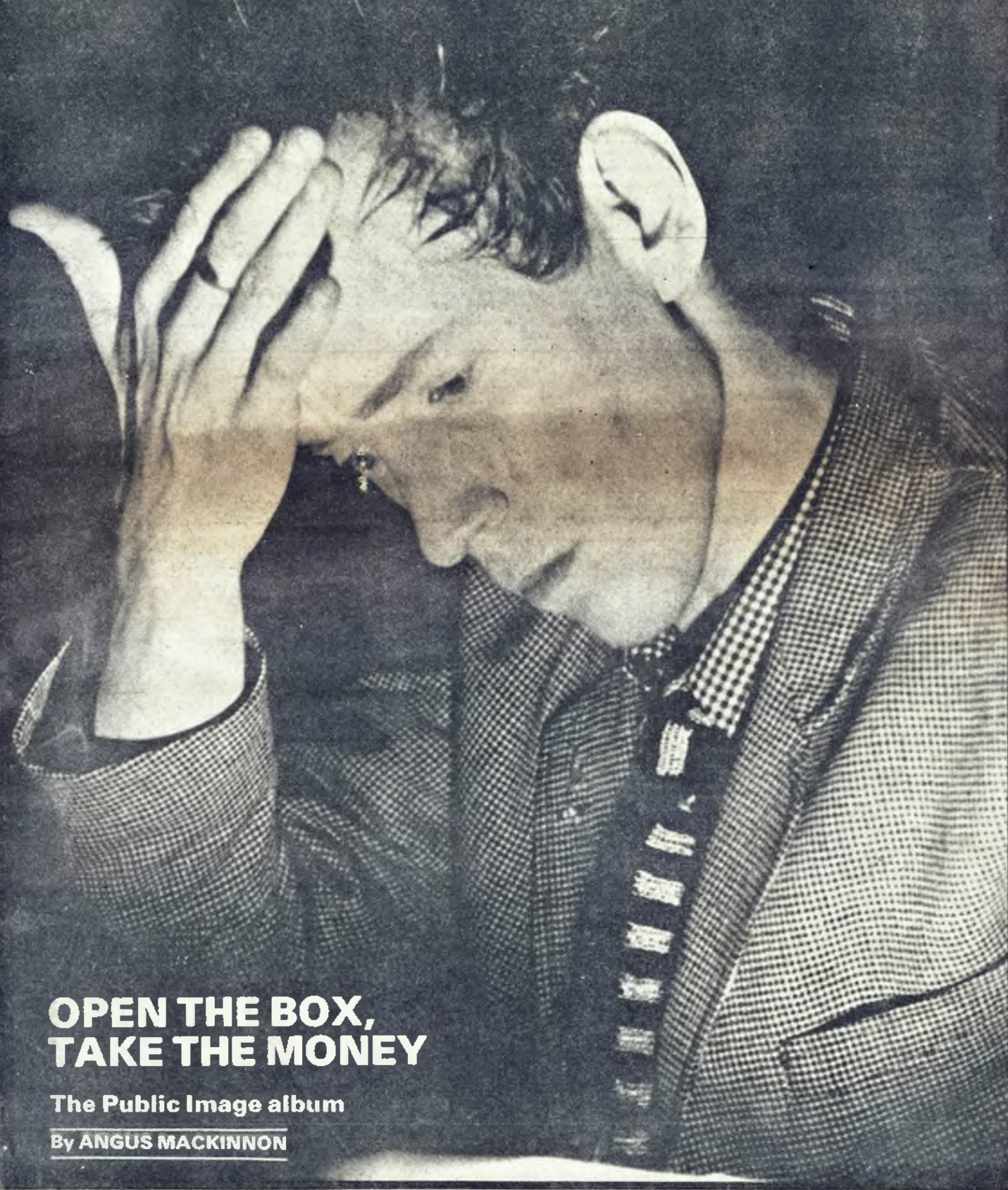


NEW **NME** MUSICAL EXPRESS

IF THIS DOESN'T SELL IT, NOTHING WILL

A Damned silly issue with a touch of Madness, 15 dates with Debbie Harry, a free demo that Costellofalogot, and a flash through The Bitch's back pages.



OPEN THE BOX, TAKE THE MONEY

The Public Image album

By ANGUS MACKINNON

NME CHARTS

Week ending November 24, 1979

UK SINGLES

This Last Week			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1 (1)	When You're In Love	Dr Hook (Capitol)	6	1
2 (8)	Eton Rifles	Jam (Polydor)	3	2
3 (3)	Still	Commodores (Motown)	2	4
4 (5)	Crazy Little Thing Called Love	Queen (EMI)	5	4
5 (3)	One Day At A Time	Lena Martell (Pye)	7	1
6 (9)	On My Radio	Selecter (Two Tone)	4	6
7 (13)	Message To You Rudy	Specials (Two Tone)	4	7
8 (2)	Gimme Gimme Gimme	Abba (Epic)	5	2
9 (16)	No More Tears	D. Summer / B. Streisand (Casablanca / CBS)	2	9
10 (14)	Ladies Night	Kool & The Gang (Mercury)	4	10
11 (8)	Every Day Hurts	Sad Cafe (RCA)	3	3
12 (7)	Tusk	Fleetwood Mac (Warner Bros)	6	5
13 (17)	Knocked It Off	B A Robertson (Asylum)	2	13
14 (10)	She's In Love With You	Suzi Quatro (RAK)	5	10
15 (28)	One Step Beyond	Madness (Stiff)	2	15
16 (15)	Rise	Herb Alpert (A&M)	5	15
17 (27)	It's A Disco Night	Isley Brothers (Epic)	2	17
18 (11)	Gonna Get Along Without You	Viola Wills (Arista/Hansa)	6	10
19 (29)	He Was Beautiful	Iris Williams (Columbia)	2	19
20 (24)	I Don't Want To Be A Freak	Dynasty (Solar)	3	20
21 (12)	The Sparrow	Ramblers (Decca)	4	12
22 (—)	Que Sera Mi Vida	Gibson Brothers (Island)	1	22
23 (—)	Sarah	Thin Lizzy (Vertigo)	1	23
24 (—)	Confusion	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	1	24
25 (—)	Monkey Chops	Dan I (Island)	1	25
26 (—)	Diamond Smiles	Boomtown Rats (Ensign)	1	26
27 (—)	Rockabilly Rebel	Matchbox (Magnet)	1	27
28 (24)	Star	Earth Wind & Fire (CBS)	6	13
29 (—)	Fall Out	Police (Illegal)	1	29
30 (—)	Let Your Heart Dance	Secret Affair (I Spy)	1	30

UP AND COMING:

Is It Love You're After — Rose Royce (Whitfield);
 Brass In Pocket — Pretenders (Real);
 Nights In White Satin — Moody Blues (Deram);
 Hot Shot — Cliff Richard (EMI);
 Living On An Island — Status Quo (Vertigo);
 Its My House — Diana Ross (Motown).

5 YEARS AGO

Week ending November 28, 1974	
1	Gonna Be A Star — David Essex (CBS)
2	You're The First, My Last, My Everything — Barry White (20th Century)
3	Juke Box Jive — The Rubettes (Polydor)
4	Killer Queen — Queen (EMI)
5	Oh Yes! You're Beautiful — Gary Glitter (Bell)
6	Hey There Lonely Girl — Eddie Holman (ABC)
7	Pepper Bot — Peppers (Spark)
8	No Hometown — Lynsey De Paul (Jet)
9	Too Good To Be Forgotten — Chi-Lites (Brunswick)
10	You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet — Bachman Turner Overdrive (Mercury)

10 YEARS AGO

Week ending November 28, 1969	
1	Archies (RCA)
2	(Cell Me) Number One — Tremeloes (CBS)
3	Oh Well! — Fleetwood Mac (Reprise)
4	Yesterday — Stevie Wonder (Tamla Motown)
5	Something — Beatles (Apple)
6	Return Of Django — Pretty Things (Fontana)
7	Wonderful World Beautiful People — Jimmy Cliff (Trojan)
8	Ruby Don't Take Your Love To Town — Kenny Rogers & The First Edition (Reprise)
9	Sweet Dreams — Jethro Tull (Chrysalis)
10	What Does It Take — Jr. Walker & The All Stars (Tamla Motown)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending November 27, 1954	
1	Little Red Rooster — Rolling Stones (Decca)
2	Baby Love — Supremes (Stateside)
3	All Day And All Of The Night — Kinks (Pye)
4	I'm Gonna Be Strong — Jimmy Cliff (Trojan)
5	He's In Town — Rockin' Berries (Piccadilly)
6	Um Um Um Um Um — Wayne Fontana & The Mindbenders (Fontana)
7	Down Town — Petula Clark (Pye)
8	Don't Bring Me Down — Pretty Things (Fontana)
9	There's A Heartache Following Me — Am Reeves (RCA)
10	Losing You — Dusty Springfield (Philips)

UK ALBUMS

This Last Week			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1 (8)	Greatest Hits	Rod Stewart (Riva)	2	1
2 (3)	Abba's Greatest Hits Vol 2	Abba (Epic)	3	2
3 (1)	Regatta De Blanc	Police (A&M)	7	1
4 (2)	Tusk	Fleetwood Mac (Warner Bros)	5	2
5 (12)	Off The Wall	Michael Jackson (Epic)	9	3
6 (6)	Lena's Music Album	Lena Martell (Pye)	6	4
7 (—)	20 Golden Greats	Diana Ross (Motown)	1	7
8 (5)	Greatest Hits	10cc (Mercury)	7	5
9 (9)	The Specials	Specials (Two Tone)	4	8
10 (4)	Rock 'n' Roller Disco	Various (Renc)	3	4
11 (11)	The Secret Life Of Plants	Stevie Wonder (EMI)	3	11
12 (19)	Out Of This World	Moody Blues (K-Tel)	2	12
13 (10)	The Long Run	Eagles (Asylum)	8	2
14 (7)	The Fine Art Of Surfacing	Boomtown Rats (Ensign)	3	7
15 (16)	20 Golden Greats	Mantovani (Warwick)	2	15
16 (29)	Bee Gees' Greatest Hits	(RSO)	2	16
17 (28)	I Am	Earth Wind & Fire (CBS)	24	2
18 (18)	One Step Beyond	Madness (Stiff)	3	18
19 (15)	Midnight Magic	Commodores (Motown)	11	11
20 (22)	On The Radio Greatest Hits	Donna Summer (Casablanca)	2	20
21 (17)	String Of Hits	Shadows (EMI)	11	4
22 (—)	Outlandos D'amour	Police (A&M)	26	7
23 (13)	Eat To The Beat	Blondie (Chrysalis)	8	2
24 (—)	Discovery	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	23	1
25 (—)	Sometimes You Win	Dr Hook (Capitol)	1	25
26 (—)	Rise	Herb Alpert (A&M)	1	26
27 (23)	Pleasure And Pain	Dr Hook (Capitol)	2	23
28 (—)	Crepes And Drapes	Showaddywaddy (Arista)	1	28
29 (—)	Wet	Barbra Streisand (CBS)	1	29
30 (—)	Setting Sons	Jam (Polydor)	1	30



So, Dan-I, you have a record in the NME charts at number 25. Not a very suspicious placing. Many before you have reached number 25 and not been heard of again let alone asked to appear on Juke Box Jury, which you probably would be, if it was still on. Dan-I... a funny name for a new star in the reggae-disco fusion firmament. Is that a letter or a numeral that comes after the dash? Are you Dan-eye or Dan-One? If you are Dan-One this could mean that you are merely the first of many. God forbid.

US SINGLES

This Last Week			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1 (4)	Babe	Styx	2	1
2 (5)	No More Tears	Barbra Streisand & Donna Summer	3	2
3 (11)	Still	Commodores	4	1
4 (2)	Heartache Tonight	Eagles	5	1
5 (3)	Dim All The Lights	Donna Summer	6	1
6 (16)	Pepp Muzik	M	7	1
7 (9)	Please Don't Go	KC & The Sunshine Band	8	1
8 (7)	You Decorated My Life	Kenny Rogers	9	1
9 (8)	Rise	Herb Alpert	10	1
10 (25)	Escape	Rupert Holmes	11	1
11 (12)	Ships	Barry Manilow	12	1
12 (17)	You're Only Lonely	J. D. Souther	13	1
13 (16)	Ladies' Night	Kool & The Gang	14	1
14 (21)	Send One Your Love	Stevie Wonder	15	1
15 (10)	Tusk	Fleetwood Mac	16	1
16 (11)	Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough	Michael Jackson	17	1
17 (16)	Come To Me	France Joli	18	1
18 (19)	This Night Won't Last Forever	Michael Jackson	19	1
19 (20)	If You Remember Me	Chris Thompson and Night	20	1
20 (24)	Take The Long Way Home	Supertramp	21	1
21 (29)	We Don't Talk Anymore	Chiff Richard	22	1
22 (23)	Broken Hearted Me	Anne Murray	23	1
23 (27)	Blondie	Blondie	24	1
24 (—)	Jane	Jefferson Starship	25	1
25 (30)	Half The Way	Crystal Gayle	26	1
26 (13)	Good Girls Don't	The Knack	27	1
27 (—)	Dream Police	Cheap Trick	28	1
28 (—)	Cool Change	Little River Band	29	1
29 (—)	Do That To Me One More Time	The Captain & Tennille	30	1
30 (—)	Cruisin'	Smoky Robinson		

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

US ALBUMS

This Last Week			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1 (1)	The Long Run	Eagles	2	1
2 (2)	Tusk	Fleetwood Mac	3	1
3 (3)	In Through The Out Door	Led Zeppelin	4	1
4 (4)	Cometstone	Styx	5	1
5 (6)	On The Radio Greatest Hits	Donna Summer	6	1
6 (—)	The Secret Life Of Plants	Stevie Wonder	7	1
7 (11)	Wet	Barbra Streisand	8	1
8 (9)	One Voice	Barry Manilow	9	1
9 (15)	Midnight Magic	Commodores	10	1
10 (7)	Rise	Herb Alpert	11	1
11 (9)	Off The Wall	Michael Jackson	12	1
12 (10)	Kenny	Kenny Rogers	13	1
13 (18)	Bee Gees' Greatest Hits	Bee Gees	14	1
14 (14)	Eat To The Beat	Blondie	15	1
15 (16)	Ladies' Night	Kool and The Gang	16	1
16 (12)	Head Games	Foreigner	17	1
17 (13)	Get The Knack	The Knack	18	1
18 (17)	Dream Police	Cheap Trick	19	1
19 (20)	Slow Train Coming	Bob Dylan	20	1
20 (22)	Keep The Fire	Kenny Loggins	21	1
21 (—)	Damn The Torpedoes	Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers	22	1
22 (21)	Breakfast In America	Supertramp	23	1
23 (19)	Flirtin' With Disaster	Molly Hatchet	24	1
24 (25)	Restless Nights	Karla Bonoff	25	1
25 (15)	Uncle Jam Wants You	Funkadelic	26	1
26 (24)	Candy O	The Cars	27	1
27 (27)	Highway To Hell	AC/DC	28	1
28 (30)	Evolution	Journey	29	1
29 (—)	I'm The Man	Joe Jackson	30	1
30 (—)	The Glow	Bonnie Raitt		

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

DISCO

(1)	Ladies' Night	Kool & The Gang
(2)	Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough	Michael Jackson
(3)	I Don't Want To Be A Freak	Dynasty
(4)	You Can Be A Star	Earth Wind & Fire
(5)	Rise	Al Hudson & Partners
(6)	Still	Herb Alpert
(7)	Gonna Get Along Without You Now	Viola Wills
(8)	Monkey Chops	Dan I
(9)	There's A Reason	Hil Tension

Chart supplied by: Powerhouse Disco Roadshow

Tel: (01) 368-8852

REGGAE

(1)	Political Confusion	Big Youth (Cash & Carry)
(2)	Watty Dread She Want	George Fawcett (Gorgoni)
(3)	Power Struggle	Bunny Wailer (Island)
(4)	Rocking Universally	Jackie Mittoo/Willa Williams (Shinest)
(5)	Humble Yourself	Asher & Tremble (Rockland)
(6)	Bad Girl	Black Uhuru (Warrior)
(7)	Sky Jools	Nigger Kojak/Lisa (Joe Gibbs)
(8)	Respect	Al Campbell (Bushy)
(9)	Get You On The Telephone	Barrington Levy & Trinity U.B.
(10)	One Drop	Bob Marley (Tuff Gong)

Chart supplied by: Daddy Kool, 94 Dean Street, London W1

INDIES

(1)	Transmission	Joy Division (Factory)
(2)	All Day And All Of The Night	Bernie Tormes (Parlole)
(3)	You've Never Heard Anything Like It	Freshman (Release)
(4)	Jumpin' Someone Else's Train	Cure (Fiction)
(5)	There's Never Been A Night	Quads (Big Bear)
(6)	Science Fiction	Dodgema (Arista)
(7)	California Uber Alles	Dead Kennedys (Fast)
(8)	Fall Out	Police (Illegal)
(9)	Frustration	Purple Hearts (Fiction)
(10)	Time Goes By Slow	Distractions (Factory)

Chart supplied by: Flyover Records, 15 Queen Caroline Street, London W6.



Blondie's beano around Britain

THE LONG-AWAITED Blondie tour is at last official. As we've been forecasting exclusively for the past fortnight, it takes in 15 dates over the Christmas-New Year period — and their itinerary, announced this week, includes New Year's Eve gigs in Glasgow and three shows at the Hammersmith Odeon.

The band are expected to arrive in Britain several days before Christmas, possibly in mid-December, just as soon as they've finished work in Texas on their new film. They'll spend the time before the holiday rehearsing, and appearing on TV and radio. In fact, their first show will be a low-key gig on Boxing Day, which isn't being announced nationally as it's in the nature of a warm-up — but if you live on the Sussex Coast, you'll find it advertised locally.

Blondie then play LEICESTER De Montfort Hall (December 27), MANCHESTER Free Trade Hall (28), GLASGOW Apollo (30 and 31), EDINBURGH Odeon (January 1 and 2), NEWCASTLE City Hall (4 and 5), DEESIDE Leisure Centre, near Chester (6), BIRMINGHAM Odeon (7 and 8) and LONDON HAMMERSMITH Odeon (11, 12 and 13).

They then shoot off to the Continent for concerts in Paris (15-16) but, according to their

London spokesman, they're likely to be back here later in January for "something special which we're working on at the moment". He added: "This is going to be an unusual tour, to say the least — we've got quite a few surprises up our sleeves".

Tickets for all shows (except Deeside) are priced £4.75 and £4.25, and they are available now from the respective box-offices — the only exception being Edinburgh, where applications are by post only. In all cases, tickets are limited to four per applicant.

Deeside Centre tickets are all at the one price of £4.25 and, in addition to the venue box-office, may also be obtained from Migrant Mouse (Chester), Rox Records (Ellesmere Port), Probe Records (Liverpool), Piccadilly Records (Manchester) and Mike Lloyd Music (Newcastle-under-Lyme). Tour promoter is Harvey Goldsmith.

The band were offered the opportunity of playing larger arenas, like Wembley or Earls Court, but — even though it means a drastic cut in profits — they said they prefer to play the regular theatre circuit.

● Blondie's new Chrysalis single 'Union City Blue', from the 'Eat To The Beat' album, is now on rush release.

Heads' London extras

THE TALKING HEADS are to play two more London dates, in addition to their previously announced gig at the Hammersmith Palais on December 4 — they're at the Electric Ballroom in Camden Town on Friday and Saturday, December 7 and 8. Support act on both these extra shows, which close their tour, is *Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark*. Tickets are on sale now priced £3.

Support act on the Heads' tour (apart from the new Electric Ballroom gigs) is billed as The Human League, who recently cancelled their own tour after a one-off London show in order to re-think their future. In fact, the League themselves will not be appearing on stage —

instead, they've designed a "remotely controlled 30-minute entertainment", which will enable them to join the audience and watch it! They say that some nights they may continue working on their second album, and may not even be in the theatre! The exact nature of the "entertainment" (obviously including films) remains to be seen!

SELECTER TOP LYCEUM SHOW

THE SELECTER follow their current 2-Tone package tour by headlining their own concert at London Strand Lyceum on Sunday, December 9 (admission £2.50), supported by latest 2-Tone signing The Beat and Birmingham band UB40. And there have been two additions to the Specials-Selector-Dexy's Midnight Runners tour — at Great Yarmouth Tiffany's (November 27) and Guildford Civic Hall (December 3).

LITTLE BO BITCH have added Aberystwyth College of Librarianship (this Saturday), Harrow College (December 7) and Swindon Brunel Rooms (18) to their current tour, which they are undertaking with stand-in guitarist Clive Mulcahy. Regular sideman Steve Carroll is still recovering from serious injuries sustained in a car crash last month.

ESSENTIAL LOGIC's gig at London Leicester-Square Notre Dame Hall next Monday (26) — which is part of their UK tour, reported last week — is to be a Rock Against Racism event. Also taking part are The Delta Five, Scritti Politti and The Door and The Window. It starts at 8pm, and admission is £1.80.

THE BRAINS are to play a series of dates in London and the Home Counties before Christmas, without their front man Brian James, currently working in a temporary capacity as Iggy Pop's guitarist. Minus James, the line-up consists of Alan Lee Shaw (guitar and vocals), John Fowles (drums) and Alvin Gibbs (bass and vocals). James will have re-joined them in time for the late December release of their new single 'Dancing On Sand' on Illegal Records.

PORTRAITS — whose debut single 'Little Women' has been picking up heavy airplay — support Simple Minds on their UK tour opening this week.

SPIZZ ENERGI have new headlines at London Leicester-Square Notre Dame Hall (November 30), Lancaster Art College (December 5), London Middlesex Polytechnic (6), Norwich St Andrew's Hall (10) and London Camberwell Art College (14). Their new single 'Where's Captain Kirk?' is issued by Rough Trade on December 15 — the same day as the premiere of the *Star Trek* movie!



Major British tour and new album UFO: 24 SIGHTINGS

UFO, currently undertaking a European tour, return home to play a five-venue mini-tour before Christmas — followed early in the New Year by an extensive 19-date nationwide outing. To coincide with this activity, their new ten-track album is set for January 11 release by Chrysalis, provisionally titled 'No Place To Run' — it's the follow-up to their Top Ten LP at the beginning of this year, 'Strangers In The Night'.

The band's December dates are at Belfast Ulster Hall (12), Dublin Stadium (13), Bradford St. George's Hall (15), Middlesbrough Town Hall (16) and Dundee Caird Hall (17). These five gigs have been arranged because they couldn't be slotted into the main part of the tour, which comprises: Liverpool Empire (January 13), Glasgow Apollo (14), Aberdeen Capitol (15), Edinburgh Odeon (16), Newcastle City Hall (17), Leeds University (19), Oxford New Theatre (20), Leicester De Montfort Hall (21), Portsmouth Guildhall (22), Wolverhampton Civic Hall (24), Birmingham Odeon (25), Coventry Theatre (27), Sheffield City Hall (28), Manchester Apollo (29), Hanley Victoria Hall (31), Bristol Colston Hall (February 1), Southampton Gaumont (2) and London Hammersmith Odeon (3 and 4).

Ticket prices for the main part of the tour are £3.50, £3, £2.50 and £2 (except Hammersmith — £3.75, £3.25, £2.75 and £2.25). Postal bookings are being accepted now by all venues, and personal applicants should ask individual box-offices for opening dates.

Uneasy Passage

THE PASSAGE have cancelled all their gigs for the time being, while they find and rehearse a new bassist to replace Tony Friel. They say they asked him to leave the group after allegedly attempting to beat up an audience member at a recent gig.

Friel, on the other hand, claims he left of his own accord after The Passage "split up". He has now formed a new band called Contact, in which he switches to guitar and vocals, and is joined by Duncan Prestbury (organ and vocals), Jimmy Carter (bass) and Nicky Marshall (drums). Their debut EP 'Future/Past' has just been issued by Object Music, and they are lining-up gigs to promote it.

Back to The Passage, who vehemently deny a break-up, and say that — after Friel's replacement is worked in — they plan to resume live work at Blackpool Jenkinson's on December 10.

OFF THE HOOK

DR HOOK will definitely not be appearing in the Wembley Country Music Festival next Easter, despite reports elsewhere last week that they would be headlining one of the four days (April 4-7). Their spokesman told NME: "They'll be in Japan at that time and, in any case, it's not the sort of event they would play". But he added that the band are confirmed for a UK tour next spring, with dates to be announced early in the New Year.

CLASH ELPEE, SINGLE AND TOUR IMMINENT

THE PREVIOUSLY reported double album by The Clash, titled 'London Calling', has had its maximum retail price set at £5 — but release has been deferred by CBS until December 14. They also have a double A-side single, comprising the LP title track and a song not on the album called 'Armageddon Time'. Plans for the band's tour are now being finalised, and the promoter tells us he's hoping to announce details in a week or two. Now, here's a listing of the tracks on the double LP.

London Calling, Brand New Cadillac, Jimmy Jazz, Hate Myself, Rudi Can't Fly, Spanish Bombs, Right Profile, Lost In The Supermarket, Clamdown, Guns Of Brixton, Wrong 'Em Boyo, Death Or Glory, Koko Kola, The Card Cheat, Lovers Rock, Four Horsemen, I'm Not Down, Revolution Rock.

URIAH HEPP TOUR: PAGE 5

STOP PRESS: Lee Karlake, Heep's drummer for the last seven years, phoned NME on Monday to say that — after a row at the weekend — he has been kicked out of the band. There's no news yet of a replacement.

STRAIGHT MUSIC PRESENTS

GANG OF FOUR

RED CRAYOLA

the Pop Group

AU PAIRS

DELTA 5

FRI 23rd NOV at 7-30 SAT 24th NOV at 7-30

ELECTRIC BALLROOM

104 CAMDEN MARKET (NORTH) (NEAREST TO BE CAMDEN TOWN)

TICKETS £2.50 (INC. VAT) / 104 CAMDEN MARKET (NORTH) (NEAREST TO BE CAMDEN TOWN) OFFICE TEL: 499 9066

GROUPS: 104 CAMDEN MARKET (NORTH) (NEAREST TO BE CAMDEN TOWN) OFFICE TEL: 499 9066

BOOKING: 104 CAMDEN MARKET (NORTH) (NEAREST TO BE CAMDEN TOWN) OFFICE TEL: 499 9066

DOORS: 104 CAMDEN MARKET (NORTH) (NEAREST TO BE CAMDEN TOWN) OFFICE TEL: 499 9066

STRAIGHT MUSIC PRESENTS

THE SELECTER

DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS

LEWISHAM ODEON

SATURDAY 1st DECEMBER at 7-30

TICKETS £3.50 (INC. VAT) / 104 CAMDEN MARKET (NORTH) (NEAREST TO BE CAMDEN TOWN) OFFICE TEL: 499 9066

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STRAIGHT MUSIC PRESENTS

TALKING HEADS

ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES IN THE DARK

ELECTRIC BALLROOM

FRI/SAT 7/8th DECEMBER at 7-30

TICKETS £3.50 (INC. VAT) / 104 CAMDEN MARKET (NORTH) (NEAREST TO BE CAMDEN TOWN) OFFICE TEL: 499 9066

GROUPS: 104 CAMDEN MARKET (NORTH) (NEAREST TO BE CAMDEN TOWN) OFFICE TEL: 499 9066

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THE WAYS OF OTWAY

MOST OF THE dates have now been confirmed for John Otway's previously reported pre-Christmas UK tour. It's already been announced that he's to play a special party-type show at London Rainbow on December 22, and it was learned this week that a major surprise guest will be making an appearance at this event.

Other finalised gigs are at Liverpool University (November 30), Leicester



University (December 1), High Wycombe Town Hall (3), Manchester University (5), Blackpool Tiffany's (6), Sheffield Earnshaw Hall (7), Plymouth Polytechnic (11), Cheltenham North Glos. Technical College (12), Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic (13), Lincoln Drill Hall (15) and Poole Arts Centre (16). Four venues — on December 4, 8, 10 and 14 — are still being arranged, with details to follow shortly.

The tour will introduce Otway's new band, featuring Geoffrey Thomas (drums) and Allan Offer (bass), plus a guitarist still to be named. There is no new Otway record product to tie in with the tour — "I just wanted to get back on the road as quickly as possible", he said on his return from America — but he'll be cutting a new album in January for spring release.

Otway also dismissed as "absolute rubbish" reports that he is to leave Britain in order to live permanently in the States. He commented: "These rumours snowballed because I spent several months in America this year. But I was only trying to establish myself there. No way would I leave the UK for good."

Gaye power



Biggest disco in the world

MARVIN GAYE is also one of the stars of a massive all-star event billed as 'The Biggest Disco In The World', which takes place at the Birmingham National Exhibition Centre on Saturday, January 19. And how's this for a line-up... In addition to Gaye, there are American chart stars K.C. & The Sunshine Band, McFadden & Whitehead, Edwin Starr and George McCrae; top British band Showaddywaddy; girl group The Mervelettes; and compares Kid Jensen, David Hamilton, Mark Wesley (Radio Lux) and Nicky Steele (BRMB).

Presented by Malcolm Field and Johnnie Peller Concert Promotions, it's a nine-hour show running from 3pm to midnight

HEADLINES UK TOUR —

MARVIN GAYE returns to Britain in January, as part of an extensive European tour. His first three dates to be finalised are two shows at Liverpool Royal Philharmonic Hall (January 23), two at London Royal Albert Hall (25) and one show at London Rainbow (26) — but at least five more UK dates have yet to be arranged, and will be announced in a week or two, together with the name of another major black U.S. artist who will support Gaye.

He also appears in the all-star Birmingham disco, see story below.

Tickets will be available from the usual local agents, and for the confirmed concerts prices are £7.50, £6.50, £5 and £4 (Liverpool); £10, £8.50, £6.50, £5.50, £3.50, £2.25 and £1 (Albert Hall); and £8.50, £7.50, £6, £5 and £4 (Rainbow). There's also a mail order service for the Albert Hall concerts only, and postal orders should be addressed to Kruger Organisation, Postal Booking Service, PO Box 460, Brighton, Sussex (enclose SAE).

AND APPEARS IN THE Biggest disco in the world

WITH STARR, SHOWADDYWADDY, KC, McFADDEN & WHITEHEAD

(doors open 1pm), and it seems likely that the 35,000-capacity venue will achieve sell-out status. Tickets are on sale now priced £9.50 (all day) and £7.50 (8pm-midnight). They are obtainable only from Keith Prowse & Co Ltd, 24 Store Street, London WC1E 7BA — either by post or personal application. It's not yet known if the other U.S. visitors will, like Gaye, be undertaking additional British dates.

As reported several weeks ago, Showstopper are planning to stage a massive disco in a huge Marquee at Knebworth on Spring Bank Holiday Monday, and they had announced this as 'The Biggest Disco In The World' — but it looks as though the Birmingham event has beaten them to it in the use of that title. Indeed, the organisers say it should qualify for inclusion in the next edition of the Guinness Book of Records, and claim that the publishers have already agreed to list it.

LATEST RELEASES AND

Elton, Darts singles

ELTON JOHN'S new single, out this week in both 7" and 12" form, is his version of the Chuck Berry classic 'Johnny B Goode' — it's taken from his album 'Victim Of Love'.

DARTS' latest single, which they are putting out because of the reaction it received when they performed it on tour, is 'Rent Potito'. It's coupled with 'Honey Bee' and issued by Magnet this weekend.

● New singles from Bob Marley & The Wailers and Motorhead are both the title tracks from their current albums — 'Survival' (Island) and 'Bomber' (Bronze) respectively. Release date is November 30.

● Rocket Records this week issue the album '499 2139', a compilation set comprising tracks from 12 new bands — The Act, The Lambretas, The Classics, Malcolm Practice, Escalators, The Vye, Wolfboys, Wardens, The Brick Wall Band, Les Effe, Reaser and Sinister. And 'Go Steady' by The Lambretas is issued as a single.

● The 'Best Of Roy Ayers' album, planned for release by Polydor this month, has now been put back to January. This is because of the imminent issue of his new LP 'No Stranger In Love', due out this weekend.

● Yet another new signing to Stiff Records are five-piece Canadian band Pointed Sticks, who hail from Vancouver. Their debut 12 inch single 'Out Of Luck' is issued this week, and there are plans to bring them over for some UK dates.

● Fabulous Records have signed Springwater, who had a smash hit some years back with 'I Will Return'. The new single from the outfit, who are the brainchild of producer Phil Cordell, is an instrumental version of 'Sailing' — out this week.

● Millie Jackson's 1976 single 'House For Sale' is currently one of the most played records on the Northern soul circuit. And Neil Rushton's specialist odies company has negotiated a special custom pressing, for rush release through Polydor.



Wreckless Eric LP

WRECKLESS ERIC releases his third Stiff album this weekend, titled 'The Whole Wide World'. It's a combination of singles, B-sides and album tracks, and was primarily compiled for the U.S. market to introduce him to potential audiences in America, where he is currently on tour. The 13-track set sells at £4.79 maximum.

● The new Secret Affair album, tied in with their current tour, is titled 'Glory Boys' and issued by Arista this weekend.

● Random Hold have their first EP, a five-track set called 'Avalanche', issued by Polydor on November 30 at £1.49. Besides the title track, the titles on the EP — which is produced by Peter Hammett — are 'Meat', 'The Ballad', 'Film Music' and 'Montgomery Cliff'. The four-piece band are currently supporting XTC on tour.

● GTO Records issue a new Billy Ocean single 'Are You Ready' this weekend. In both 7" and 12" versions. Due on November 30 from the same label is 'Straight Lines' by New Russia.

● RCA rush release a single called 'Year Of The Child' by Polly Boden with the Coventry Cathedral Choir, from which all royalties are donated to the charity of the song title.

● Holly & The Italians, the Los Angeles new-waveers who've been working in Britain since the summer, are recording a one-off single for the Oval label — prior to signing a long-term deal with a major company.

● Jona Lawrie, who's been conspicuous by his absence for most of this year, has a new single out on Stiff this weekend. Titled 'God Bless Whoever Made You', it has the distinction of being penned by Nick Lowe and Ian Gomm, and produced by The Rumour's Bob Andrews. And coming out on Sonet Records this month is an album, recorded some time ago, called 'Alas Jona Lawrie'.

● With the Viole White album 'Without You' issued this week, Charly Records have now scheduled the follow-up to her current chart single — it's a revival of the Kelly Lecker hit 'Love Letters', and it's due in a couple of weeks.

● The long-awaited 'Southend Rock' compilation LP — featuring Mickey Jupp, Kerswell Flyers and The Jukes, among others — is now out on Sonet.

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BARCLAY JAMES, TROWER AND URIAH HEEP ON TOUR



Left to right: PRITCHARD, LEES and HOLROYD

BARCLAY JAMES HARVEST this week announce details of what's become their annual foray into the concert world. They'll be touring Britain, Europe and America in the New Year, kicking off with eight dates in this country during January — which, compared with previous outings, is a relatively short UK itinerary.

They play Edinburgh Usher Hall (January 19), Newcastle City Hall (20), Birmingham Odeon (22), London Hammersmith Odeon (23 and 24), Bristol Colston Hall (25) and Manchester Apollo (27 and 28). Tickets are on sale now at all venues priced £3.25, £2.75 and £2.25 with additional £3.75 seats at Hammersmith. Promoter is Denny Betesh of Kennedy Street Enterprises.

These will be their first dates since Woolly Wolstenholme left the band in June to pursue a solo career — the first personnel change in their 13-year career. For their upcoming live appearances, the remaining nucleus of John Lees, Mel Pritchard and Les Holroyd will be augmented by one or two newcomers, details to be announced shortly.

Their new album 'Eyes Of The Universe' is out this week on Polydor — it was recorded in the summer after Wolstenholme left, and with Lees and Holroyd playing the bulk of the keyboards. An extensive European tour follows immediately after the UK dates, then BJH set out for Canada and the States.

URIAH HEEP are back on the UK concert trail in February, playing 17 major dates and introducing their new vocalist John Sloman — he replaces John Lewton who left the band two months ago. Sloman, formerly with Lone Star, was selected from 200 applicants — and he also plays guitar and keyboards. Heep are currently re-recording their new album with Sloman, and this will be issued by Bronze to coincide with their upcoming tour.

Dates are Birmingham Odeon (February 1), Manchester Apollo (2), Sheffield City Hall (3), Preston Guildhall (5), Glasgow Apollo (5), Newcastle City Hall (6), Hull City Hall (8), Bradford St. George's Hall (9), Leicester De Montfort Hall (10), Ipswich Gaumont (11), Portsmouth Guildhall (12), London Hammersmith Odeon (14), Bristol Colston Hall (15), Oxford New Theatre (17), Croydon Fairfield Hall (18), Cardiff Sophie Gardens (19) and Swansea Brangwyn Hall (20).

Tickets are on sale now at all box-offices, except Leicester and Bristol (postal applications). Prices are £3, £2.50 and £2 — except Hammersmith (£3.75, £3.25, £2.75 and £2.25), Croydon and Hull (£3.50, £3, £2.50 and £2), Portsmouth and Cardiff (£3.50, £3, £2.50 and £2), and Oxford (£3.25, £2.50 and £1.75). The tour is promoted by Kennedy Street Enterprises, in association with Neil Warnock of the Bron Agency.



ROBIN TROWER

ROBIN TROWER headlines his first British concert series for more than four years, when he plays eight major dates in February. And he'll have a new album titled 'Victims Of The Fury' issued by Chrysalis to coincide with his touring. Featured on both the tour and the LP are a new slimline band, now down to a trio and comprising Trower, Jim Dewar (bass) and Bill Lordan (drums).

Dates are Liverpool Empire (February 3), Glasgow Apollo (4), Edinburgh Odeon (5), Birmingham Odeon (7), London Hammersmith Odeon (8), Sheffield City Hall (10), Manchester Apollo (11) and Newcastle City Hall (12). Tickets are now on sale at box-offices and usual agencies priced £3.50, £3, £2.50 and £2 (Hammersmith); £3.25, £2.75, £2.25 and £1.75 (elsewhere).

RECORDINGS

- 'Steppin' Stones' by The Headbays and 'Yesterday's Hero' by Paul Nicholas are singles issued tomorrow (Friday) by RSO Records.
- Shattered Records are a new label based in Worthing, currently seeking a manufacturing and distribution deal. This week, in the meantime, they are releasing a limited edition single by Liverpool band Fragments — 'Nuthin' City Limits'.
- The Marlene Schoolgirls have their debut single 'Life In The 1980s' issued this weekend by Red Planet Records, available through Finnisco and Rough Trade. The band are lining up a string of dates to promote it.
- Chris Slevy and The Freshies, currently touring with John Cooper Clarke, have their original album 'All Sleeps Secrets' — previously only available on cassette through the band's own Razz company — issued by T.M. Records of Manchester. The band will also have a new single called 'Yellow Spot' released just after Christmas on a new Manchester label, Overchoice Records.
- Recognised as one of the first mod revival bands, but now defunct, The Rivets have their first two singles issued by the Alien Record Company — 'Saturday Night At The Dances' and 'Never'.
- Christmas Records have signed Trimmer & Jenkins, the ex-Burlesque duo currently on tour with Roger Chapman. Their first single 'I Love Parties' / 'Thank You Lord', described as 'The definitive Christmas record', is out this week.
- Trojan this week release the classic 'Sunhead Moonstomp' by Symarise as a 12 inch disc — re-mixed, re-edited and lengthened to five minutes. The two tracks on the B-side are 'Skinhead Jamboree' and 'Fung She'.
- False Idols have a three-track EP issued this weekend by Kid Records. Wave Records (54 Everholt Street, Somerset Town, London NW11). Selling at 99p, it comprises 'Broken Judy', 'Marbled Hands' and 'H-Grain'. Phone contact is 01-367 0654.
- Eddie Mooney & The Grave's single 'I Bought Three Eggs' / 'Zombis' is issued in January by Manchester's T.M. label. Meanwhile, the band are urgently seeking a replacement drummer — interested applicants contact the record company at 061-236 2717.
- First release on Cloned Records of Plymouth — 'Clone' by Greg Vandike — is available now nationally through Rough Trade in conjunction with Spartan.

Sad Cafe tour, new single

SAD CAFE, currently riding high in the charts with their single 'Every Day Hurts', are being lined up for their first major British concert tour early in the New Year — details to follow shortly. Meanwhile, their next single — titled 'Strange Little Girl' — is set for January 4 release by RCA.



THE INMATES headline a major London show at The Venue in Victoria on Friday, November 30, when they'll be augmented by The Rumour horns. This will be their last UK date in 1979, as they then fly direct to New York to open their debut U.S. tour.

RONNIE LANE returns to live action next month when he plays two nights at London Victoria The Venue on Thursday and Friday, December 13 and 14, supported by Jimmy Lindsay Lane, whose new single 'Kuchty Ry' is just out on Gem Records, is currently putting a band together and other dates are likely to follow.

JOHN POTTER and Mike Maynard, who were keyboard player and vocalist respectively in the now-defunct John Potter's Clay, have teamed up again for a new venture and plan to release a single early in the New Year. This will feature a multi-keyboard technique, incorporating ten different simultaneous keyboard sounds. As with their earlier Clay product, it will appear on Nighthawk Records.

ROY SUNDHOLM has joined the current John Miles tour as guest artist, coinciding with the release of his debut album 'The Chinese Method' and a single titled 'Did You Ever Have A Heart', both on the Ensign label. Since the LP was recorded, the band has undergone a few line-up changes and now comprises Simon Climey (guitar and keyboards), Charlie Staniforth (guitar), Andy Rawson (bass), Andy Cave (drums) and Sundholm himself (guitar and vocals).

