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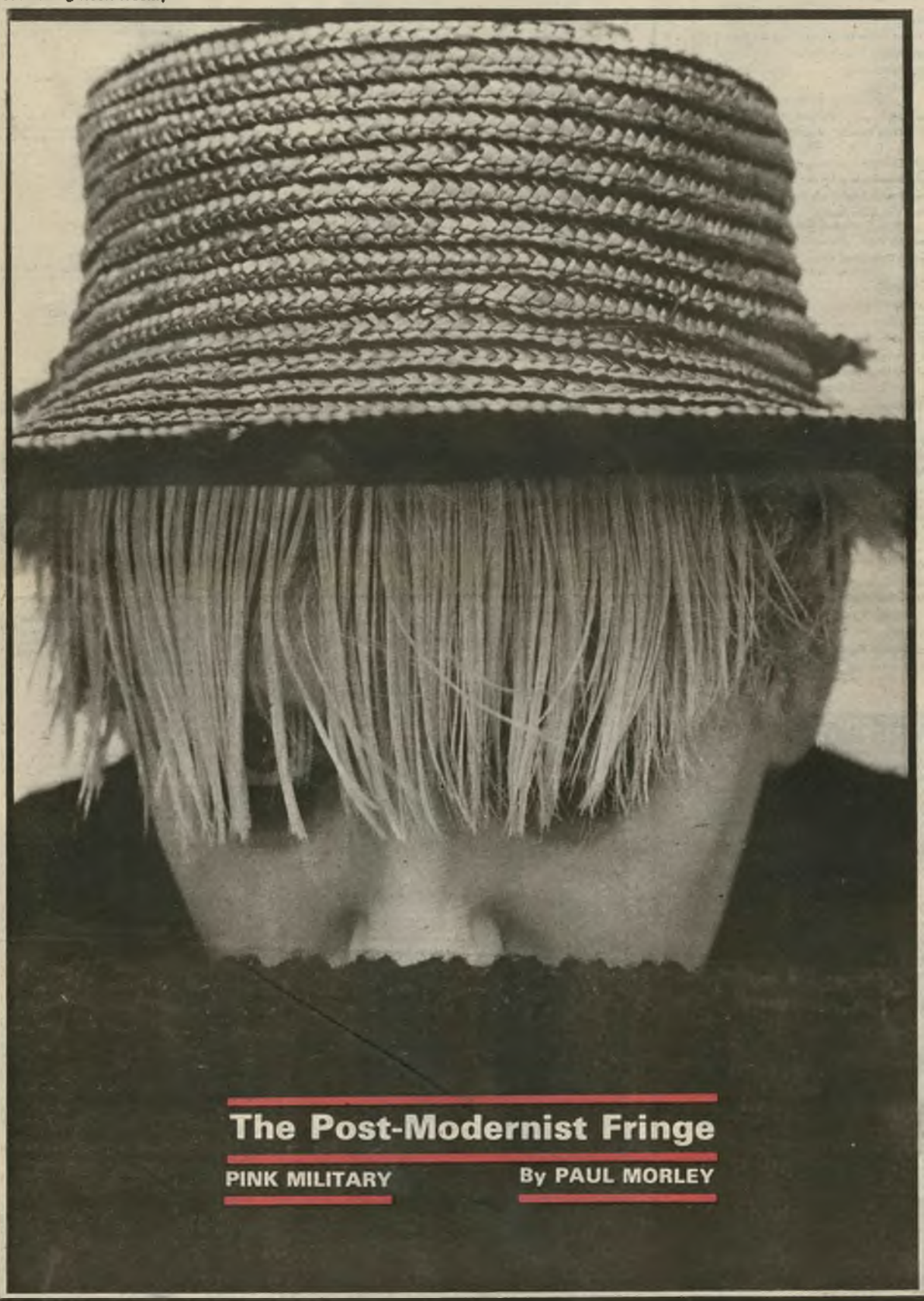
NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

The World's Best Selling Rock Weekly

BOWIE VIDEO ON ...

David's Transition Transmission



The Post-Modernist Fringe

PINK MILITARY

By PAUL MORLEY

Pink Military's Jayne takes a cautious peek at 1980

Photograph: Kevin Cummins

NME CHARTS

Week ending January 12, 1980

UK SINGLES

This Week	Last Week			Highest position	Weeks in chart
1	(1)	Another Brick In The Wall	Pink Floyd (Harvest)	4	1
2	(7)	I Have A Dream	Abba (Epic)	3	2
3	(8)	Day Trip To Bangor	Fiddlers Dram (Dingles)	3	3
4	(—)	Brass In Pocket	Pretenders (Real)	1	4
5	(3)	I Only Want To Be With You	Tourists (Logo)	5	3
6	(2)	Rappers Delight	Sugar Hill Gang (Sugar Hill)	4	2
7	(4)	Walking On The Moon	Police (A & M)	5	1
8	(—)	Please Don't Go	K C & The Sunshine Band (TK)	1	8
9	(5)	Off The Wall	Michael Jackson (Epic)	5	5
10	(16)	John I'm Only Dancin' (Again)	David Bowie (RCA)	2	10
11	(25)	Tears Of A Clown	Beat (Two Tone)	2	11
12	(10)	My Simple Heart	Three Degrees (Ariola)	4	10
13	(21)	Is It Love You're After	Rose Royce (Whitfield)	5	13
14	(—)	With You I'm Born Again	Billy Preston & Syreeta (Motown)	1	14
15	(9)	Que Sera Mi Vida	Gibson Brothers (Island)	6	3
16	(18)	Wonderful Christmas Time	Paul McCartney (Parlophone)	3	16
17	(28)	London Calling	Clash (CBS)	2	17
18	(26)	My Feet Keep Dancing	Chic (Atlantic)	3	18
19	(13)	Union City Blue	Blondie (Chrysalis)	5	11
20	(—)	My Girl	Madness (Stiff)	1	20
21	(—)	It's My House	Diana Ross (Motown)	2	21
22	(—)	Better Love Next Time	Dr Hook (Capitol)	1	22
23	(—)	Sarah	Fleetwood Mac (Warner Bros)	1	23
24	(11)	One Step Beyond	Madness (Stiff)	7	8
25	(17)	Living On An Island	Status Quo (Vertigo)	3	17
26	(12)	Nights In White Satin	Moody Blues (Deram)	4	9
27	(30)	Christmas Wrappin'	Kurtis Blow (Mercury)	2	27
28	(29)	Blue Peter	Mike Oldfield (Virgin)	2	28
29	(—)	It Won't Seem Like Christmas Without You	Elvis Presley (RCA)	1	29
30	(—)	Spirits Having Flown	Bee Gees (RSO)	1	30

UP AND COMING:

Spacer — Sheila B. Devotion (Carrere).
It's My House — Storm (Scope).
Green Onions — Booker T and the MG's (Atlantic).
Babe — Styx (A & M).
Working For The Yankee Dollar — Skids (Virgin).
I Hear You Now — John