DUSTY SPRINGFIELD and John Miles are among the artists appearing in a Year Of The Child charity concert at London Victoria Albert Hall on Monday, December 3, which is also to be filmed for TV. And in the event tonight (Thursday) for the same charity at London Wembley Arena, The Real Thing have been added to the bill which already includes Gary Numan, Cal Stevens, Wishbone Ash, David Essex and Sky.

THE SPORTS, the Australian band who guested on London Victoria's spring UK tour, play London Kensington Nashville tonight (Thursday). It coincides with the release by Sire this weekend of their album 'Don't Throw Stones' and single 'Who Listens To The Radio'. They then leave for a major tour of the States.

LIVE WIRE, currently touring America as support to such acts as Jefferson Starship and Rory Gallagher, return here to play a few Christmas dates. They have London gigs at Islington Hope And Anchor (December 14), Clapham 101 Club (15) and Camden Dingwells (21) — plus Loughton College (Essex) on December 19. Their new single 'Hi And Run Driver' is issued this week by A&M.

BONNIE TYLER has won first prize in Japan's Yamahe Song Festival, which was staged in Tokyo before a 40,000 audience. For the weekend of November 1, 1979, songs from 53 countries was whittled down to 32 songs from 20 countries. Bonnie's winning song was 'Singing On The Edge Of The Ocean', penned by Ronnie Scott and Steve Wolfe, her producers and managers.

TREVOR RABIN, currently touring as support to The Sex Pistols Band, plays his first UK headline date at London Victoria The Venue on November 19, backed by his new band featuring John Gally (keyboards), Les Goode (bass) and ex-Bop drummer Simon Ffox. Rabin's new album 'Face To Face' has just been issued by Chrysalis.

MIAMI BEAST, the Manchester band with a loyal local following, have decided to split up after playing two farewell gigs at Manchester Band On The Wall this Friday and Saturday (23-24). Guitarist Rick Wayman and singer Graham Saxe are considering forming a new band, and the rest of Miami Beast will continue working together under the name of District Thirteen, concentrating more on jazz-influenced music.

NEWS ROUND-UP

NO DICE have new London gigs at Camden Music Machine (this Saturday) and Victoria The Venue (December 8). And THE MISDEMEANORS are also in London at Canning Town Bridge House (December 9), Covent Garden Rock Garden (14) and Fulham Greyhound (15).

BUDGIE top the bill in what's described as 'The Heaviest Night Of The Year' at London Strand Lyceum on Sunday, December 16. Also appearing are Girlschool, Angelwitch and Praying Mantis, and admission is £2.

THE CROOKS have dates next month at High Wycombe Nag's Head (December 5), London Fulham Greyhound (7), Weymouth South Dorset College (12), London West Hampstead Moonlight Club (14), Reading Target Club (15) and Maidenhead Alexander's (16). They're also in the process of recording their debut album, produced by Simon Boswell, for release on the Blue-print label in late January.

WINGS are playing yet another night at Liverpool Royal Court Theatre — on November 23. But this one is a free private function, admission by invitation only, and not open to the general public. Paul McCartney is playing it for his old school, the Liverpool Institute.

THE BOGEY BOYS are to support Alvin Lee's Ten Years Later on their five-venue mini-tour, starting next Monday (26). The Irish band also have gigs in London in their own right at West Hampstead Moonlight Club (tonight, Thursday), Islington Hope And Anchor (December 11) and Covent Garden Rock Garden (17).

LANDSCAPE have added several dates to their UK tour, reported four weeks ago — at Fife St Andrew's University (November 30), Colchester Essex University (December 15), Sheffield Limit Club (20) and Birmingham Underworld (21). Their gig at Middlebrough Teesside Poly (November 27) is now cancelled, and their Edinburgh gig on November 28 is now at Buster Browns instead of the Astoria. Another new booking is on December 2, when they appear in a special concert at Glasgow University, to be recorded by BBC Radio Scotland.

THE PRANHAS, the Brighton band currently previewing their debut Virgin single 'Space Invader' (released on November 30), have added another three dates to those reported three weeks ago — at Colchester Essex University (tonight, Thursday), Reford Porterhouse (Friday) and London West Hampstead Moonlight Club (November 28). December gigs are currently being finalised.

Carolyne coming across



This is the girl everyone's talking about in the States right now. CAROLYN MAS is her name — a singer, guitarist and profile composer — and, together with her band, she's a rich, echeloned soul-artista at encores throughout the East Coast. This week we have a chance to hear what all the fuss is about, when Mercury issue her debut album, with her name as its title — selling initially at £2.99, before reverting to the regular price of £4.99. A single called 'Quota. Goodbye. Quota' follows on November 30. And Carolyne is set to make her first UK live appearances next month, when she plays London Victoria The Venue (December 5 and 6) and Leicester University (8).

DAVID BROMBERG BAND are now confirmed for two nights at London Victoria The Venue on December 3 and 4.

LANDSCAPE

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City of London Polytechnic 23
Battersea Arts Centre 24
Buster Browns, Edinburgh 28
Astoria, Edinburgh 29
St. Andrews University 30

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Mary Wilson extension

MARY WILSON, the former Supremes leader (after Diana Ross), has extended her current debut solo tour of Britain into the New Year — and continues to promote her new Motown album 'Mary Wilson' and single 'Red Hot'. Still more one-nighters are being added to her date sheet, including a major London concert, but new bookings confirmed so far are:

- Ceephilly Double Diamond (this Thursday to Saturday), Luton Caesar's Palace (Sunday) — then, after a European tour and Christmas at home, she returns to Luton Caesar's (January 31–February 2), followed by Birmingham Night Out (11–23), Stoke Jollies (25–March 1), Purfleet Circus Tavern (2–8), Westchiff Queen's Club (10–16), Poole Arts Centre (21) and Wakefield Theatre Club (25–29).

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20 NORWICH, University
21 OXFORD, Polytechnic
22 PLYMOUTH, Polytechnic
23 BRISTOL, University
24 COVENTRY, Theatre
25 REDCAR, Coatham Bowl
26 HULL, Theatre
27 YORK, University
28 BRADFORD, University
29 BIRKENHEAD, Hamilton
DECEMBER 1 SNEFFIELD, University



NICE BAND, SHAME ABOUT THE FANS

HOTFOOTING it around dank, dreary Derby at 7.15 on a Thursday evening, desperately searching for a pub with a television so Madness can watch themselves on *Top Of The Pops*, rifling frantically through pubs, launderettes and Chinese take-aways. ... *TOTP* tonight has to be rather special. And it is, with all three of the 2-Tone bands, Madness, Specials and The Selecter, on together.

Madness in fact are now signed to Stiff, but tonight, and for the duration of the tour, they are still a 2-Tone band.

Chas Smash, compere and onstage entertainer, asserts his authority by sheer volume of voice, directing everyone into various establishments to telly-hunt, and when we eventually find one, takes it upon himself to introduce the band to the bar staff and customers, and beg that he be allowed to switch channels. "We're in a band and we're on *Top Of The Pops* tonight," he announces proudly, "and we're playing a gig in the King's Hall tonight."

The barman firmly shakes his head and the few customers present — only one watching the telly — look on impassively, gazing as if uncomprehending when Chas offers to buy them all a drink — doubles — if they'll let him turn over for just five minutes.

Chas looks as if he's going to explode. "Come on," he finally shouts in exasperation to his willing entourage, "let's find somewhere else. Thanks a lot mate," he mutters to the sea of vacant, miserable faces gathered around cold linoleum-covered tables topped with pints of bitter. "Thanks a lot, nice people in Derby."

Really nice. The next pub has two TVs in it, both on the same channel. Both remain on the same channel. They are surrounded by the same empty faces, none really aware of what is on the screen, much less caring. This time Chas doesn't bother with the customers, he offers the barman a fiver each — "Straight up" — if they let him turn over one of the televisions for a mere five minutes. "We're on *Top Of The Pops* tonight," he repeats. "Please mate, we're a band called Madness."

The name means nothing to those on either side of the bar, and neither does Chas's rather pitiful cajoling.

Out we all troop, ready to give up, but Chas refuses to be beaten. He is on television, and even if it isn't for the first time (the band having been on *TOTP* twice before), he doesn't want to miss a second of his glory. Someone on the street mentions another pub with a TV, and time being of the essence, we are shepherded into a tiny prefabricated taxi HQ... and there, blinking demurely in the corner of the room, is another television.

By the time I've climbed the steps and squeezed into the cramped room, Chas has already done the introductions and requests, and has the television on the right channel. *TOTP* is already into the third act. "It's alright, it's alright," Chas pants feverishly, "we was on fourth, we're on next."

And they are. Eagle Taxis have saved the evening, and Chas is quick to show his appreciation, issuing free autographed copies of the single, free invitations to the gig, lavish tips to our taxi driver, and, once the band are onstage, free publicity for Eagle Taxis: "Ere, I'd just like to say that if any of you lot out there want taxis home, get Eagle cars, 'cos they're the best..." or something like that.

He recognises the power and influence he holds as a pop star — and so do the audience. There is no crowing and jeering when the band stumble into their first number and come to a ragged halt after the first few bars, there is no abuse when they are forced into an embarrassed, flustered soundcheck onstage, and there are no riots when the band say sorry, but their organ and bass are not working properly and they cannot continue. There is only a general air of disappointment.

But the other bands rally round, shifting and hoisting equipment about, and soon Madness are back onstage, doing a much-shortened set of only five numbers, for which the audience are generous in their appreciation, and oblivious to the still poor quality sound.

"And if you mention tonight I'll kill you," Woodsey (drummer Dan Woodsey) tells me afterwards, half-joking, half-serious. (I choose to mention it anyway, for reasons that will become apparent later on.) There is an excuse

for this evening's performance anyway: the band coach had been broken into the night before, vast quantities of clothing and two portable televisions had been stolen, and the bands had been delayed by the police all morning.

Consequently they'd arrived in Derby with a mere half an hour to spare, which meant only The Selecter had time for a soundcheck.

THE AUDIENCE, and their passive reaction to Madness's hackneyed set, triggers off a heated exchange of views the next day, on the coach to Newcastle.

We begin by talking about audiences; audiences intent on enjoying themselves instead of looking around provocatively for anyone acting or looking a bit different. And the fact that everyone is different, a mixture of mods, punks, skinheads, and just individuals, and yet there is no trouble, proves beyond doubt that all these people are there for one reason only, to enjoy themselves. Even when a band makes as big a hash as Madness did that night in Derby, the audience wait optimistically and do not take their impatience out on one another.

There have been other mishaps on the tour — put it down to the general rutiness and the chaos of three big-family bands trying to organise themselves — and still there has been no trouble, bar the Hatfield Polytechnic incident (reported in *Thrills*) when a gang of razor-wielding idiots forced their way into the gig and hospitalised a number of people. The gang was alleged to have been either British Movement or Anti-Nazi League, although it was never determined which (the band insist ANL).

The trouble therefore centred around one small unsavoury element of whom, apparently, not much has been seen throughout the tour. But National Front and British Movement supporters are often seen at Madness gigs, particularly in London, and I ask the band why.

They are wary, immediately on the defensive, first denying that they had noticed any large numbers of NF/BM members at their gigs, and then stating that they do not wish to discuss politics in conjunction with the band. Chas is first to break rank.

"It's got nothing to do with us," he snaps impatiently, "we don't care if people are in the NF or the BM or whatever, so long as they're behaving themselves, having a good time, and not fighting. What does it matter, who cares what their political views are? We don't ask them, like we don't ask them if they're Conservative or Labour when they come through the door. There's no difference, they're all kids."

I express surprise that Chas finds no difference between Conservative and Labour, and hard-line right-wingers such as the NF, but before I can say too much on the subject, and before Chas can get another word in, Woodsey politely but firmly butts in:

"Look, all we want to say on the matter is that we are not a political band, we aren't like The Clash or Sham 69, we see our music purely as entertainment, and our only concern is that everyone enjoys themselves."

But can everybody enjoy themselves, I wonder? Had it not occurred to them that people maybe kept away from Madness's gigs by the NF contingent — not just coloured people, but whites who are either frightened of the NF and the attendant violence or are just so strongly against all they stand for that they stay away as a matter of principle? Or, worse still, some kids may believe that Madness themselves are NF sympathisers. Does that not matter either?

"But we never mention the NF," Woodsey insists. "We neither encourage them or discourage them."

So do you sympathise with them or don't you?

"No we don't. I think I can speak for all of us, but we don't want to interfere with their politics. We don't want to become involved."

Do you not think you owe it to your audience to become involved though, take a stand and tell the kids concerned that you do not agree with them, do not like what they represent, make your own views known? Because for some kids their music and the bands they follow are all they've got; they look up to you, even idolise you, and they respect what you say. You're already involved.

"But do you think they'll really listen to us?" Mike Barson (keyboards) asks uncertainly, unsure of himself possibly because it is something they have never discussed properly before. "I mean, look what happened



"We don't care if people are in the NF, as long as they're having a good time"

— Chas Smash

"Shut up, Chas!"

— Madness

Deanne Pearson puts the cat among the pigeons and scotches some nasty rumours. Click'n shutter: Pennie Smith.



Chas



Suggs



Mark (left) with friend



Chris



Lee



to Sham 69 when Jimmy Pursey took a stand and shouted about his political ideas; it just made matters worse, encouraged more violence at gigs and destroyed the band."

Chas, whom the rest of the band have been endeavouring to suppress throughout the conversation due to his tendencies to go completely over the top it seems, bursts forth yet again:

"If we carried on like Pursey, saying yeah we hate all NF supporters, we don't want them at our gigs an' all that stuff, then we'd just get even more coming, and other kids who were just looking for a fight. It's best to just ignore them — most of them don't know what they're talking about anyway, they're not the real older NF supporters, who follow Tyndall and Webster an' all that lot. They just say, 'Ah yeah, we're in the NF', stick an armband on — and they don't know what it means, it's just like supporting a football team, wearing their scarf and going round in a big gang saying, 'Yeah we support Chelsea'. They're just kids, they don't know any better."

So if they don't know any better, isn't that even more reason to talk to them and try and help them, before those older hardliners get to them first? Pursey may not have succeeded but at least he tried — and what about bands like The Clash and The Specials? Maybe they have succeeded, at least got some kids to think about what they are doing... It's a difficult thing to judge; far easier to measure failure than success in these cases.

Chas's porkpie hat, which he never takes off during the two days I am with the band, bobs impatiently. "But we do talk to them — but offstage. We don't want to glorify it onstage."

"He talks to them," Woodsey interrupts.

"He's speaking for himself now."

"Yeah I am speaking for myself, 'cos some of those kids are my mates, and they're good kids. I don't talk to them because they're in the NF, they're just really good kids, a good lot, know what I mean? They know I don't agree with their views, and so what if they wear Union Jacks and Nazi swastikas, I don't care about that."

Vocalist Suggs agrees that it is far better to talk to the kids offstage than on. "It's easy for bands to spout off about being antiracist an' all that, and then stand on the other side of the wall while they hurl bottles and abuse at them, but it's much more difficult to go down into the audience and actually talk to them."

I mention The Specials' attempts at communicating with their audience through

their lyrics. He grins genially and gracefully backs out of the conversation with: "Oh yeah, well I'm all for these sociological lyrics, I just can't be bothered to write 'em."

LATER ON he makes his point of view a little clearer. He is in a band for his own enjoyment as much as his audiences; he sings because he failed in his attempts at learning to play an instrument. He is a self-proclaimed "yobbo — we all are", and as such feels he has no right to preach to anyone. Perhaps he is a bit of a purist too. Music equals entertainment, fun, it's getting away from the dole queue, the office money, politics... it's having a good time down the pub or the club, with all the other 'kids' — Trouble is, I suggest, not enough people think like that any more, bands or audience.

And so back to politics. Chas is once again in control, leaning across the table shouting down all my ifs and buts and ignoring the rest of the band, who are becoming extremely agitated — angry at Chas for letting himself get so carried away, and angry at themselves for not being able to control him.

"Can I just say that the rest of us do not have friends in the NF and do not like having NF supporters at our gigs," Woodsey proffers, as Chas pauses for breath.

But these friends of yours, I direct at Chas again, they may be a good laugh but you're still aware of their twisted vicious views against other groups of people, aren't you? In a way you're encouraging them even by ignoring their political views, just by being friendly.

"You just don't understand, do you? They're just a group of kids who, like any kid, have to take out their anger and frustration on something. Some it's football, some it's music. NF don't really mean much to them. Why should I stop them coming to our gigs, that's all they've got."

"It's people like you who live in a cosy flat in London" — I tell him I live in a bedsit in the middle of a seedy red-light area, but my words are drowned in a stream of wrath, a torrent of adrenalinised verbiage — "people like you who don't understand anything, you just come along and see a few NF armbands in a crowd and say 'Ah yes, these rumours were right', and go away and sensationalise it all in the press, when you don't really know what's going on at all."

"Well I'll tell you something, you print a word of this and I'll deal with you personally."

"Chas, shut up!" everyone seems to scream at once.

"Don't take any notice of him," Woodsey begs. "He's just the compere, he's not really in the band, these are just his views."

He, Mike and Suggs urgently try to convince me of their own disassociation with Chas's views, all now acutely aware of the need to clarify their position.

As I said before, I tell Chas, I don't intend to heed his threats, so he can deal with me there and then if he likes.

Suddenly the coach breaks down — conveniently outside a pub, to which we all thankfully adjourn. All talk of avoiding political discussion is gone, everyone is far too heated and things have already gone too far for anyone to back out now. When I return from the bar there is much urgent whispering going on, and finger shaking at Chas, who seems a little more subdued afterwards.

LEE THOMPSON, the saxophone player, the only Madness member who has not participated in the discussions on the coach, intercepts me before I rejoin the band, and speaks to me sternly. "I just want you to know that I don't want to be associated with anything they've been saying. I want you to put down that I had nothing to do with the conversation. Also you're not going to quote them on everything they've said, are you? I mean if they say, 'Don't quote me', you won't?"

I say I won't, but no one asks not to be quoted. They have no reason to. I am sure that everything they've said is totally sincere and any doubts I may have had about their political leaning have been completely wiped away. Woodsey clarifies things once and for all when he says he wishes to state categorically that in no way does he sympathise with, or want anything to do with, the NF. The others each do the same, unasked, except Lee, who, when prompted, will only emit such inane phrases as "eggs and bacon and sausages, with tomato sauce please", and "how do you like your eggs?"

Chas too is sincere, if a little confused, but then he cleverly illustrates the confusion and pointlessness of this whole NF/BM movement.

"I've got friends in the NF who love The Selecter, and get up and dance with them onstage at gigs, and I've even got some black mates who are in the NF — because they hate Greeks and Italians."

Continues over

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MADNESS

■ From previous page

The conversation continues after this, a little uncertainly, but we seem eventually to be going round in circles, and finally agree to let the subject drop.

But everyone is still concerned and worried, probably for the first time, about what exactly they are involved in. Suggs takes me to one side, much later on, and we discuss certain points again, and again it is impossible for either of us not to get heated all over again, but Suggs also asks one very important question: "What should I do? I do what I think is best, and ignore the audience's politics, but if that's so wrong then you tell me what I should do, because I don't know. I'm confused."

A long pause. I don't know what you should do, Suggs. But just thinking about it is a start, isn't it?

ON TO Newcastle, which goes without a hitch and showcases all three bands at their best, all three sets competing and yet running smoothly into one another to produce a continuous set of crystal clear reggae, rock and ska with no divisions. The grand finale sees all three bands crowded together on the tiny stage, with a body sweating, flailing limbs struggling to join them.

"It was just like The Beatles, wasn't it?" Woodsey pants as he fights his way backstage, flushed with excitement and exertion. "Did you see them all crushed at the front of the stage — mostly girls screaming and climbing up the sides, grabbing anything they could get hold of as souvenirs?"

The others dash in mouthing the same thoughts: "It's just like The Beatles isn't it?" with the same childlike excitement, wide-eyed and almost disbelieving their own popularity.

There really was no support band and headliner that evening; all three bands were on a par, giving their best and getting the best from their audience.

The advantage of their musical differences, Suggs feels, speaking for Madness now, is that if and when all the fuss surrounding this current ska revival dies down, the band's individuality will stand them in good stead, and allow them to branch out on their own. Thus also their break from 2-Tone after their first single: "It wasn't that we were ungrateful or anything — we probably owe most of our success to The Specials — it was just that we couldn't stay under their wing forever. We had to break out on our own, develop our own style."

Likewise the reason for them leaving the 2-Tone tour before the end and playing some gigs on their own — before they go to America at the end of the year.

Suggs: "I believe that every band has their ten minutes of glory, but I like to think we've left enough options open to give us 20 minutes."

The others are equally optimistic about their future as a band, but I remember Woodsey's comment as Chas became a little too out-of-hand during our coach conversation — "He's only the compere." That Chas holds a fairly unique job in the band, being classed as neither instrumentalist nor vocalist, is undeniable, as is his present popularity and notoriety with the audience. But how long can this last? Can Chas hope for much more than just his ten minutes?

Rest assured, Chas has thought about all this. He and his younger brother ("Brought in to keep him out of trouble") run the band's promotion marketing — printed T-shirts, ties, nutty badges and posters, porkpie hats just like Chas's coming soon — and are starting a Madness fan club shortly.

But despite his business-minded attitude like the rest of Madness he subscribes to the slogan now splattered brazenly across Stiff's latest T-shirt creation: "Fuck Act, Let's Dance."

A WEEK later and Madness are playing Camden's Electric Bellroom, sans the rest of the 2-Toners. The place is packed with skinheads, fronted by an even larger than usual NF representation — i.e. the Tufty Club brigade.

They selfishly refuse to allow support band Red Beans And Rice, whose frontman is black, to play, and Suggs is forced onstage to plead, reason and yell at the audience. I feel sorry for him, as he spreads his hands in despair, and admits that he doesn't know what to say. He's not only saddened, he's ashamed — this is a Madness audience? Finally he storms offstage, kicking the microphone over as he goes — shades of Pursey.

Chas has to go, and even his brother Brendan, and finally the audience majority, seeing not only their entertainment but their money being wasted, back up Chas's "fun not politics" line, and welcome Red Beans And Rice onstage, who benignly take everything in their stride.

After Madness' set the Tuftys' meaningless Seig Heil bleating is quickly quelled by Suggs' patronising sneer of "Alright, I can see what you are, I've got eyes haven't I?" — then he, like the rest of the audience who are old enough to enjoy music, simply ignore them.

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3	4	THE POLICE — REGATTA DE BLANC	4.99	3.74	33	31	MY GOODNESS — BOP TIL YOU DROP	5.00	3.75
4	3	ROD STEWART — GREATEST HITS	4.99	4.19	34	27	BOB DYLAN — SLOW TRAIN COMING	5.29	4.04
5	5	ABBA — GREATEST HITS VOL 1	5.29	4.59	35	38	OK FLEETWOOD — LET IT ROLL	4.99	3.74
6	6	THE SPECIALS	4.99	3.74	36	39	E.L.O. — DISCOVERY	5.49	4.24
7	7	STEVE WOMACK — SECRET LIFE OF PLANTS	8.50	6.50	37	37	NEIGH COMEVELL — PROSPERITY	4.99	3.74
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THRILLS

SOUTHALL: 'Justice Not Seen To Be Done!'



No Nukes Music

JANUARY 26 next year will see a massive demonstration in London against the transportation of nuclear wastes through the capital city. It will mark the first major action on the part of an operation that for the present goes under the working name of No Nukes Music, and which will act as an umbrella organization for all the so far largely fragmented London anti-nuclear groups. Strictly solidarity!

Meanwhile, on November 23rd at the Central London Polytechnic, New Cavendish Street, London W1, No Nukes Music is holding a fund-raising gig. Bands featured will be Local Operator, This Heat, The Mighty Vibes and poet Martin Bofferman.

Tickets for the licensed gig are £1.50 on the door or £1.20 in advance from Rough Trade.

A. GINSBERG

THRILLS



Boy, that was some party we had last night. Just look at the state of the front room. The Pop Group by Mike Laye.

Pop Group In Ruins?

Slits Film Premiere

SPECULATION mounted once more over the future of implacable Bristol guerrilla beat unit The Pop Group after singer Mark Stewart announced from the steps of the University Of London's Union Hall last Friday that "We won't be around for very long."

The Pop Group had been lying low since their debacle earlier this year with the late Radar records — finding themselves a replacement bass player while their drummer, Bruce went off to tour with The Slits — and were playing their first date of a short tour to co-incide with the release of a single with the typically brazen title 'We Are All Prostitutes'.

The Slits connection arose through both groups the same manager, one Dick O'Dell, who emphatically denies that The Pop Group are breaking up, and also put paid to rumours to the effect that all was not well with The Slits.

It emerges that the three Marys, rather than running afoul of each other, merely ran afoul of their record company, Island, and had to issue a writ for non-payment of advances under the terms of their contract, at which Island coughed up the stipulated ready.

Though this dispute has been settled, The Slits are not now likely to be recording for Island in the

future.

The Pop Group, meanwhile, do still exist, and will be completing their tour, although Mark Stewart will be leaving at the end of the year, and Bruce continues to double as drummer for both groups.

Only Bruce was available for comment when Thrills contacted the group regarding the split.

"It's hard to put it in a way that won't come out sounding sardonic," he explained. "Mark just feels that there are more pressing and worthwhile things he could be doing."

They have no plans to replace Stewart when he leaves, but will be recording a new album for Rough Trade "as cheaply as possible" after finishing the tour, which itself is being recorded for a possible cheap live album.

All that remains to be added — for this week at least — is that the movie *The Slits Pictures* will be premiered at London's Scala cinema this Saturday (the 24th) with the infamous Pop Group film on the same bill.

Incidentally, there is no truth to the rumour that The Pop Group will be relocating to Cambodia.

A. N. INNOCENT

THRILLS

"THE ATMOSPHERE in the court is rather unfortunate. Justice is not being seen to be done."

Thus barrister David Mitchells complained to the Bar Council of the sentences being dealt out in Barnet's Court Three to the defendants involved in the Southall trials. There are 342 in all — according to police estimates, that's around ten per cent of the people who turned out to demonstrate against the National Front last April 23.

Mitchells' signature, along with those of most of the 40 barristers and solicitors acting for the defence, goes to the Lord Chancellor this week on a petition protesting at the way the cases are being conducted. The lawyers complain that:

The conviction rate in the cases tried to date is some 30 per cent higher than the national average for such offences.

The general severity of sentences reveal a magisterial bias against the defendants as a whole.

The magistrates consistently accept police evidence in the face of credible defence evidence.

They conclude that these facts to "intimidate and discourage the Asian community in this country and have done irreparable damage to race relations."

Of the 14 defendants arrested in the People's Union Community Centre — a house some 300 yards from Southall town hall (where the NF meeting took place) that served as refuge from the mayhem on the streets and was invaded by police in one of the bloodiest episodes of the day — only four have been sentenced, while the other cases have been deferred, thus preventing a media focus on this incident.

Misty's manager Clarence Baker, who received a fractured skull resulting in a blood clot dangerously near the brain (see THRILLS original report dated May 8th) recovered in time to have his case deferred. But Joseph Brown, bass-player with The Enchanters, received a one month sentence, which he has just finished serving, while Chris Bolton and Bongo Danny's wife received sentences of one month, which they are appealing against.

The trial of Misty's Vernon Hunte was the scene of some surprising revelations of police behaviour on the day — this time from the police themselves. Joseph Much, of Rochester Row police station, is reported in the *Sunday Times* to have said in court that the police had

formed a gauntlet and might have hit a defendant while he was running it, despite being already under arrest. This corroborates the report of an ambulance man on the scene at the time.

Much said he took Hunte down the stairs of the house to be charged at the police station. "The stairs were lined by police officers," he told the magistrate. "They might well have assaulted him."

Despite this, Hunte, who has no previous convictions, was sentenced to serve a total of six months in prison for three offences, including assault on the police. He also is appealing against his sentence.

The full outcome of the Southall trials won't be known until all the cases in what is Britain's largest group of criminal trials have come to court, which promises to be well into next year. As things stand now, justice is not only not being seen to be done, it is being seen to be unjust.

PAUL RAMBALI

THRILLS

WIN! The Original Elvis Demo Tape!

As First Heard On 'Honky Tonk!'

A few years back a young songwriter called D. P. Costello of Osterley, Middlesex submitted a demo tape of his work to then Radio London DJ Charlie Gillett, for broadcast on his programme 'Honky Tonk'. Gillett, who was also featuring demo tapes by unknowns and unsigneds like Dire Straits, Darts, Graham Parker and others on his programme, was immediately impressed and duly aired the half dozen songs.

D. P. Costello went on to become the Elvis Costello we all know and have the mixed feelings about. Charlie Gillett — author of the celebrated *Sound Of The City* and *Making Tracks*, ex-Kilburns manager and a much respected figure on the rock scene — later forsook his radio show to concentrate on his record label, Oval Records.

Now Charlie and Oval have put up this preposterously rare and valuable collectors item up for grabs in another fab fun-to-enter Thrills competition exclusive, with 5 copies of Oval's 'Honky Tonk Demos' album for the runners-up, featuring said demos of Dire Straits, Darts, Chas and Dave and others. The 'Elvis Costello At Home' tape features the four-eyed fury crooning his way through solo acoustic versions of 'Blame It On Cain', 'Lip Service' and 'Mystery Dance' and three unreleased songs 'Jump Up', 'Poison Moon', and 'Wave A White Flag'. It has to be the ultimate Elvis collector's item, and it could be yours. Simply, ring the correct answer to each question, complete the tie-breaker and hope for the best. All entries must be received by December 7, 1979 and addressed to:

NME's Elvis Costello Demo Tape Competition,
55 Ewer Street, London SE9 6YP.

(1) Name Elvis Costello's first band:
(a) Eggs Over Easy (b) The Joe Loss Orchestra (c) Flip City (d) Liverpool City.

(2) Who was the guest guitarist on E.C.'s 'Big Tears':
(a) Dave Edmunds (b) Mick Jones (c) Brinsley Schwarz (d) Stephen Stills.

(3) Name the band that provided the back-up on the 'My Aim Is True' LP:
(a) The Damned (b) The Attractions (c) Clover (d) Rockpile.

(4) On whose album has Elvis just made a guest appearance:
(a) George Jones (b) Gracia Jones (c) James Brown (d) Jackson Browne.

(5) Costello's recording of (What's So Funny 'Bout) Peace, Love & Understanding' was credited to:
(a) Joe Jackson (b) The Jags (c) Graham Parker (d) Nick Lowe.

(6) Jake Riviera's real name is:
(a) Andrew Jakeman (b) Jacob Miller (c) Lee Jackson (d) Peter Grant.

(7) This here tape that we've put up for grabs was first broadcast on Charlie G's 'Honky Tonk' programme on:
(a) March 1, 1975 (b) August 15, 1976 (c) February 29, 1977 (d) August 21, 1977.

(8) The two songs on the flip of Elvis' last single ('Talking In The Dark' and 'Wednesday Week') previously appeared as:
(a) An NME Xmas single (b) An 'Armed Forces' freebee (c) A Christmas Concert freebee (d) A flexi-disc given free with Jackie.

This competition is open to all readers and residents in the UK, Eire, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, except employees (and their families) of NME Magazines Ltd, the printers of New Musical Express, members of The Attractions, Jake Riviera's cronies and Nick Lowe. The Editor's decision is final and the results will be published in a future edition of NME.

TIEBREAKER:

Now complete the following sentence: I deserve the 'Elvis Costello At Home' tape because . . .

Name

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THE HONKY TONK DEMOS

Thrills In Poetry Mag Review Shock!

Ginsberg's Plutonium Flexi-disc

ROCK'S literary godfather makes a return to disc this month with a double sided 33 rpm flexi-disc given away with the first edition of *Poetry London*/Apple magazine.

The record features a live performance of Ginsberg reading his lengthy and unpublished *Plutonium Ode*, a fearsome anti-nuclear tirade which both pays respect to plutonium and nuclear power for its ability to render the world to oblivion and calls upon America's government and people to "Destroy this mountain of plutonium with ordinary mind and bodyspeech."

The mag also has rock connections in the form of the first published lyrics of Dylan's 'Slow Train', 'Gotta Serve Somebody' and 'Changed My Way Of Thinking' alongside John Cooper Clarke's first appearance in any literary mag with 'Valley Of The Lost Women' and lyrics from Leonard Cohen's album, 'Recent Songs'.

JCC's 'Salome Malone' was censored by the mag's sponsor against the wishes of its editor Tambimuttu, which perhaps typifies just how feeble the British literary establishment has become. Indeed, the violence, immediacy and relevance of the Ginsberg disc tends to show up the weakling self-indulgence of much of the magazine's remaining poetic content, which features such heavyweight literary names as Iri Murdoch, John Wain, Ted Hughes, Gerald Durrell and Ewan McColl. Poetry London had something of a racy reputation when it was founded in the late '40s, and is clearly hoping to continue in similar style after its 30 years' absence. God knows the ossified UK literary scene needs all the kicks up the arse it can get, and harder than those provided here.

The whole thing costs £2.50. Address is 14 Cornwall Gardens, London SW7.

JACK LONDON

The Lone Groover



Strummer maintains credibility by narrowly avoiding cupping his hand round his ear. Pic: Chris Walter

Clash Reggae Single

WHEN it comes to covering other writers' material the Clash City Rockers chaps are obviously still as astute and tasteful as ever.

The weekend before last the band went into Wessex Studio, whence they've already been ensconced for the past few weeks finishing off their about-to-be-released third album, to cut their own version of Willie Williams' classic reggae 45 of this summer, 'Armageddon Time', for release as a likely next single.

The original Studio One seven inch single, which made number one on the reggae charts two or three months back, should still be available on pre. If The Clash version isn't issued as a 45 it will probably end up on 'London Calling', as the new Clash double LP is, of course, known.

Toasted Disco

Strange phenomena of our time (cont)

THE CURRENT issue of *Billboard* contains a feature on an interesting development in disco music: the "rapping deejay".

No mention is made whatsoever by the consistently insular Yanka that the deejay who raps does not appear to be a million miles removed from the ancient Jamaican art of toasting, a practice established as far back as the late 1960s.

"The phenomenon of the disco rapper," says *Billboard* "a spinner who talks in a lyrical, rapid-fire, streetwise dialogue over the pulsating rhythm track, began in the black discos of New York." Clubs in Detroit, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington DC and Chicago also feature Toasted Disco.

There is already a minor Toasted Disco hit. "Rapper's Delight" by the Sugar Hill Gang is now 41 on *Billboard*'s Disco Top 100 whilst Fatback Band's "King Tim III" is one

notch below at 42. In addition, there are several bootleg Toasted Disco discs available, of which the most successful is currently "The Spoonin' Rap" by Spoonin' Gee, a 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ 12-inch.

It was the Harlem Apollo's DJ, Hollywood who first brought the phenomenon of The Rapping Deejay to the attention of Jerry Thomas, the Fatback Band's co-producer. He then heard a cassette of Roy Ayers' "Running Away", that had a rap recorded over it. Inquiries revealed that the deejay's voice was that of King Tim III, another popular local rapper.

"King Tim III" was the result of the decision of Thomas and the Fatback band to cut a track with Tim and it was originally destined to be the B-side of a single entitled "Candy Sweet".

Says Thomas: "We asked our label (Spring Records) to push both sides because we felt so strongly about "King Tim III". In fact, demand for the disc made Spring switch it to the record's A side.

By this time the Sugar Hill Gang's "Rapper's Delight" — which features three Rapping Deejays: Big Hank, Wonder Mike and Master Gee — had become a New York City street anthem, paving the way for the success of the Fatback Band's disc.

King Tim III has now been added to the band's live show. Hollywood is reportedly about to cut a Rapping record and Kurtis Blow, a hot Philadelphia deejay, will soon release a 12-inch wittily entitled "Christmas Rapping", and an album, "Kurtis Blow Live From Post-War Harlem."

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Jimmy Iovine And The Gentle Art of Of Production

YOU MAY have noticed the name of Jimmy Iovine cropping up on some of the more durable albums of the last few years.

He engineered both John Lennon's 'Walls And Bridges' and 'Rock 'n' Roll', Springsteen's epic 'Born To Run' and, as producer, his name is to be found on The Patti Smith Group's 'Easter' and the accompanying 'Because The Night' hit single. Currently he's chart-bound with Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers' 'Damn The Torpedoes'.

On a recent trip to Britain he completed The Motors' comeback album and, he reveals, he's soon to oversee Graham Parker's next *meisterwerk*.

Unlike most self-obsessed record producers who pass themselves off as sensitive and creative beings Iovine doesn't sit around waiting for a gig. If he feels an affinity towards an act he'll get on the blower and suggest they make sweet music together. That's what he did with both The Motors and Tom Petty.

"Let's just say," he quips, "I ain't proud!"

Iovine imbibed his techniques in fast company. When just 19 it was a case of monkey see/monkey do at the elbows of such craftsmen as Roy Cicala and Phil Spector when he was working on the John Lennon projects.

Of Spector he says Phil doesn't give any tricks away but he sure treats his engineers right.

Later Jon Landau called upon Iovine to assist in the making of Bruce Springsteen's 'Born To Run'.

Of Lennon, Iovine says "From Lennon I've learnt how things should feel as opposed to how they should sound. And, just as important, if something wasn't right I've learnt how to find out why it wasn't right."

Of Springsteen he says "You could narrow it down and say that Bruce wanted to streamline, modernise and personalise Spector's Wall Of Sound, but make it as breathtakingly exciting as humanly possible."

Iovine really got talked about over the Springsteen/Smith

controversy that surrounded 'Because The Night'. The grapevine had it that following the commercial disaster of 'Radio Ethiopia', Ariola's warlords instructed Iovine that part of his commission was to produce a hit single and that unbeknown to Springsteen he 'borrowed' an unreleased tape of 'Because The Night' and had Patti Smith cover it.

Iovine refutes this version of the story. "I was engineering 'Born To Run' and producing 'Easter' at the same time. Now, Bruce was very understanding and very flexible, because he realised that this was my first first real break as a producer. Anyway, one night whilst we were lounging around the Hotel Navarro in New York I told Bruce I desperately wanted a hit with Patti, that she deserved one. He agreed. As he had no immediate plans to put 'Because The Night' on an album, I said why not give it to Patti. Bruce replied, 'If she can do it, she can have it'.

"What happened in the press was... er, Patti being Patti, she said that Bruce pestered her to record it, but that's not how it was."

He has very strong views on some of his fellow producers. In the '50s and '60s, he opines, record producers like Spector, Bob

Crowe, Leiber & Stoller, Holland, Dozier and Holland, and Shadow Morton were true artists, but today, more often than not, such crucial work is controlled by dillitantes.

"They just wanna get their own identity all over the place. If that's the way they feel about their role, then they should make their own records instead of just trying to make as much money as quickly as possible."

"If," he concludes, "you wanna hear how the greatest ever records were made, just listen to anything by Buddy Holly or something like The Supremes' 'You Keep Me Hangin' On'. For me, the great test is that when it comes over the radio, it doesn't sound just like a record, but some unexplainable experience. And if I can ever get that on a record then I will feel that I've achieved something."

ROY CARR

THRILLS

California Uber Alles?

A AH, that sultry soulful doe-eyed gaze, the biceps flexed just so.

What troubled muse lurks beneath that sea of dark curls? Who is this lugubrious gentleman with the mirrored Strat and carefully trained gypsy features?

Why, none other than Randy California, recent visitor to these shores with his new three piece band.

California has confined the much loved Spirit to shrink wraps while he undergoes a course in heavy metal mechanics assisted by two sprogs called Liberty and Jack Willoughby, neither of whom reproduces the excitement of the man's past with Ed Cassidy and Larry 'Fuzzy' Knight.

California would seem to be indulging his once-a-decade sharp blow to the cerebrum scenario whereby he attempts to sacrifice his well documented artistic muse to the jackals of high finance.

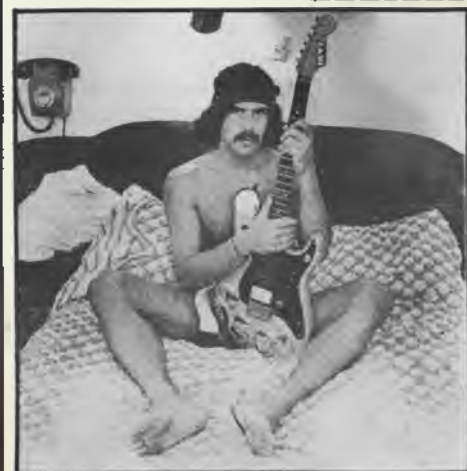
Our scout cornered him somewhere on the time coast. (Oh dear, he's been eating the mushrooms again — Ed.): having admitted that he didn't approve of Randy's current life-style he was placated by a display of California in whimsical solo mood, jest a man and his Pignose. Randy C has finished his 'Potatoland' labour of love anew and hopes to secure a well meaning distributor for this artefact of genius.

Meanwhile, in Columbia's Soho Square offices, company men are removing their fingers from the corporate rectum and muttering about releasing the original 'Potatoland' only ten years after they should have done.

God bless CBS for this incredible show of aesthetic generosity and God Bless Randy California for never conforming to expectations. Get well soon Rand.

CAPTAIN KIRK

THRILLS



So you still think a guitar isn't a phallic symbol... Pic Mike Laye.

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DANGEROUS VISIONS

Professor Quatermass 0 Doctor Who 5



STAR WARS wasn't a great film, it wasn't even a good film, but it was a lot better than its rival box-office blockbuster *Close Encounters* for one very simple reason — it didn't take itself too seriously.

ITV's *Quatermass* wasn't quite as turgid, as bombastic, as self-important as *Close Encounters*, just as *Dr Who* is more likeable, more affectionate, more downright good fun than *Star Wars*, but the basic rule of thumb still applies: Don't take yourself too seriously!

By *Dr Who* standards, *Quatermass* was very 'big budget' and thereby serves as a chastening example of an irrefutable law of the entertainment world: big budgets = self-indulgence directly proportionate to the amount of money available.

Launched with a mass of fanfares as a sure-fire certainty to woo the viewers back to ITV after the long lay-off, we knew exactly what

to expect of *Quatermass*: extravagant special effects, a real serious drama with real serious actors. What we got was a we: fart capable of introducing an embarrassed cringe from even the most thick-skinned. The script-writers and directors of 'dramas' such as these can only fall into two categories. Either, in an awesome display of naivete (improbable) they honestly believe they're creating great drama or they are cynical enough (probable) to have no shame about reducing us all to hot uncomfortable flushes.

Any show which builds itself and its audience up to expect so much is courting disaster. And when they go to the lengths of hiring Wembley Stadium and filling it with extras we have a right to expect something which will justify all the portentous huffballoos. When we get nothing more than a loud bang and a big white light such as I could easily achieve simply by knocking my indoor aerial onto the floor we naturally feel disappointed.

To be fair, this 'big bang' was probably the result of painstaking and ingenious technology but you could say that about a Pink Floyd light show too. It doesn't make it any big deal — more a waste of time, money and ingenuity.

John Mills as our hero must have cost a bit to hire too. Benny from *Crossroads* would have been cheaper and just as convincing.

Tom Baker is a superior actor to the over-rated Mills anyway and *Dr Who*, being unashamedly low-budget, is a vastly superior show where

once again we know just what to expect. We know that the props and special effects will be cheap and nasty, but we know that the show's creators know that too — and they know that we know. It all adds to the fun, of which there's plenty. We are almost always provided with a humorous knockabout script perfectly complemented by magnificently over-the-top performances by short-of-work actors. The humour seldom reaches a standard higher than childish but it's good childish, not *Crackerjack* childish.

Take the story which finished last week. As a reader so pertinently pointed out in *Gasbag*, it even featured heavy metal freaks — brainless, hairy nuds obsessed by metal who provided the low-brow buffoonery which even Shakespeare was not ashamed to stoop to in his day.

There too was the monster, a cheapo-cheapo giant air-filled polythene bag, and the power-trazed villainess, all arrogant evil smiles when she was winning and mad, rolling eyes and gnashing teeth when the tables were inevitably and implausibly turned. And there too of course was the Doctor, milking it all for laughs with his weak jokes, goggle-eyes and flashing smiles.

You can keep your pretentious nonsense and your big white explosions, give me that heady *Dr Who* mixture any day. Nothing bombastic, nothing but fun. *Dr Who* will never die.

STUART JOHNSTON

Lowry



"Later this evening we have a searching investigation into relationships between the police and minority immigrant communities. This will be shown at 12.30 am, when everyone's asleep."



MODS!

by RICHARD BARNES

There was a lot more to 60's Mods than seaside battles, scooters and parkas. This mainly photographic book shows all the images of Mod life: buying clothes in Carnaby Street, dancing in clubs 'up west', as well as posing with scooters and hanging out in Brighton.

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Cartoon Capers

THESE cartoon frames are taken from "Devo Contre Ramones", the first four-page-long strip in the second Rock Special edition of the French Metal Hurlant.

In this Luc Cornillon-illustrated, Philippe Manoeuvre-scripted everyday tale of rock'n'roll folk the Devo chaps fight fearlessly against the forces of evil in the shape of the wicked Elvis Costello and his Ramones hirelings. In the first full-page frame of the strip the fair maiden Blondie appears about to be gangbanged by America's most intelligent group "Non! Pas ma virginité! Je vous en prie!" squawks our Deb.

With several pages in full colour, an "appreciation" of Sid by NME's own Patchell Twins, some twenty more strips altogether, illustrated lyrics and song-titles, the weighty, tasty tome will no doubt be available in England at assorted "hip" (sic) bookstores but can be obtained

direct by sending fifteen francs to Metal Hurlant, 15/17 Passage Des Petites-Ecuries, 75010,



Devo Save The World!

Shell Shock Rock

LAST WEEK Irish moviemaker John Davis' documentary, 'Shell Shock Rock', won a Silver Award at the International Film And Television Festival Of New York.

A perceptive movie that vividly depicts how the New Wave has enabled a section of young Irish kids to face the troubles in Ireland 'Shell Shock Rock' was given the burns-rush in June by the inflexible committee of the Cork Film Festival due to its controversial subject matter.

However this totally unexpected Stateside recognition has enabled Davis to sell his movie to Swedish Television and firm-up a distribution deal throughout Southern Ireland for midnight matinees.

"At last!" says Davis, "the film is beginning to get some small recognition. I'd almost given up hope of reaching a wide audience because last summer I busted my ass in London trying to set up any kind of distribution deal only to discover that absolutely nobody was really interested in a rock documentary about Ireland."

But the movie hasn't been gathering dust underneath Davis' bed. Over the last few months, 'Shell Shock Rock' has been playing on the Irish gig circuit as the supporting attraction to such movie-featured groups as both Rudy, and The Outcasts.

However, the problem of what's to become of the movie's soundtrack album is in abeyance. Initially, it was hoped to release it on the Good Vibrations label. "But," Davis reveals, "at the moment, we still haven't got nearly sufficient capital to promote and distribute it the way we had intended."

Like all moviemakers, John Davis' career is dependent on whether or not he can raise enough collateral to transform ideas into reality. His latest plan is to shoot a feature-style-fiction based-on-fact movie utilising local talent.

Says Davis, "I don't want to repeat myself by making another musical documentary, but I would like to incorporate a certain degree of Irish rock music and some of the issues raised in 'Shell Shock Rock' into the theme."

As to whether his new movie will ever get into production, all Davis can say is, "We'll have to wait and see. Next week, I'm off to the States to see if I can generate any interest."

Anyone interested in distributing this film can contact John Davis, c/o Hollywood Films, 14 Seapark Road, Hollywood, County Down, Ireland. ROY CARR

RAR: Regular Venue?

THE Notre Dame Hall, an old-style dance hall and occasional music venue, is situated in Leicester Place, one of the many side streets on the north side of Leicester Square.

Recently the venue has been experimenting with a few mod gigs, but after a trouble with the British Movement the management was persuaded of the virtues of RAR. They now hope to hold monthly RAR gigs there and establish the 700 capacity hall as a central London RAR venue.

Last Thursday saw Misty and Swedish rock group The Bjorn Afzelius Band playing the first gig there, the Swedish band proving that there's good music to be found on the other side of Abba. The gig was part of a short tour here for them, the result of a reciprocal visit to Sweden by Misty, as guests of the Nacksving Socialist Musicians Co-operative of Gothenburg.

Though the concert was poorly attended RAR put this down to poor publicity and feel that once the venue is established they'll have no trouble in filling it. I hope so. With bar staff and bouncers bedecked in Dayglo RAR stickers the atmosphere was certainly friendlier than is encountered at many central London commercial venues.

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23	QUEENS UNIVERSITY	BELFAST	3	NEW THEATRE	OXFORD
25	APOLLO THEATRE	MANCHESTER	4	UNIVERSITY	SHEFFIELD
26	TIFFANY'S	EDINBURGH	5	UNIVERSITY	BRADFORD
27	APOLLO CENTRE	GLASGOW	6	UNIVERSITY	SOUTHAMPTON
28	CITY HALL	NEWCASTLE	7	UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA	NORWICH
29	CITY HALL	HULL	8	UNIVERSITY	NOTTINGHAM
30	PAVILION PONTRYHOEDGIAID	ABERYSTWYTH	9	COATHAM BOWL	REOCAR
			10	UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX	LANCASTER
			12	UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX	COLCHESTER
			15	PAVILION CIVIC HALL	WEST RUNTON
			16	PAVILION CIVIC HALL	DUNSTABLE
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TOSHIBA

Large In Leningrad! Massive In Moscow! Kolossal In Kiev!

HOW DOES The Red Square get its Rock-on? What makes Moscow disco? Why's The Bolshoi Ballet defecating? What's going down like a Molotov Cocktail? Who claims they're as big as Elton out East???

In a word, Gold.

Herewith a heart-warming

Frills Meets Gold (Who?)

story of six local lads from Seal London who've shot overnight to Soviet Superstardom from a life on the scampi-in-the-basket circuit.

A breathless Thrills found drummer Danny Ryan hanging on the hotline.

Explains Dan: "We played a Russian tour along with a group called Lips, and although Elton's tour was marvellously publicised, we — being *nothing* — went over there and had equal success. We've got a record coming

out in The Soviet Union that's scheduled to sell 7 million copies."

But who the hell are Gold?

"We're a professional band," chimes Dan, "who've been playing cabarets and nightclubs for a good ten years. We're into a soft version of the new wave rock."

Together with Lips — "a London-based girl duo" — the two bands were snapped up by one Stanley Laudan, the Harvey Goldsmith of The Eastern Front, the man responsible for foisting on the slavering Soviets such megastars as Elton and Cliff Richard.

Dan claims they scorched round a 75-date whistle-stop tour packing 10,000 seaters as if they were bierkellers. The natives were paying up to 25 roubles (nigh-on 20 quid) to witness Gold churning out 'Monie Monie', 'I Will Survive', Beatles "medleys" and a few of their home-grown classics. By all accounts crowds were getting legless in Leningrad, going mental in Moscow, lulu in

Latvia and totally over the top in Tbilisi. Could it not be said that the Russkies were a little rock-starved?

"True," says Dan, "but they're also Western-starved. The point is that they've got a reverence for the West. Anything from The West they're going to be interested in, especially Stanley Laudan's tours, 'cos they know that every act he's brought over there has to be Top Quality."

Could anyone touting Beatles' medleys set the whole place sabre-dancing? "You've got to prove your worth," Dan asserts sagely. "They're not completely in touch over there, but they're not out of touch — not by a long chalk. They respect Art for Art's sake. They don't respect gimmicks."

"But you've got to play some covers. Even if Abba went over there, they'd have to play some familiar numbers. Actually," reflects Dan, "they're quite lucky, 'cos most of their numbers are familiar anyway."

Dan claims they're making and breaking records out East



Gold, Lips: We're all going on a summer holiday

faster than you can tune a balalaika. Their upcoming album, imaginatively titled 'Gold And Lips Live In Russia', he cites as "an historic event". Not only is it "the first live LP from an all-male British Rock Band" but it's also going to be

"the first East/West simultaneous release." "Over there we're as big as Elton," sighs Dan, sounding all morose, "and over here we're absolutely nothing. It's a big let-down to play 10,000

seaters and then come back to doing Saturday nights at the pub."

MARK ELLEN

THRILLS

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Arturo — the man with the lead guitar in Pinpoint. The amp is a Vox AC30 Combo. One of them plays through the other and there's no prizes for guessing which.

Anyway our story starts at the Nashville in October. We decided that as Arturo needed an amp and we had one spare maybe it'd be an idea if the two of them got together. So we pitched up at the Nashville with an AC30 and a couple of Escort rehearsal amps.

Pinpoint were a little bit magic and Arturo said I like the amp and we said keep it and give us some nice things to say about it in an ad and he thought for a bit and then said OK because it's not so bad really which was roughly when we switched left running on the tape recorder which we



Arturo's amp. A love story.

the first guitar I ever owned was a Vox Clubman... cost me seven pounds and it had a socket like a television aerial it was ridiculous really... my brother played in groups years ago... taught me three chords and it just went from there...

What other gear... did I have? All sorts. A real mish mash... for a long time though I've had my eye on an AC30... preferably an old one although when I've played the new ones there really isn't that much difference... well they haven't changed it in fifteen years...

No it's the same circuitry... all that's missing is a few kick marks... no well it'll get like that after a few gigs now I'm using it...

was that the first time you'd set up with it... yeah... yeah it was... I was really pleased with the sound... really punchy... I use a Gretsch Roc Jet which is really an old guitar as well and it sounds really good... I think too many people are using the same guitar and amp setup and the sound is too similar... in a lot of groups... the thing about an AC30 as well is that it's small... you don't get as much spread so the vocal mike and the drum mike don't pick up as much... the overall sound's not as mushy as it used to be...

how do you find working in the studio? depends on the producer... you can hear every single beat... every single note... the first time you're in a studio is the first time you really hear yourself... there's no way though you can sound as raw in a studio as you do live... no way...

what's the most frustrating thing about playing live... touring? getting to a gig at five and not going on stage 'til midnight... and having to kill time in a town you don't know with no money... most of mine goes on the motorway services... eating sometimes and playing Space Invaders...

when you were doing the tour with the Members did you have any hassles? None at all... we had a really great time... I think that the people who you do get like that... they think you don't deserve a soundcheck or whatever... have something seriously wrong with them... it's silly... everyone's a support band sometime...

Dear Vox Arturo seems to know something I don't. Send me a few more details please Vox Limited, 32-34 Gordon House Road, London NW5 1PE. Tel: 01-485 4553

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VOX

Hear the results of Pinpoint's studio experiments on their single in Richmond on Abbey



Revealed: why when Henry Badowski sings 'Making Love With My Wife', he's actually singing about making love with his mother . . .

HENRY Badowski hated the demos he gave Step Forward so much that he scribbled explanatory notes like "I had flu" and "Henry's waste of time" all over the tape cases.

Miles Copeland, majordomo of Step Forward, Britain's most successful independent label, wasn't going to be put off by a little thing like artistic insecurity though. He took the demos to his own marketing guru, one Derek Green at A&M.

"This boy's got genius!" boomed Miles in his best transatlantic tycoon voice.

"Absolutely!" agreed Green, the man who told The Sex Pistols where to get off. "Genius plus! This is number one material. Let's have the first single out pronto!"

Henry Badowski's musical career to date has been a mixture of exclamation marks with all the questions coming from him. This is the man who was stopped in the street by Gene October and told that the bass seat in Chelsea was his for the asking. Quiet, modest, deadpan Henry tucked that one under "Experience: past". The Shift crowd had an eye on his burgeoning eccentric talents too and Badowski played with Wreckless Eric, The Damned/Doomed and finally landed a plum role providing the structure to Mark Perry's experimentation.

The Good Missionaries liberated Henry to an extent, gave him the room to dabble with engineering, develop his keyboards, use his sax and his bass. Chelsea, Wreckless Eric, The Doomed and The Good Missionaries — a more motley collection of rootsy punk types you couldn't hope to find but they all had Henry Badowski in common.

Henry's debut single for the Deptford Fun City label 'Making Love With My Wife' and 'Baby, Sign Here With Me' is a record to be proud of,

but its maker merely shrugs. "They all like it over there but I dunno, they must be out to lunch. Still, if they can work with me they must be OK."

The single in question has been pressed twice but not due to public demand. The Deptford version sold 2,000 copies and the A&M cut managed a paltry 1,000. Nick Jones, Step Forward's resident nice guy, isn't wrong when he describes these sales figures as "despicable".

It's one of the best homegrown records made this year and it's only a smidgeon from Badowski's catalogue of material, much of it in a similar vein. The sound is completely opposed to any expectations based on the man's past history. His style is idiosyncratic in the same way that the music of a Brian Eno or a Kevin Ayers or a Syd Barrett comes all at a tangent.

There's something very British about it, conjuring up visions of cosy Sunday afternoons spent feeding the ducks on the Serpentine with your girlfriend at your side. In any week spent listening to the run of the mill singles fodder Badowski's fresh effort stands out like a beacon in a sea of unadulterated trendy rubbish. Ain't that so, Henry?

"I haven't got a very English name though. My dad's Russian I think and my mum comes from Holland. 'Making Love With My Wife' was written by my old man — that's a picture of my parents on the label. The photo on the other side is me as a kid, it's a chicken before the egg situation. You know, I didn't even want this record to be released, I'm not ready for it. I don't see myself as an artist, certainly not a rock and roller."

"The bands I was in used to get on with it, went through the numbers and got off, but they lost all the enthusiasm. I hated all the primping up before a gig. It went against the spirit of enjoyment. When other people in a group tell you they don't

like your shoes or maybe you should have a different haircut it isn't any fun. The Doomed and Captain Sensible was alright but they took themselves too seriously; it started getting heavy — there were a few fights, which I'm not very good at. I like working with the Captain but the gigs were a shambles, drunken brawls."

Whatever plans Step Forward may have for Badowski, he isn't going to play live. "Not yet, not until I can do it very well. I dislike live playing from experience and I don't know how long gigs will exist; they're not what I call entertainment. I prefer Space Invaders and mucking about with tape recorders."

"With The Good Missionaries I didn't like the everyday clothes aspect; it contradicted itself. You had these respected bands coming on and shouting 'We hate the music business, we hate rock and roll' and

it didn't ring true. The accidental parts of that band were good but The Good Missionaries and The Pop Group . . . whew! All 'what are we doing here', the idealistic confusion bit. Mind you if I hadn't met Mark I'd probably have a nice hairstyle and a nice suit. I like him a lot but he's in a bit of a state."

Outside of an admiration for early Roxy Music and Eno's work in general, Badowski confesses that he doesn't keep up with the workings of the music industry.

"The Syd Barrett comparisons I heard a lot, so I played some of his stuff and it frightened me. I've got a few valid ideas of my own I think but at the moment I'm piecing it all together; the past is my musical career and now I'm making sense of it."

For now Badowski is waiting for Copeland and Green to decide on another single and hoping they can

Funny names for English rock stars

An investigation by MAX BELL

get it across. He wants to earn a living as a musician and an engineer but he's genuinely astounded that anyone should consider he has anything to offer.

"They're all mad. I've got lots of songs in a similar vein to the single though. I'm sorry that the independent side of small companies has disappeared; it's gone right back to where it was, hasn't it? Everything is so commercialised again and what I do isn't very commercial at all. Still, I should think I'll come up with something."

Make sure you hear it when he does.



THE NEW PORTABLE SOUND STUDIO

This Philips N2233 automatic recorder looks simple enough.

Simple to operate yes, but there's a lot more to the Philips N2233 than its smart looks let on.

It's much more like a portable sound studio.

Of course it records cassettes like ordinary recorders. And the quality is a lot more than you'd expect from something so small.



The Philips N2233 has a cue and revue capability too.

This enables you to put together your own selection of music. It also lets you play back material the moment you have recorded it. Watch out Kid Jensen!

You'll agree that such a sophisticated piece of equipment as the Philips N2233 shouldn't be called simply a cassette recorder.

The portable sound studio is much more flattering.

PHILIPS

Simply years ahead.

Recording and playback of material may require consent — see Copyright Act 1956 and the Performer's Protection Act 1958-1972.



IN 1978, Jackie Collins was the only author that my mother (over 21, a factory worker) and my best friend (under 21, a secretary) read.

Jackie said: "She was thin and white. She dressed and went out. The people in the street disgusted her."

But he said, HE said: "In the moonlight, after midnight, I see you silly people out looking for delight. Well I'm so HAPPY, I'm feeling so fine, I'm watching all the rubbish and wasting my time."

Like all children of the working class, Johnny was raised to aspire to the ad man's tawdry images of the Good Life, good for nothing but remembering the long parade of cabbage gadgets on a quiz show. When I watch a quiz show I get angry, and I just want to force the contestants into brainwashing, education, what you will camps, where they would be forced to learn the bare bones of general knowledge, just so quiz masters can't ridicule the working class on peak time TV every week. I want to teach them that Romeo's girlfriend was called JULIET, that the first name of the President of America is JIMMY, both questions recently flunked by *Mr And Mrs* contestants. I just want to stop the virtues that "working class" used to stubbornly stand for drowning in a sea of digital clocks and apathy.

Johnny got angry. The difference was — the difference that made him The Greatest where most rock anger makes the owner look morose and old — was that he wasn't angry AT his parents, he was angry FOR them.

Youth culture fashions make money for the rich eventually, but the frustrated, special prod child who dreamed it all gets the memory. For a magic moment, wealth and influence trail slack-jawed after the ragged trousered philanthropist, his eyes gleam because it's precious to avenge the way your parents ate the middle class, the way the people you're meant to respect are always kept five years behind, in the dark, unconscious that when they finally get their prawn cocktail and their foreign holiday they're the topic of some quality paper's cartoon chuckle.

So you let rich kids copy your clothes and kicks, and you don't feel so ashamed on your parents' behalf. Their children can set styles, fool. Even if they do get shorn and sold to less acute working class kids about a year later by the old and rich. Let them fight over your old skin!

I can care if I want to.

You probably think people who read Jackie Collins books are stupid and a shade sheepish, but compared to the slapdash, shallow and facile standard of "youth music" shoved out these days — from quasi-Mod spiritual impotence to Dury's jolly little lolly lists — her work is positively noble. Unlike everyone's records, her books tend to point out problems, suggest solutions and set examples. They tend to have more wit style and craft than your average single, last for days instead of minutes and cost around the same.

Let us compare Jackie Collins, a popular novelist, with Jimmy Pursey, a popular singer. Both appeal to an aggressively working-class audience, both make *Having A Good Time* their cause célèbre, both churn it out fast. Yet Collins has more skill in her cleavage than Pursey has in both heads.

This paper emerges every week to de-trivialise and analyse rock, so why shouldn't I do the same for blockbuster paperbacks? This is a popular arts paper, not an arts cult magazine. And the fact is that more young people in this country own a Collins-conceived record (*The Stud*, *The World Is Full Of Married Men*, *The Bitch*) than they do a Sex Pistols one. Like it or not, Collins disco films and accompanying soundtracks have captured the money and attention of more youth than, say, *Quadrophenia* could dream of. The disco compilations sold under her titles spend weeks in the charts, and feature, well, more stars than there are in the heavens. Blondie, Taste Of Honey, Gene Chandler, are attached, sell and are sold; the tortoise and the hare, the old folk grin gummy. Money makes money out of the young and the black. It makes the marketing of every other youth-aimed album look as hypocritical as the pontifications on Ireland that Vietnam-whipped America makes.

The blockbuster is the art form of now and of the future. It sells more than anything; it is an avenue easily entered by any kid with a typewriter and two braincells to rub together; it is occasionally patronised and massively ignored.

Women in particular are making a wagonload of money out of popular paperback fiction: Mme de Staël, an early bluestocking, said that women are the presiding spirits of modern literature, and inventors of its characteristic form, the novel; classical literature is masculine, extolling political or martial heroism, but modern literature concerns internal journeys, emotional discovery, the feminine correlative of masculine adventure.

God forbid that being upwardly mobile should make women into John ME ME ME Wayne bottled up! Thankfully, the ancient wisdom of the British public shrugged off the self-indulgent shower of early Seventies Yank mind-wanking (*Fear Of Flying*, *Zen And Art*, *Cowgirls Get The Blues*), simply because we like books with stories, like we like songs with tunes. An unpretentious people.

WORKING CLASS NEROS

BY JULIE BURCHILL

THE GIRL WHO
READ THEM ALL!

Wealth, power, sex, glamour, drink and drugs . . . Julie Burchill has read books about all these things. No blockbuster was too big for her to handle, no male pulpmeister too crass for her cool wit and savage insight.

In the most sweepingly panoramic literary spectacle since *The Betsy*, J.B. comes not only to bury Harold Robbins but to praise Jackie Collins. Your visits to the library may never be the same again . . . !

A savagely uplifting and profoundly moral work . . .

PROF A. J.
BARTLETT-PEAR

I was moved literally beyond tears . . .
AUBERON
THAMES

Lashings of sex . . . DAILY BOIL

THE blockbuster-best seller is still slightly synonymous with Harold Robbins, a gross and *passee* practitioner of the form. He has written 14 books; he is irretrievably rich and time-warped (his books swim with women who are movie stars, but he has never featured one man who is a rock singer, though they make the kind of money he admires avidly. Maybe he reckons they're not as virile as Arabs and tycoons).

Robbins began writing in the '40s and flopped horribly until the 1961 *Carpetbaggers*. This is the biggest selling paperback ever — over ten million sold. It has two female pivots; one dies for her sins (having sex a lot), the other gets raped, becomes a call girl and ends the book as a nun.

His books are thick in more ways than one. They are without exception about successful men (ie they have a lot of money) who have sex with beautiful, sick in the head whores. The fact that he always acts concerned and "let's get to the bottom of this interesting case" about his women makes him extra-sickening: they never whores around because they like sex or are rebellious, but because their father, brother or Santa Claus raped them as a young girl. No one's personality is ever of their own making or mistakes: he takes very much the cheap liberal view of the poor little psychopath having a harsh childhood, bless him.

He cannot conceive that girls might not want to sleep with their old dads, but his men are never mother-fixated (he himself is an orphan). He tends towards prologues in which he tries to be a sex-free storyteller, but always lapses into perfunctory fornication within the first chapter. He fouts himself, you feel: you feel that he thinks if only he could write a book

without sex in it (like Marilyn Monroe fretted that playing sexy girls meant no one took her seriously) he would be respected as a serious author. He doesn't realise that the secret is not to ignore sex, but to write it without clichés. Cliches are at their most ugly and pathetic when used in the context of written sex. He hurries sex, but dare not drop it; it's his ticket.

Like a paper sailor, he has a different girl's face on the front of every book, hinting, if packaging was representative of content, he'd have a different, seductive boardroom table on them. We link up well with our working-class crass-culture here; these Temple Goddesses of banality, the *Sun* Page 3 girls, get best billing — Stefanie Marrian on *The Adventurers*, Nina Carter on *The Carpetbaggers*.

Blockbuster writers, like singers, have developed definite personality cults, and thus has Harold Robbins — old and plain — been heavily dropped by the '70s media. A good thing too; his writing has no blood, no odour, no visions. He knows nothing about youth, fashion or sex, which is why his pulp is so beyond the pale to girls, and to men with a brain (surely a good quarter of them?). He has claimed that due to a back injury (never stopped Jack Kennedy) he has only ever participated in sex while prostrate.

The funniest male pretender to Robbins' rusty throne is Burt Hirschfeld, who in 1975 wrote *Aspen* to cash in on the Claudine Loger shot-the-ski-instructor scandal. In it, sadistic men have sex-by-numbers with helpless, textbook-orgasm women and dice darily with the killer "grass", tee hee. Like with a lot of writers who have nothing to be proud of, the copyright is under another name — the Simon Jesse Corporation. Judith Krantz's

Scruples, on the other hand, belongs to her husband's production company.

Scruples was 1978's blockbuster success story. Krantz's first book — she has just signed for a record million and half paperback rights for her second, not yet written. Ms Krantz, as her copyright shows, may be a career woman (she was a *Cosmopolitan* editor for years, and the book was previewed therein which probably helped flog a few) but she is not a feminist — maybe this is why her prose is so corny and stiff.

It is basically Mills and Boon romance-on-the-pill. Those sexually liberated, self-improving, empty-hearted glossies are as bad as the jam-and-jumpers mousewife rags — in which the heroine finally finds fulfilment in pregnancy and the only lesbian is ugly, lonely and nasty. I have long suspected *Cosmo* of being a bastion of bad sex therapy; always advising girls to get contracepted and sleep around yet forever recoiling at the thought of lesbianism. As if to illustrate my point, Irma Kurtz, another of their ageing swingers, just published her first book — how a liberal Jewish New York girl reporter falls in love with a handsome Klu Klux Klan boss. Marlon Brando should love the part.

Krantz so thinks she can storytell that she doesn't even bother to gossip — the only thing this kind of writer is good for. *Ritz* is a hundred times cheaper and more aesthetically pleasing, and at least keeps up to date on what brand names to drop. Krantz writes old and soulless; the occasional yucky bad scene, no flesh or snazziness, and making up for it by flaunting the trappings of wealth. The plot concerns a rich woman who marries a sugar daddy and then a ridiculous strutting wop.

• Continues over page

■ From previous page

and then opens a vulgar (some would say exclusive) department store. She is a most uninteresting heroine, existing no further than the designer labels in her clothes.

The funny thing about books built around showing off how modern one is in that status symbols change so fast. To *Scraples*, Chloe is THE designer, Woodward and Bernstein THE party guests, Margaux Hemingway THE beauty; by now it's at least Ralph Lauren, Fran Lebowitz, Muriel Hemingway. It certainly doesn't date classically, as have Jacqueline Susann's '60s showbiz epics (that woman knows more about pills and their reasons than Mr Roche does). Incidentally, this is the ONLY book I have ever read that features not one working-class person, not even made good.

It even passed a clone in 1979: Michael French's *Abingdons*, "a simmering mixture of ambition, greed, betrayal and sex in the world's most glamorous department store" — even the blurb has more art than inside book. There are approximately four sex scenes to save face, so sketchy that the participants must be skeletons. The psychology of the mind that considers a piece of buying and selling an aphrodisiac and an ideal setting for ecstatic sex is sweet and old-fashioned, but even this conviction he can't carry through, and the little passion there is reserved for heated discussions in the sil-male boardroom. Poor sods trying to set swinging standards; Mulder in mind.

WHEN the young use the blockbuster as a vehicle on which to peddle their art, they often do it brilliantly, tending as they do to know more about sex, fashion and extreme emotion, and not bogged down with the nagging obsession of MONEY and BUSINESS — obsessions which quickly drain all the enjoyment from life.

The most vivid young blockbuster was written in 1959 by John Ferris, then hardly out of his teens. As per usual with working-class-fiction, the art-work (accommodating blonde in grubby slip, grappling) and the blurb ("the co-ed where promiscuity runs unchecked and the curriculum includes sex and violence") collaborate to de-value the literature and despise the buyer — sell it short and sales rise, think the publishers evidently. Still, they can't stop *Harrison High* reading like a gritty *Grease*, a suburban *West Side Story*, a clean cut *Wanderers*; the beautiful writing seeps and sways like the best doo wop combo in the world, like Brian Wilson after Saturday night in his room.

The packaging of Harriet Frank's admirable *Single* (singularly graceless title) is misleading and maddening: "Sexy... funny... moving... liberating that's being 'single'" — God knows what *The Group* would be flogged like if it wasn't on Penguin. "Racy and raunchy... a sort of women's *Harold Robbins*" said the stupid *Spectator*, not able to stray any further off the mark. It certainly isn't in the "wild witty and winning tradition of *Fear Of Flying*" — the universe as revolving around Erica Jong's clitoris, everything else in comparison, from the Holocaust to her husband, being transient and trashy, useful only for metaphors.

No, *Single* is like an urban Jane Austen novel, or Colette battling with the aesthetic unattractiveness of the IUD. Harriet Frank wrote the screenplay for *Mud*, *Conrack* and *The Long Hot Summer*, and like all the best writers she can see gestures and phrases as if on a screen while realising the wonderful way in which only the printed word less language play. She also has a deep and realistic knowledge of America, poverty, the past, ambition, sex, success, the literary world and drugs — the book's junkie is a doctor and it is a little known fact that heroin addiction in this country and America was introduced by abuse within the medical practice, and that the first group of junkies were doctors, the morons.

Rona Jaffe's *The Last Chance* also follows the lives of four women; it makes practically every other book that has come out this decade look like a sick excuse. Jaffe is an old hand, too — she wrote *The Best Of Everything* in the '50s — and her book is totally contemporary, totally classic. She has morals that make haloes look like L-plates. In accordance, the sex is rare but when it happens it's totally recognizable, real sex with fingers and moans. She's a woman who has savoured her surroundings, not just made a quick list of them between the boutique and the shrink. Her grasp of New York, of the agony and ecstasy of competing there, makes Woody Allen look like the wrong-out old stand-up he is.

ALL these books — the great, the good and the cretinous — are uniformly packaged in pretty girls and hyperbole to sell them to illiterate, crass, ogling Social Class Five. Jackie Collins sells her books on those two words — Jackie Collins — and what they stand for.

She is a famous figure now, more famous than Charlotte Brontë; she is the best-selling author in Britain, and a suitable case for critical praise.

There was a definite air of also-ranism over the Collins clique in the early '70s. Jackie, the failed starlet and pulp writer; her husband Oscar Lerman, owner of Tramp disco where

no-one under thirty-five would be seen dead after George Best flew the nest; Joan the much-married, much-misused older-sister of British films and her husband Ron Kass, resting after playing music-management musical-swivel-chairs for much of the '60s (he has been President, Manager and various bossy things for, amongst others, Apple, Warner Brothers and MGM). Nothing sadder than glamour on the rocks.

Then BANG! it was like the Bee Gees — who dreamed THEY'D turn up again? In 1978, after the success of *Saturday Night Fever* and the renaissance of disco, the Collins clique went into a huddle and emerged triumphant with the film of the book of *The Stud*; written unnoticed by Jackie in 1971, starring Joan, set largely in Oscar's nightclub with Ron producing. What a jammy bunch, of course it ran and ran. The album got a gold watch when it finally dropped out of the charts, Joan Collins was voted the sexiest thing in the world, Jackie Collins became the new media authority on the Good Life; much prettier than Parkin or Cooper, and those film star connections.

Films had just boomed again, the compilation album was riding high; the Collins clique were perfectly suited to this new wave of vulgar frivolity. People who'd stopped buying books bought Jackie Collins because she was a mere unit of the latest glamour icon, buying the book became an on-casual and everyday as buying the record or seeing the film. She's responsible for starting a lot of people actually reading words again.

sexual desires; can you imagine a white man daring to say "This is how a black man thinks..." and being applauded by enlightened people? If men treated women like they treat blacks, it would be quite a giant step up for us. Collins never punishes her girls for having sex, either; her heroines without exception find one man they really want and end the book discussing film offers or going on honeymoons or simply in bed, unlike male authors, she punishes people who ill-use others, not girls for having it away.

This year *The World Is Full Of Married Men* came out, with 8 actors and a star soundtrack which sold it to millions. The book was published in 1968, all wild models in bistros and neglected wives meeting sexy hippies at Ban The Bomb protests. The film happens in discotheques and throws in a pop star instead of a sexy hippie. The book contains some coarse, almost Chaucerian humour ("Ugh!" says the heroine after eating a canape at a rivals wedding. "A bit of dried up old sausage meat, sort of like the bridegroom."), but it is most remarkable for its disclosure that Jackie Collins, a grown woman with a solid middle-class education, has — like the popular idea of the masses she deigns to give a glimpse of the Jet Set — little clue of where to use a comma, a colon or a full stop.

The World Is Full Of Married Men had some great disco on its soundtrack, but it didn't have Joan Collins in her underwear. Understanding that her sister is on a winning streak, Jackie Collins quickly cobbled together a sequel to *The Stud*, dropping the idiotic gigolo and

complexly constructed, skipping and hopping and flashing back and forth hypnotically. Collins seems to know the sordid side of rock quite well; there are good scenes of the drunk, uncaring star doing a lousy show to an audience who would rather stab out their eyes and cut off their ears than see and hear the awful truth, mumbling "more!" as he is bundled into a car and taken back to the security of a sedative at the hotel, the crowd still going wild; the tragic-comic teenage toughs Flum and Glory who pool their savings, throw in their jobs and follow their star, Evan King, the son of AJ, is simply the best adolescent study since Holden Caulfield, and the sullen dialogue between him and his father a work of trivia genius.

There is classiness, incisive wit: "Did Carol Cameron think of him as adequate? He thought not, remembering the compliments she had showered on him. 'Enormous!' (untrue) 'Never seen anything like it!' (unlikely) 'You're the best!' (could be true, but with her track record probably not). There is progression; by now Jackie has learned how to use punctuation. In fact she goes overboard. On full stops. And uses very. Short. Sentences.

WHY I like Jackie Collins, and the new wave of populist, commercial, "women's books" blockbusters in general, is that she strikes a healthy, often stylish and funny balance; between the tough gang of Boy's Own buddy-buddy war-mongers (carving out one's Nietzsche at the expense of every other living creature that happens to be sharing your space, who've been making a comeback since America said five Hail Narys and forgot what a pathetic bunch of losers and bullies they acted like throughout the '60s and early '70s in Indo-China), and the godawful passive, put-upon, pessimistic "feminist" "self discovery" drivel that's still seeping out of America (thanks to Woody Allen giving self-indulgence and life-as-gauntlet-running a shot in the arm with his fashionable films) wherein women try to keep themselves "open" and "positive" just by letting men do what they like to them, and then look back on it and shake their head sadly over what a bunch of crap life is, but don't worry, I'll feel non-negative again when my new analyst tells me it would help me to relate to him if we had a physical inter-action relationship for five minutes before his next client arrives...

Jackie Collins girls, and Rona Jaffe's, and Harriet Frank's, have the humanity and commonsense that male heroes tend to think is prim and soppy to have these days, but they also go out and DO things, they don't sit around moaning and resigned to their raw deal. If she has ancestors in the arts, it's '40s film directors Douglas Sirk and George Cukor, themselves often dismissed for making "Women's Films" (ie no one gets their head blown off in slow motion); the only directors who have repeatedly shown their female characters to DO instead of BE, who have focussed consistently on the minds and ambitions of beautiful women as opposed to the ways they can be a help or a hindrance to men. They were populist, money-making artists who reached the masses in the way Jackie Collins does now.

Sirk was a genius, though, and Cukor was immensely talented, and Collins has at least ten years hard practice in front of her before she even stops being that slight bit camp and throwaway; then she can start properly. Her main fault is that she takes for granted the idea that all working-class people want to live like the rich, and that this is a biological fact, that materialism is built into our brains.

Of course, many working people do years for nothing more than the crack of old crap at the end of *Sale Of The Century*, their lives DO run in ever decreasing circles around the Classified Results on a Saturday, and the reliance on a random lump sum obliterates any real ambition or hidden talent they may have, and may make them despise their class for not having a houseful of consumer status symbols; but this idea of material objects as the most important goal in life is the last Meaning Of Life that needs upholding, big business are the least people who need support. It's a shame that the books the working-class buy so much of encourage the Pools Lifestyle; fat comedians waving open bottles of Moët and dummy cheques at old people with hardly any teeth, John Conteh with his eye swollen closed presenting a cheque for £235,000 to a man with his tongue literally hanging out. "IT'S FUN WHEN YOU'VE WON!" yells the glossy Pools Yearbook. "SEE HOW EASY IT IS TO FILL IN A VERNON'S COUPON!" The print emphasises the word EASY.

Still, Collins' morals are more alright than not. Her characters are allowed to take any kind of drug except heroin, have any kind of sex except rape and still settle down happily when they've tried enough. She believes in REVENGE and HAPPY ENDINGS — an impeccable, lonesome example to set against the misanthropic, back-pattingly-morbid, "anything goes" fatalism of the majority of "sensitive" books, films and rock music that gets taken so seriously by the wailing, trendy media.

I'm glad that so many people buy her books and make her rich; I'm sure that's a compliment she'll understand.



Though her productions are synonymous with Sex, it is probably her connections, her sister and her beauty which have caused this — she shows a great deal of marvellous cleavage on certain book covers, and though in her forties looks like a particularly sleek 27-year-old. She denies her books are about sex, and indeed she is very naive and "later... much later". When she tries to be modern and frank it's embarrassing ("She could feel his maleness... it was good. It was meaningful.") Still people buy her books because they associate her, as a celebrity, with superior sex to what you and I and our friends will ever have (Harold Robbins' *The Betsy* was advertised with the most arrogant piece of boasting ever: "The Harold Robbins women... they do the things that you only dream of." The dream police know!), and because it's like dating a chaste girl who you know has had a sordid past; "She's been holding out on me, but TONIGHT will be the one."

When both Robbins and Collins want to hint that a man is super-potent, successful and jaded, they construct a scene in which he has had sex with two women in one bed — a bit strong, what? Both *The Pirate* and *Lovers And Gamblers* start exactly this way.

Obviously she stands for the same kind of writing as Robbins — but she writes from a sensitive, realistic, essentially female angle. (Yes, women may not have it in them to be geniuses, as we're always being told, but if there isn't a female Michaelangelo, there sure as hell isn't a male Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Women still pretty much have a monopoly on humane, civilized behaviour — I'm sure all you trendy boys and old men who worship at the feet of *The Deer Hunter* and *The Warriors* won't mind me saying that — you like to think of yourself as noble savages, don't you? Happy head-hunting, anyway.)

Unlike men, particularly men who write about women and sex, she knows about women; about rich women, who manipulate and enjoy young boys, or young sexy girls who manipulate powerful old sods. Robbins' girls sleep with men because men are just so damn desirable, every last one of them; Collins girls do it to protect and advance their careers, or to have orgasms. Countless male authors from St Paul to Hemingway to *Playboy* have been applauded for definitive comments on women's brains, emotions,

concentrating on the character of Fontaine. *The Bitch* tries to move even more firmly into the youth market; the Olympic Runners appeared on *Top Of The Pops* singing the signature tune, and the soundtrack features Blondie, who is nothing if not loved above all else by the country's youth. The film consists of Joan Collins looking matronly, and failing badly to be wise-ass and witty to a sad bunch of 8-men. With its classy and tempting TV ads, it will capture more young interest and money than you hope.

The book is slightly heroic in its haste, but has its moments. The heroine, thank God, is at last growing old gracefully (good God, if only musicians would learn to: a good number of them will be prospective grand-dads in a few years time) and juggling young bimbos is becoming a bore. "God! Was this what her life was all about? Fashion and Getting Fucked. Both were beginning to pall" has more class than any number of rock songs about ennui. The book unfortunately features a male character whom Collins admires — a Greek gambler — and reveals an interesting flaw in her work; she cannot write well about men she admires, though she is excellent at ridiculing conceited, ugly and empty-headed ones. She writes about admirable men like an extra-floral Ian Fleming — incidentally, I have never read a writer who is so much in love with his creation as Fleming was with the appalling James Bond.

Both 160 pages slim, *The World Is Full Of Married Men* and *The Bitch* are blockbusters because they concern the sleazy side of wealth and show business, chase all round the world and sell brilliantly. *Lovers And Gamblers* is simply the archetype blockbuster of the '70s, Jackie's *Ulysses*; published in 1977, 600 pages long, it is Collins only foray into the rock world, though one can guess at many more now the record-buying youth have clutched her to their bosoms and put their money down her décolletage. In it Al King, "rock/soul superstar and legendary Superstud" has reached his peak at 37. Collins has described him as a hybrid of Presley, Tom Jones and Rod Stewart, a monster-birth befitting Roger Corman. The young, tough, gorgeous heroine is a mixture of Marj Wallace, Farrah F.M. and Everygirl who ever had a portfolio made up. The story concerns their careers and courtship; as storytelling it is beautifully and

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London

Thursday November

john mayall no more interviews



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Poison people (L-R): Bernhardt Rebours, Richard Famous, Vi Subversa, Lance d'Boyle

POISON GIRLS COME OUT TO PLAY

**Graham Lock
lends an ear**

**Mike Laye
airs a lens**

"Remember the holocaust/Holocaust in Bremen/In the name of the fatherland/In the name of the fatherland/In nomine patri/For the sake of his property/Napalm napalm/Fire fire witches burn/Woman is heretic..."

"ABOUT TWENTY years ago, I was living in a hostel with some Jews who'd been refugees — I can't remember the exact circumstances — and a girl there used to hum this tune all the time. Then about six to eight months ago I saw the *Holocaust* series on TV and I remembered the girl and her tune.

"The girl came from Bremen and the tune was an old folk song, but some words had been put to it about the destruction of Bremen, I think, but anyway a small town in Germany where a lot of Jews had been rounded up and put in wooden buildings and burned alive. It just made a huge impression on me."

And the connection with the witchcraft trials?

"There were an estimated nine million women burned as witches over a period of a few hundred years. And most of the people who've set light to themselves as a political protest have been women. It was... I don't know, I just connected all those images of fire."

Vi Subversa sighs thoughtfully. "Bremen Song" comes from Poison Girls' 12-inch eight-track EP *Hex*, co-released on Small Wonder and their own label XN Trix. In my reckoning, it has a strong claim to being one of the year's most important records. A stark, quirky, intense new rock is the vehicle for a harrowing vision of modern life, carried boldly along by Subversa's gripping vocals, which can crackle with power or shriek in anguish.

Although an avowedly political record, *Hex* eschews the usual avenues that genre explores, concentrating instead on the less publicised areas of what, in this society, is usually female experience — songs about housework and looking after the kids ("Jump Mama Jump", "Reality Attack", "Crisis") or sinking into a tranquillised netherworld "under the doctor".

"We all made a choice to include female statements because most rock songs exclude that. I don't like the fact that if there are women in the audience, nothing is said that includes their imagery or their experience. *Hex* was an attempt to say we are a mixed band and we want to address ourselves to a mixed world."

Drummer Lance d'Boyle concurs: "There's

no song on *Hex* I couldn't personally identify with, except for maybe the line 'I used to be a tart, I sold myself as art'. Well, I used to be a prostitute in the sense that I sold my body to other people, but I don't think I ever sold myself for art. Not so far, anyway.

"I think confusion arises because in this society men's experience and women's experience is generally different. Like, the woman stays at home and the man goes out to work, so for the majority of the time they're living a different life. For us, that's not true, cos we've given up those roles. We share all the work, we share all the responsibility for the kids and the domestic situation. And I think it's important not to have part of human experience pushed off somewhere and nobody talks about it. People say that talking about the washing up is boring, yet we've been listening to the trials and tribulations of unrequited love for years on end."

Subversa: "I still think that begs the question a bit. There are still a lot more women without a voice in that situation."

DESPITE their radical politics and explicitly anti-racist statements like 'Bremen Song', Poison Girls have incurred the wrath of many left-wing organisations. The bone of contention is how to deal with violence at gigs; and the row erupted when, after a gig with Cress at the Conway Hall was broken up by a brawl between the NF and the SWP, Poison Girls issued a press statement which blamed the violence on "the system of gang warfare" which all political groups, right and left, perpetuated.

Subversa: "There are a lot of young people about, and a lot of other people who are trying to colonise their energies — vultures who see us all as a kind of prey. I'm not really interested in mass political movements, I think we've all suffered from them. I think people, if they're trusted, can sort out their own hassles. Where it goes sour is when those hassles get manipulated by outside agents for political ends, and often for personal careerist ends as far as I can see."

I'd agree that this might apply to left and right-wing factional groups, but why did you specifically include RAR in your general condemnation?

Guitarist Richard Famous: "That was because they'd just put out a manifesto saying who was and who wasn't gonna be allowed into RAR gigs. I know it's one way of stopping violence at gigs, just stopping the disruptive elements getting in — but it assumes you know who they are, or can recognise them by their appearance, and that it's always and only them who cause the trouble. I don't find that sort of attitude particularly constructive."

d'Boyle: "It's our specific objective when we're performing to engage with those issues, with why that frustration and anger and violence exist. And it seems to me that we've got to make a constructive contribution to that rather than a purely defensive, fearful, closed event. I mean, if we exclude people, just preach to the converted, play to politically 'safe' people, that's pointless."

But even if the band are prepared to take these risks, should the audience be expected to? Surely the band feels a responsibility towards ensuring the safety of the people who come to hear them?

d'Boyle: "Of course. But it's everybody's responsibility to ensure that. Nobody has been hurt at any of our gigs except the Conway Hall, which was the one time the SWP offered their 'solution'. That speaks for itself."

Subversa: "It's a very difficult problem. But it's to do with means and ends. There has to be some kind of correlation between the goals that you're seeking and the means that you use. And if our goals are opposed to mass bully-type political movements — of which the end result is fascism of one kind or another — then using those tactics to police our gigs would destroy our position."

"Of course we're afraid, of course we're vulnerable — but the expedient politics you're talking about is like choosing the lesser of two evils. I've reconsidered that point over and over for the last twenty odd years, and I think that that way lies despair and disappointment."

"What some of us have always to be doing is saying, 'I will not choose a lesser evil. An Evil is an evil'. I know it's idealistic and some people will say it's unrealistic, but I'd answer that by saying it's the only realism. If you are trying to work out a viable alternative approach, you must really be careful not to compromise."

"We're working in a very difficult area to do with exploring aspects of power, and solutions to that through personal relationships rather than through political solutions — though they do meet, obviously. But the root of it is in personal relations and the way people perceive each other and the roles they allow each other. And I don't want our band manipulated by organisations who aren't working in that area and who I feel don't respect what we're trying to do."

d'Boyle: "I'd criticise RAR and RAS and CND, though we've done benefits for all of them, because I don't see that there's a political identity in being anti-racist, or anti-sexist, or pro-peace. They're all little bits of something else. I think you should rather engage with what you're actually for, with what kind of life you want to live."

"So many people come to our gigs who're totally frustrated, they haven't got any means

Continues page 60

"The threat of middle-aged people chucking up the system is really exciting"

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Yanks

Directed by John Schlesinger
Starring Richard Gere, Lisa Eichhorn, Vanessa Redgrave and William Devane
(Unfated Artists)

AFTER two decades of film making — a British one and a US one, roughly speaking — Schlesinger has now found a way to interweave his preceptions of the English and American character in *Yanks*, which concerns the build-up of US troops in an unnamed town in the North in 1942 in preparation for a Second Front against Hitler, and the

effect of their presence on somnolent life there.

Schlesinger's speciality has been in the depiction of a particular social milieu, and so far his eye has been a deliberately roving one (*Darling*, *Far From The Madding Crowd*, *Midnight Cowboy*, *The Day Of The Locust*), but the setting of *Yanks* takes him back to the Northern landscapes where he established his reputation (with not only *A Kind Of Loving* and *Billy Liar* but also an excellent BBC documentary about Oldham Rep).

It could so easily have been mishandled, since both the period and the locale have



Yanks: William Devane and Vanessa Redgrave take a raincheck.

been fashionably over-sentimentalized in recent years, but Schlesinger retains a sense of proportion. The background detail is indeed meticulous, but it's still background; the characters rightly take centre-stage.

His canvas is a broad one, in that patterns of behaviour of

both British and Americans, and upper and working-class are contrasted. Credibility of characterisation was virtually ensured because the scriptwriting chores were evenly divided between Colin Welland, whose original idea it was, and who well remembers the events from

his own childhood, and Walter Bernstein, who was actually stationed here as a GI. Thus, many of the incidents have been reconstructed from actual experience. Even the one that I found absolutely contrived — a dance-hall scene where a racial fracas develops — is apparently a

personal reminiscence of Schlesinger's.

Two relationships are examined (three altogether, but one is rather under-nourished, almost certainly sacrificed at the editing stage). A plain and simple one between Jean (Eichhorn), whose family run and live above the Post Office/General Store, and Matt (Gere), a GI cook who nurtures ambitions of opening a motel chain. The other pairing matches Helen (Redgrave) — lady of the manor, Volunteer Red Cross worker and amateur cellist, who's trying to sort out the adolescent problems of her children in the absence of her husband — with John (Devane), a US Captain.

It is all admittedly very romantic, but in the context of the film that's not simply excusable, but actually necessary; it was a more romantic time anyway, and also the brief encounter aspect of the relationships no doubt exaggerated the mutual passion — the imminence of absence makes the heart grow fonder.

Excellent performances all round; both Gere and Eichhorn should rapidly

● continues over there



Mad Max gives another biker a hard time.

Mad Max

Directed by George Miller
Starring Mel Gibson
(Warner Bros)

A FEW years from now something not quite kosher is going down on Anarchy Road. The Night Rider, a renegade outlaw, is playing joy ride high speed chicken with the local law and order boys — the MFP, commonly known as the Bronze.

After the pursuit comes the inquisition with one set of psychotics in uniform facing off against some unpleasant biker trash in an outback wasteland dotted with the possible scars of a minor nuclear accident.

Obviously standards of moral decency have fallen by the wayside somewhat and the plot, such as it is, sets about unravelling a series of grisly revenge acts, conducted with a fine disregard for human dignity and a total absence of real motive.

This needn't bother the cinema-goer too much though because the willing suspension of disbelief is adroitly feigned by the Miller Brothers' absurdly stylised dialogue and several highly entertaining hot chases; the 'sickness' of *Mad Max* is nowhere near as pervasive as we've been led to believe either, all the violence is conducted in a ritualised, fantastical manner which had me gagging with laughter rather than retching for a handkerchief.

Into this muted channel house enters the hero of the melodrama, *Mad Max* himself, played with real sensitivity and, uh, finesse by an Australian rising star called Mel Gibson. *Mad Max*, the interceptor, is cast in a fiendish combination of spare parts from *The Mean Machine*, *Dirty Harry* and the film's true mentor, James William Guercio's *Electra Glide In Blue* (the relationship between *Mad Max* and his police pal The Goosie takes several leads from the Wintergreen/Zipper double-act in the latter flick).

Miller can't resist raising the spectre of the righteous hero out to avenge the killing of his buddy and immediate family. There's a middle section of unrelieved sentimentality which is far sicker than the burnt red meat offerings that constitute the aftermath of the death races, but he directs his cast of bikers with a camp wit that overrides these scenes of domestic bliss.

The bikers are played for maximum laughs, an inept crew of surrogate hairdressers on dodgy Jap wheels, sheltering from the fallout of spoiled leathers and generally making complete prats of themselves like overgrown juvenile delinquents who've been reading too many *Skull* comics. Their leader, Toe Cutter, is a splendid lunatic with a line in sarcasm that Olivier couldn't better, and a penchant for other people's ice creams. He comes to no good and like his swashbuckled mates is drawn with a fatal attraction to Max's understandable wrath.

If *Mad Max* ultimately disappoints it's because the finale is too predictable, succinct but sudden. Otherwise it's an enjoyable, well made B-movie with a smattering of the qualities that elevated the spaghetti westerns into a main meal. Some of Miller's best touches — the Big Brother-have-a-nice-day feminine controller, the brain washing orders that everyone mostly ignores, the friendly neighbourhood cultures — suggest that he has some more substantial ideas up his sleeve.

In the meantime, if you want to see some old fashioned good guys in black settling up accounts then check out *Mad Max*. Vengeance is his and he repays it. It's a riot of bad driving and the shai-las aren't half bad either.

Max Bell

What does the creature from the black lagoon have in common with dirty Harry?

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Incidentally, 'Dirty Harry' Clint Eastwood had a walk-on part as a lab assistant in 'Revenge of the Creature'—as if you didn't know....!

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• more Yanks

Well, at least one. He's Chick Vennara.



become established as star names, thereby ensuring long-term interest in this movie. Meanwhile, nothing here causes me to revise my opinion that Vanessa Redgrave was the first lady of British cinema: suffice it to say that this role neatly completes a hat-trick of superb performances which cover consecutive decades of this century — the '20s (Agatha) and the '30s (Julia).

Other incidental pleasures include a varied music score and the obligatory steam train. I was disappointed the Americans scored such an easy victory in the tall, dark and desirable stakes (Jean's putative fiancée is dull-witted and squat, Helen's husband a balding public-school prat; the Americans adaptable and enterprising in comparison), but couldn't really claim that they thereby undermined the verisimilitude of the film. Yanks has great zest and character, and I loved it.

Bob Woffinden

On The Box

NME's guide to television films

Friday November 23

MILDRED PIERCE: Witch-faced Joan Crawford emoting like crazy in the sort of overboiled melodrama beloved in certain camp circles. Directed in 1945 by Michael Curtiz, the man who forgot all the Hungarian he ever knew whilst working in Hollywood and never bothered to learn any English (fact). Ann Blyth is hilarious as Joan's vicious daughter. (BBC 2)

MADIGAN: Solid, workmanlike Don Siegel police thriller from 1968, a good deal better than the subsequent TV series but a few degrees below *Dirty Harry*. Richard Widmark is the tough cop, with fine support from Harry Guardino, James Whitmore and Steve Ihnat, memorable as the unpleasant villain. (BBC 1)

Sunday November 25

VALLEY OF THE DOLLS: Feeble, sanitised 1967 version of Jacqueline Susann's best-selling sleaze with Barbara Parkins, Susan Hayward, Patty Duke and the ex-Sharon Tate drowning bucketfuls of barbs in hooch, doing Judy Garland impressions, contracting breast cancer etc. Mark Robson leadenly tacks it all together and the aptly named Paul Burke makes one of his riveting appearances. Russ Meyer where are you? (ITV most regions)

JOE: Apoplectic black comedy with a monumental performance from Peter Boyle in the title role, the meanest,

most mealy-mouthed hardhat bigot this side of a loony bin. Lots of junkie squallor and middle-class vacuity in writer Norman Wexler's nightmarish New York and John Rocky Avildsen's direction is hard and cruel (he's obviously gone soft since 1970). Good support from Dennis Patrick (the oily exec), Susan Sarandon (his naughty daughter) and Patrick McDermott (the greasy-haired doper) but it's Boyle's show. He's magnificent, even if — on the orders of the Beeb's ailing Director General — he's had a handful of 'fucks', as it were, taken out of his foul mouth. And that on the 'minority' channel after midnight. Well done sir! (BBC 2)

Monday November 26

MR MAJESTY: Silly thick ear thriller with the inscrutable Charles Bronson as a Colorado dirt farmer trying to protect his watermelons (honest) from a syndicate hit man (Al Lattien, very watchable as usual). The anonymous Richard Fleischer did the honours in 1974. (BBC 1)

Tuesday November 27

COUNTDOWN: Robert Altman's first fiction feature is a 1967 curio plotting the trials and tribulations of astronauts and their wives. The hardware's dated, inevitably, but there's a strong cast (Robert Duvall, James Caan, Michael Murphy, Steve Ihnat) and Altman's offbeat approach left Warner and his Brothers suitably befuddled. (BBC 1)

In prison for life...
with other prisoners pushing him on...
for one brief mile... he was free!



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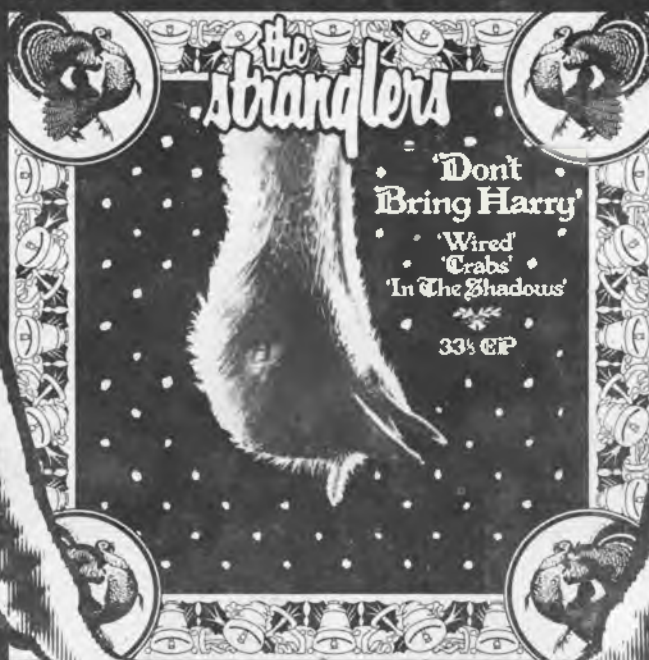
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PRINT

Brother Ray
By Ray Charles and David Ritz
(MacDonald and Janes £5.95)

The Golden Age Of Jazz
By William P. Gottlieb
(Quartet Books £8.50)

THE Ray Charles autobiography, penned in collaboration with *New West* writer David Ritz, presents a portrait of a proud, sometime arrogant and maybe even unlikable man, whose conquests in the world of 'pussy' (Ray's favourite euphemism) would seem to him as any of the musical mountains he has climbed. "In order to be a Raellet, he must first let Ray," somebody once quipped, and Charles, who has fathered a child by Margie Hendrix along the way, admits that this has some element of truth.

A junkie for 17 years, he claims that he kicked the habit in just three days during the '60s, in order to avoid a possible jail sentence and the effect such an event would have on his son, Ray Jr. "Physical addiction is something you can put behind you in 96 hours," he states, reaffirming his own ability to do anything he sets his mind to, "but the psychological addiction is the real crusher, that's the bitch."

No one has ever forced Charles to do anything that he didn't want to do and he readily refutes the theory that record companies have been responsible for pushing him into more commercial areas of music. His move away from the early R&B of his Atlantic era was entirely his own idea and Ray reveals that the ABC execs even protested against his idea for putting out country albums, claiming that his would destroy his credibility as an artist. But Ray took no notice of their protestations, just as he has taken little notice of any other's advice along the way. "The only musician whose opinion ever mattered to me was Lucky Millinder," he admits. "He was the cat who once told me that I wasn't good enough for his band!"

His loss of sight, which took place over a two-year period when he was a small boy, is generally played down throughout the book. Ray Charles has never been into the sympathy bit. It's never stopped him heading for his ultimate destination, he opines, recalling that even as a 10 year old he could ride a cycle round his hometown of Greenville, Georgia, speeding just like a kid with 20/20 vision.

The book, like Ray's music,



Yes, these guys were outrageous in 1964.

Tickets To Ride, Faces To Match

Mods!
Compiled by Richard Barnes
(Eel Pie Publishing £3.95)
HANDSOME... an edition that matches up to the aesthetic demands of the 12" centre vent, the 1963 Vespa GS 160, the french crew and the french blue. One for the stylists and scooter kids alike.

Mods! is a collection of '60s mod photos and ephemera plus a potted history of the movement. Given that a book like this was inevitable in the light of current interest in *les affaires du modernisme* circa mid '60s, it's a relief and a half that Richard Barnes and Eel Pie Publishing (Townshend's company) have wrapped up the job as neat as a Scene Club dancer doing a backturn.

The pix — 150 of them on

glossy paper — are a real treat. Barnes says in the accompanying essay that the true mod was "half reality, half myth" and the photographs reveal the dazzling reality — the great clothes, styles, dances — alongside the mundane truth of disaffected teenagers trailing round a windswept British seaside resort.

Everything is here bar that celebrated *Town* magazine piece featuring Marc Bolan; the fashions, the scooters, the dances, *Ready Steady Go!* the haircuts, the riots, the doobies, and some (not enough) of the music.

Barnes is an old mate of Townshend's from way back when the two went windowshopping in Carnaby Street together, and the book's dedicated to arch face

and one-time Who manager Pete Meaden, who was co-incidentally the subject of an *NME* centre spread last week. Barnes essay is an unpretentious straightforward and detailed account of the movement's growth and many facets. It's no eulogy; its attitude is more "That's the way it was and it was, you know, pretty alright."

Written in plain rather lacklustre prose, it's gratifyingly accurate and bullshitted, and pays a most modlike attention to details ("If you put your hands in your trouser pocket, you never pulled the jacket up so it was wrinkled. You'd have the top button done up and the jacket would be pulled back behind the arm," recalls one devotee).

New age mods and *Quadrophenia* freaks will be interested to read Barnes' comment that "my strongest memory of mods is their gentleness." I'm glad someone remembered that side of the movement.

Though clearly aimed at *mods nouveaux*, I hope it finds as many customers among former mods who have largely had their movement ignored (something that would never bother them) or misrepresented (which would, and who, true to character, tend to look upon the current mod resurgence with good-humoured derision. A mod movement without a single new fashion? Tut.

Neil Spencer

has been fashioned for popular appeal. The result is that those interested in learning more about the musician Ray has played with or has employed on his sessions will doubtless find *Brother Ray* as rewarding as the sleeve notes to any of Charles' Crossover albums.



Ray Charles

Nevertheless, it is frank, believable and eminently readable.

By contrast, *The Golden Age Of Jazz* is just something to skim through at bedtime. Bill Gottlieb was the best photographer working in the field of jazz during swing and bop days of the '30s and '40s, and his book is little more than a collection of his best shots from that era, rounded off with a few pithy captions. Certainly some of the portraits are remarkable — a picture of Stan Kenton and high-note trumpeter Buddy Childers seen through a fractured mirror acts as a brilliant photographic interpretation of Kenton's full-blooded, dissonant, powerhouse jazz — but, because of what seems a prohibitive price for a fairly slim tome, I can't see *Golden Age* finding too many takers, even among those with credit cards.

Fred Dellar

Subculture: The Meaning of Style
(Methuen New Accents)
By Dick Hebdige

PUTS me at an awkward angle, this one.

"Criticism" in the weekly, dim dawn's chorus of the rocky press is little more than a scratchy, self-congratulatory noise, what little there is soaking its smalls in a cold dishwasher dry dock of '60s metaphysics and '70s consumerism: no attempt whatsoever to raise levels of discussion either publicly or internally...

Hebdige's *Subculture: The Meaning Of Style* is a Godsend of a problem. It goes beyond normative acceptance of fashion (as what? *fashion?*) and makes inroads toward a semiotics of youth cultural style: a theoretical 'reading' of post-war movements from Teddy Boys to Punkie people.

Hebdige analyses the 'codes' — behaviour, clothes, etc. — of the successive styles, using as a basis a cross-fertilization of recent developments in European social, political, cultural and linguistic philosophy. He gives a working definition of each concept in turn — from



When jazz was king

Gramsci's of 'hegemony' to Kristeva's of the 'subject' — and substantiates the cross indexing of them as adequately as his space and project permits.

This is necessarily (?) the least 'critical' area, and anyone already cognizant with the lingo can skip. The first part proper of the book — *Some Case Studies* — is also fair field for those with a flair for deconstruction, being a relatively straight and at times too personal journey (Hebdige's black culture/white culture crossover equation ought to be questioned) through punks, Rastas (a better section), mods, etc. The slightly voyeuristic tone of text — Hebdige very much adopting the observer's role — is cloying, as is the over abundance of literary coat hangers (oh, he does like his Genet)...

The second half of the book, *A READING*, is more interesting, and nearer the 'spirit' of his interests: a reading as opposed to the meaning. Not in the spirit of the *Reading*, however, is the space allowed this review, so no quantifiable textual quibbling from me — I'm sure you'd rather read about Keith Richards's yacht called *Mendax*, anyway.

Curious omissions from *A Reading* struck me as being, in no particular order, the questions of: beat music/style and sexuality/sexism, dealt only with a glancing blow apropos punks; beat music language — why did "be bop a lu la" signify, and how, etc.; youth culture in its own media, is Hebdige deals with the straight Fleet St. reaction to the successive styles, not with the recording of same in the pop press — surely a quite central, and more often than not harmfully unreflexive mirror of cultural changes.

This is probably part of a wider question/confusion around (not going into *essentialism* and *reductionism* too far) the creation of specifically working class cultures and to what extent their conditions of existence are created for them rather than by them.

Otherwise, *Subculture: The Meaning Of Style* steers clear of hack sociology and is perhaps the only current point of reference in an otherwise critically unpopulated area — myself notwithstanding, of course.

Theory needn't be 'dull' — surely it couldn't be worse than (New) journalism, at any rate? — and common sensical analysis is invariably repressive. Maybe you think something like 'subculture' is an 'intellectual' red herring, that it's all 'just' people 'following' fashion... yes, of course, just like 'people' follow fascism (!) Wake up and make some sense of it.

Ian Panman

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- 16 Liverpool Empire
- 17 Edinburgh Odeon
- 18 Glasgow Apollo
- 19 Newcastle City Hall
- 20 Sheffield City Hall
- 21 Wolverhampton Civic Hall
- 22 Birmingham Odeon
- 23 Oxford New Theatre
- 24 Bristol Colston Hall
- 25 Southampton Gaumont
- 26 Bradford St George's Hall
- 29 Bridlington Spa Hall

December

- 1 Hammersmith Odeon
- 2 Hammersmith Odeon
- 3 Leicester De Montford Hall
- 4 Ipswich Gaumont
- 5 Brighton Centre
- 6 Preston Guild Hall
- 7 Brunel University
- 8 St Albans Civic Hall
- 9 Cardiff Sophia Gardens
- 10 Swansea Brangwyn Hall
- 12 Keele University



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THE NME SEARCHERS INTERVIEW

In Search Of Pop Paradise Lost

After 25 years, the enigmas of rock break silence to talk to Bob Edmunds

FRANK ALLAN of The Searchers says that when Supertramp played in London, he wanted to be them but couldn't get a ticket. So he phoned the promoter's office and told them who he was.

"I said I was Frank Allan of The Searchers, but I didn't expect them to be too impressed. Anyway, the girl who answered the 'phone went away for a couple of minutes, and when she came back, she said: 'Are the tickets for you personally?'

"So I said: 'Yes, for me and a couple of friends.'

"So she said: 'Sorry, we're full up.'

Frank laughs when he tells this story, evidently taking The Searchers' reduced status in his stride. You can't help but think, though, that it's a pretty twisted hierarchy that puts a lightweight, pretentious act like Supertramp above a seminal group like The Searchers.

But then, no one ever claimed there was any justice in rock'n'roll. It's 13 years since The Searchers last had a hit single, a swansong with the ironic title of 'Take Me For What I'm Worth' which went to number 20. It's also five years since RCA, their third label on the way down, foreclosed on their contract, and The Searchers found themselves out in the cold. Or, more precisely, they found themselves making a living from colleges, universities, and cabaret on the Northern club circuit.

The Doncaster Top Rank or Leicester Bailey's or the Sheffield Fiestas hardly seem like appropriate launching pads for a band aiming for world domination, but don't be surprised if these guys are soon back earning a megabuck. Their new album 'Searchers' on Sire is winning consistently favourable reviews, and their new single 'Hearts In Her Eyes' is already a turntable hit. What's more, the music sounds just the sort of thing America's buying from the British these days.

The Searchers have assembled all the right ingredients in precisely the right mixture. Working as ever on the borders of pop, R&B and country, they don't put a note wrong. If the first single fails, the album's well stocked with more to come. The Searchers haven't worked all these years to let slip an opportunity like this. They're not about to wait another 13 years for their third chance.

THE funniest thing was at a gig we did last year in London," says John McNelly, lead guitarist and founder member.

"There was this guy down the front dressed in what looked like one of our old stage suits."

"He was like one of The Knack or The Pussycats," says Mike Pender, lead vocalist and 12-string guitar, another original Searcher. "Dress like and winkle pickers, that sort of thing. Anyway, Frank was taking the piss out of him."

Frank, who plays bass, is not one of the originals. He's only been with the band for 15 years, but he seems the one most likely to make smart remarks from the stage.

"I said: 'My God, there's a guy down there who looks just like one of our old album covers.' The band all laugh, although they've probably heard this one before. "So this guy looked up at me, and he said, 'That's what's supposed to be, you silly prat.'"

Collapse of entire band. Much clapping of knees. Tears of laughter discreetly wiped away. The Searchers evidently like a good story. Batley doesn't seem to have

made them bitter.

"We had one young kid came in the dressing room one night," says John McNelly. "And he said: 'You fellers are great. You should make some records.'"

"He was right," says Frank Allan. "We should."

The Searchers were, of course, one of the original Merseybeat groups who made it big in the wake of The Beatles. Their very first single 'Sweets For My Sweet' went to number one in July 1963.

From the outset, it was clear they were no mop-top plagiarists. Unlike The Fourmost or The Merseybeats or The Swinging Blue Jeans, they never adopted Beatle haircuts. Technically, they were strictly Brylcreemed rockers. More importantly, though, they had their own sound: high, robust harmonies and jangling 12-strings.

"The Byrds were the ones who got the name for using 12-string," says John McNelly. "but we were one of the first to try it out. In fact, we didn't use it that much. The only single it was on was 'When You Walk In The

McNelly and Pender still have untempered Scouse accents as well. These days, they live in a seaside resort called Blundellands which is between Liverpool and Formby. Apparently they see quite a lot of other groups from the Merseybeat era.

Mike: "We bump into the Blue Jeans quite a lot. They play a few of the gigs that we play. Colleges and universities."

John: "The line-up now is Colin Manley from The Remo Four on guitar. He's backed Frankie Laine and Engelbert Humperdinck."

Mike: "Quite a good musician. And they've still got Ray Ennis who's the singer."

John: "Yeah, Ray and Les are still in the group."

Mike: "And of course we still see Gerry (Merden, of The Pacemakers) now and then."

John: "He's still playing the clubs."

Mike: "But he's more into the cabaret sort of thing. I mean, we do a week here and there to keep our money up. But he's really into it."

Anyway, a few years back Mick and I got a big shock. Surtax bills: four thousand quid each. We had to pay it off in instalments."

"We thought the accountant had paid it," says Mike, "and ten years later you get something like that. It can destroy you."

"You need a lot of strength in this business," John says. "It's the only way you keep going."

THE STORY of how The Searchers got together with Sire is an intriguing one.

resting in part on coincidence. If Seymour Stein, head of Sire Records, had not gone to Germany and met Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, and if Seymour hadn't employed a former Social Secretary from Loughborough University, none of it would have happened.

John McNelly takes up the story: "We've known Rob Dickens from Warner Brothers and Paul McNelly (no relation) from Sire for years."

"It was all the first time that we got the right answer to the first question was always put: how did they see us? Usually, the answer is: they know another 'Needles And Pins' hire said they saw us doing all this material. They think we're a solid musical prospect now — and of course we think that too."

The 'Searchers' album was carefully planned over the course of a year. No mistakes were to be allowed in picking the right songs. The Searchers themselves write material, but only two of theirs ended up on the record.

"Our songs had to take their place on the pile like all the rest," says Frank. "We wanted the best songs we could get, and if ours weren't the best we junked them."

The first two songs they had were the 'Hearts In Her Eyes' single, written by The Records' Wilf Birch on top form, and an extraordinary dance tune with the joky title 'No Dancing (Is Allowed)', by Noel Brown, a writer published by Jake Riviera. Brown's songs had already been recorded by Dave Edmunds, and the style was just right for a more forceful Searchers approach.

After that, it was hard slog. The album's producer Pat Moran spent some considerable time slogging round music publishers in London, collecting demos.

"We probably went through hundreds of songs. Some would have made hits for other people, while others were like 'Needles And Pins'. Publishers had lots of them and they brought them out as soon as I mentioned The Searchers."

SO WHY, Frank, did things ever go sour in the first place?

"It was a gradual process. It's not like a footballer who's in the team one week and out the next. The hits don't just suddenly stop. They get smaller. There's a gradual reduction in status and a change of level."

"The singles go down from the Top 10 to the Top 20, to the Top 30, Top 40, and so on. It took a period of about two years for the whole thing to stop."

"During that time, you decide whether you're going to get all paranoid about it and blow your brains out or you're going to make the best of it and accept the new level. I think our main problems were a lack of invention and a bad choice of singles. Once you've had a flop, it's much more difficult to come back. The next record has to be even better."

"After a few flops, you can lose all ideas of what's right."

Did you panic?

"Yes, I think so. We released records that really didn't have any chance, that weren't really good enough. Then some of the later ones — maybe four or five records later — would have had a great chance. But by that time it was too late. The impetus had gone."

I wondered why, during the long years out of favour, The Searchers didn't pack it in? Frank explains that there are two reasons why groups usually give up.

"Other people are very rich, so they're independent of each other, or they're on so little money it's not worth all the aggravation and hard work that goes into touring. In our case, we've always earned enough to maintain a very, very high standard of living. In the last couple of years, we've had to work a lot more days out the year to maintain that standard. But we still do well."

"I've heard people say: 'When I stop enjoying it, or I have to work in cabaret, I'll pack it in. Well, that's fine. But music's not a holy cow. It's still better to play music that's not quite what you want all of the time, than to go and do something you'll hate a hundred per cent of the time.'"

Searchers now (l-r): Mike Pender, Frank Allan, John McNelly, Billy Adamson.

Room'. We used a mix of six-strings on 'Sweets For My Sweet', 'Needles And Pins', and 'Sugar And Spice'. In fact it was a combination of two six-strings, but nobody knew that."

So where did The Searchers' sound come from? John talks about subconsciously adopting guitar solos from Elvis Presley records, but generally he's got no great theories. "It was just the way we played, I suppose."

Sixteen years on, John and Mike still look much the same as they did on the sleeve of their first album 'Meet The Searchers'. As Frank Allan puts it, "This band will always look younger than some of the heavy groups that were around at the end of the '60s."

It's slightly unnerving, however, when McNelly and Pender walk into the West End recording studio where we meet. Imagine meeting Lennon and McCartney today and they're still like something out of 'A Hard Day's Night'. Or imagine a non-ravaged Mick Jagger and a pristine Keith Richards.

John: "We see a lot of Billy Kinsey from The Merseybeats. Liverpool Express, now. They've fallen into the same trap as we did in the early days. Legal hassles, contract hassles, management hassles."

When I ask The Searchers how they feel about their '60s musicians who became millionaires, they say that they themselves were very green in the early days. For example, they gave away the B-side of 'Needles And Pins', their biggest hit which was number one in the States as well as Britain.

"The B-side was 'Saturday Night Out' and it was from a film we were in," Mike explains. "They said we could be in the film if they could have the B-side. We thought, great, led's! We're in a film. But we lost the royalties we'd have had if one of our own songs was used instead. We just didn't realise at the time. Silly really."

John: "We had one manager who said: 'Take a wage, lads, the accountant will look after the rest.'"

They used to book us for concerts at Loughborough. Anyway, Seymour went to Germany and got to know people like Tom Petty who were raving on about 'Needles And Pins'. So he said: 'Who are these guys, The Searchers?', and they got on the 'phone to us and that was it."

The Searchers had their first hits on Pye, then had a spell with Liberty, followed by RCA. At RCA they were persuaded to re-record an album of their hits, because they needed the money: "A bad mistake," says Mike Pender.

After RCA, The Searchers decided they'd had enough of conventional record companies, and though a number of deals presented themselves in the past five years, only Sire was taken up.

"It was the first time that we'd been taken seriously by a new wave kind of label," says Frank Allan. "We thought it would give us credibility by association — which it has done. People weren't so ready to sneer and drop you before you even start."

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THE SINGLE

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	27	BIRMINGHAM Top Rank
	29	HATFIELD Polytechnic
December	2	EDINBURGH Usher Hall
	3	GLASGOW Apollo
	4	MANCHESTER Apollo
	5	NEWCASTLE City Hall
	9	LONDON Empire Ballroom Leicester Sq.
	11	OXFORD New Theatre
	13	MARGATE Guildhall
	14	PORTSMOUTH Guildhall
	16	BRISTOL Locarno
	18	DUBLIN Olympic Ballroom
	20	BELFAST Ulster Halls



SINGLES

SINGLE OF THE WEEK 1

WIRE: Map Reference (Harvest). The obvious single from Wire's exceptional '154' album, 'Map Ref.' is a masterful exercise in mating a strong, well-honed structure of a song with superb twists, turns and splashes of embellishment. The number immediately accelerates into a thoroughly bracing voyage in an aural skyscape, strafed with the juddering motion of aerial flight. An exceptional piece of work from initial concept to final execution, every aural brush-stroke is drawn with an uncanny talent for visualising the full lustre of the end result. The number is also accessible enough to be a hit which would be a blessing not simply for helping raise the standards of radio, but also because its excellence could help unblink the poor chums who consider the likes of Gary Numan to be providing them with relevant experimental music. Buy, buy, buy.

SINGLE OF THE WEEK 2

THE INMATES: The Walk (Radar). After performing a cracker version of the Standells' 'Dirty Water' for their previous outing, The Inmates brusquely launch into Jimmy McCracklin's 'The Walk' and consequently provide this week's plethora of 45s with its most invigorating black of orthodox rhythm & blues/rock 'n' roll mating. Guitarist Peter Gunn plays ice-cutting guitar riffs reminiscent of one Keith Richards in tip-top form, the singer whacks home the lyrics with a stylish vengeance and the whole enterprise rocks with the kind of devil may care authority and unity of purpose that simply wills you to get up and dance. The Inmates, unlike their peers — Feelgoods, Bishops etc. — are only too able to transfer their live punch onto vinyl, parrying a dense, gutsy guitar sound alongside the quicksilver tightness of the rhythm section. This makes them very special indeed. You have been alerted.

JONA LEWIE: God Bless Whoever Made You (Stiff)
RACHEL SWEET: Baby Let's Play House (Stiff)
THE DUPLICATES: I Want To Make You Very Happy (Stiff). There was a time when a record bearing the Stiff logo would be regarded with no small relish by the likes of singles reviewers. Times change and what began as an exemplary record label with great flair and irrepressible verve and a roster of talent more than able to back up the blarney has wilted sadly into ... well just another record company. OK, so Ian Dury is still present in the ranks but, Christ, this trio of releases make Stiff's current clientele seem a pratty scrappy bunch, all in all. Jona Lewie is obviously after a hit single but attempting the coup by penning a number all too reminiscent of contemporary Paul McCartney & Wings' penchant for out-and-out schlock is just too desperate a ploy to be condoned on any level. 'God Bless ...' is basically shaped around the facile familiarity of McCartney's wretched 'Silly Love Songs' and though a fuller production and a couple of chord changes grant it to be viewed as a mild improvement on the latter, it's still a feather-weight conceit lacking punch or anything in the least bit inspired. The Duplicates are a new signing who are obviously highly enamoured with synthesizers which embellish their merry slice of power-pop bop to the point of dreaded overkill. On first hearing their single, I scribbled down "The

Foundations meet Todd Rundgren" only to subsequently decide after further plays that the comparison does the latter pair scant justice. Adequate pop is adequate pop is ... well, need I continue?

Rachel Sweet, on the other hand, sounds like Wanda Jackson choking on a chicken bone when attempting to croon Presley's majestic 'Baby Let's Play House' in a manner so off the mark that it would drain the King's corpse of all that embalming fluid, were this version to be played near his grave.

DAVE EDMUNDS: Crawling From The Wreckage (Swansong). The two excellent singles released from the superb 'Repeat When Necessary' have already made considerable chart impact this year. Now Edmunds tries for a third hit from the same package. A canny choice for pulling off the coup: 'Crawling ...' will doubtless follow in the tracks of the simple fact that the song donated by the very wonderful Graham Parker is Grade A buoyant naggingly addictive rock with wry, ingenious lyrics right up Edmunds' stylistically razor-edged alley.

As a bonus for those who already possess the cut in its album context, the B-side offers a loping country 'n' western tinged paean to heartache entitled 'As Lovers Do' penned by Messrs. Lowe & Edmunds. Unreleased in any other form, it's not essential Edmunds/Lowe product but still not to be sniffed at. Purchase the thing and help the charts from totally degenerating into their ritualised Christmas season schmaltz. Talking of which,

Left: Colin Newman of Wire. Pic: Santo Basone.



45s reviewed by

Nick Kent

PAUL MCCARTNEY:

Wonderful Christmas Time (Parlophone). No point in mincing pies about this one. Paul McCartney dons Santa Claus drag, pulls out his pocket calculator and knocks off a grotesquely twee piece of festive nose-scrappings utilising a tune of his own creation so twee and repellently banal that it makes 'Mull Of Kintyre' sound like John Coltrane's 'Naima' by comparison. God knows McCartney has hit some musical troughs in his time but this hideous offering shuts down even 'Mary Had A Little Lamb' as 'Our Macca's' worst recording to date.

Literally, it strings together clichés pertaining to the festive season ('The choir of children sing their song/Ding Dong Ding Dong Ding Dong') is but one of these inspired morsels, whilst the melody is bereft of even a glimpse of the once prolific ex-Beatle's talents as tunesmith.

The B-side, by the way, is 'Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer' with McCartney sans Wings on both sides tackling all instrumental chores — scarcely a harrowing task, given the purile nature of the undertaking.

MARVIN GAYE: Ego Trippin' Out (Tamil-Motown)

STEVIE WONDER: Send One Your Love (Tamil-Motown). Two talents capable of sporadic bouts of brilliance are here caught going through their dullest moments. Marvin Gaye wins on points (good title, very promising lift-off) but after a minute of playing time the potentially interesting chord structure with multi-tracked Gaye vocals swooping and diving for the sweet notes, it gets

Below: Bill Hurley of The Inmates. Pic: Tony Maclean.

bogged down in the usual limbo i.e. exact same rhythm as 'Got To Give Up', chords straight out of 'Trouble Man', same vocal intertwining as on both the aforementioned, same jive 'I'm so great in the sack' self-assertions. It virtually limps to the finish line.

Meanwhile, Stevie Wonder dips into his schmaltz catalogue to drag out this flimsy effort with the habitual bossa-nova rhythm, electric piano, dreadful "greeting card" lyrics, and harmonica breaks. Both men have been called 'geniuses' but it appears more and more self-evident that they simply have two songs each, a slow one and a fast one. The fact that the B-sides to both songs simply utilise the instrumental track of the A side doesn't exactly help opponents to this contention in their argument.

RANDY NEWMAN: It's Money That I Love (Warner Bros).

One of the most disturbing things of the last two years has been having to clock Randy Newman's degeneration as a songwriter. Having spawned albums of the quality of '12 Songs' and 'Good Old Boys' choc-full of brilliantly concise, wickedly perceptive musical vignettes, Newman's 'Little Criminals' finally made him a lucrative selling commodity 'tho what appeared with that album to be a temporary lapse from inspiration was proven to be a serious malady with the follow-up, this year's 'Born Again'. It's Money That I Love' from the latter is a depressing testament to Newman's all-too-apparent dearth of inspiration these days. A facile observation on your Joe's ruthless obsession with material wealth, it lacks a solid lyrical twist, filling the gaping hole instead with well-worn Newman mannerisms. A good Newman song can make you laugh out loud while scaring the hell out of you; on 'It's Money' the effect is virtually nil: you laugh more out of habit than any impulse. And the habit wears off very quickly.

ROBERT PALMER: Can We Still Be Friends (Island). After years of quietly wondering whether Island Records marketing department was grooming him simply to advertise after shave, Robert Palmer finally drops the credit card Don Juan persona and to and behold gets a hit album in the States. A minor-league talent blessed with good looks his version of Todd Rundgren's sublimely melodious plea for reconciliation neither adds anything nor detracts too much from the original (on Rundgren's excellent 'Hermit Of Mink Hollow' album). There's something very bland about this geezer's whole style and presentation whilst his voice is nothing startling beyond the obligatory blue-eyed soul inflections.

TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS: Here Comes My Girl (Backstreet/MCA). Petty and his cohorts are set to break into the big league with their third album 'Damn The Torpedoes' which is bullfiling its way into the US album Top Ten even as I scrawl. However, the party responsible for choosing this particular track as a single is way off mark. 'Here Comes My Girl' is simply not in the league of 'American Girl', at once overburdened by Petty's all-too-dramatic vocal delivery and under par due to an unimpressive chorus. Producer Lovine builds up the

■ Continues over



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SINGLES

From previous page

song's minor-league momentum with a regal expertise, but the composition simply finds Petty and Co. trying too hard to force conviction into a comparatively weak creation. Even a bonus B-side of Petty performing a credible version of the Animals' vintage 'Don't Bring Me Down' live, somehow fails to alleviate picking a damp squib out of a box of dynamite.

VISAGE: Tar (Genetic/Radar). **GARY NUMAN: Complex (Beggars' Banquet).** Visage is one Steve Strange, ex-Moors Murderers and all-purpose band-wagon jumper helped out by assorted members of Magazine and ex-Rich Kids attempting to make what he doubtless considers to be 'highly relevant' music for the Orwellian '80s. In other words, it's a load of over-synthesized drive overburdened by layer upon layer of clumsy electronic icing that attempts to come to terms with the topic of cigarette smoking and succeeds only in sounding like a bunch of inept and uninspired young posers ripping off Devo, early Roxy and contemporary Bowie in no fixed ratio and to merely too-grating effect. Enterprises like these are simply wretched.

Unfortunately for Visage, Gary Numan himself is far too active on the home-front for similarly all-too-calculated plagiarists to be allowed elbow room. Not that the wretched Numanoid is any better than the likes of Steve Strange. He's just luckier and concentrated on stealing from one lucrative source. The British market after all has always had a great fondness for out-and-out David Bowie rip-offs. Steve Harley proved this some years back and Gary Numan is doing so again. In fact, by simply diluting the

Bowie style made manifest of D.B.'s last three albums and making it more 'approachable' for the masses, Numan currently outsells his source three-to-one. 'Complex' is more of the same formula: a ponderous, zombie-time undertow with Numan's Bowie-on-Largactyl voice appearing after a lengthy intro. The song sounds like an uninspired version of Lodger's 'Fantastic Voyage'. It's so vacuous it's really nothing more than muzak, a fact that makes me feel increasingly uneasy about this wretched clone's considerable following.

ELECTRIC CHAIRS: So Many Ways (Safari). The Chairs, now minus Wayne/Jane County strike out on their own and surprise, surprise, provide the singles reviewer with a piece of experimental pop isosyncrasy that works. An undertow of Can-like drumming is mated to bass harmonies whilst various vocal and guitar 'treatments' grant the song a capricious speeded-up quality that successfully captures that gorgeously hypnotic trance-music that Can were the instigators and masters of, yet without directly plagiarizing the latter as far too many bands do these days. The B-side — 'J'Attends Les Marines' — is excellent as well, a haunting piece sung in French by guitarist Henri Padovani to mesmerising effect. Hunt this one down and check it out. The Electric Chairs, now rid of County's excess and repellent vocals, are suddenly contenders.

GRAMHAM FELLOWS: Men Of Oats And Kneecaps (EMI). Graham Fellows was Jilted John last year. This year, he's chosen to approximate an old

lag from up t'North reciting a touchingly bizarre tribute to you Northern old-timers born with nowt but one clog on, "hard working craftsmen with simple pleasures, living out their twilight years fowling, training whippets and resting their weary bones beside log-fires etc." Backed by lavish orchestration replete with brass band, Fellows uses his considerable talents as burgeoning actor to sound like some antiquated cross between Clive Dunn and John Cooper-Clarke. A veritable oddity and bound to be regarded by many as an elaborate joke. Fellows is strange enough and chooses to function outside the accepted standards of rock music, so that however unorthodox, I have little doubt this piece of sentimental cloth-cap bathos is very seriously conceived indeed.

As a final twist of perversity, Fellows reverts to his Jilted John persona for the B-side 'Rebecca'.

COCKNEY REJECTS: I'm Not A Fool (EMI)

UK SUBS: She's Not There (Garn/RCA). Punk is not dead but tends to buckle at the knees when a band like Cockney Rejects are allowed into the studio gratis one J. Pursey whose production of this horrible harangue displays just how enamoured the King Sham — and the Rejects — was/are with the archetypal Pistols sound. Instrumentally, it's fifth rate 'Bollocks' fare with the guitarist knocking out Steve Jones power chord flourishes and the drummer clumsily copying Paul Cook's rock steady drumming. Worst offender is the singer whose wretched whine attempts to equate the unadulterated vitriol of J. Rotten, '77 vintage, and fails dismally to the point where he sounds like the very

epitome of the moron he so vociferously claims he's not. A stab at punk irony, perhaps? I doubt it. A diabolical record? Absolutely.

The UK Subs on the other hand are more enamoured with The Damned and The Ramones. Their version of the Zombies' 'She's Not There' handles that particular chestnut in much the same way that the Dimmed trashed 'Help' except that while the latter was just an exercise in speed-freak irreverence, the Subs actually lend their amp-up of the sullenly-paced original a carefully thought-out acceleration which is agreeably effective. Unfortunately, their own song, 'Kicks', is further proof that bands who think it easy to copy The Ramones' style of blitzkrieg bam-balam are living under grave delusions.

THE STRANGLERS: Don't Bring Harry EP (UA). With their usual puerile sense of humour, The Strangers have chosen to dish out a four-track EP for the festive season that, beyond the silly cover, strings together material previously available on various albums which has nothing whatsoever to do with the period of greed and gluttony. Instead, one is primarily granted a reprise of JJ Burnel's anti-heroin paean from 'The Raven' — 'Don't Bring Harry'. Of the other three tracks, 'Wired' from Cornwell's collaborative 'Nosferatu' appears to deal with the effects of cocaine but ends up sounding pointlessly oblique, full of desperate instrumental effects failing to connect with one another. Burnel's 'Crabs' from 'Euroman' gets stolid adherence from all participants. Ominous stuff but mock-ghoulish vaudeville and not remotely unsettling.

TALKING HEADS FEAR OF MUSIC

SEE THEM ON TOUR:

- November 26th Leicester de Montfort Hall
- November 27th Newcastle City Hall
- November 28th Aberdeen Capitol Theatre
- November 29th Edinburgh Odeon
- December 1st Manchester Free Trade Hall
- December 2nd Birmingham Odeon
- December 3rd Hammersmith Palais
- December 4th London Hammersmith Palais
- December 5th Portsmouth Locarno
- December 6th London Electric Ballroom
- December 7th London Electric Ballroom

WEA
SRK 6076

Not sure if Tony Parsons'

PUBLIC
NEARLY TEN THIRTY
I'M RAISING EARLY
I'VE GOT AN EYE
TO BUY THE BEST
BEFORE THE RUSH
SOMEONE LEFT A BABY
IN THE CAR PARK
NEVER ANY REASON
DON'T YOU LISTEN
ONE MORE SOB STORY
SOMEONE IS CALLING
SEEN THROUGH THE WINDOW
CALLING THROUGH MIRRORS
DON'T YOU LISTEN
DON'T INTERFERE
IGNORE IT AND
IT WILL GO AWAY
SOMEONE IS CALLING
DON'T YOU LISTEN
SOMEONE IS CALLING
DON'T YOU LISTEN
DON'T YOU LISTEN
DON'T YOU LISTEN

I DON'T EVEN CARE
 THIS PERSON'S HAD ENOUGH
 OF USELESS MEMORIES
 ALWAYS REMEMBER
 TWISTED AMENITIES
 COULD BE WRONG
 THIS PERSON'S HAD ENOUGH
 OF USELESS MEMORIES
 ALWAYS REMEMBER THESE
 TWISTED AMENITIES
 OUT OF ORDER
 OUT OF ORDER
 IT COULD BE WORSE
 YOU'RE LOSING ALL THE TIME
 I LET YOU STAY TOO LONG
 IT COULD BE WRONG
 IT COULD BE WORSE
 YOU'RE LOSING ALL THE TIME
 I LET YOU STAY TOO LONG
 I COULD BE WRONG
 I COULD BE WRONG
 WHATEVER PAST
 COULD NEVER LAST
 ALL IN YOUR MIND
 WHERE IT ALL BEGAN
 YOU'RE DOING WRONG
 IT'S NOT THE MOVIES
 AND YOU'RE OLD

DRIVE ME TO THE FOREST IN A JAPANESE CAR
THAT SWEET OF RUBBER ON CONCRETE TAR
HINDSIGHT DOES ME NO GOOD
STANDING NAKED IN THE BACK OF THE WOODS
THE CASSETTE PLAYED PORTUNES
I CAN'T FORGET THE IMPRESSION YOU MADE
YOU LEFT A HOLE IN THE BACK OF MY HEAD
I DON'T LIKE HIDING IN THE FOLIAGE AND PEAT
IT'S WET AND I'M LOSING MY BODY HEAT
THE CASSETTE PLAYED PORTUNES
THIS BLEEDING HEART
LOOKING FOR BODIES
NEARLY INJURED MY PRIDE
PRAISE PICNICKING IN THE SAKASHI COUNTRY SIDE
PORTUNES

SLOW MOTION
 SLOW MOTION
 GETTING RID OF THE ALBATROSS
 SOWING THE SEEDS OF DISCONTENT
 I KNOW YOU VERY WELL
 YOU ARE UNBEARABLE
 I'VE SEEN YOU FAR TOO CLOSE
 GETTING RID OF THE ALBATROSS
 FAYING REAR BLINDS
 IF I WANTED
 SHOULD I REALLY
 IF I
 RUN AWAY
 RIDING ALONG ON THE CREST OF THE WAVE
 GETTING RID OF THE ALBATROSS
 ANOTHER YOU WILL NOT FORGET
 I KNOW
 RUN AWAY
 RUN AWAY
 SHOULD I
 RUN AWAY
 GETTING RID OF THE ALBATROSS
 I KNOW YOU VERY WELL
 YOU ARE UNBEARABLE
 I'VE SEEN YOU FAR TOO CLOSE
 IF I WANTED
 IF
 RUN AWAY
 RUN AWAY
 RUN AWAY
 RUN AWAY
 HIDING ON CARPETS
 ANOTHER
 SOWING THE SEEDS OF DISCONTENT
 RUNNING AWAY FROM THE
 SLOW
 SOWING THE SEEDS OF DISCONTENT
 STILL
 RUN AWAY
 I RAN AWAY
 FAR TOO PERSONAL
 SHOULD I REALLY STAY
 GETTING RID OF THE ALBATROSS
 ALWAYS FAR
 GETTING RID
 IF I WANTED TO

A FACE IS RAINING
ACROSS THE BORDER
THE PRIDE OF HISTORY
THE GAME AS MURDER
IS THIS LIVING
HE'S BEEN CAREERING
THE BRADY HANDS RUNNER
BEHIND THE REASONING
NO CLAIM FOR PROPERTY
BOTH SIDES OF THE RIVER
THERE IS BACTERIA
IS THIS LIVING
HE'S BEEN CAREERING
THE GUNNER MACHINERY
MANGLE THE MILITARY
NO ONE SHOULD BE THERE
IS THIS LIVING
BLOWN INTO BREEZE
SCATTER CONCRETE
THE JAGGED METAL BAD LIFE
MANUFACTURED
HE'S BEEN CAREERING
IS THIS LIVING
A FACE IS RAINING
ACROSS THE BORDER
THE PRIDE OF HISTORY
THE GAME AS MURDER
IS THIS LIVING
CAREERING
THERE MUST BE MEANING
BEHIND THE MORNING
SPREADING TALES
LIKE COFFIN NAILS
IS THIS LIVING
HE'S BEEN CAREERING
IT'S RAINING
I NEED TO HIDE
TRIGGER MACHINERY
I'VE BEEN CAREERING
ACROSS THE BORDER
IS THIS LIVING
BOTH SIDES OF THE RIVER
THERE IS BACTERIA
ARMOURD MACHINERY
MANOVED

IT IS YOUR CHARACTER
DEEP IN YOUR NATURE
TAKE ONE EXAMPLE
SAMPLE AND HOLD
ROMANCE AND SPACE
THE LACK IN YOURSELF
IT IS YOUR NATURE
WE SEE YOU CLIMBING
IMPROVING THE SPORT
WEARING MY SUIT
IT IS YOUR CHARACTER
THERE IS A LIMIT
OVER A YOUR SHOULDER
EVERYONE LOVES YOU
UNTIL THEY KNOW YOU
PEFUME AEROSOLS
MAY CHAMPION THE STRANGERS
NICK
STANDING AROUND
ALL THE NIGHT
CRAWLING
TENNIS ON TUESDAY
THE LADDER IS LONG
IT IS YOUR NATURE
YOU GOT A SUNDAY
FOOTBALL ON SUNDAY
SOCIETY BOY
ON SOCIAL SECURITY
IT IS YOUR NATURE
TENNIS ON THURSDAY
SIPING CHAMPION
FOOTBALL ON FRIDAY
HOME ON THE TRAIN
IT IS YOUR NATURE
GIRL FROM TOTTER
SAID MY WIFE
SO WAS MY SUIT
THE LADDER IS

I'VE HAD YOUR
 FROM TOTALLY
 TO YOU WERE
 WAS MY SUI
 THE LADDER IS LOW
 SEEING IN YOUR EYES
 WORDS CAN NEVER SAY THE WAY
 TOLD ME IN YOUR EYES
 PAIN IN A FADE
 SEEING IN YOUR EYES
 SEEING IN YOUR EYES
 NEVER REALLY KNOW
 NEVER REALIZE
 SILENCE IN YOUR EYES
 SILENCE IN YOUR EYES
 NEVER REALLY KNOW
 NEVER REALIZE
 TIL IT'S GONE AWAY
 THE SILENCE IN YOUR EYES
 SEEN IT IN YOUR EYES
 SEEN IT IN YOUR EYES
 SEEN IT IN YOUR EYES
 NEVER NO MORE HOPE AWAY
 PAIN IN A FADE
 WATCH HER SLOWLY DIE
 SAW IT IN HER EYES
 CHOKING ON A BIRD
 FLOWERS PUTTING EYES
 SEEN IT IN A DAY
 SILENCE WAS A WAY
 SEEING IN YOUR EYES
 SEEING IN YOUR EYES
 SEEING IN YOUR EYES
 IN SEEING THROUGH MY EYES
 WORDS CANNOT EXPRESS
 WORDS CANNOT EX.....

VOICE MORNING IN A SPEAKER
NEVER REALLY GET TOO CLOSE
ONLY A GIMMICK POINTED FINGERS
NEVER MORE SERIOUS SIGHT
WOULDN'T WASTE THE EFFORT ON ENTERTAINMENT
OUT OF CONTROL- MOB RUNNING WILD
ALL YOU EVER GET IS ALL YOU STEAL
SIDE OF THE MOND THAT THE TOURISTS NEVER SEE
ANGLO AMBIENCE
CHANT
DON'T KNOW WHY I BOTHER
THERE'S NOTHING IN IT FOR ME
THE MORE I SEE THE LESS I GET
THE LIVES OF YOU AND ME ARE
AN EMBARRASSMENT
CHANT
IT'S NOT IMPORTANT
IT'S NOT WORTH A MENTION IN THE GUARDIAN
EVERY LIBRARIAN HAS ITS THEORY
CHANT CHANT ANGLO AMBIENCE
CHANT
VOICE MORNING IN A SPEAKER
CHANT

THIS COULD BE HEAVEN
SHALLOW SPREADS OF ORDERED LAWN'S
I LIKE THE ILLUSION
ILLUSION OF PRIVACY
THE CAREFUL TREES BLENDING SO PERFECTLY
BLAND PLANNED IDLE LUXURY
A CAVIAR OF SILENT DIGNITY
LIFE IN LOVELY ALLOTTED SLOTS
A TOWN NICE
A NICE CONSTITUTION
A LAYERED MASS OF SUBTLE PROPS
THIS COULD BE HEAVEN
MILD MANNERED MEN
WELL INTENTIONED RULES
TO DIGNIFY A DAILY CODE
LAWFUL ORDER - STANDARD VIEWS
THIS COULD BE HEAVEN

THE METAL BOX.



RAT SCABIES. Age 23. Instrument: drums. Hobbies: breaking things. Ambition: "Plenty of booze, plenty of women, all the drugs I can take and somewhere to live while I'm doing it."



CAPTAIN SENSIBLE. Age 25. Instrument: guitar. Hobbies: cricket, psychedelic music, jazz. Philosophy: "I'd rather be poor and keep playing 'til I'm 60, 'cos I actually enjoy all this rubbish."



ALGY WARD. Age 20. Instrument: bass. Hero: Lemmy. Hobbies: avoiding arty people, playing while drunk. "I can do it without batting an eyelid. It's an art and it took me a year to perfect it."



DAVE VANIAN. Age 23. Instrument: vocals. Hobbies: vampirism, horror chic, not waking up in the morning. Quote: "I don't exactly identify with Dracula, but I sympathise."

CAPTAIN SENSIBLE to a DJ from Radio Trent: "Exactly what this group is all about, right, is we just make NOISE. We've got no politics, no nothing, no big ideas about changing the world. RAT SCABIES: "It's NOISE, in the final analysis. It's all NOISE. THE DAMNED: "NOISE, NOISE, NOISE is for heroes/Leave the music for zeros." — Notes, Noise, Noise."

THEY'RE a noisy bunch of bleeders, The Damned. A more rowdy, rockfide, barbarian troop of demolition crazies would be hard to enlist. Ask anyone.

Aesthetics? — they've scarcely heard of the stuff. Moderation? Composure? — they wouldn't know it if they saw it. No-one, least of all the band themselves, would deny that there's been times when the name of The Damned and the tab 'Rock 'n' Roll Parody' have split one and the same thing.

Times have changed, but The Damned, it seems, have been loath to follow suit. Despite the break-up, Dave Vanian's brief tenure with the abysmal Doctors Of Madness, Scabies' short season with his dinner and pizzen tiggers' combo, The White Cars, Sensible and Algy Ward's initial flirtation with no-hope unit King, the band may have crawled back — penniless but unscathed — from the brink of extinction but the song remains the same.

Bear in mind at the early juncture, that the songist have always taken a staunch second seat to the band's boundless ability to convert wide-scale vengefulness into pop press hot copy. You'll hardly need reminding of the time in Paris, say, when Scabies was forced to wear the crownlet out after his pandemonium entailed his motorcade for a "terrorist shoot-out", or the time they drew 25 fire-engines to The Holiday Inn, Boston, at the time they were apprehended on the M1 for carrying a "burning person" aboard their Transit. Or even the dear-legendary occasion where they checked into a San Francisco hotel in three times only to be closed two days later humbling their gear to a bus stop with source enough moolah for the fare to the airport. He alone four tickets to LA.

Their tour managers bear silent testimony to such hair-raising antics. One, they claim, suffered a heart attack for his pains, another pulled out with nervous exhaustion. Their last manager, one Rick Rogers (now safely in The Specials' driving seat), was reduced to barricading himself in his hotel room on hearing the news for the 10th time, and — on several occasions — was moved, quite literally, to tears.

So it's hardly surprising the brain to imagine that the most chaotic tank known to rock — short of jamming a "blunk piano" on the Uptown — can only be a sojourn in the Damned camp.

Many's the time some defenceless hack has been delivered, quaking, into their contemptuous company, to return a shaken, slightly burnt shadow of his/her former self, reeking of fighter fuel and with a banner choc-fil of chattering-gum.

And that it is that your reporter took this life in his hands to risk you the features you never believed was possible — The Damned as individuals (!)

Scene: An expensive suite in The Monsoon Hotel, Marble Arch. Rat Scabies (23) is ensconced in a king-size bed. He's clearly had a couple of drinks. On his right is a brief acquaintance, one Karen, starters serve a waist-length Yoko One wig. The bed is strewn with discarded flowers and an empty squash bottle. Mailed on the wall is a circular logo depicting the Woodstock guitar, broken, with a bar hanging from the neck, bearing the legend "Three Years Of Anarchy Chaos And Destruction". The effort is shortening.

P "EAD," says Scabies, fumbling with the songist have always taken a staunch second seat to the band's boundless ability to convert wide-scale vengefulness into pop press hot copy. You'll hardly need reminding of the time in Paris, say, when Scabies was forced to wear the crownlet out after his pandemonium entailed his motorcade for a "terrorist shoot-out", or the time they drew 25 fire-engines to The Holiday Inn, Boston, at the time they were apprehended on the M1 for carrying a "burning person" aboard their Transit. Or even the dear-legendary occasion where they checked into a San Francisco hotel in three times only to be closed two days later humbling their gear to a bus stop with source enough moolah for the fare to the airport. He alone four tickets to LA.

He's wearing tonight but a grin like a suspension bridge and what appears to be a bathmat on his head. It looks a bit familiar, somehow.

"Believe!" How Scabies, enraged, "It's my hair." He waves aloft a cheap nylon Lennon wig. "It's my new image. We're fuckin' 'gods' now, are we?"

"We've been sitting here contemplating on destruction and chaos — and meditating, I'm told, you're insane. I've decided to become the ultimate and Woodstockian."

I clear a few flowers and park myself at the foot of the bed. And what inner visions might Rat have experienced?

"I don't know. John Lennon did this once, I thought I'd see what it was all about."

What is it all about, Rat?

"Wreckin' things," he explains with obvious relish. "It's like this, you see, when Keith Moon died I was grief-stricken. What a loss to the world and the music business. And I was just lying there in this lonely room one night and this white dove came fluttering in and threw the silly old into the window. And then this white dove flew straight at me and into me 'sart, and that was it — big drum fits, smash! hotels, great fun. I like breaking things. Everyone does it when they have the chance, don't they? Cheap publicity."

I glance at the scotch bottle. Finish — every drop.

"I've got a personality crisis. Who am I? What am I? What am I doing here? What's the meaning of life? The answer's in the wall. Move too fast and you're in the past (demonic laughter). Yeah, everyone's seen Quadrophonia. Mod's were last week's thing, that was cut minutes ago. The band here two days, panicking about trying to decide how lovely I am. This minute's thing is being John Lennon."

How long is to go to there, Rat?

"I think it's going to stop right now, actually."

The Lennon wig goes flying across the room, as does the One wig, accompanied by a hail of ripped-up flowers. The wigless Karen is dispatched to procure more booze, much to her dismay. She plies enjoys musing in on the Scabies limelight.

"The reason we've got a bed this big," she means, "is to fit his ego."

"It's a rule," chirps Rat. "I've got an enormous ego. That's why I go on stage and show off. That's what it's all about and that's all I'm interested in doing. It's true, isn't it? No-one goes on stage unless they want to show off. Look at me, I'm up here, you're down there, and I'm cleverer than you're 'cos you paid to see me do this!" (Ratwig like a drum).

"I see myself more like a schizophrenic than anything. The confusion on stage that's playing drums is not the same person who's sitting here talking to you now. That's the thing about excess. It does get to the stage of 'Ah, yes, I've exceeded in doing. It's true, isn't it? No-one goes on stage unless they want to show off. Look at me, I'm up here, you're down there, and I'm cleverer than you're 'cos you paid to see me do this!' (Ratwig like a drum)."

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Whereas if I was on stage and someone gave me an electricity bill, I'd rip it up. And a dead bug? — I'd bite his head off and throw it in the audience.

When I'm not up there, I like to think I become a bit... human."

He leaps up, grabs a towel, and disappears backwards.

"All I want from life," comes a voice above the running water, "is plenty of booze, plenty of women, and as many drugs as I can take. And somewhere to live while I'm doing it."

HIS A MAN of simple tastes, is Rat. He approaches to Damned music is little different.

Remember this: it's the group that started out playing chaotic three-chord punk thrash in '70 and repeated this formula for 2 albums and 6 singles before getting a first taste of chart success with 'Love Song'. It's shot straight in at No. 20, heralding the reunion tour and a label switch from Sire to Chess.

A song with a melody — a hit single. There had to be a connection.

Maybe on this stage course of events, and Rat Scabies never submerged in the bath, a microphone propped against the toilet, as he considers the meaning of melodies between doses of sweet-smelling hotel shampoo.

"The new single," he explains, "is, I think, a really good record. It's a lot of normal Damned fans don't like it because it's a bit poppy."

Your reporter is perched on the sink. He's wondering — as 'Love Song' was such a comparative monster — why they didn't deliberately write in the same vein?

"What do you mean 'deliberately write'? None of us, I don't think, has ever sat down and thought 'I'm going to "deliberately write" a song like this. You write what you THINK is a good song, and what you think is a suitable song for us to do. And 'Smash It Up' is."

"Love Song" got to number 20, which is a little bit high really. 20 isn't half a big one for a band's first single. I mean this is the our first proper album coming out."

Why proper?

"Well they were proper, but they were all Brian's songs apart from 'Slab Your Back'. Now it's all down to me and the Captain. What do you think of the new album?"

He leaps up, grabs a towel, and disappears backwards.

"All I want from life," comes a voice above the running water, "is plenty of booze, plenty of women, and as many drugs as I can take. And somewhere to live while I'm doing it."

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I like it, I tell him, but The Damned seem to be still travelling the circle line. 'Liar' and 'Molody Lee' are just straight old punk thrash, no more.

"Yeah, the straight old Damned tradition. Classic Damned. 'Liar' I'd call a straight-forward punk song in a lot of ways, but the drum break in the middle of it is completely unexpected. A Sandy Nelson rip-off."

Don't you feel like writing something else apart from straight-forward punk songs?

"Notes, Notes, Notes is like Status Quo recording 'Again, Again', a total parody of what you were doing in the early days."

That's true, but I don't know how much you want to read into what goes on in our minds."

How much does go on?

"A lot," claims Rat defiantly, losing the soap. "Me and the Captain have been going to the studio and producing lovely, and we've begun to define what makes a good record from a bad record. And it's down to production — and notes. I mean 'Devos With The Devil' by Cory Powell wouldn't be the same without that drum sound. It's noise, in the final analysis, it's all noise. Like The Flying Lizards — a combination of noises that are pleasing or catchy to the ear."

That's the way I'd rather read something behind a certain drift the desert straws of 'other half'. Unfortunately nobody ever reads that far with The Damned. They just think 'Notes, Notes, Notes' — Wooooo! (The wooooo).

What "other half"?

"You know, jessameelica." He says the word as if chewing a pound of terrons.

"There's a rare half" that jessameelica always look at. But when it comes to an audience, I think they like a good song."

(Ratwig like a drum). — Yeah pan gum, they look a good tune. And that's what it's all about, getting the fucking noise right."

Your whole approach, then, hasn't had much of an approach?

"On the approach is exactly the same of course. Plenty of noise, as much as you can, as often as you can. We're shouting off, and it's whoever can outplay the other one. Everyone's competing against everyone else. That's what The Damned are all about."

Rat's out of the bath and slinking back into his threads. I'm off the sink and wondering if he ever really believed he'd be successful.

"What, as The Damned? I don't know. I think

I'll be successful somehow. It all depends what you call success. The idea, right, is that you do what you do, and you try to make as much money as you can doing it. I just got on with what I'm good at, and that's playing drums."

How long is he going to keep doing it?

"I think there's a," grins Scabies stuffing bars of soap into his pockets. "I think you're stuck with us."

The contents of the dress cabinet are being transferred to his shoulder bag. "From gym-slips to junk, like The Damned corrupt your life," Rat announces, as we leave in something of a hurry.

Scene: Dave Vanian's basement flat in Islington. It's a veritable shrine to Great Dracula and all of vampire persuasion. Short of a brass of iron maiden, it has all the self-conscious shaven of a high-budget Hammer set. The place-dark is split away by a candlelight and a dim red bulb. The walls are hung with wigs of Dracula. The plastic tea-tray, a spilt bull-and-chain mace, and bouquets of fake roses. Life-size painted china mannequins peer from the corners in black lace veils; several olive hands and skulls graze the mantelpiece. There's a church harmonium and a black telephone off the hook. From behind a curtain drift the desert straws of Hammer movie soundtrack — with delights as 'Vampire At The Harpichord'. The scoundrel slinking after and the original Master of the House peep into the air, the place reeks like a High-Church Society throwing a Black Mass.

Vanian (22) sits in a huge velvet armchair — white face, oiled collar, slicked back hair — sipping a bloody mary from a crystal goblet, and winking up a clockwork mouse to entertain his black cat, Demos (barbaric slur). True, he's pulled out all the stops for the benefit of his reporter, but it would be correct to deny that the place was just a little bit baroque.

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was directly ripped off from the seed Vampire. He shows me pictures of the pair and, yes, you can hardly tell them apart.

With precision timing, the bedroom door creaks open to admit Laurie, Vanian's wife, who appears to be directly ripped off from both of them. Jet black hair, ghostly pallor, crimson lipstick, black face gloves, black patent boots, black apron — she's the spitting image. It's almost uncanny. She met Vanian in '77 when they both answered an ad to buy a house, and ended up splitting the cost two ways. They were engaged in a week, and married in three. Who says romance is dead and buried?

I ask Vanian what he's made me of Udo Kier from Warhol's Blood For Dracula, but then again anyone wearing white makeup, a black cloak and a banner full of occultist symbols to look like Udo Kier. It's an occupational hazard. Vanian says it's "an accident" anyway.

Had he seen the Warhol portrait, and were there any particular screenings of The Count that he held in great esteem?

"The Warhol? I enjoyed them. I'd like to have seen them in 3-D though. There's a weird sequence in Flash For Frankenstein where the servant attacks the housekeeper. They're on the ground and you see up through a grill, and the guy actually puts his hands on her scar and pulls her inside out. In 3-D," he says, his eyes lighting up, "this falls onto the grate above you and her insides fall towards your face. There's various gory things like that."

I find most Dracula movies very bad. If anything, but I like the way Polanski did that apocryphal, Director Of The Vampires."

Laurie's expression fringes looks out of the dark bearing another large vodka and orange. I settle back into the sofa, surveying his enormous collection of Dracula books and wondering what it is he finds so attractive about our sharp-toothed friend.

"It's the whole romance of it. Although he's supposed to be an inflexible monster, hunting for blood etc, he has the air of a gentleman on top of all that. And I suppose in many ways I — not exactly identify with him — but I sympathise, and many of the emotions that are described in these books are quite similar to the way I feel. We're pretty much nocturnal, so a kind of late into place."

"Then there's this strange thing towards black as well, not just the colour but anything with the word 'black' in it. Although it

was directly ripped off from the seed Vampire. He shows me pictures of the pair and, yes, you can hardly tell them apart.

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From previous page

probably seems contrived, I'm attracted to certain things that are black — black cherries, black cigarettes — I find it happening all the time."

Looking at the ghastly collection of props around the flat, it's evident that there's practice in such preaching. Vanian claims he's been like this since he was a kid, a feeling somewhat bolstered by his past employment as a grave-digger in (of all places) Hemel Hempstead in '75. He didn't just need the job, he was apparently hell-bent on the idea of such a post. He played the very first Damned gigs while still shifting the stiffs, and left after a year and a half, despite being offered the management of two cemeteries with a house and car thrown in "just because I was so good at the job."

It could be construed that Vanian's neat transition from catacomb creeper to glam-punk singer was no more than a convenient vehicle for indulging in his current fantasies.

"No it wasn't like that at all. At the time I just desperately wanted to be in a band and sing. I wasn't even sure if I could do it. In fact I'd never actually sung before. There wasn't a lot going on then, everybody was just fading away, and everything that was around just didn't interest me. And I was hearing these things coming from New York about The New York Dolls. I liked their attitudes to the music business in general, and in London there were certain other people who felt the same way. It was like a magnet."

"Malcolm McLaren introduced me to Chrissie Hynde, then Rat Scabies, then The Captain — who was called 'Eats' at the time 'cos he never stopped eating — and we formed a band. We had this idea of having two lead singers who'd do these dual vocals all the time. It was absolutely horrendous, I might add, but it was a good idea."

"When I first met Brian (James), I liked his style 'cos I thought in lots of ways he was like Johnny Thunders from the Dolls, although unfortunately I think he's lost a lot of that initial aggression. And I suddenly realised that if I worked hard enough at it, it would all work out."

And how did they feel about your vampire-camp visuals?

"I don't know. You've got to remember that then there wasn't such a thing as punk at all. There was nothing except Ziggy Stardust. It was a transition period, and all people had was David Bowie and the glam-rock thing —

Gary Glitter. But otherwise — in real life — you didn't see many odd people — many really strange people walking about. And if you did, they were probably in platform heels and they were transvestites or something."

"And I suppose looking at it the way I did at the time they thought it would be good — just because no-one else looked like that."

Aren't the current band members now a little sceptical about your chosen lifestyle?

"Well, they don't try and change me, but they obviously take the piss now and again. But I think they accept that it's part of my personality and they have to stick with it. Whatever each of us is — and whatever faults we have — has seemingly become one thing, which at the moment is The Damned."

At this point, with the closing chords of the *Tarantula* soundtrack shuddering from the Danette, Vanian sets about explaining how he wants to install moving eyes in his mannikins so they can follow you as you wander round the room. I suddenly notice there's another china maiden, draped in black batwing silk, leaning out over their double-bed. It would seem that Vampire, Morticia, Laurie and this uncomfortably lifelike creature are four and the same person.

What's it look like, I wonder, when they wake up in the mornings?

They don't know, they tell me, they don't wake up in the mornings.

Scene, the first: The Indoor Cricket Section of the Crystal Palace Sports Centre. Nets 1-3 contain portly stockbrokers with W G Grace beards who are taking turns at lobbing leg-breaks in the direction of a wicket. Net 4 contains the founder members of the Croydon Punks Cricket Club (or the CPCC, as its captain would have it) going about their weekly practice. The persons in question are Raymond Burns (Captain Sensible, 25) in his Test Match whites, and his girlfriend, Curse (that's how she spells it, German) wearing a T-shirt labelled 'The Vomits'.

An outsider could well feel perplexed.

"It's cricket, innit?" chimes The Captain between off-drives. "It's good fun, y'know, wacking a dirty great hefty ball all over the place."

In a blinding flash, I recall the instant (in February '79) when Captain first advertised his love of the game. He and various others of the CPCC were to be found at Heathrow waving banners reading "Boycott For Pope" and "Brearley Must Go" at the returning English team. It even made the *Sunday Telegraph*.

"It was one of those drunken decisions. We were down at some club and just stocked up with beer — pockets bulging with bottles of whisky — and headed down to the airport."

"We don't like Mike Brearley 'cos, y'know,

Boycott should have been made captain. He's the senior member of the side, and he's the greatest living cricketer at the moment. He breaks records every season. He's brilliant. They should have made him captain. So we said 'We're gonna chain ourselves to the railings 'til Geoff Boycott comes'. Only trouble was, Boycott and Brearley had both stopped off in Bombay."

Scene, the second: Sensible's room in his parents' gaff in Croydon. A poster of Boycott hangs above the bed, alongside Olive Newton-John. The legend "Music For Idiots" is scrawled on the wallpaper. There's a wardrobe full of dayglo gorilla suits, two stolen police sirens and a sizeable stack of psychedelic albums, one of which — Terry Riley's 'A Rainbow In Curved Air' — is making the rounds at this very moment.

UNLIKE SCABIES, The Captain off-stage is a mild-mannered sort, though it's obvious that it's the same flashes of anger that greet certain questions as account for much of The Damned's notorious lust for wreckage. Somehow, the amount they make on tour never quite covers their astronomical hotel bills. They lost £5000 in America alone, somewhat encouraged by the nation's apathetic response.

"They hated us," he says. "The Yanks are never going to like anything as extreme as us. They like things to be nice and compact and middle-of-the-road. They like MOR heavy metal like Boston, and MOR punk like Costello."

Didn't the mind that The Damned and Vast Wealth weren't exactly synonymous?

"No, that's a good thing. That's probably why the group's still going, you know. If we'd have made it stinking rich, we would have took the money and pissed off by now. Know what I mean? As soon as someone gets enough money, they don't have to do it anymore. Or if they do it, they do it half-heartedly — like your Stones and your Floyd, who I suppose were great once."

"I'd rather be poor and keep playing 'till I'm sixty, than make it stinking rich and end it all now, 'cos I actually enjoy all this rubbish."

He claims he's heavily influenced by Syd Barrett, loved The Soft Machine (first four albums), The Floyd (first two), sings the praises of The Electric Prunes and a technoflash hippy combo called Egg, and adores Terry Riley so much he actually lifts entire chords from his albums and slots them into Damned numbers. He also has a passion for Gary Glitter, *Grease* and *Abba*, *The Movie*, but that's another story altogether.

I took a shine to The Soft Machine myself

once, but evidently not to the same extent as The Captain.

"I used to be a jazz-groupie, a complete fan of The Soft Machine. We used to follow them around everywhere, me and the Mopeds (as in Johnny Moped). We used to have false moustaches and sunglasses exactly like Mike Ratledge, and we even used to grow our hair like him. And after gigs we used to get in the car and follow him when he drove off, and when he stopped at traffic lights, we'd draw up next to him and all look out of the window — completely deadpan faces, y'know. And he'd go 'Aaaaaaah' and put his foot down and try and get the hell away from us."

I like it in small doses, but I mention that others won't be quite so partial to his psychedelic leanings.

"I couldn't care less. I couldn't give a shit. I just do what I wanna do."

"The reason I like this band is that we all play to the limit. Rat plays his drums to the limit, I play to the limit of my capabilities and Algy does too. Most groups just underplay it all the time, and we extend ourselves. And if we blow it sometimes it doesn't matter, 'cos at least we've tried. It's like The Cream. They used to go supremely over the top, didn't they? They weren't playing with each other, they were competing. That's what we do, and I won't change it for anyone or any amount of money."

What if there wasn't an audience for it?

"Well I mean there's no audience for jazz, and there's some really good jazz coming out at the moment. Elton Dean — he couldn't get a contract. He'd been looking for a contract for a year and a half, and yet all these punk groups were getting contracts thrown at them. It's all wrong."

"If what I was doing was out of fashion or something, I wouldn't care, I'd still do it. I'd never do stupid sessions playing disco guitar or things like that. It really must be soul-destroying."

True to form, The Damned cut a ludicrous spoof on Numan, Travolta and The Specials for a Peel session two nights before. Peel aptly summed up their efforts as being by "The Barron Knights of the '80s".

Sensible chips in: "That's it, y'see, we can do it! Phil out of Motorhead, y'know, he comes up to me sometimes and says 'You're in such a great position, 'cos you can do anything you want to do.' Other groups would blow their ...

Continues page 77

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PUBLIC IMAGE LIMITED
The Metal Box (Virgin)

PEOPLE say that Public Image Ltd. should play live more often. People say that PiL aren't interested in their (or any) audience, that they're selfish and irresponsible, that they abuse their privileges, that they only want to alienate. People say too much and think too little.

So PiL prefer to spend their time in studios rather than on stages, so the PiL creative process and ensuing recorded noise have no cosy accommodating antecedents. So PiL are not what they were expected to be — so what? Did you really expect a repeat performance? Do you really want John Lydon's head on a plate? I didn't and I don't.

But even as we drift towards the bitter end of 1979 and the 1970s, pundit persons are compiling retrospectives of the dying decade like there was no today, let alone no Friday week. Maybe Doomsday is ahead of schedule, but they're welcome to their insights, hindsight and overviews, the huffing old windbags.

Past is passed, and all I feel moved to say about matters punk and post-punk is that I'm glad John Lydon is no longer Johnny Rotten, that he's somehow managed to crawl from the pathetic wreckage of the Pistols with his dignity if not his self-respect intact, and that I admire the man for displaying a sight more sheer bloodyminded integrity during the whole pitiful parade than almost any of his peers or partners in iconoclastic crime.

Just what is the problem with PiL though? I can't see it myself. Lydon never promised anyone an easy ring around the rose garden. You can take PiL or leave them — just don't say they haven't given fair warning. If you haven't enjoyed the story so far, then you won't even want to glance at these chapter headings. Mind you, I always found the Pistols unbearable except in tiny doses, but then there's no accounting for my taste.

The PiL noise is certainly 'different', but hardly 'difficult'. Such flags are subjective and relative, of course, but try and keep the mounting preconceptions at arms' length, OK? It might help.

The PiL noise is John Lydon (vocals), Keith Levine (guitar, drums) and Wobble (bass, drums), everybody trebling on electronics, effects and synthesizers.

The PiL noise is a three-way street, a most democratic and co-operative animal that uses the studio as it sees fit, as an additional instrument mostly, that assesses where the limits of the recording technology lie and tends to break beyond them.

PiL produce the most aggressively — and sometimes oppressively — physical sound on record since Can made 'Monster Movie' or 'Togo Mago'. Drawing rigid, restrictive parallels between the two bands is probably pointless, but it's interesting to compare their respective attitudes to music-making.

Part of the point about early Cansound was that it was enthusiastically, guilelessly manufactured by five men whose collective experience of rock was at best minimal. The object of the exercise was simply to proceed with open ears, to somehow un-learn and then learn afresh. Can were playing at being primitivists, scratching the skin off every bone, and they got away with it, only letting their various, very formal musical pasts (Stockhausen, etc.) intrude at odd, unexpected angles.

The results — those two albums in the main — were extraordinary. And yet it all seemed so natural, so uncontrived, so naked, so absolute.

PiL seem equally reluctant to make correct, polite gestures, to make music that does all the right things in all the right places. Beginnings and endings seem pretty arbitrary throughout 'The Metal Box': shapes and sizes seem pretty optional.

The gist of the PiL drift is, I suspect, extremely Canshish. The band are forgetting things, mislaying things, fumbling with things,

stumbling on things — and then, abruptly, it all clicks, locks, holds. Don't matter a tawny owl's hoot whether any of this album is accidental or intentional; such distinctions are much too 'nice' to survive in these territories.

Flotsam and jetsam of past endeavours and enthusiasms (Wobble's fondness for the work of producers Lee Perry and Dennis Bovell, for instance) surface from time to time, but they're small fry, sub-atomic particles in a huge, accelerating whole. And yet it all seems so natural, so instinctive, so honest, so absolute.

But time is tight and 'The Metal Box' is the second PiL 'album'. It comes in a plain silver can with the PiL logo stamped in relief on its lid. It's a tracklist and 60 minutes 34 seconds of sound pressed with enviable clarity onto three 12-inch 45s slipped between four white paper discs (PiL wanted more protective inner packaging, but Virgin said no). It retails at

£7.45, a sum that's not nearly as extortionate as it first seems.

And 'The Metal Box' goes like this ...

'Albatross': Wobble's megabass rumbles massively in the mix. Levine's guitar stutters into earshot, a crebbled neural scratch. Rhythm and drums are relentless. Lydon draws lugubriously about 'Slow motion / Slow motion / Getting rid of the albatross / Sowing the seeds of discontent ...' (for complete lyrics of 'Box', refer pronto to page 39; they're all there). The syllables are dragged out. Rotten slurs, seems to move through the song like a deep-sea diver. The final, manic shriek of 'Only the lonely' is chilling. A doom decree about responsibility, accounting and atoning (but to or for what or whom?).

'Memories': an electric glide in grey, remixed, bass frequencies diminished and then suddenly pushed right into the red. Levine's guitar is

a gliding scale, at times a doppelganger for Michael Karoli of Can's. Another public or private address from Lydon: 'It could be worse / You're losing all the time / I let you stay too long / I could be wrong / It could be worse'. It Could? And just who is 'you'? The question begs on empty.

'Swanlake': 'Death Disco' remixed. A meelstrom, Levine's Tcheikovsky chords more prominent, more perverse than before. Lydon is almost hysterical: 'Watch her slowly die / Saw it in her eyes / Choking on a bed / Flowers rotting dead'. I hope this is an exorcism, but can't help but find it unnervingly guilt-ridden. 'Words cannot express ...' the vocal trails away, helplessly. The jump on the fade is deliberate.

'Poptones': PiL in King Crimson's clothing, looser and slacker than Crimson's 'Red' album. Lyrics? Check 'em out in your own time. They seem to run very scared. Lydon's vocal, especially the 'I don't like hiding in this foliage and peat ...' verse, is a droll to say the least. Lydon as haunted, hunted fool? Other memories for a man with too much on his mind.

'Careering': x-treme. Discotic, washed with malevolent synthesizing and shattered by electronic gunfire. Lydon's voice constantly mixes sense, sound and metaphor: 'A face is raining / Across the border / The pride of history / The same as murder ...' The references to 'the border', 'both sides of the river' and the 'military' all suggests Northern Ireland as the song's locale. Later, Lydon identifies with the central character, whose role escapes me utterly: a gunman, a soldier, a civilian or what? I wouldn't know. Despairing depths, these, mirrored remorselessly by their soundtrack.

X-traordinary. 'No Birds': another alternative mix or take.

Guitars are everywhere, scrawling mayhem, vicious graffiti, as Lydon squirms through a tunnel of sound: a full-frontal assault on suburban standards.

'Graveyard': a spooky, scratchy instrumental. Mercifully brief, Levine's chords clamber up a metal ladder to the moon.

'The Suit': Wobble's bass hum-drum over a spartan rhythm track. Lydon's put-down of a 'society boy on social security' is bitter as myrrh. Sheer spleen, Blackest bile. Hope he never hears it. 'Bad Baby': the PiL engine idling nervously. New drummer Martin Atkins hits a hi-hat, does well for himself. Lydon, almost cracking into falsetto, tells a tale of the times: 'Someone left a baby / In the car park / Never any reason ... Ignore it and it will go away'. Inner city anxieties. Anti-social comment.

'Socialist': Telex and / or Kraftwerk spin-dried. Stuttering drums, gibbering mini-moogs. The title's significance (if any) eludes me.

'Chant': roughshod and raucous. I think the chant goes like this 'mob ... war ... feel ... here'. Lydon affects a petulant whine — 'It's not important / It's not worth a mention in The Guardian' — but again he's playing hard to get, attitude dancing as coyly as ever. An ironic idiots' anthem, yes?

'Radio 4': a soft, deep-piled rug of neo-classical synth orchestration. A groaning parody of BBC boredom. Levine's idea apparently, and funny as in ha, ha, Very.

Conclusions: 'The Metal Box' is more complete, more convincing than the first album. As indicated above, Lydon is still the crustacean, all pink and squiggling flesh beneath the outer shell. But for one obvious reason and another, that's his prerogative — for the time being at least.

Nerves and tendons and frayed and twisted more often too; Lydon, Levine and Wobble all seem more ... concerned, confident. In terms of impact and effect, 'The Metal Box' is pulverising, incredibly exactly. All this forward flow in twelve months — it's almost frightening. PiL are miles out and miles ahead. Follow with care.

Angus MacKinnon



NEIL YOUNG AND CRAZY HORSE**Live Rust (Reprise)**

"My, my, hey hey, rock and roll is here to stay, / Hey hey, my my, rock and roll can never die." BUT it isn't. Neil, and I'm afraid it will. There comes a time in many a respected rock and roll star's life when the past must be accounted for and justified, when stocks are taken and accounts settled. Oftentimes the personality in question will attempt to undergo a new lease on his life-style and if he finds it wanting — in terms of youthful inspiration, naivety, what have you — our star is wont to plug into a vicarious energy outlet (take a look at Pete Townshend).

Neil Young, who is as respected, even deified, a figure as the American rock business is ever likely to produce, has tended towards this pattern with a vengeance. At the nub-end of the '60s Neil was a young man with a lot of experience under the belt; after Buffalo Springfield and the abominable CSN and himself had parted company he was still in possession of considerable integrity, with a potential reservoir of powerful lines and evocative melodies that have since become ingrained into America's rock culture.

Understandably, no one here ever surpasses infallibility. You can hardly fail to appreciate the de ja vu ambience of 'Live Rust', a double set that reiterates those strong points so heavily handedly that it threatens to undo all the pleasant memories. It may be convenient to forget 'Journey Through The Past' or 'Time Fades Away' with Neil Young apparently hanging on the '80s door, but actually 'Live Rust' conforms to those pratfalls with a savage vengeance. A lot of the time this much vaunted, eagerly awaited 'epic' only highlights



the man's many irritating tendencies, his obsession with his own weak character and his desire to commemorate the smacked-out debris that had only themselves to blame for littering the human highway. Whether this amounts to warts-and-all honesty, stating the obvious or hideous self-indulgence depends on just where you sit on that Topanga Canyon fence.

The audience present in the L.A. Forum last October appear to be in the first

category. Every time Neil trots out old Pavlovian catch-phrases like "the king" and "rock and roll" and "I felt like getting high", they respond accordingly. At least on the first 'Rust' Never Sleeps (which also had 'live' versions of 'Powder Finger', 'Sedan Delivery' and 'Hey Hey, My My (Into The Black)') we were spared the feeling of gate-crashing somebody's else's party without a bottle.

Neil Young was 34 last November 12, but he still opens the show with his hippy

Final daze: Neil Young opts out

acoustic set, with the pleasant, childish nostalgia of 'Sugar Mountain', the rank mediocrity of 'I Am A Child' and 'Comes A Time', the self-righteous and helpless angst of 'The Needle And The Damage Don', the nice starship doodling of 'After The Goldrush' (look at Mother Nature on the run in the 1970s and what are you going to do about it?) and the utterly banal 'Lone Love'.

But what about the music? Nothing of any worth is added to these songs. The studio versions are superior, their current emotional effect is nil: tired movies. Ditto the introductory 'My My, Hey Hey (Into The Blue)', a prime example of lampoonable Young, a song that gets considerable mileage out of one fortuitously dumb rhyme. "It's better to burn out than it is to rust", squeals Neil. Yes, but what does it all mean?

Once Neil straps on his electric and Crazy Horse step up, the abstractions and the absurdities resume control. There's nothing pretentious about 'When You Dance I Can Really Love You' and at least 'Sedan Delivery' indicates that Young has been listening to David Byrne — there is life beyond Devo. Again, these are adequate live versions of songs that don't need reproducing.

Throughout Neil Young emerges in the lucky position

of being totally confused and yet being surrounded by a host of admirers whose own confusion is greater. When the singalong Woodstock "No rain" chant is played over the P.A. (and Neil Young has said that "I want people to know that something really did happen. Musically the promise of the '60s was that we were going to put out") and the audience take it seriously, what can any sane person do but ask what happened?

On side three Crazy Horse start turning up the intense electric noise. 'Powderfinger' doesn't deviate at all from the version on 'Rust 1'. Big deal. It's scratchy, fuzzy, distorted and incredibly basic rock music, but Neil wears Jimi's badge next to his CND logo so I guess that makes it alright. Or how about the breathlessly awaited 'Cortez The Killer', the reggae version, where Young sings the fade in an embarrassing, hammy West Indian voice? It's about as reggae as a packet of Planter's peanuts. 'Cinnamon Girl' is good, but no better than you know it.

It goes on. It seems so futile. The five-year-old 'Like A Hurricane' is a beautiful electric charge but they can't capture the original intensity or offer any other reading. And then it's back to the 'Hey Hey' routine. Everybody stomps, rock and roll, etc.

Who needs it?

The band still go out with 'Tonight's The Night'. Neil can't get Danny Whitten and Bruce Berry out of his system; they're worse than heroin, except they kill everybody else with boredom. The song meant something when Crazy Horse toured here with Nils Lofgren in the stable, but even then Neil used to sing the song four or five times a night. Besides, the Sampedro, Talbot and Molina back-up is only really happy when they're blowing an approximate heavy metal gale — whatever sensitivity resides in Young's songs is frequently extinguished when he stretches his limited vocal range across the great volume divide. The profundity of the Woodstock announcement is equaled when the star of the show starts thanking all and sundry and the band sing the harmonies on 'Tonight's The Night'. Californian rock is seldom ranker.

It isn't as if Neil Young is in any position to lay a resume of his past on the ever-glibbie public — 'Journey Through The Past' and 'Decade' have already done that. But of course Neil will probably get away with it, although other bands have been crucified for less.

Being charitable, there seems to be something wrong-headed about rock artists who seek to repeat their careers. Maybe 'Live Rust' is a victim of the atmosphere that blights most live records ('The Doors' 'Absolutely Live' is the blueprint for avoiding this disaster), or maybe the protagonist thinks it is important enough to be valid. I expect enough from Neil Young to wait around for a studio album with some decent new material, but this 'Live Rust' is gonna sit down and decay.

Still raining, still dreaming, eh Neil?

Max Bell

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LITTLE FEAT Down On The Farm (Warner Brothers)

WHATEVER corners were knocked off Little Feat's "real last record album" by Lowell George's death earlier this year, they've been carefully set back in place by the rest of the band, numerous friends and playing partners. Its brash, saucy Neon Park cover promising welcome distractions from the frenzied log jam of Xmas-conscious product, 'Down On The Farm' is hardly down at the heel. As Feat records go, it's sterling silver; as rock records go, it's solid gold.

But then Little Feat were forever hooking up strange fish from pools that had long since ceased to flow into the muddy, amorphous mainstream. The Feat Beat itself seemed something of a tenacious, utterly unexpected holdover from some half-remembered, half-idealised period in rock's evolution: a period when every band worth its wage was relied on to display a towering but self-deprecating musical intelligence and a healthy interest in the decidedly different, not to mention a sense of humour.

Or so it always seemed — at least until someone or something punctured the dream bag and choked home the fact that this idyllic period had never actually existed and that all Little Feat and a handful of their peers (Ry Cooder, Beefheart and his most Magic Bands, Steely Dan et al) were doing was beating a retreat, burning bridges and feeding lonely hilltop fires against the encroaching dark ages of corporate Yankee rock. The Feats themselves seemed reluctant to cast themselves in so futile a light — understandably so, I suppose, since they were otherwise preoccupied: making musical ends meet

was never a problem; making financial and personal ends meet almost invariably was.

'Down On The Farm' was intended from the outset as Feat's last blast, and as such it's pretty good, pretty neat, effectively erasing most memories of the disappointing studio 'Time Loves A Hero' and the disastrous live 'Waiting For Columbus'. Perhaps it was just a matter of everyone involved sitting down in their own, most comfortable musical chairs — if there were strains during recording, they don't surface — but 'Dixie Chicken' appears to have been the root from which much of 'Down On The Farm' was grafted; both albums feel very similar in mood, cut, thrust and overall poise. The production here, by George "with a little help from his friends", makes a clear, compact meal of everything within range.

Whatever, Little Feat's, and especially Lowell George's, lasting affection for the music of New Orleans in general and of Allen Toussaint in particular (two of those pools) is aired again here, and quietly celebrated.

Take Paul and Gabriel Barrere's title track, for instance, which starts play in earnest after some silly banter between George and a vociferous duck. A slide-shot

(George leading, I suspect, and "electric aid" David Lindley following) and toe-curling boogie and about some country folks wondering what's with their Linda Lou in the big city, it's sung by Barrere and beats across much the same second line as The Meters' 'They All Ask'd About You' from their 'Fire On The Bayou' album. Supple stuff, of course, Feat putting complex principles into simple practice.

And then there's Barrere and Tom Snow's 'Perfect Imperfection' (anyone for emotional dualism?), a bittersweet ballad which would have no trouble finding its way onto any Toussaint album. The lyric's worldweariness is beautifully caught by George, who often passed almost unrecognised as one of rock's most emotive vocalists; the conflicting air of resignation and determination he achieves here is easily as affecting as his own 'Long Distance Love'. You want sheer soul? Here it is.

The closing 'Feel The Groove' makes another, earthier Crescent City connection. A laconic chunk of funk co-written and sung by percussionist Sam Clayton, pushed by Bill Payne's nagging clavinet and shoved by a brace of horns, it's well above par for the course. Stretching its canvas,



Lowell George goes out on a high. Pic: Robert Ellis.

'Down On The Farm' alights elsewhere. Presumably a legacy of George's production of The Grateful Dead's 'Shakedown Street', his and ex-Dead pianist Keith Godchaux's 'Six Feet Of Snow' is a natural seventh son to 'Willin'. A snappy, courtiered trucker's lament with graphic lyrics ("Six feet of snow comin' through my radio/It's rainin' in stilettos from here clear down to Mexico..."), the song's packed on its ironically merry

way by Sneaky Pete Kleinow's steel guitar and Payne's synthesizer doubling as accordion. (And where does the road lead? Down to New Orleans, naturally.)

George's own 'Kokomo' completes the circuit from 'Dixie Chicken' itself to 'Rocket In My Pocket'. Drummer Ritchie Hayward finds his way through the crosscurrents as if sailing by the stars — they call it second-nature syncopation — and once again there's snakes and slides on

everything, Barrere's rhythm constantly clipping at edges and angles.

And the hits get higher. Old Feat friend Fred Tackett strums an acoustic on 'Be One Now'. Co-written by him and George, the song rises on a gentle but inexorable swell of melody. Add George's plaintive vocal and you have something that should open hearts and minds in every home.

Over on side two, Payne and George's 'Straight From The Heart' seems slight by comparison, brisk and confident but missing its mark. The pair's 'Front Page News' is much more interesting, sprung as it is over a loping Latin piano figure not at all unlike the one Herbie Hancock threaded through 'Beauty And The Beast' on Weather Reporter Wayne Shorter's 'Native Dancer' album. Payne's elaborate synthesizer orchestrations and trillings mid-song call to mind WR's Joe Zawinul, but don't really carry the melodic weight placed on them; it's left to bassist Kenny Gradney and Hayward's backbeat to keep the faith.

Payne and wife Fran's wistful 'Wake Up Dreaming' works less well. Diffident and rhythmically self-conscious, it could have drifted in off either 'The Last Record Album' or 'Time Loves A Hero', and even two abrupt, flaring guitar solos from (I think) Robben Ford can't lift its veil. File under filler.

So that's 'Down On The Farm'. To be honest, given the ructions in the Feat camp of late, I'd expected a lot less. As it is, the final Little Feat album can take care of itself, standing on merit not memories.

"This is from us all to Lowell, straight from the heart. Goodbye, friend. Be free". It sez on the sleeve. Enough said, enough done.

Angus MacKinnon

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SA's Ian Page urging his audience on to... what? Pic by Chris Harter

**SECRET AFFAIR****Glory Boys (I-Spy Records)**

IAN PAGE doesn't half fancy his chances and if his arrogance is the appeal of Secret Affair then a lot of people seem to enjoy imitating the flash gob of the a-go-go club.

He is the self-elected figurehead of mod, but this movement has little to do with individuality or freedom, change or progress. Nearly all the songs on this debut album present an image of enforced conformity, transparent values chanted to beaty, bouncy rhythms that barely disguise the militaristic uniformity of it all. And 'Glory Boys' is just the right sort of dodgy title from a group who understand teenage gullibility and vulnerability and know they can enlist their own army of fanatics.

'Time For Action' and 'Let Your Heart Dance', already released as singles, superficially suggest that Secret Affair are innocuous, offering a hedonistic release from the mundanity and disillusionment of adolescence. The rowdy club atmosphere of both even implies that lyrics like 'We hate the punk elite' in 'Action' and 'Goodby pogo/And tired old disco' in the latter are celebrations of something new to come.

But goodtimes seem to be the last of Secret Affair's thoughts. Their songs are bitter and twisted, three of them — 'Days Of Change', 'Don't Look Down' and 'I'm

Not Free (But I'm Cheap)' — dealing not with any profound overview of youth style, but with Page's own resentment of the music business, those showbiz shits.

Throughout this album there lurks menace, intimidation, vulgar narcissism and outright bigotry that make the Affair a distasteful and dangerous proposition. The lyrics, mostly written by Page, envisage pointless mob rule and endorse the gratuitous violence that attracts mindless fanaticism and bootboy glory. Naturally 'Glory Boys' — the bastard of 'My Generation' and 'If The Kids Are United' — is an obvious example, but

'Shake And Shout' and 'New Dance' follow a similar pattern.

It's a form of incitement of the pop masses that pervaded the most disturbing areas of rock 'n' roll, skinhead stomp and puerile punk: a trait, let's not forget, of right-wing political factions. But Page and Dave Cairns — the other half of the songwriting team — probably don't realise how inflammatory their songs are, or how narrow and regressive their silly little doctrine really is.

Styled on the more dubious characteristics of Pursey and Rotten, inspired by the way Page and Cairns have misinterpreted the mod

socialism of Townshend and Weller, these four unfortunates have conceived a musical mongrel that will turn on them as surely as a rabid dog.

Their main problem is that Page is misdirecting and indulging his ambition for pop power. The lyrics reveal he's sour, cynical, selfish and particularly vicious in his imagery. Whereas onstage Secret Affair are an exuberant, exciting band and Page a confident and persuasive frontman, on this album those talents are abused and Page has coldly decided he will be a star, he will be a figurehead.

With a thin and weedy production most of the tracks

are ineffectual, concerned more with establishing a style and manifesto. And as the band are reduced to the backing ranks, there's little of the instrumental enthusiasm that gets you dancing to them in the clubs. Predictably, their most distinctive quality — Page's sweet, clear voice — is not buried along with Dennis Smith's bass and Seb Shetton's drums.

There are a few highlights on the album — the cover of Smokey Robinson's 'Going To A Go-Go', the swinging, boisterous but delicately played 'Don't Look Down' and the dancebeat of 'One Way World' — which emphasise just how they've grossly misused their talent.

Ignoring the stomping chorus hooks and deliberate a-go-go atmosphere, the rest is feeble-brained and derivative. 'Shake And Shout' blatantly rips off Steve Winwood's classic 'Gimme Some Lovin'': 'I'm Not Free' is pure pretentious Townshend in structure. Then there are the contrived metaphors and mad narcissism and fashion, clearly insincere and suspect as Page tries to achieve anemic immortality.

Rarely does this album transcend his small-minded and facile aspirations.

Literally, he's in the dark ages, writing reactionary drivel that possesses none of the perception, radicalism and broad vision that uncovers genuine cult leaders.

Because of him and Cairns, Secret Affair's stance is contrived and deliberate; a classic example of brutish impatience and conceit rather than ability. When somebody tells you forcefully how great they are, you tend to be sceptical. With Page you should be a little wary of how he's going to prove it.

Reasonable persuasion won't be one of his methods. You can bet your front teeth on that. Be out with the in-crowd? Join the Secret Army? Hal

Tony Stewart

**SPEEDOMETERS Day In The Lights (Acrobat)**

SPEEDOMETORS play that fast and shiny kind of rock/pop which puts a skinny tie around its neck just so you know they know what year it is, and it's horrible. However melodic and polished and determined they get to sound the whole affair just radiates pointlessness.

Here they bluster through two sides of crisp, professional drack, conventional to the point of creative invisibility, exuding this depressing mixture of dynamism and irrelevance. And worse, they have to peddle their clapped-out third-hand fantasies of fast cars and fast women (both images cressy used to promote the album), bright lights, big city, big money, you name it.

At best it's like a bastardised Bruce Springsteen, stripped of the flimsiest vestige of authenticity — the dumb, vicarious heat-on-the-street schtick, shrink-wrapped for leisure-pleasure in the comfort and privacy of your own bungalow.

Speedometers could have won New Faces any day. Especially recommended for disco-goers into racing-driver jackets and the great smell of Brur who talk too loudly in with-it pubs and then get sick in the car-park over the Cortinas with the Playboy Bunny window-stickers.

Paul Du Noyer

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One too many complications

SIMPLE MINDS Real To Real Cacophony (Zoom)

ALIENATION — now there's a word to win friends and influence people with. Alienation can mean the feeling you get when everyone's talking about an SF film you haven't seen. In the socio-technical sense, it refers to that state whereby the modern worker (and a certain breed of musician?) is reduced to "an appendage of his machine." For the self-consciously contemporary musician, of course, it also provides a serviceable variant on the moon, June and spoons.

One can't be very sure, but alienation might possibly be the concept in charge of Simple Minds' second album, wallowing as it appears to in all that's unsimiling, austere and mysterious. Voices lurk deep back in the mix, inaccessible; titles are enigmatic (I think), clipped and grim — 'Factory', 'Scar', 'Cacophony', 'Premonition'. The fact is I don't know what any of it is about or meant to convey. It alienates me, no problems there whatsoever.

It's the smug, callow, facile facade of inscrutability which irritates, and it's the long, ponderous, pointless musical meandering which bores. There's neither the energy nor the emotive capacity to sustain either album side, and any intellectual consistency remains too obscured for this reviewer to detect. Serious, cold and contrivedly clever, the results stretch your

patience rather than your mind. And if you find anything in here that's even remotely moving, then you're a more sensitive soul than I.

Between the making of this album and that of their vaguely promising, if similarly flawed debut 'Life In A Day', Simple Minds have accentuated the negative aspects in their work. Making comparisons — however odiously unfair a little game that may be — is about the only form of fun on offer. They're like Magazine without the invention, or Sparks without the wit. (Anything you may have liked about Genesis, on the other hand, is preserved here pretty well intact.)

There's no special pleasure to be derived from dismissing any young band that demonstrates some degree of concern and care with the music they make. But I won't endorse Simple Minds until they develop a perspective and decide to what useful or enjoyable purpose all that expertise and technology at their command can be put — until they knock the hollow modernistic poses on the head and decide to say something, in terms of ideas or of feeling, to the people expected to pay for the privilege of listening.

They need more projection and less posture; more artistic attack and less electronic doodling. And less self-importance. You're only as important as your usefulness to others; no more and no less than that.

Paul Du Noyer

FAST PRODUCT The First Year Plan (EMI) VARIOUS ARTISTS 20 Of Another Kind Volume Two (Polydor)

FAST'S 'First Year Plan' consists of six singles — 14 tracks — released between January '78 and March '79. Five bands are involved — The Mekons, 23, The Human League, Gang Of Four and Scars — but this isn't a Various Artists package. This album was made by Fast Product.

Fast Product is Bob Last, a man who operates on his own terms. His reasons for leasing this material — the entire Fast singles catalogue bar the recent US absurdity, The Dead Kennedys' 'California Uber Alles' — to EMI are cut and dried. Fast is not in business to churn out records, or to maintain a back catalogue. The Gang Of Four, Human League and first Mekons singles are all deleted, and the others will soon follow, so to satisfy the increasing demand for the likes of 'Armalite Rifle,' and to prevent them becoming collectors' items. Last did a one-off deal with EMI. (He has "no moral objections" to dealing with EMI; manufacturing records is their function.)

'The First Year Plan' represents one phase of Fast, which Last might call the "independent experimental" phase (he has since moved on, via the 'Earcorn' mini-LPs, to instigate a more pop-oriented label called Pop: Aural). Every Fast product was designed to make the consumer aware of the processes involved in its production, and this album, with the single sleeves displayed unstuck and folded out on the back, is no exception.

Right from the start, Last could not have unearthed more suitable bands to work with than The Mekons, Gang Of Four and The Human

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One too many compilations



League. All, in their different ways, set out on these singles deliberately to demystify rock and roll, to make the listener aware of the recording processes, the musicians' technical limitations, their existence outside of the audio capsule. The Mekons can hardly play: The Human League explain the plot of one song before they play it; Gang Of Four track a subliminal voice commenting on recording levels against 'Love Like Anthrax' (On the EMI 'Entertainment!' album, incidentally, it's replaced by a commentary on the habitual mystification of 'love' in pop songs...)

Which is not to say there is no mystery in this music. On the contrary, there is much confusion, chaos, questioning and cryptic posing. That it hangs together as an album has a lot to do with this common thread of uncertainty, of young bands testing themselves.

First up are The Mekons with their godawful three-track debut 'Never Been In A Riot' — an inspirational record for other people who

couldn't play, no doubt, but not an inspirational listening experience.

Scars' two tracks show them to be the most underrated Fast band. Paul Research's scrambled whine-guitar scribbles attractively over the fuzzy almost-chaos of 'Adult/ery' and 'Horrorshow' in a strange, laboured pair of performances. What Cherisma Records will make of them remains to be seen.

The guitar-and-drummer-less Human League follow them surprisingly naturally with 'Being Boiled,' a pioneering pop synthesiser song which was too tinny for the Numan market, too po-faced for M and Lizards fans, and too under-produced for radio play. A pop group without hits, like The Records? If anyone can cure that, Virgin will. Meanwhile the sparse, evocative 'Circus Of Death' shows The Human League are capable of better things, with Phil Oakley's unusual vocal style particularly impressive.

2.3, who apparently are about to reform, open the second side with two pleasingly constructed



lightweight punk songs, and then come the real heavyweights. Gang Of Four tower over this album as they do over virtually every other band on the planet. Their

three tracks are sheer genius from the very first notes, as Andy Gill's massively reverberated guitar crashes into the brilliant 'Love Like Anthrax', 'Armalite Rifle' and

Left: competition winners Gang Of Four (from top) — Jon King, Dave Allen, Muga Burnham, Andy Gill. Pic: Chris Horler.

'Damaged Goods' complete one of the greatest debut singles of all time: anger, fear, power, technical virtuosity, devastating simplicity, wit, subtlety, uncertainty — even if they were singing the simple love songs they so eloquently (and unconvincingly) refuse to play, they'd still be the best new band since The Jam.

The Mekons wrap things up with their second single, in a way Fast's most important release in that it showed that even the awful Mekons could get a second chance. They use it well, showing off a huge jump in prowess over the year in between. The attractive, half-witted Buzzcocks feel of 'Where Were You?' augurs well for their Virgin LP.

As befits a good compilation album, The First Year Plan is greater than the sum of its parts. Bob Last can feel justifiably proud.

Which is more than can be said for whoever slung together '20 Of Another Kind Volume Two'. The original '20 OAK' was a pretty good package, featuring a haphazard selection of 'name' punk tracks — 'In The City', 'Borstal Breakout', 'Killing An Arab', 'Gary Gilmore's Eyes', 'Suspect Device', 'Emergency', 'No More Heroes' — but this set is just a depressing showcase for Polydor and Beggars' Banquet's recent 'new wave' signings.

Almost the only tracks which stand out among the largely mundane offerings of The Cure, The Chords, Patrik Fitzgerald, The Invaders, Purple Hearts, The Lurkers, The Carpettes and Xdreamysts are The Jam's 'Strange Town' (about which I could write pages, but won't).

Tubeway Army's 'Down In The Park', Protex's lovely Irish punk-pop 'I Can't Cope', The Headboys' assured technopop 'The Shapes Of Things To Come' — and Twist.

Twist are a four-piece led by wimp-rock loser Pete Marsh, apparently, but the snarling glam-pop of 'This Is Your Life' leaves the rest of '20 OAK Vol 2' in its wake. Jam excepted — though bands like The Cure and The Invaders would surely have much more to offer if sympathetically presented.

Oh yes, and there are two absolutely terrible tracks: Sham 69's 'Hersham Boys' and 'No Entry', which say nothing about anything outside of Jimmy Pursey's unbearable egomania. Listening to these feeble imitations of The Sex Pistols, it's easy to see why Pursey's liaison with Cook & Jones fell through. When you've worked with 'ol Biggys, who wants to hear the poor man's version?

Phil McNeill

COZY POWELL Over The Top (Ariola)

THIS is a recording of an event sponsored by Ariola Eurodisc Ltd., in which several middle-aged men gathered in a London studio, threw the switches, and went completely lulu. Jack Bruce brought his bass, Gary Moore & pals brought their guitars, Cozy Powell (a drummer who looks pretty on a motor-cycle, and therefore gets his mosh and moniker on the sleeve) drummed, and Don Airey made by far the loudest noises, tearing the intestines out of a Yamaha CS80 Polyphonic synthesiser.

The various tracks have titles like 'Killer' and 'Loner', and jolly stirring, progressive stuff they are too. At maximum volume it all sounds not unlike The Alien taking a mouthwash in the fuel tanks of The Nostramo.

Rick Joseph

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Sunday 18th ST ANDREWS, University
Monday 19th EDINBURGH, Tiffany's
Wednesday 21st WOLVERHAMPTON, Poly
Friday 23rd BIRMINGHAM, Aston University
Saturday 24th NEWCASTLE, University
Tuesday 27th SHREWSBURY, Music Hall
Wednesday 28th COLCHESTER, Essex University
Thursday 29th PORT TALBOT, Troubadour
Friday 30th LIVERPOOL, Eric's

DECEMBER

Saturday 1st MANCHESTER, Poly
Sunday 2nd LEEDS, Floride Greer Hotel
Wednesday 5th NORWICH, University of East Anglia
Thursday 6th SHEFFIELD, Limit Club
Friday 7th STAFFORD, North Staffs Poly
Saturday 8th NOTTINGHAM, Sanjapper
Monday 10th EXETER, University
Wednesday 12th KEELE, University
Thursday 13th LONDON, Marquee
Friday 14th LONDON, Marquee

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Thursday November 22nd	£1.70	Tuesday November 27th	£1.20
CUDDLY TOYS + The Features + Embryo		COBRA RECORDS NIGHT FEATURING ELECTO TUNES + Craze	
Friday November 23rd	£2.20	Wednesday November 28th	£1.20
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Saturday November 24th	£2.20		
NO DICE + La Straz			

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TOUR

SECRET 1 AFFAIR

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NOVEMBER

Thursday 15th COVENTRY, Tiffany
Friday 16th LAMARCO, Carr Exchange
Saturday 17th READING, University
Sunday 18th BIRMINGHAM, Tiffany
Monday 19th WARRING, Unity Hall
Tuesday 20th BATH, University
Wednesday 21st BATH, University
Thursday 22nd LONDON, Oval Hall
Friday 23rd NEWCASTLE, Poly
Saturday 24th MANCHESTER, University
Monday 26th WOLVERHAMPTON, Civic Hall
Tuesday 27th LONDON, University
Wednesday 28th LIVERPOOL, University
Friday 30th ABERDEEN, University

DECEMBER

Saturday 1st ST ANDREWS University
Sunday 2nd GLASGOW, Tiffany
Monday 3rd EDINBURGH, Tiffany
Tuesday 4th A&R, Pavilion
Wednesday 5th SHEFFIELD Poly
Thursday 6th COLCHESTER, Essex University
Friday 7th CAMBRIDGE, Dublin
Saturday 8th LONDON, Rainbow
Sunday 9th BRIGHTON, Poly
Monday 10th LONDON, Marquee
Tuesday 11th SHREWSBURY, Music Hall
Wednesday 12th SHREWSBURY, Music Hall
Thursday 13th OXFORD, Civic Hall
Friday 14th CHICHESTER, West Sussex Pavilion

SECRET AFFAIR THE ALBUM GLORY BOYS

28th NOVEMBER 1979

CHARITY ROCK CONCERT

TOP RANK SUITE, SOUTHAMPTON

THE LENS

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8.00 pm - 1.00 am. Price £1.50
Proceeds donated to Oxfam S.O.S. Cambodia medical aid for children and refugee appeal

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27 Nov Apollo Theatre, Glasgow 041-332 6055
28 Nov City Hall, Newcastle (0632) 20007
2 Dec De Montfort Hall, Leicester (0533) 549922
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MARQUEE

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FRI 23-SAT 24 NOVEMBER

ALVIN LEE'S

Ten Years Later

PLUS SUPPORT

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Monday 26th November, 7.30 p.m.
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DE MONTFORT HALL, LEICESTER
Tuesday 27th November, 7.30 p.m.
Tickets £3.00, £2.50, £2.00
available from Box Office Tel: 0533 77022

HAMMERSMITH ODEON
Wednesday 28th November, 8.00 p.m.
Tickets £3.50, £3.00, £2.50, £2.00
available from Advance Theatre Box Office Tel: 740 4001
London Theatre Bookings, Shaftesbury Avenue Tel: 439 2371
Premier Box Office Tel: 740 2245 and Visual Agents

CITY HALL, NEWCASTLE
Thursday 29th November, 7.30 p.m.
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available from Box Office Tel: 612 640

COLSTON HALL, BRISTOL
Friday 30th November, 7.30 p.m.
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ROCK AGAINST RACISM

Ronnie Fix's Gig

Thursday, November 22nd

INJECTIONS

Saturday, November 24th

ARROGANT

+ BURNING BLOCKADE

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THIEVES LIKE US

WINCHESTER 62581

Thursday November 22nd
WINDSOR CASTLE, HARROW RD

Friday November 23rd
SALISBURY CITY HALL
+ the MARTIAN SCHOOLGIRLS

Saturday November 24th
THE SWAN, HAMMERSMITH
ITCHEN BEAT

DINGWALLS

RHYTHM 'N' BOOZE

THURSDAY 22
THANKSGIVING PARTY NIGHT, FROM USA

CRITICAL MASS

SATURDAY 24

THE BRAKES

SUNDAY 25

THE LITTLE ROOSTERS

TUESDAY 27

BILLY KARLOFF BAND

WEDNESDAY 28

BLACK SLATE

THURSDAY 29

GEORGE MELLY

COMING SOON: Tuesday 4 & Wednesday 5 December From USA

NICK GRAVENITES

CAMDEN LOCK, CHALK FARM ROAD, LONDON NW1 01-267 4867

QUEEN

on tour

WINGS

on tour

COMPILED BY

GIG GUIDE

DEREK JOHNSON

Thursday

Basildon Double Six: The Liffettes
Beaumont Megnum's: Plasmogen
Bath University: Neil Innes
Bedford House & Groom: Force
Birmingham Mercat Cross: The Clinic
Birmingham Odeon: Hawkwind/Doll By Doll
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Orphan
Birmingham University: Art Failure
Blackpool Tiffany's: Squeeze/The Photos
Bournemouth Town Hall: Gang Of Four / Red Crayola
Bradford Palm Cove: The Cure/The Passions
Bradford Princeville: Deadringer
Bradford St George's Hall: The Under-ones
Brighton The Hungry Years: Airport
Bristol Granary: Bethnal
Buckley Tivoli Ballroom: Black Goliath
Burnwood Troubadour: The Amazing Dark Horse
Canterbury Art College: Here & Now / Splodgenessabounds
Cardiff Great Western Hotel: Screen Gems
Chatham HMS Pembroke: Flash Cats
Chatterfield Station Hotel: Dave Berry
Chorley Joiners Arms: Mistress
Colchester Essex University: The Piranhas
Dublin Olympic Ballroom: The Specials/Dr. Feelgood
Dublin Simmons Court: Queen
Dundee Art College: Friction
Eastwood Langley Mill Club: Nightmare
Edinburgh Odeon: John Martyn
Glasgow Apollo Centre: Cliff Richard
Glenrothes Rothes Arms: The Original Mirrors
Gravesend Red Lion: Nightbride
Hale Well Green Hotel: Roaring Jelly
Halesowen Tiffany's: Diamond Head
Hartley Victoria Hall: Motorhead
Hayes (Middlesex) Adam & Eve: Schisur Rita
Hill Wellington Club: Cooper Clarke / Chris Sievey / The Freshies/The Out
Isle of Sheppey New Island Hotel: The Silettes
Kingston Polytechnic: The Psychodelic Fetus/Bauhaus
Leicester De Montfort Hall: The Damned
Lincoln Drill Hall: Secret Affair/Squire
Liverpool Eric's: Landscape
London Camden Dingwells: Critical Mass
London Canning Town Bridge House: The Mo-dettes/Wasted Youth
London Clapham 101 Club: Kevin Armstrong's Local Heroes
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Angelo Faladino
London Ealing The Old Harts: The Mods
London Fulham Golden Lion: The Kidds Band
London Hannoverian Odeon: Ian Hunter Band with Mick Ronson/Rachel Sweet
London Hammermith The Swan: Badlands
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: The Jump/Thieves Like Us
London Islington Hope & Anchor: The Innmates
London Islington Pied Bull: Gino & The Sherks
London Kennington The Cricketers: Lacey's Affair
London Kensington De Villiers Bar: Gold Duet Twins
London Kensington The Nashville: The Sports
London Knightsbridge Pizza on the Park: The Leases Duo
London Marquee Club: Mobile
London Middlesex Polytechnic: Speed-O-Metors
London Oxford Street 101 Club: Pressure Shock
London Soho Pizza Express: Helen Merrill/Bill Skaer Quartet
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: Billy Lee Riley/Johnny & The Roccas
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: The O.K. Band
London Victoria The Venue: Marie Mulder
London Waterloo Royal Victoria: Freddy's Feetwarmers
London Wembley Arena: Gary Numan
Cot Stevens / Wishbone Ash / David Essex / Sky (Year Of The Child charity concert)
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: The Bogey Boys
London Woolwich Tramshed: Marty Wilde & The Wildcats

London W.10 Acliam Hall: Misty
London W.C.1 New Merlin's Cave: Big Chief
Loughborough Town Hall: Maddy Prior
Manchester Osborne Club: Back To Zero
Manchester Polytechnic: Apartment
Manchester University The Squat: Any Trouble / The Cheaters
Newcastle City Hall: The Spinners
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: The Hormones
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Gaffa
Paisley TUC Club: Gino/The Rockin' Rebels
Penzance Demelza's: Sabotage
Plymouth Polytechnic: John Miles
Plymouth Tops: Metro Gliders
Portsmouth Polytechnic: Samson
Port Talbot Sandman: The First
Poynton Folk Centre: Peter Bodamy / Shesingen
Preston The Warehouse: The Fall
Reading Sweeney's: Romantic
Salford Walkden Butts Head: The Salford Jets
Scarborough Panthouse: Carl Green & The Scene / The Cassettes / Dave Barbarian
Sheffield City Hall: Mike Harding
Sheffield Limit Club: The Movies
Sheffield The Pegasus: The Accelerators
Sheffield University: Eric Bell Band
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: Galtacher & Lyle / Judie Tzuke
Southampton Joiners Arms: Lip Moves
Southend Scamps: Bastille
Southport Theatre: Boxcar Willie
Thornaby Conservative Club: Vardis
Tunbridge Wells Menover Hall: Vital Third / The Gist
Wigan Casino: Humandala
Wolverhampton City Hall: The Jam / The Vapors
Yeovil R.N.A.S. Yeovilton: High Flames

Friday

Aberavon Nine Volts: Little Bo Bitch
Aberdeen University: John Martyn
Aylesbury Maxwell Hall: Caroline Roadshow
Basingstoke Megnum's: Youlouise
Belfast Queen's University: The Specials/Dr. Feelgood
Birkenhead The Gallery: Ken Maiden
Birmingham Barrel Organ: Bright Eyes
Birmingham Elizabethan Days: The Treas
Birmingham Golden Eagle: Sensible
Birmingham Underwood: Cowboys International
Birmingham University: Simple Minds
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: Midsomer
Blackpool Lion Bar: The Salford Jets
Blyth Golden Eagle: Carl Green & The Scene/The Cassettes/Dave Barbarian
Bournemouth Winter Gardens: Gallagher & Lyle/Judie Tzuke
Bradford St. George's Hall: Motorhead
Brentwood Hermit Club: Fast Edd
Brighton Sussex University: Here & Now/Splodgenessabounds
Bristol University: John Miles
Cambridge Corn Exchange: The Damned
Chalfont St. Giles Newlands Park College: The Act
Chatham Central Hall: Boxcar Willie
Chesham: Shesbury Hall: The Silettes/Creation Rebel/The Dead Airman
Chippingham Langley Burrell Hall: The Scoop
Coventry Ryton Bridge: Streetlife
Coventry Warwick University: Samson
Coverack Youth Club: Metro Gliders
Dudley J.B.'s Club: The Silettes
Dundee Technical College: The Original Mirrors
Edinburgh Art College: The Freeze
Edinburgh Netherbow Theatre: Visitors / Day Trippers
Frodham Folk Club: Peter Bellamy
Glasgow Apollo Centre: Cliff Richard
Glasgow Theatre Royal: Boys Of The Lough
Guildford Surrey University: Caravan
Harrow King's Head: The Mods
Hastings Ocean Bar: The Trendies
Hartford Polytechnic: Cannon Rock
Kilvington Country Club: Speed-O-Metors
Knaresborough Folk Club: Andrew Frank & Mike Mason
Leeds Florde Green Hotel: The Movies / Speedbait
Lancaster Phoenix Theatre: J.O.W. Band / Ophelia

QUEEN, pictured above during their last UK concert in 1978, begin a major tour this week. After an Irish gig in Dublin on Thursday, they kick off in Birmingham (Saturday) and Manchester (Monday and Tuesday).
WINGS take the road for the first time in four years, with their new line-up comprising (from left to right) Denny Laine, Steve Nolly, Laurence Juber, Linda and Paul McCartney. They open in Liverpool (Saturday, Sunday and Monday) and Manchester (Wednesday).

Also opening tours

THE TALKING HEADS
THE DAMNED
XTC
ALVIN LEE'S TEN YEARS LATER
THE CURE
NEIL INNES
GINGER BAKER'S ENERGY
JOE JACKSON
JOHN MARTYN

London one-offs

IAN HUNTER BAND with Mick Ronson, and Rachel Sweet guesting, are at Hammermith Odeon (Thursday); Gary Numan, Cat Stevens and Wishbone Ash are among those in the Year Of The Child benefit at Wembley (Thursday); Randy Newman plays the Dominion Theatre on Sunday; The Shirts stop off at the Nashville en route for Europe (Sunday); and Soney M, Amil Stewart and Bill Haley are included in the Royal Variety Show at Drury Lane (Monday).

Leicester University: John Cooper-Clarke/Chris Sievey & The Freshies/The Out
Liverpool Polytechnic: The Revillos
London Acton Kings Head: Pat
London Archway Margrave Hall: The Demolition Decorators
London Camden Centre: Midnite Follies Orchestra
London Camden Electric Ballroom: Gang Of Four/Red Crayola/Au Pairs/Delta 5
London Camden Southampton Arms: Jet-lyre Blues Band
London Central Polytechnic: Local Operator/The Heat/Lighty Vybess/Martin Besserman
London City Polytechnic: Landscape
London Clerkenwell Youth Club: Silencere/Effort/TX1
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Tribesmen
London Fulham Golden Lion: Dana Gillespie
London Islington Hope & Anchor: Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders
London Kennington The Cricketers: Manyane
London Kensington Imperial College: Urchin
London Kensington The Nashville: Girt
London Marquee Club: Moon Martin
London New Cross Laurie Grove Baths: Little Tony & The Tennessee Rebels
London New Cross The Royal Albert: Rubber Johnny
London Putney Half Moon: The Blues Band
London Putney Star & Garter: Greig & Nigel's Folk and Blues Night
London Putney White Lion: Nitehawkers
London Soho Piza Express: John McVie/Clock Embelow Quartet
London Tottenham White Hart: Yakety Yak
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: Stream Line
London Victoria The Venue: Richard & Linda Thompson

London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: The 45's
London W.9 The Chippenharn: Sanity
Loutham White Horse Inn: The Fans
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Squeeze/The Photos
Manchester Band on the Wall: Miami Beach
Manchester Stalybridge Commercial Hotel: Direct Hits
Manchester UMST: Neil Innes
Middlesbrough Town Hall: The Spinners
Nelson Railwayworkers: The Nice Men
Newcastle City Hall: Mike Harding
Newcastle Polytechnic: Secret Affair/Squid
Newport The Village: The Cure
Norwich Cromwells: T.C.O.J.
Norwich Keswick College: The Running Dogs
Nottingham RAF Newton: Nightmare
Nottingham Sandpiper: Bethnal
Nottingham University: XTC
Oxford New Theatre: Hawkwind/Doll By Doll
Paisley Festival Theatre: Tammy Wynette/The Duffy Brothers
Reading University: The Psychodelic Fetus / Romantic
Reform Porthouse: The Piranhas
Salisbury City Hall: The Martian Schoolgirls
Salford University: Fischer-2
Salisbury Telford Barn: Dave Berry
Scarborough Panthouse: Slaughter & The Dogs
Sheffield Crucible Theatre: Maddy Prior
Sheffield Limit Club: Screams
Sheffield Medical Centre: The V.I.P.'s
Shildon Social Club: Vardis
Skipton Devonshire Hotel: The Vye
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: The Jam/The Vapors
Southend Top Alex: Steve Hooker Band
Southport Theatre: Marie Mulder
Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic: Tours
Sunderland Annulet: J.A.L.N. Sand
Uxbridge Brunel University: Wild Horses
Uxbridge Unit One: The Attendants/The Statistics
Weymouth College of Education: Sta-Pre
Windsor Blazars: Andy Williams
Wolverhampton The Merry Hill: Johnny Coppin
York College of Ripon & St. John: Flash Cats

Saturday

Aberystwyth College of Librarianship: Little Bo Bitch
Aldershot Leisure Centre: Roaring Jelly
Ayr Darlington Hotel: J.A.L.N. Band
Barkingside Old Maypole: Matchbox
Bath Mole Club: The Martian Schoolgirls
Bath Newton Park College: Whitekings
Birmingham Bopans: Life Support
Birmingham Golden Eagle: Sensible Suggestions / The Last Gang
Birmingham Mercat Cross: Strider
Birmingham National Exhibition Centre: Queen
Birmingham Railway Hotel: School Sports
Birmingham Underworld: Screams
Birmingham University: XTC
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: The Newton Neurotics
Blackpool Lion Bar: The Salford Jets
Blackpool Norbeck Castle: The Revillos
Bodmin Jail Club: Sabotage
Bradford Bridge House: Romantic
Bradford Palm Cove Club: Laurel Aitken
Bradford St. George's Hall: Showaddywaddy
Brighton The Northern: Airport
Bristol Turntable: Jimmy Lindsay
Burnwood The Troubadour: Ocean Boulevard
Bury St Edmunds British Sugar Club: Clem Curtis & The Foundations
Canterbury Kent University: John Cooper-Clarke / Chris Sievey & The Freshies / The Out
Cardiff Heath Hospital: Screen Gems
Carshalton St. Helier Arms: Yakety Yak
Clay Rockwell Club: Zorro
Coventry Dog & Trumpet: The T.V.I.'s
Coventry Lanchester Polytechnic: Mikiie
Coventry Theatre: John Miles
Coventry Warwick University: The Cure / The Passions / The Associates
Cromer West Runton Pavilion: Tours
Derford College of Education: The Silettes
Dublin National Stadium: Marie Mulder
Dudley J.B.'s Club: Slaughter & The Dogs

Edinburgh Usher Hall: Boys Of The Lough
Fareham Stubbington Community Centre: High Flames
Fife St Andrew's University: The Original Mirrors
Glasgow Apollo Centre: Cliff Richard
Glasgow Strathclyde University: John Martyn
Gloucester Cinderford Rugby Club: Nightmare
Gloucester Tracey's (metinee): Apartment
Hartley Rose & Crown: Any Trouble / 23 Jewels
Hull St Alban's: Voice / Human Zoo
Ilkley College: The Vye
Keele University: Dave Cousins
Leeds Staging Post: Side Effect
Leicester University: The Photos
Liverpool Folk Club: Peter Bellamy
Liverpool Royal Court Theatre: Wings
London Battersea Arts Centre: Landscape
London Camden Brecknock: Tennis Shoes
London Camden Dingwells: The Brekes / The Dec Decays
London Camden Electric Ballroom: Gang Of Four / Red Crayola / Au Pairs / Delta 5
London Camden Music Machine: Lasterza
London Central Polytechnic: Pinpoint
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: The Quada / The Name
London Fulham Golden Lion: Le Debbonaires
London Fulham Greyhound: A.D. 1984
London Hackney Adam & Eve: Little Tony & The Tennessee Rebels
London Hammermith Lyric Theatre (lunchtime): Bob Kerr's Jazz Friends
London Hammermith The Swan: Thieves Like Us
London Hampstead Town Hall: The Resistans / The Spallports
London Islington Hope & Anchor: The Blues Band
London Kensington Imperial College: Bethnal
London Kensington Queen Elizabeth College: Here & Now / Splodgenessabounds
London Kensington The Nashville: A Teardrop Explodes / Holly & The Italians
London Kilburn Gaumont State: Boxcar Willie
London Marquee Club: Moon Martin
London Millwall Magnet & Dewdrop: The Rackets
London N.4 The Stapleton: The Rest
London Pechham Newlands Tavern: Billy Karloff Band
London Regents Park Cecil Sharp House: Not Vultures
London Soho Piza Express: Lennie Felix Quartet
London Southall White Swan: Arrogant
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: Big Chief
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: Stream Line
London Victoria The Venue: The Movies / Interview / Flying Colours
London Withamstow North-East Polytechnic: London Zoo
London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic: The Jump
Loughborough University: Roger Chapman & The Shortlist
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Motorhead
Manchester Band on the Wall: Miami Beach
Manchester University: Secret Affair / Squire
Measham Ex-Servicemen's Club: Strange Days
Newcastle University: Simple Minds
Nottingham Boat Club: Lone Star / Angel Street
Nottingham Outlaws: Art Failure
Nottingham Sandpiper: The Teentests
Oldham Town Club: Eric Bell Band
Oxford New Theatre: Tammy Wynette / The Duffy Brothers
Oxford Oranges & Lemons: The Sonic Tonic
Peterborough Longthorpe Hall: Pant
Peterborough Wintona Stadium: The Damned
Redruth London Inn: Metro Gliders
Sheffield City Hall: Flypenny Piece
Sheffield University: Neil Innes
Shoreham-by-Sea Casablanca Club: Dave Berry
Slough College of Education: Caravan
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: The Jam / The Vapors

CONTINUES OVER . . .

MORE GIG GUIDE — and these are The Talking Heads



Southampton University: Lip Moves
St Austell New Cornish Riviera: Ginger Baker's Energy
St Austell Polpoth Inn: The Fans
Stratford-on-Avon Green Dragon: Orphan Swindon Wyvern Theatre: Gordon Giltrap
Wantage Lains Barn: Fred Wedlock
Warrington Lion Hotel: Iron Maiden
Whitchurch Sports & Social Club: Toulouse
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime): The Pests
Worthing The Montague: The Same

Sunday

Arbroath HMS Condon: J.A.L.N. Band
Banbury The Unicorn: Spreadthick
Bath St. Barnabus: Power Glide
Belfast Queen's University: Samson
Birmingham Singley Hall: The Jam/The Vapors
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Prima Donna
Birmingham Shirley Red Lion: The Crack
Birmingham (Yardley) The Swan: Video
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: Exile
Bournemouth Winter Gardens: Tammy Wynette/The Duffy Brothers
Bradford Princeville Club: Rokka
Bristol Colston Hall: Hawkwind/Doll By Doll
Bristol Plume of Feathers: The T.V.L.'s
Bromley The Northover (lunchtime): Bill Scott & Ian Ellis
Cardiff New Theatre: Mike Harding
Cardiff The Philharmonic: Screen Gams
Cardiff Top Rank: The Damned
Chelmsford City F.C.: Yaksy Yak
Chelmsford D.J.'s Clubroom: Roaring Jelly
Cornith United Club: Vardis
Croydon Fairfield Hall: Gallagher & Lyle / Judie Tzuke
Glasgow Apollo Centre: Andy Williams
Gravesend Red Lion: Bastille
Haywards Heath Cider Hall: The Yetties
High Wycombe Nags Head: Here & Now/Splodgenessabounds
Horsesham Roffey Social Club: Dave Berry
Ilford The Crabbrook: Raised On Robbery
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: Windovers
Leeds Warehouse (lunchtime): Best Friends
Liverpool Royal Court Theatre: Wings
London Battersea Candlelight Club: Ukelele
London Battersea Nags Head: Jugular Vein
London Camden Dingwells: Evening of British Blues
London Charing Cross Duke of Buckingham: The Invisible (for four days)
London Clapham 101 Club: The V.I.P.'s
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: The Prime Movers
London Finchley Torrington: The Piranhas
London Fulham Golden Lion: The Blues Band
London Fulham Greyhound: Speed-O-Metors
London Hammersmith Lyric Theatre (lunchtime): Johnny Siblo
London Islington Hope & Anchor: The Bishops
London Kennington The Cricketers: The OK Band
London Kensington The Nashville: The Shires
London Marquee Club: Bethnal
London Peckham Montpelier (lunchtime): Blue Moon
London Rainbow Theatre: Caravan
London Soho Pizza Express: Lennie Feltz
London Strand Lyceum Ballroom: The Specialists/The Selecter/Deasy's Midnight Runners
London Tottenham-Court Rd. Dominion Theatre: Randy Newman
London Victoria The Venue: John Cooper-Clarke
London Woolwich Tramshed: Bob Kerr's Whoopie Band
Lowestoft Sparrows Nest: Matchbox
Luton Cesar's Palace: Mary Wilson
Lynham RAF Club: The Bumpers
Maidenhead Alexandra's: The Alligators
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Dr. Feelgood
Newbury Old Waggon & Horses: Hanning Light
Newquay Central Hotel: The Winners
Norwich Whites: Denizens
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: The Mortals
Pools Wessley Hall: The Enid
Portsmouth Victory Club: Canned Rock
Poynton Folk Centre: The McCalmans / Heather Whittaker
Reading Hexagon Theatre: XTC
Redcar Coatham Bowl: John Miles
Rochdale Gracie Fields Theatre: Gordon Giltrap
Scarborough Futurist Theatre: Showaddywaddy
Stratford-on-Avon Royal Shakespeare Theatre: The Spinners

Wellingford Corn Exchange: Magenta
Walsall Dirty Duck (lunchtime): The Amazing Dark Horse
Warrington Folk Club: Peter Bellamy
Wollaton Nags Head: Sauchaus

Monday

Birmingham Barrel Organ: Freebird
Birmingham Golden Eagle: Quarts
Birmingham Odeon: Alvin Lee's Ten Years Later/The Bogey Boys
Blackburn King George's Hall: Andy Williams
Brighton Alhambra: The Likettes
Brighton Dome: Gallagher & Lyle/Judie Tzuke
Bristol Colston Hall: Mike Harding
Bristol Crookers: Whitewing (for three days)
Cambridge Lady Mitchell Hall: Neil Innes
Cambridge Odeon: XTC
Edinburgh Tiffany's: Dr. Feelgood
Exeter University: Joe Jackson/The Original Mirrors
Guildford Wooden Bridge: The Cosmetics
Hemel Hempstead Pavilion: The Specialists / The Selecter/Deasy's Midnight Runners
High Wycombe Town Hall: The Enid
Hull City Hall: John Miles
Hull Scares: The Motivators
Hull Tiffany's: The Stiletos
Ilford Cauliflower Hotel: Original East Side Stompers
Leeds Floride Green Hotel: Yaksy Yak
Leeds Mexboro Arms: Best Friends
Leicester De Montfort Hall: The Talking Heads/The Human League
Liverpool The Everyman: The Nice Men / Wah Hat
Liverpool Royal Court Theatre: Wings
London Bermondsey Apples & Pears: Stans Blues Band
London Camden Brecknock: Sad Among Strangers
London Camden Dingwells: Charlie Fawn/The Drill/The Rockets
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Money/Killing Joke
London Drury Lane Theatre Royal: Royal Variety Show with Boney M/Amii Stewart/Bill Haley etc.
London Fulham Golden Lion: Bob Kerr's Whoopie Band
London Fulham Greyhound: The Trendies
London Hammersmith Odeon: Motorhead
London Islington Hope & Anchor: American Blues Legends 79 Tour
London Kensington The Nashville: Tours / The Stickers
London Leicester Square Notre Dame Hall: Essential Logic/Scritti Politti/The Door & The Window/Delta 5

London Marquee Club: Bethnal
London N.4 The Stapleton: The O.K. Band
London Putney Half Moon: Paul Brett & John Joyce
London Putney Star & Garter: Penny Royal
London School of Economics: Electrotunes
London Shepherds Bush Trafalgar: The Act
London Victoria The Venue: Ben E. King / Mirage
London W.10 Acklam Hall: Dangerous Girls
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Queen
Middlesbrough Teesside Polytechnic: Lit-Te Be Black
Norwich St. Andrew's Hall: Gang Of Four
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: The Party
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Gswahir
Plymouth Polytechnic: Here & Now
Ponmouth Enterprise Wine Bar: Attie/The Nice Boys/The Chimes
Rayleigh Crooks: Gina 'n' The Rockin' Rebels
Scunthorpe The Big Social: Dave Berry
Sheffield Top Rank: The Damned
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: Hawkwind/Doll By Doll
Southend Zero 6: Musicians Workshop
Southsea King's Theatre: The Rocky Horror Show (for a week)
Spenny Moor Recreation Centre: Vardis
Stafford Doxey Institute: M.U. Workshop Unit
Stockport Davenport Theatre: Showaddywaddy
Stoke Trentham Gardens: The Jam/The Vapors
Swindon Brunel Rooms: The Scoop
Wolverhampton Civic Hall: Secret Affair/Squire

Tuesday

Belfast Ulster Hall: Planxty
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: Brujo
Birmingham Mercat Cross: Kitar
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Speed Limit
Birmingham Top Rank: Joe Jackson/The Original Mirrors
Bishops: Stamford Triad Leisure Centre: Dangerous Girls/Cordic Arrest
Brentwood Hermit Club: Noel Murphy
Bridlington Spa Royal Hall: The Jam/The Vapors
Cardiff University: Samson
Chesterfield College of Art: M.U. Workshop Unit
Farnborough Tumbledown Dicks: The Purple Hearts
Fleet Fox And Hounds: Jenny Seecock
Glasgow Apollo Centre: Dr. Feelgood

Gt. Yarmouth Tiffany's: The Specialists/The Selecter/Deasy's Midnight Runners
Halifax Civic Theatre: Andy Williams
Ilkley Rose And Crown: Side Effect
Inverness Eden Court Theatre: Gordon Giltrap
Leicester De Montfort Hall: Alvin Lee's Ten Years Later/The Bogey Boys
Leicester University: Secret Affair/Squire
London Camden Music Machine: The Crazy/Electrotunes
London Canning Town Bridge House: Lonesome No More
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Medium Medium/Long Tall Shorty
London Fulham Golden Lion: Ltd. Company
London Fulham Greyhound: Scissor Fits / Sad Among Strangers
London Hammersmith Odeon: Motorhead
London Islington Hope And Anchor: The Untouchables
London Kensington The Nashville: The Merton Parkers/The V.I.P.'s
London Marquee Club: Tours
London N.4 The Stapleton: Brett Marvin And The Thunderbolts
London Old Kent Rd. Thomas A'Becker: Stan's Blues Band
London School of Economics: Here And Now/Splodgenessabounds
London Soho Pizza Express: Campbell Bump Quintet
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: Lastarza
London Victoria The Venue: Neil Innes
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Queen
Manchester Polytechnic: Screams
Newcastle City Hall: The Talking Heads / The Human League
Norwich East Anglia University: John Cooper-Clarke/Chris Stevey And The Freshies/The Out
Rugby Emmaline's: The Stiletos
Sheffield Limit Club: Gang Of Four
Sheffield University: The Cure/The Passions/The Associates
Shrewsbury Music Hall: Simple Minds/Fischer-Z
Sitting MacRobert Centre: Boys Of The Lough
Walsall Dirty Duck: The Amazing Dark Horse
York University: John Miles

Wednesday

Aberdeen Capitol Theatre: The Talking Heads/The Human League
Birmingham Barrel Organ: Brujo
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Rammaker
Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: Roses
Birmingham University: The Cure/The Passions/The Associates

Bolton Aquarius: Ginger Baker's Energy
Bradford University: John Miles
Bradford Vaults Bar: Sheke Appeal
Brighton Alhambra: Dirty Weekend
Brighton Dome: Andy Williams
Brighton Top Rank: The Damned
Bristol Stonehouse: The Interceptors
Chesham Plough Inn: Roadsters
Chesham Winter Gardens: The Specialists / The Selecter / Deasy's Midnight Runners
Coleraine Ulster University: Planxty
Cromborough The Crest: The Barron Knights (for three days)
Donby Comrades Club: Zoro
Eastleigh Concorde Club: Sweet Subst-tur-tur
Edinburgh Buster Browns: Landscape
Edinburgh Moray House: Sameon
High Wycombe Nags Head: The Stiletos
Hull New Theatre: Mike Harding
Inverness Eden Court Theatre: Boys Of The Lough
Keels University: The Enid
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: Doggy Tacties
Leeds University: Gang Of Four/Red Crayola
Leicester De Montfort Hall: Cliff Richard
Liverpool University: Secret Affair/Squire
London Camden Dingwells: Black Slate
London Camden Music Machine: The Warm Jets
London Clapham Two Brewers: The Bumpers
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Danny Adler Band
London Deptford Albany Empire: Holly & The Italians/The Lucy's/Wine Below Zero
London E.3 Earl of Aberdeen: Jeff Dady Band
London Fulham Golden Lion: Wide Boys
London Hammersmith Odeon: Alvin Lee's Ten Years Later/The Bogey Boys
London Highgate Lane Community Centre: Dave Totterdale
London Islington Hope & Anchor: Steppeside
London Knightsbridge The Grove: Free Bear
London Marquee Club: The Lurkers/The Carpatians
London New Cross Goldsmiths College: Here & Now
London Peckham Montpelier: Blue Moon
London Putney Star & Garter: Dana Simmonds & Greg's Folk and Blues Show
London Soho Pizza Express: Dave Cliff / Jim Linsay Quintet
London Victoria The Venue: Neil Innes
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: The Piranhas
London Wimbledon Nelson's Club: The Dance Band
London Woolwich Tramshed: Bernd Webber & The Models
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Wings
Manchester University: XTC
Middlesbrough Rock Garden: Screams
Newcastle City Hall: Dr. Feelgood
Norwich Whites: Dangerous Girls
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: Gswahir
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Some Chicken
Oldham Queen Elizabeth Hall: Freepenny Piece
Portsmouth Palmiston Hotel: Sly Scandal
Shrewsbury Cascade Club: The Photos
Solihull Golden Lion: The Celtic
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: Motorhead
Southampton Top Rank: Refugees/The Lens/King Rock/Alchemists
Southampton University: John Cooper-Clarke/Chris Stevey & The Freshies/The Out
South Woodford Railway Bell: Original East Side Stompers
Swindon Bulls of Wellington: The Trend
Weymouth Cellar Vint: Thieves Like Us
Wolverhampton Polytechnic: Roger Chapman & The Shortlist

NEW YORK GIG GUIDE

MO:DAY (26): Max's Kansas City — John King & The Cats; My Father's Place — Brooklyn; Nassau Coliseum — The Circus (seven days); Bottom Line — Horne/Live Wire; Reno Sweeney Juke Joint.
TUESDAY (27): Lone Star Cafe — Sam & Dave; My Father's Place — The Contortions/Dirty Looks; Hurrah — Walter Steding/Dragon People; Max's Kansas City — Dark Day/Sick Dick & The Volkswagens; Tran — Gramscos; Sweet Basil — Maelstrom Mik; Bottom Line — Clannard/Jack Hardy; Paramount — White Gland (two days); 7th Ave South — French Kisses (two days); Fat Tuesday's — Max Roach (five days).
WEDNESDAY (28): Fast Lane — Wreckless Eric; Emerald City — The Buzzcocks; Bottom Line — John Fahey (two days); Capitol — Santana; Hurrah — Linton Kwesi Johnson; Lone Star Cafe — Vassar Clements (two days); Max's Kansas City — Love Of Life Orchestra.
THURSDAY (29): Palladium — The Police/Steel Pulse/The Motels; Majestic — Bette Midler (four days); Madison Square Garden — The Outlaws/Molly Hatchett; Hurrah — Wreckless Eric/A Teardrop Explodes (two days); Great Gildersleeves — Elvin Bishop.
FRIDAY (30): Max's Kansas City — The Contortions (two days); My Father's Place — Count Basie; Madison Square Garden — Foreigner/Johnny Winter; Bottom Line — McCoy Tyner (three days); Bascom — Charley Palmeri/Hugh Masekela; Town Hall — Ralph McTell/John Renbourn; Avery Fisher — Dexter Gordon; Other End — John Herald (two days).
SATURDAY (31): Palladium — The Buzzcocks/The Fall/The Sports; Village Gate — Herbie Mann; My Father's Place — David Johansen; Reno Sweeney's — Blossom Dearie (two days); Capitol — Rainbow/Scorpions; Hurrah — Echo & The Bunnymen/A Teardrop Explodes.
SUNDAY (2): Fast Lane — Johnny Thunders/Gangwar; Joe's Place — Loud Sex/The Grunts (seven days); Max's Kansas City — Von Eric; Sugar Ann's — Posh & The Pokeys (two days).



ANDY PARTRIDGE of XTC



DAVE VANIAN of THE DAMNED



HOPE & ANCHOR
UPPER STREET
ISLINGTON, N.1
R/N'S FESTIVAL

Thursday November 22nd THE INMATES WILKO JOHNSON	Monday November 26th AMERICAN BLUES LEGEND
Friday November 23rd THE BLUES BAND (featuring Paul Jones, Hughie Flint, Tom McGuinness)	Tuesday November 27th THE UNTOUCHABLES
Saturday November 24th THE BISHOPS	Wednesday November 28th STEPASIDE
Sunday November 25th THE BISHOPS	Thursday November 29th RED BEANS & RICE

Tickets: £1.50

WILD HORSES
NUTZ
STRAIGHT 8
ELECTRIC BALLROOM
(the CAVENDISH ROAD 111, LONDON N1 6AA)
SATURDAY 1st DECEMBER at 7-30
TICKETS: £1.50 (incl. VAT) ADVANCE: ELECTRIC BALLROOM BOX OFFICE, TEL: 485 9006
LONDON: HARRIS GARDENS, SOUTHWICK AVE., TEL: 415 2173, PRESTON: BOX OFFICE, TEL: 240 1245,
WE ROCK ON RECORDS, 3, NEWTON TOWN, NBL, TEL: 485 9006

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Hawkwind
IN CONCERT
with their Special Guests
DOLL BY DOLL
HAMMERSMITH ODEON
Box Office 01-749 4811
EXTRA CONCERT
SATURDAY DECEMBER 1st at 8.00pm
£3.75 £2.25 £2.75 £2.25

Beetle Pub A DEVIL OF A DISCO
Ginger Baker's Energy
Saturday 24th November
IN THE 2,000 CAPACITY BIG HALL 8pm
Tickets £2.00 In Advance
ADVANCE TICKETS FROM
SAFFRON RECORDS, TRINITY STREET, ST AUSTELL
AND FROM VIRGIN RECORDS

NEW CORNISH RIVIERA LIDO
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TELEPHONE: PAR(072-681)4261

Beetle Pub A DEVIL OF A DISCO

Climax Blues Band
SATURDAY 8th DECEMBER
IN THE 2,000 CAPACITY BIG HALL 8pm
Tickets £2.00 In Advance
ADVANCE TICKETS FROM
SAFFRON RECORDS, TRINITY STREET, ST AUSTELL
AND FROM VIRGIN RECORDS PLYMOUTH
NEW CORNISH RIVIERA LIDO
CARLYON BAY, 2 MILES EAST OF ST AUSTELL OFF THE A390
TELEPHONE: PAR(072-681)4261

BERND WEBER
AND THE LAST RESORT
Friday 23rd, Kings College
Wednesday 28th, Truro

CAROLINE
Roadshow
Friday November 23rd
THE MAXWELL HALL
CIVIC CENTRE
AYLESBURY, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Saturday November 24th NORTH HERTS COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE ROAD, HITCHIN, HERTS	Thursday November 29th KEMPTON MANOR A20 CHARING NR. ASHFORD, KENT
Wednesday November 28th WINDMILL HALL, ST MARY'S LANE UPMINSTER, ESSEX	Friday November 30th TALK OF THE EAST SOUTH PIER LOWESTOFT LIVE ROCK BAND COBRA

Doors open 8 pm. Bar. D.J.'s include Robb Eden, Harvey The Rabbit, Brian Martin and Robbie Day

MM presents
THE JOE JACKSON BAND
plus 2 supports
Sunday 9th December
EMPIRE BALLROOM, LEICESTER SQUARE
Doors open at 8pm. 1st support 8.30pm
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and Leicester Square Box Office Tel: 01 437 1666

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309 Harrow Road, W9
Thurs 22nd 8pm
THEVES LIKE US
+ The Jump 8pm
Fri 23rd 8pm
THE FEATURES
+ The Phonics Free
Sat 24th 8pm
ONE HAND CLAPPING
+ Support Free
Sun 25th 8pm
ROARING 80's Free
Mon 26th 8pm
FLEXIBLE DUSTBINS Free
Tues 27th 8pm
THE MICE Free
Wed 28th 8pm
MEDIUM MEDIUM
Open till 12 Mon-Sat Close 10.30 Sun
Westbourne Park tube 01-286 6403

100 CLUB
100 OXFORD STREET,
LONDON WEST ONE
Thursday November 22nd
SONS OF JAH
Thursday November 29th
ALTON ELLIS

ROCK AGAINST RADIATION PRESENTS
LOCAL OPERATOR
THIS HEAT
MIGHTY VHYBES
MARTIN BESSERMAN
Appearing Friday, November 23rd
Central London Polytechnic
115 Cavendish Street, W.1
Doors open 7.30 pm. Tickets £1.00
Nearest tube Oxford Circus or Warren Street

BRUNEL UNIVERSITY
Kingston Lane, Uxbridge, Middlesex
Tel: Uxbridge (89)39125
Friday, November 23rd
WILD HORSES
+ Support
Tickets £1.50 in advance £1.75 on the door
Friday, November 30th
JOHN MARTYN
+ Support
Tickets £1.80 in advance £2.00 on the door
Friday, December 7th
HAWKWIND
+ Support
Tickets £2.20 in advance £2.40 on the door
Doors open 8.30 pm
Tickets available from SU, Hardpress Records, Uxbridge, or
by post from Social Secretary, Students Union.
Nearest tube Uxbridge Motorway 2 miles

'REFUGEE' WILL 'ROCK YOU'
Friday 23rd November
SOUTHAMPTON TECHNICAL COLLEGE
+ SUPPORT
(ROCK AGAINST BLOOD SPORTS)
Saturday 24th November:
'JUMPERS TAVERN' CHRISTCHURCH
+ SPECIAL GUESTS, 'THE LENS'
Sunday 25th November:
LAKE HOTEL, REDHILL, SURREY
Wednesday 28th November:
TOP RANK SUITE, SOUTHAMPTON
(OXFAM S.O.S. MEDICAL AID FOR CHILDREN)
Band Enquiries: Southampton 850028

FUTURE PASTIMES
Tour arranged by Cowbell
THE CURE
THE PASSIONS
THE ASSOCIATES
16th LIVERPOOL Eric's • 17th LONDON L&E • 20th PRESTON Poly
21st MANCHESTER Unk • 23rd NEWPORT The Village
24th COVENTRY Warwick Unk • 27th SHEFFIELD Unk
28th BIRMINGHAM Unk • 29th PORTSMOUTH Poly
30th NORWICH Unk
1st DURHAM Unk • 3rd PARIS Empire • 5th WOLVERHAMPTON Poly
8th LONDON Music Machine
EXTRAORDINARY SENSATIONS TOUR Arranged by Robert Goss to
accompanied with Cowbell Agency
PURPLE HEARTS NOVEMBER
29th LONDON Oni Hall • 30th BLACKPOOL Northbrook Castle
1st WOLVERHAMPTON Poly • 2nd BISHOPS STORTFORD Tied Letters Centre
2nd PORTSMOUTH Poly • 4th EXETER Rooms • 6th LEEDS T Club
7th BIRMINGHAM Underworld • 8th WEST RUMTON CROMER Pavilion
10th BIRMINGHAM Hamilton Club • 11th SHEFFIELD Unk
12th YORK De Gray Rooms • 13th MANCHESTER Poly
14th SCARBOROUGH Parthenon • 15th MIDLESBOROUGH Rock Garden
warm-up dates: 2/12 November - Tumble-down Dicks, FARNBOROUGH



SECRET AFFAIR
plus SQUIRE
RAINBOW THEATRE LONDON
Saturday 8th December 8.00 p.m.
Tickets £2.80, £3.40, £2.00

THE TOWER CLUB
POWER BY OLDHAM LANC'S
Saturday November 24th
ERIC BELL BAND
Featuring ex Tills Lacey star Eric Bell
Also coming to the Tower
Saturday December 8th
DEF LEPPARD
Direct from AUCUK tour
Saturday December 22nd
IRON MAIDEN
prior to coast to coast U.S. tour
Heavy rock fans can meet all their idols at the Tower
NO MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED

Rainbow OUTLAW CONCERTS PRESENT
THE DAMNED
+ VICTIMS
FRIDAY 30th NOVEMBER 7.30pm
TICKETS £3.00, £2.50, £2.00
FROM BOX OFFICE, LONDON THEATRE BOOKINGS.
PREMIER BOX OFFICE: TICKET MACHINE

MEDIUM MEDIUM
Tuesday November 27th
ROCK GARDEN, COVENT GARDEN.
Tickets £1.

THE SELECTER
THE BEAT
U.B.40
LYCEUM
SUNDAY 9th DECEMBER at 7.30
TICKETS £2.50 (INC. VAT) ADVANCE LYCEUM BOX OFFICE, TEL. 434 3715.
LONDON THEATRE BOOKINGS, SHAFESBURY AVE., TEL. 430 3371, PREMIER BOX OFFICE, TEL. 240 2245.
20 RUCK ON RECORDS, 2 KENTON TOWN RD., WML, TEL. 445 1086

THE PORTERHOUSE
20 Carolgate, Retford, Notts.
Tel. 0777 704881.
Friday November 23rd
THE PIRANHAS
+ Uncool Danco Band
Saturday November 24th
SAMSON + Dead Ringer

POLYTECHNIC OF
CENTRAL LONDON
BENEFIT
FOR SANE
Nov 23rd Friday
LOCAL OPERATOR
MIGHTY WHYBES
THIS HEAT
MARTIN BESSERMAN
115 New Cavendish Street, W.1
Nearest Tube: Goudge Street,
Oxford Circus
Admission £1.50 Start 7.30pm

To Advertise
Ring
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(opp Victoria Tube station)
01-834 5500

Tickets from The Venue Box Office
and the Ticket Machine in the Virgin
Megastore, 14 Oxford Street, W.1.
Postal Applications (P.O.'s only) from
The Venue.

Food, Drink, Live Bands, Dancing
7pm-3am

See 3 nights
Wednesday 21st
Thursday 22nd
MARIA MULDAUR
(2 shows per evening) £4.25

Friday 23rd £3.50
RICHARD & LINDA THOMPSON
(2 SHOWS)

Saturday 24th £3.00
MOVIES + INTERVIEW + FLYING COLOURS

Sunday 25th £3.00
JOHN COOPER-CLARKE

Monday 26th £3.00
BEN. E. KING + MIRAGE

See 7 nights
Tuesday 26th
NEIL INNES + JOHNNY G £3.00

Thursday 28th £3.00
TREVOR RABIN

Friday 30th £3.00
Last U.K. appearance prior to U.S. Tour
THE INMATES + MARK ANDREWS AND THE GENTS

Sat 1st December £3.25
U.K.

Sun 2nd December 7.00 £3.00
1.30 £3.50
PIERRE MOERLEN'S GONG

See 2 nights
Monday 3rd, Tuesday 4th Dec £3.50
DAVID BROMBER BAND

See 7 nights
Wednesday 4th, Thursday 5th Dec £3.00
CAROLYN MAS

THE BRIDGE HOUSE
23 BARKING ROAD, CANNING TOWN, E16
Thursday November 23rd 50p
THE MO-DETTES
+ Wasted Youth
Friday November 23rd 60p
THE BRAKES
+ The Stickers
Saturday November 24th 60p
O.T.'s
featuring John Kelly
+ Chris Youliden
Sunday November 25th 50p
SPECIAL BRANCH
+ The Streets
Monday November 26th 50p
SMALL HOURS
+ The Face
Tuesday November 27th 50p
LONESOME NO MORE
+ Prime Movers
Wednesday November 28th 60p
WASTED YOUTH
+ Industrials
Thursday November 29th 50p
FLEXIBLE DUSTBINS
+ Shiner

THE GREYHOUND
Thursday November 22nd 60p
DEL DROMMAH OASIS + Goldwing
Friday November 23rd 60p
MARK ANDREW + Nutrioms
Saturday November 24th £1
1984
Sunday November 25th 60p
SPEED O METERS
+ The Never Never Band
Monday November 26th 60p
THE TRENDIES + The Marines
Tuesday November 27th 50p
SAD AMONG STRANGERS + Scissor Cuts
Wednesday November 28th 50p
SUSSEX + Mad Chateau

CORRECTION
JAM
Due to an error it was announced the JAM would be appearing at the LSE tonight, November 21st. This is not the case and we apologise for any inconvenience you may have been caused.

DUKE OF LANCASTER
Approach Road, NEW BARNET
(betide BA New Barnet)
Thursday November 22nd
THE ALMOST BROTHERS
Friday November 23rd
SKINFLOCKS
Saturday November 24th
KASHMIR
Sunday November 25th
PREYING MANTIS
Tuesday November 27th
THE FEATURES
EX SUCKER

THAT BRIGHTON BLUE BEAT!!
LET'S SKA WITH
SECOND NATURE
Nov 21st Stapleton Arms, Crouch End
Nov 25th Norfolk, Worthing
Nov 28th Moonlight, West Hampstead
Nov 29th Art College, Brighton

PIPS PIPS
ATTENTION
MANCHESTER MODS
presenting the
TEENBEATS
plus Mod support
and Mod DJ
£1.25 — Monday 26th November
at 8.30 pm
Mod Disco every Wednesday
Live Mod Bands every other Monday
PIPS HOME OF THE NORTHERN MODS
56 Farnell Street,
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TICKETS TICKETS TICKETS
AVAILABLE FOR ALL LONDON
CONCERTS OF THE
FOLLOWING
NOVEMBER
22 Ian Hunter, Mick Ronson
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23/24 Gang of Four
25 Caravan
26/27 Motorhead
28 Alvin Lee
30 The Damned
DECEMBER
1 Specials, Selecter & Wild
Horses
1/2 Hawkwind
4/5 L. Cohen
6 The Cure
7/8 Talking Heads
8 Secret Affair
9 Selecter
13/15 Cliff Richard
16 Budgie
18/19 Dire Straits
19 Dr. Feelgood
20 X.T.C.
20/24 Leo Sayer
21 Teardrop Explodes
22 The Damned
28 Purple Hearts
30 Madness
FEBRUARY
1/2 Wishbone Ash
MARCH
14/15 Judas Priest
For more information send SAE to
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GEORGE MCRAE
KID JENSEN
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MARK WESLEY
AND NICKY STEELE
FREE RECORDS given away during the day
NATIONAL EXHIBITION CENTRE BIRMINGHAM
SATURDAY JAN 19 1980
3pm - Midnight
DOORS OPEN 11pm SHOW COMMENCES 3pm. HALLS 3, 5 & 6
Please Stand & Behave at All Times

ALBUMS

EXTRA

GENYA RAVAN

... And I Mean It!
(20th Century Fox)

GENYA Ravan (a/k/a Goldie Zelkowitz as in Goldie And The Gingerbread) must be fed up to the back teeth with people continually pointing out that she's 'been around a long time,' or words to that general effect. Even her record company keeps plugging away, logjamming her press handout with mid-'60s snaps of Genya in her Goldie Gingerbread incarnation alongside the likes of Jeff Beck and Mick Jagger.

Your modern-day Ravan is a tough, soulful woman who runs an autonomous operation: she's written most of ... And I Mean It! and produced the album. She's one of those songwriters who feel that rock and roll is not merely medium but

metaphor, not so much a way of looking at the world but a subject of inexhaustible interest in its own right. She's at her best when it goes the other way.

'Love Isn't Love', wherein she gently seduces a nervous young man, is almost marvellous and 'Stubborn Kinda Girl' (her revibe of Marvin Gaye's 'Stubborn Kinda Fella') is the work of an artist with a genuine grounding in soul music. 'Pedal To The Metal' is '50s nostalgia just for fun and 'It's Me' is a great put-down song.

Famous performer Ian Hunter drops in for a bit of a warble on 'Junkman' and

resists the temptation to attempt to out-shout Ravan, which means that he gets off with a draw, and on the same track Mick Ronson shows up to tweak a string or two. Ronson's cameo confirms a suspicion that had been building up throughout the entire album: that Ravan's band scale the headiest heights of mediocrity. They are *dullsville*.

Mind you, an infinitely better band could still be reduced to wallpaper by a production as flat as the one which Genya lavishes on this album. The end result is a dull album with good bits here and there, an artist working at well below maximum output. Genya Ravan sounds like someone who deserved to make a better album ... And I mean it!

Charles Shear Murray

To Hell with The Boys

First 5,000 albums include free illustrated song book

Catalogue No: 1-2-BOYS
Second digit spoken in FrenchSee them at the FREE
Grand Safari Xmas Party
Music Machine London
Thursday November 29thNew single
KAMIKAZE SAFE 21SAFARI
Distributed by SpartanAnswer for non-polydoplois
One DeuX Boys

MORE

LIVE!!!
01-261 6153ALAN STUART MANAGEMENT
PRESENTSTHE
FEATURESMUSIC MACHINE Thursday Nov 22nd
WINDSOR CASTLE Friday Nov 23rd

TOWN HALL HIGH WYCOMBE

Monday 26th November 7.30pm

THE ENID plus support

Tickets in advance from Venue or Scorpion Records High Wycombe Chiswick
Sound Marlow £2.10 or at the door

TOURS

Monday November 26th

NASHVILLE

Tuesday November 27th

MARQUEE

Thursday November 29th

ERIC'S LIVERPOOL

Tours New Single Tourist Information (VS307)
Out Now

LE DIAMOND DIVE UNDER THE ALBANY

240 Great Portland Street W.1.
Tues 27 NovLES ELITE + SUPPORT
AND ALL THE SOUNDS
8pm Adm £1SAD
M
O
STRANGERS
G

21st TWO BREWERS, CLAPHAM

26th BACKNOCK

27th GREYHOUND

28th TWO BREWERS

3rd Dec (MOONLIGHT CLUB, WEST HAMPTON)

7th BACKNOCK

12th TWO BREWERS

Management - 01 725 8755

ST. ANDREWS HALL NORWICH

Monday November 26th 8pm

GANG OF FOUR

+ Au Pairs + Bar

Tickets £1.75 in advance from
ROBINS, ACE BACKS, TOPDECK,
SNEAKERS RECORD SHOPS NORWICH
or £2.00 on the nightSPIZZ ENERGI + ESSENTIAL LOGIC
+ MORDEN ENGLISH

SUNDAY 2nd DECEMBER

at 8 pm.

NORTH PECKHAM

CIVIC CENTRE

600 Old Kent Road, SE15

Tickets £2

Licensed Bar

BOX OFFICE: 703 2917

BEAT CRAZEE!

V.I.P.'s

Friday November 23rd

SHEFFIELD

MEDICAL SCHOOL

Sunday November 25th

101 CLUB

CLAPHAM JUNCTION

Tuesday November 27th

NASHVILLE (Get There Early)

Management

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Agency

Nimoch 01-584 7584

GREYHOUND

FULHAM

sat. nov. 24th.

Live Filming!
documentary

FEATURING

AD.1984.

+ GUESTS + YOU!

PTARMIGAN

Would like to apologise to all who turned out to see us last Thursday, and would like to thank all those who came when we really did play on Friday. Also, contrary to last week's advert, we will be at THE CUMBERLAND TAVERN, PORTSMOUTH

Thursday November 22nd

and the ROYAL OAK, WHITEHILL

Friday November 30th

"Please Accept My Resignation"

The Person Who Makes The Adverts Up.

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E U N I V E R S E

ALBUM





POISON GIRLS

■ From page 25

whereby they can express themselves creatively as people. And there's no point in them saying 'oh I'm anti-racist' and being recruited on that basis without there being an attempt to construct a creative alternative to the life they've got."

Subversa: "I think this is why some kids flirt with the NF. It's the same need for identity that leads people to identify with football teams. I don't think the kids are gonna be fooled by the NF for long, cos they're too clever, they'll see it's just another bunch of redundant fuddyduddies trying to capitalise on the energy of young people. But the source of that need is an important problem."

And the source is?

"The feeling of being dispossessed is the nearest I've got to it. In the way that we're dispossessed of our bodies, our relationships. They're determined from the outside, that sort of feeling. A crucial basic deprivation of identity."

(Footnote: Four days after this interview, a group of NF skinheads broke up a benefit gig which Poison Girls were playing for the Theatre Royal, Stratford. The band were attacked onstage and their equipment trashed. Afterwards Famous told me that the band had been very shaken and may reconsider their position on open gigs — "we'll certainly take steps to ensure we're not setting ourselves, or the venue, up to be vandalised." Later the band issued a statement which reiterated their basic point that violence stems from male power games and asked for help in formulating ways of combating this that did not involve violence.)

■ THE MOST powerful, provocative song on 'Hex' is 'Under The Doctor', with its bleak refrain 'What I'm trying to say is you've gotta be strong/Cos nothing takes the pain away for long'.

The implications of the song are quite terrifying — that practically everything we do is just a ploy to avoid facing the misery of our living conditions and that when these ploys fail, the result is 'mental illness' — but to me they also seem logically plausible. It's an oft-quoted statistic that nowadays one person in five receives treatment for 'mental illness' of one kind or another. We all know people who've been in that situation; and d'Boyle himself admits: "I've been offered those solutions. I've been offered ECT."

What I wanted the band to clarify, though, was what exactly they thought constituted this "pain".

Subversa: "I think it's the pain of the awareness of the situation in which you've got to keep yourself together."

Famous: "People know that it's ultimately not gonna do them any good to collect stamps, say, when they're actually angry with a system that represses their kids by making them go to school everyday."

"It's very easy to slip into a notion that you have no choice. Like, kids have got to go to school, and when they leave they've got to get a job, and when they've found one they've got to get married and gotta have a kid and gotta buy a house."

Subversa: "I think there is a sort of existential pain — though I hate that phrase — I don't know if it's basic to the human condition, though I sort of hope it isn't. But I know that it is in the society we live in. And the attempts I've made to avoid that or to feel happy have been, like, if I earn a lot of money, or buy a nice house, then I'll be happy."

"And there's a whole lot of things, from buying make-up to trying meditation techniques — and they're all big business, that's another part of it — and what I think we do by pursuing those forms of happiness is just numb ourselves to the pain of the conditions we're operating in."

"I mean, we've got a song with the line 'survival in silence isn't good enough'. We all suffer our pain quietly to ourselves, and personalise it, and have nightmares, and take it out on the cat and the kids and each other. But somehow pain I think is something which needs to be shared, cos from that comes a reality from which springs a need to change the basic situation."

But how does this change come about? Don't you think the kind of life you lead — living communally in the countryside — is both elitist, because it relies on the fact that only a few people do it, and limited, in that you're too isolated to affect many others? It's a private escape rather than a viable solution. Most people don't have much of a choice — they need to take the jobs available simply to feed, clothe and house themselves and their kids.

Subversa: "I think this is a really important question and I don't pretend to have the answers; but I'm sure the answer isn't simply to say 'I'm against this and that' and deal only with the symptoms of the problem. The issue is our right to choose how we use our lives, our blood, our energy; and not to be coerced or co-opted into a system whose end result, it seems to me, is more and more frustration and death."

d'Boyle: "I think it's a mistake to think in terms of a large social movement, that what we ought to create is a mass movement. That's the way the world works now, or

doesn't work actually but tries to — you get a good idea and then try and build a huge movement out of it. I don't think that's the way to do it."

"What we do, and we have our limitations and weaknesses like everybody else, is to make sure that personally we live in as uncompromised a way as possible."

■ IF POISON GIRLS are an unusual band in the extent of their political commitment, they are also untypical in the rock world because of their age. I don't know exactly how old they are — I don't think it's important — but I'd place Subversa, d'Boyle and bassist Bernhardt Rebours (who's got a sore throat and isn't saying much) as being well over 30, at the least.

They are also unusual in that they learned their instruments specifically to be in this band, and decided to form a band specifically because they had some things they wanted to say: the correct approach, they maintain, to any form of self-expression. But why did they choose rock 'n' roll?

Subversa: "It's exciting, innit? It's to do with the excitement and infectious enthusiasm that can happen. And the fact that a lot of the ideas that came to me when I was living in isolation were through listening to rock music. It was alive. And it suddenly occurred to me that there were groups of people working together, sharing their difficulties, at a time I thought there was nothing like that going on, when the alternative was people kinda carving out their own doom, on mortgages or whatever."

"The thing I value more than anything about what we're doing is that I've found people I can work with and who will work with me. It's been a real personal revolution — to move out of isolation, to break out of that and share a means of expression with other people."

d'Boyle: "The really important thing for me is to show that rock music isn't purely something you can do when you're a teenager. It's not just a revolt against your parents and when you reach 19 or 21 your phase of rebellion is over. That's exactly what it's not. It goes on, and yes people get tired or compromised or disappear, but we want to show that the life which this revolt represents does go on, can go on, and should go on."

Subversa: "I've been told that I'm in my second childhood, but I think the threat of middle-aged people chucking up the system is really exciting. You don't have to give in when you're over 20, and we want to exhibit that fact."

You've also said that "of all the issues, sexist oppression is where Poison Girls are mostly involved, both in our music, our lyrics and our everyday lives". Again, choosing to fight that within the confines of rock 'n' roll, a traditionally sexist genre, must have caused problems...

Subversa: "There is a problem and it's to do with images or models, with how you present yourself onstage. If you look at the roles women are allowed in western society — virgin, goddess, mother, whore — I mean, I've been a bit of each in my time and I was already trying to escape the strait-jacket of those roles. And in the rock business, I think women really have to struggle not to be pushed into the role of whore. That's a huge burden we have to fight."

"But cos I was already fairly conscious of these pressures, I was helped to go through what felt like a tangle of knots about how I should appear onstage, how I should stand, how I should even 'wear' a guitar. And the way I got through, too, was by the respect from other people in the group for what I wanted to do; they gave me real help and support over that."

"And it was a real burden. I mean, I was afraid to be in the band because of all that for a long time. I did it. I stood onstage, but I could feel my fear paralysing me. Now I can feel it dissolving a bit."

"And I hope I'm sexy, but I don't want to play the seductive game — like, the traditional stance of the woman performer is to be seductive — cos I think the kind of success you achieve through seduction is a bit cheap and probably won't last. I want to have a political effect, and that has to be a lot more than seduction, to come from something a lot stronger."

"It's been a really important step along the road for me, and for the men in the band, to understand the role sexism plays in our total oppression, but I don't think it stops there for us. It can't, because we're working together as people."

"And I'm perfectly aware of the role that men have played in oppression and the role that women have played in colluding with that oppression. 'Hex' came from political struggle out of those roles, but it's not the total political statement that we want to make."

"There's a new kind of stuff coming through in our work now, songs that are a lot less rooted in an experience of pain and a lot more rooted in an experience of hope. And that's come from working in the band, because we are involved in a process of change."

"We've got to carry on with that process ourselves. And trust that other people will, at the least, be less and less willing to do what they're told to do and more and more willing to take risks to get somewhere nearer where they'd like to be."

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Pop Shop,
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Cloudsden,
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Page 43
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Brighton
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Cardiff
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Coventry
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Edinburgh
18a Frederick Street
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Liverpool
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Newcastle
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165 The Parade, West Hart.
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Chew & O'Brien,
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Pine Office Walk, Harlow
Avon,
27 Chichester Road, Woking, Surrey
Bagsby Records,
2 The Square, Richmond, Surrey
Musicians,
Lower Addiscombe Rd, Addiscombe, Surrey
Bagsby Records,
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Bagsby Records,
21 Market Square, Bromley, Kent
Subway Bar,
14 Turgate Square, Guildford, Surrey
Langley's Records,
468 Walton Road, Molesey, Surrey
Musie Lewis,
29 East Street, Hingham, Surrey
Musie Lewis,
148 Central Road, Worcester Park, Surrey
Musie Lewis,
118 High Street, Kingston, Surrey
L & H Chalk,
26 High Street, Croydon, Surrey
Starline,
171 High Street, Chatham, Kent
Musie Lewis,
Bank Street, Bramley, Essex
Musie Lewis,
High Street, Strood, Kent
Musie Lewis,
4 Grove Road, Eastbourne, Sussex
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99 High Street, Maidstone, Kent
Langley's,
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Langley's,
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Turntable,
16 Bank Street, Ashford, Kent
Golden Disc,
39 Queens Road, Southend, Essex
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35 Lee High Road, Lewisham, SE13
Godfrey's,
28/22 Eastwalk, Baskin, Essex
Adrian's Records,
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Kelly's Radio Ltd,
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Kelly's Radio Ltd,
High Street, Southend, Essex
Kelly's Radio Ltd,
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Kelly's Radio Ltd,
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Kelly's Radio Ltd,
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Page 43,
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Outchell,
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Seaborn,
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Spittles,
36 The Hayes, Cardiff
Rainbow,
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9 Giggles, York
Score & Heard,
2 George Square, Halifax
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Gordons,
University Precinct, Manchester
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Gulchall Arcade, Preston
Hardman Records,
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LIVE!

Pop Group Scritti Politti

University Of London

THE tradition of the angry young idealist, full of righteous fervour, self-righteous condescension towards those at odds with his or her volatile beliefs, and a mass of confused rhetoric and contradictions, goes on forever.

Tonight the location for this is a London University Union dance, but few people are dancing because on the stage Scritti Politti are playing and it is impossible to dance to them.

You've probably heard of Scritti Politti due to one of our more idealistic young scribes who constantly declares they are one of the principle forces of change trumpeting away at rock 'n' roll's reactionary Wall of Jericho. But the only wall that looked ready to tumble down on Friday was that of a bank of amplifiers behind them.

"Ere Jack, toss us over some gaffs tape quick. The PA's falling to pieces," a roadie shouts during one of Scritti's atonal doodles.

These are the most clearly-stated words throughout the set. Originally they'd just strutted on and plugged in, considering it pointless to get any sort of sound balance. The bass player is pumping out his patterns at twice the volume of the guitarist's feeble sound. The drummer, a white guy with a ridiculous Rastafarian head of hair, sporadically beats away at a lethargic reggae beat.

The guitarist announces that every number they intend to play in the set has been specially prepared for the gig and never before

played. But this statement is soon contradicted by the yelps of recognition greeting some songs and requests from the audience which the guitarist readily agrees to perform.

It makes no difference to me either way. Scritti appear so passively *laissez-faire* about their vocation that they rarely choose to play together, and, on Friday's showing, I wonder why they bothered at all.

They pointlessly meander around and play so lethargically that the limbo they find themselves in is totally bereft of any virtues. As far as lyrics go, I couldn't hear one word the guitarist was rather feebly singing, and his playing was simply a gross waste of a decent instrument.

Bands like Scritti Politti are irritating; they came over as smug, lazy and directionless. Their apathy towards such conventions (one can already hear them yawning at the

word) as tuning up and working as a unit so that their sound and vision is clear, makes them both condescending and redundant. Or to quote Tom Verlaine: "It seems you have something to say. Why don't you say it?"

The full extent of Scritti Politti's wretched impotence was driven home when The Pop Group took the stage.

Building up the atmosphere with a tape of an ominously belligerent tribal chant, the band instantly locked into the momentum they created and charged into 'Thief Of Fire'.

Now here was something special: the band literally exploded, with drummer Bruce Smith providing a stop-start pulsebeat around which the bassist fired off volley upon volley of gutsy runs and the main guitarist played violent rhythmic outbursts that effectively muted Zoot Horn Rollo with James Brown's chicken scratch work.

Pop Goes The Tension

Meanwhile Gareth Sager, multi-instrumentalist and all purpose extrovert, played second guitar but continually swapped from that to saxophone to clarinet to violin. Frontman Mark Stewart threw himself around with great abandon, screaming into the mikes in a

way reminiscent of Tim Buckley in his 'Starsailor' period (he lacks Buckley's range, but his ability to hit those phenomenally high notes was startling).

From 'Thief' onwards it was more than evident that The Pop Group are something very special. Their use of

dynamics is unique in terms of rock — drummer Smith provides the pulse in much the same way that Tony Williams did during the classic 'Emergency' era of Lifetime, and his style is so volatile that the others had to work around him. It's incredibly taut, on a hair-trigger and always threatening to go over the top.

They project a very real sense of danger of the sort I've not experienced since the Pistols' 100 Club days. But whereas the Pistols were more into conventional hard rock, The Pop Group are working in territory that is far from orthodox.

Echoes of free-jazz mingle with James Brown funk and dub techniques, but the eclectic moulds into one sustained scream of tension. But that's not to say that the band are perfect.

Vocalist Mark Stewart tended to preach at the audience, yet his idealism isn't the condescending style of Scritti Politti. In fact, in one of his between-song raps Stewart declared that this would be the last gig this particular incarnation of The Pop Group would be performing. This added further to the tension present.

New songs were performed. 'Rob A Bank' being particularly memorable, whilst the current single 'We Are All Prostitutes' ended the set with the explosion the band were threatening to dive-bomb into.

The future remains uncertain because Stewart is definitely leaving. But Friday night's gig was recorded for a live album and I can't wait to hear it. With or without Mark Stewart, this band must continue.

They are too precious to be victims of their own misguided idealism.

Nick Kent

The B-52's The Troggs

Electric Ballroom

IT'S a little different, this time around: beehives, bombers and bouffants; dinky handbags, slink-fit rayon dresses and knock-knees; monster earrings and layers of mascara this thick! And you ought to have seen what the girls were wearing!

No doubt about it. The B-52's have touched down. The harrowing crew of rockbiz personnel, wayward punks and finger-on-the-pulse-type West End hipsters that mustered at the Lyceum gig in July have now been shown the door by an army of dancebeat fanatics, '60s sympathisers (nouveau mods among them) and walking, talking Barbi Dolls doing the Shu-ga-loo, the Aqua-velva and the Hip-o-crit. They know all the words — every squeak, yelp, bleep and shriek — and they're not keeping quiet about it.

The B-52's have had a respray themselves. Fred Schneider's turned in his psychedelic beachwear, and now looks like a nerve-wracked marriage between Fee Waybill and Kenneth Williams, but still sounds like an acid casualty with an adenoid problem. Keith Strickland's trimmed his hair to mod and his kit to two tom-toms, a tub, two cymbals, a bass drum and a snare, making the bottom line even more crack-sharp, flat, cut and fried.

Ricky Wilson's hunched over his double-neck 6/12 string sporting a fresh penitentiary crop, Kate Pierson's behind the synths in a vast crimped lures number and Cindy's frugging stage-left in a manner that sways between strict discipline and sheer petulant screaming lunacy. She's in a class of one, is Cindy.

The 52's wield a kind of early '60s campus/beach party, hot-potato rock-a-boogie, stripped to the bones and stretched like canvas between a constant kickstart drumbeat, bass synth, bristling raw guitar and a plastic organ, plus a tremulous B-movie ghost-chorus hovering in the wings.

If this fabulous cacophony fails to move you, please see a doctor

Over the top of all this are the most demented scrapplings of burnt-out, dream-pop psychedelia — cartoons, sketches, patterns, lists. *Happy Days* gone Marlon — all of it intoned by Cindy, Kate and the very weird Schneider like Beat meets The American Musical. The result is about the flakiest piece of cinema your ears are ever likely to see.

Somebody faints, the whole place seethes forward and the 52's are on stage to gargantuan whoops of glee. It's impressive as they've neither had any TV nor a hit single.

The mix throws the synth too high and the guitar too low for 'Planet Claire', but visually they're in sharper focus and altogether a sight more confident: Schneider moves in gawky jerks, his walkie-talkie an extension of his stick-like limbs; Kate conducts breezily with a lures-clad arm; Cindy belts hell out of the bongos. It clicks into place like a gearbox. It's brilliant.

And it's downhill from then on.



B-52's Fred Schneider salutes the departure of Mark Stewart from The Pop Group. Guitarist Gareth Sager jumps for joy. All pix Santo Basone.

The mix evens out for '6960-842', the hard-driving 'Devil In My Car', the supreme 'Hot Lava', 'There's A Moon In The Sky (Called The Moon)' and the stupendous 'Dance This Mess Around' with Cindy's dewy-eyed vocal trailing off into a series of frenetic gulps.

As if this wasn't enough, her intro on 'Rock Lobster' is like the death-throe hysteria of a Lewis gun in need of axle grease. They're never dull, this lot, believe me.

There's nothing quite like The B-52's and it's worth seeing them before there is.

For that matter, there's nothing quite like The Troggs either, which is no bad thing.

The Searchers having pulled out (shame, they'd have been perfect) and the VIPs kicking off with commendable flair playing Rutles/Blue Jeans/Bubblegum Best, the news that Reg

Presley was on stage met with a fair amount of disbelief. Looking like Lee Brilleaux — chubby, sweating, slicked-down hair forging over his forehead like the bows of a steamer — Reg heaves into a ferociously heavy reading of 'All Your Love'.

It's unbelievable. The Troggs, reasonably fresh from the velvetine niteries of the Northern Club Circuit, are delivering 'With A Girl Like You' and 'Wild Thing' for the millionth time, creaking at the joints, missing beats, stumbling and sounding like loose heavy metal all blurred at the edges.

They're OK on the mega-stomp section, but come a balled like 'Any Way That You Want Me' it's hardly unkind to suggest that old Reg can't stretch the pipes quite like he used to, and his ocular solo on 'I Can't Control Myself' fairly gets up your nose.

There's a market for them somewhere, but it ain't around here.

Mark Ellen

Wire

Jeanetta Cochran Theatre

It went something like this: several hundred people stood squashed like sardines in the small foyer. A video camera and a dangling boom-mike eavesdropped on the crowd. The promoters had stressed the importance of prompt arrival, yet the auditorium remained locked well into extra time.

The audience were to be the victims, the observers and the players in a huge practical joke. And the punch-line was to be Wire.

An instant replay of the foyer scenario was transmitted to a large screen onstage and as everybody gradually moved into the auditorium, they were able to witness themselves performing Act One — *The Audience*.

The house-lights dim. A man appears onstage and performs a lo-o-o-ong and very boring charade with a glass of water and a cocktail trolley. As if on cue, segments of the audience trickle back into the foyer for a smoke and a mutter, while their actions and conversation are beamed back into the auditorium. So the audience becomes the performance.

Like Klein's Bottle, inside and outside are the same surface.

Vision cuts to solarised footage of fast car-ride into New York on an elevated highway; sound cuts to a frenetic, garbled FM transmission and the searing blast of electronoise... Then black...

Bright green shard of light erupts diagonally across the stage backdrop. Spooky figures draped in black chiffon crawl the boards. The electronoise intensifies. The audience becomes bored, uncomfortable, embarrassed, excited and even angry. They

fidget, murmur, yell discontented catcalls, or remain utterly bemused with the entire farce. You could cut the air with a chainsaw.

An Unlikely Occurrence: 14 black-clad figures creep into view, each one scratching his own "mantra" on an electric guitar. *The Decorator:* a man in a white boiler-suit splashes paint on to a big white screen. The audience's vexation thickens.

As dry and pointless as it appears to be on the printed page, this drawn-out prelude turned out to be a brilliantly conceived and executed anti-drama metaphor for the group Wire, who are themselves an awesome practical joke. It was also a wholly successful attempt to subvert any notions of what to expect from the Last Act... *Wire*.

The stage darkens. The black backdrop fragments to reveal a seamless, starkly illuminated recess. The band play their set silhouetted against it, front-lit only by four dim spotlights. The gig is projected in detail on the video screen.

Wire invite an ambivalent response from the spectators: their demeanour is contrived to seem as passively contemptuous of them as possible. Their grim faces read like the first scratch in a new car; they display less joie-de-vivre than Dutch Elm Disease on a plastic palm tree. Yet once the initial obstacle of acceptance/rejection is overcome, their music is totally absorbing.

They deal in severely uncomfortable rhythms and dark atonal melodies wrapped around strange tableaux of decidedly pretentious prose lyrics. Their playing is fraught with robotic despair and teeming claustrophobia.

And there the generalisations must stop; for whatever it is Wire are up to,



Wire see what will stick. Pic Santo Basone.

Art For Art's Sake...

they sound twice-removed from any other band or machinery currently in business.

At any given moment, something unorthodox seems to be afoot — be it a rumbling bass lead, a three-chord riff in an obscure minor key, or a one-note siren sizzling away on an unmanned synthesizer. Their live set is geared to the dubious stance of "musicians"

musicians". They turn the audience/performer equation on its head.

As such, Wire have fomented a strictly non-populist cult following which thrives on, is galvanised by, and ultimately renders futile the jibes and brickbats from their many detractors.

That, I suppose, is the practical joke.

Wire may not be everybody's bag of dolly-mixtures, and it would be bed news if their attitude was to become prevalent. They are destined to be misunderstood and unwhistled-along-to. They belong in some twilight zone where the boogie ends and the woogie begins.

Rick Joseph

Randy Newman

Paris

WITH his lumberjack shirt and uncool flared faded denims, Randy Newman looks as much a rock star as Woody Allen is the romantic movie hero.

The similarity to Allen doesn't end there either: both men seek (and attain) serious critical respect in what are essentially anti-intellectual, populist spheres; and both appear to be on a creative peak at present. 'Born Again' and a ticket to see *Manhattan* are two of the year's best buys, and on the evidence of his recent Paris gig, the same can be said of a ticket for Newman's forthcoming show at London's Dominion Theatre.

This is the first time Newman has toured outside the States with a backing group, but it doesn't show. He's a natural front man and the musicians were never less than competent. Their only drawback was that at times they tended to obliterate the lyrics. But this was more than compensated for by the verve which they added to Randy's raunchier numbers: 'Mama Told Me Not To Come' was an outstanding example.

At the other extreme the songs which evoke particular American towns — Birmingham, Baltimore and Louisiana — were all handled with the requisite subtlety and finesse.

A central part of Newman's talent is his scathing criticism of the vices which beset America. If 'It's Money That I Love' is anything like an accurate description of the mentality dominating the US at the moment, then the ultra-conservative Ronald Reagan must be a cinch for the 1980 Presidential election.

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At the same time, Newman considers himself to be "a particularly American person": there is much self-mockery and no little affection laced into his cynicism. He also claims to have a liking for the Electric Light Orchestra who he satirises in 'The Story Of A Rock 'n' Roll Band', but this was by no means apparent in tonight's rather hurried version of the song — the evening's only disappointment.

There were no such upsets in the first half of the set which featured Randy alone at the piano. He ran through a varied selection of some of his most memorable songs, changing mood and tempo with consummate ease. It as if he was playing in his own front room.

Randy's latest two albums have been notable for their lack of a straightforward love song and it's difficult to see why. Someone who can write a number as sensitive as 'Ghosts' or as pseudo-aggressive as 'Pants' must surely be able to describe his own emotions.

'Ghosts' was without doubt the best performed song of the evening. The story of a dying old man, a simple, sparse tune means that its vocal delivery has to be perfect for it to succeed. Newman approached it with the delicate touch and tenderness with which you'd handle an injured kitten.

Even so, the most striking aspect of Randy Newman's character is his all-conquering sense of humour, and witty and often self-deflating asides permeated this set.

If you have the chance to see this show and you miss it, more fool you. You've got to let this boy into your life.

Frazer Clarke



Phil Oakey and his pin-up physician Pic Santo Basone.

Change For God's Sake

Human League Teardrop Explodes The Beat

Lyceum

THE Human League are a quartet who shun

between-song raps with the audience as a rule, but their underlying dry humour could not resist the temptation to have a poke at the cancellation of their British tour.

"We're really tired after our nationwide tour," droll vocalist Phil Oakey informed the gaggle of synthesizer

sympathisers who gathered to see the band at the Lyceum. "The other date was really hectic."

But, enigmatic as ever, the League gave no hints as to what direction their planned 're-programming' would take. Two things, however, were certain: this was the last time we would see the group in their present format, and the

imminent changes are indeed much needed ones.

While their success in injecting some wit and accessibility into the po-faced genre of electronic music has been a vital and influential one, their gigs over the past year have become increasingly sterile and predictable.

Since I first saw them supporting The Rezillos last year, the changes have been minimal — a few new songs here and there but none of the radical steps forward that they once looked set to provide.

The Lyceum show followed a well-worn path and comprised all of the 'Reproduction' album plus a couple of new songs in the same mould. Their sound was fuller and heavier than before, but the ever-present backing tapes — necessary as they are — still left little room for improvisation.

The only departure was in the use of video.

Slide-man Adrian Wright now operates his projector from the stage itself instead of hiding somewhere in the wings. And why not? If someone is making such a vital contribution, he deserves to be put where he can be seen by everyone. This gig also saw the introduction of cine-film for the first time.

"Another Human League first," Phil Oakey cruelly sniggered.

Against the criticisms, it must be reiterated that Oakey and Martyn Ware are both fine singers with excellent control and expression and they combine devastatingly to provide the soaring harmonies on 'You've Lost That Loving Feeling'.

But, taken as a whole, this set proved that the re-furbishing cannot be too soon in coming.

Like Human League, Teardrop Explodes suffer in struggling to keep attention

for a full set. At best, their well-paced sparse funk shows them as one of the most promising new bands to emerge this year. But when they lose their way, like Talking Heads, they become clinical and cold.

Their sound hinges on crisp drumming and the loping bass lines of vocalist Julian Cope — a framework onto which hangs the chunky economy of guitarist Mike Finkler and stand-in organist Dave Ball of Zoo Records.

They have grown enormously in confidence and stature since they last visited London from their native Merseyside, although Cope — in a manner reminiscent of Paul Weller — was still needlessly sardonic in his introductions.

"This song is very big in Liverpool," he said introducing an excellent cover of Echo And The Bunnymen's 'Read It In Books'. "But I doubt if any of you have ever heard of it."

Which brings us to The Beat, the latest link in the 2-Tone chain.

Hailing from Birmingham, this multi-racial six-piece have a lot to live up to, but they're doing more than alright because not many bands could follow The Specials, Madness and The Selecter and acquit themselves as well as this bunch.

Not as up-front dynamic as any of their stablemates nor as impressive visually, they compensated for this shortcoming with an engaging and atmospheric hybrid of reggae, soul and R&B punk.

Their forthcoming single 'Tears Of A Clown' gives a misleading indication of where they are heading. Their own self-penned efforts like 'Jackpot' and 'Ranking Full Stop', the toasted flip of the single, are far superior.

Adrian Thrills

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Tripping over the light fantastic

John McLaughlin Rainbow

NEAT, nifty and bouncy in red coveralls and gymshoes, his hard angular features tucked under a sta-press quiff, John McLaughlin still gives good guitar, but the mark-up remains unchanged: alpha plus for technique and gamma minus for heart, heat, hips or whatever it takes to push music through the soul barrier.

Whether by accident or intent, McLaughlin's current band recaps a decade or more of his career.

Bassist Jack Bruce played with the expatriate Yorkshireman in the middle and late '60s, first alongside other English jazzmen, then alongside Tony Williams and Larry Young in Lifetime. Drummer Billy Cobham took his raincheck on fame in the first and best Mahavishnu lineup, whilst keyboard person Stu Goldberg made his own smaller mark in later, lesser Orchestras, joining McLaughlin again after the sublime acoustic interlude of Shakti.

Welcome though McLaughlin's recent return to the electric circuit may have been to some, it seems that the man remains unaware that the jazzrock bubble has long since burst, that he naively imagines that he can start over again, just like that.

McLaughlin still juts his jaw heavenwards, with or without the blessing of Sri Chinmoy, still screws his eyes shut as if gazing upon some imponderable inner ecstasy, still scribbles frantically up-fret and down-scale. His sheer speed was once

the essence of a certain serenity, a sort of exaggerated, accelerated ticket to instant catharsis. But now it appears pained, effortful, strained, as pointless as his interminable duet with Cobham — just like old times perhaps, but a sad, shapeless old song all the same.

The problem of course is compositional. McLaughlin's last album 'Electric Dreams' suffered from a near total lack of melodic form or content, and most of the Rainbow set is based on this or similar material: too much noise, too much frenzy, altogether too much of nothing.

Quiet, thoughtful spaces — such as the acoustic intro to 'Electric Dreams' itself — are throwaway, a vestigial echo of the emotional depth and breadth regularly scored by Shakti on stage.

In the main these 'songs' are just thrashings and flailings, the band herded together like frightened wildebeest into incessant crescendos and diminuendos.

Goldberg's contributions exemplify the continuing jazzrock impasse, the self-perpetuating vacuity of the form's ethic. On electric piano he's Herbie Hancock, on acoustic piano he's Keith Jarrett, on mini-moog he's Chick Corea, on organ the late Larry Young — a paid-up member of the 'play now, think later' school, he's neverhimself. And why is it that synthesizer players always act as if they're plugged straight into some great Moog in the sky, as if they have a hotline to Himself, waving body and bum in spiritual spate?

God alone knows, and he's keeping it under wraps.

Bruce looks haggard, misplaced, plops in with a 'Rollin' And Tumblin' riff in his solo spot, his sonorous bursts of time and motion seem antediluvian, once righteous relics, in the post-Pastorius age.

And Cobham — he's a brash, belligerent constant, a geared engine with no synchro-mash. One moment he's pittering, the next thundering — no dynamics, no grace, just brute force. His drum solo is appalling, egotism run riot.

And so it goes, and goes, and goes. Four virtuosos without a cause, let alone a common one.

McLaughlin only moves me once, with a gorgeous cluster of blue notes bent up around the bridge of his Gibson, the ensemble similarly, with Lifetime's crushing 'One Word' coda, Bruce singing with astonishing power: two lagoons of considered, concentrated calm in a sea of spray.

So sad to see our John in such a state. I got the same old blues, the same old jazzrock blues again.

Angus MacKinnon

Leo Kottke

Dominion Theatre

LEO Kottke is among the most accomplished guitarists currently working in the field of country blues, but (confession time) I've only recently become acquainted with his work and so wasn't sure what to expect live.

On Sunday night, Kottke ambled onstage and began rather austere with a series of four unnamed instrumentals. But thereafter he switched to a more

accessible programme of material, still displaying his incredible technique on the occasional arcane blues, but also singing in his uniquely deep, scratchy voice and recounting several hilarious anecdotes.

By the end of the evening, his skill, unassuming warmth and dry humour had established themselves firmly in head and heart. Simply, he made you feel good. And he made it seem so easy.

The range of his music was extraordinary — blues, rags, country tunes, classical pieces

— all executed to perfection on one of his three guitars. I didn't recognise many of the instrumentals but 'The Orange Room' was typically deft, and a slow, intense 'Rege' was a captivating study in slide harmonics.

Kottke's style is unusually percussive. He eschews the melody line for contrapuntal rhythms, picked out with an astute ear for dynamics and dexterity yet still capable of evoking fleeting moods from the jaunty to the plaintive.

As a newcomer to the music, though, I found his

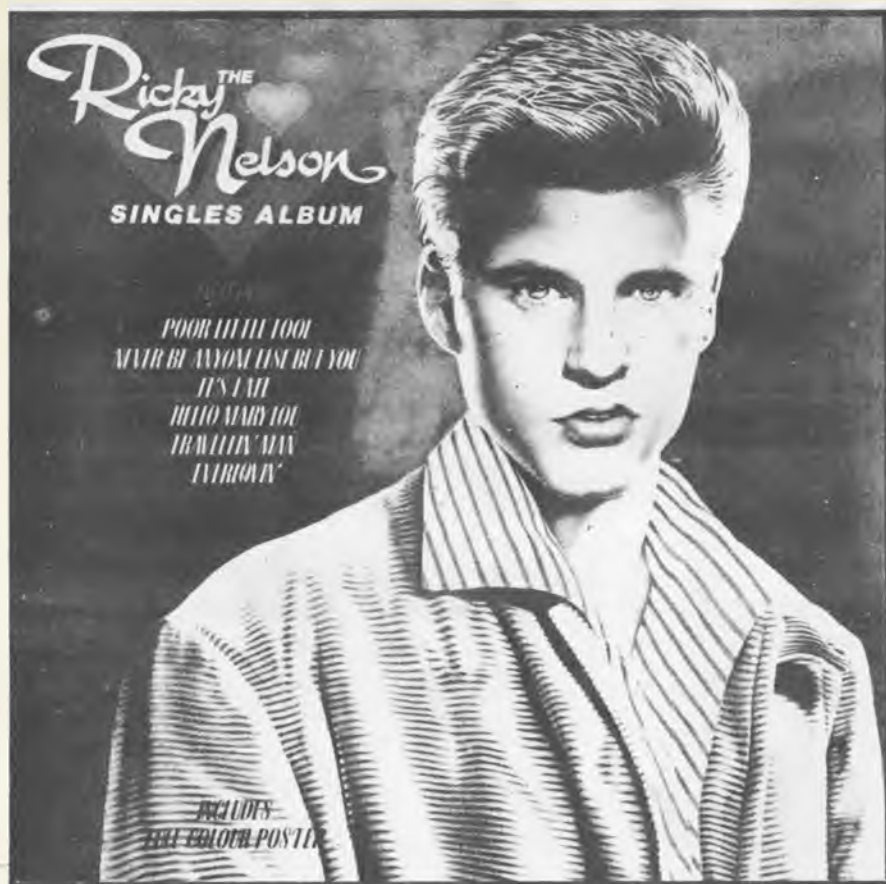
songs more immediately pleasurable. 'Pamela Brown', 'Tell Mary' and a beautiful love song called (I think) 'Standing On The Outside' were resonant and moving; the lyrics as wry and touching as his humour.

My one regret was that Kottke didn't repeat his superb version of 'Learning The Game' from the new 'Balance' album (a hit single, maybe?).

But, for the rest, a faultless evening with a rare and vintage craftsman.

Graham Lock

John McLaughlin
Pic David Corio



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Ian Gomm

Nashville

FRINGE entertainment? We knew Ian Gomm was no fashion leader, but with his snub nose and down-to-the-eyebrows curls, he looks too pooped to even powerpop. Still, he obviously left school at least a year ago, while guitarist Taff Williams, hair flopping over his shy grin, is surely cutting prep to play for us tonight.

With these two as frontmen (sic) and three grizzled beards in support, the presence of a mobile studio parked outside is a baffler. Must be in the music, man.

It is Gomm and Co throttle the riff of 'What Makes A Man A Man' a little too long, but it's a good 'un just the same. The little lad shows himself at once to be a stronger singer than Lowe or Edmunds and it's only a pity his first solo is buried in the mix.

Williams gets plenty of solos and makes them clean and stinging — just like his harmonies, in fact. On 'Telling Lies', the guitars link like a pair of funky Harp Mervins over Nick Glennie Smith's

organ phrases and the effect is just dandy.
Gomm's non-image and

generally harmless air belie the ethnic Ealing gumbo that infects much of his work.



Pic Anton Corbin

Gombo

giving an extra dimension to Berry's flippant 'Come On' and conjuring up a *Hazel*-type scenario in '24 Hour Service'. He can also evoke dormant dynamism like Van Morrison ('Slow Dancing', replete with divine weeping guitar) and John Fogerty ('He Don't Know Why') without coming at all badly out of either comparison.

Paul Morley's castigation of Ian Gomm as just so much marshmallow for Stateside consumption holds up only on the wettest 'Sad Affair' and 'Hold On' ('a melody of our hit'), which is merely semi-acceptable Eagles fare. 'Hooked On Love', the old Brimleys chestnut, is a too-cosy closer after the more demanding pastures visited earlier in the set.

If a successful image is usually an extension of the person beneath, the self-effacing strummer should invest in a raincoat and trilby and practice his wry grin.

Hancock-rock (and I don't mean Herbie) could just be next year's thing.

Marty George

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Carol Stocker. Pic Tony Maclean.

A Rock Folly

Tour De Force

Moontlight Club

TOUR De Force have been going for about two years, though the current line-up have only been gigging for half that time.

An all-girl combo, the first impression is that they all want to be stars — each member has her own two-dimensional stage persona, be it purple satin and sequins, white boiler suit or tigerskin tank top — and they force their appearance onto the memory before playing a note. The visual intrusion screams volumes from the outset.

The second impression is that they are all accomplished musicians, playing with a verve and confidence that invites the watcher into a world of traditional rock values.

Having accepted all that, their only hope in being spotted among the plethora of groups with the same profiles is in the interpretation of their material and their live performance.

On this level Tour De Force just don't make it.

The Cartwright sisters, Deidre and Bernice on guitar and bass respectively, form the

nucleus of the band, writing most of the songs together, and one suspects they're responsible for the direction of the group. New recruit Val Lloyd smites the skins with the practised ease of a session-person, while Carol Stocker grabs centre-stage as vocalist and focal point.

They reminded me very much of The Little Ladies and their appeal will depend on your opinion of *Rock Follies* or *Rock Dollies*.

The songs all ooze that same mid-Atlantic feel — the harmonies, the starry-eyed guitar solos, even the titles: 'Hollywood', 'Megsomania', 'I'm Only Dreaming'.

'Phantom of the Odeon', are all predictable. They seem too conscious of competing in what they evidently regard as a male-dominated system. It's a redundant attitude given that we are beyond the stage of regarding women rockers solely as jell-beit or white-garbed fantasy princesses.

It's because I believe that the female group is on the verge of becoming something more substantial that I refuse to patronise a rock band purely because of its feminine content.

Actually, I didn't like Tour De Force.

Neil Norman

PATRICK D. MARTIN



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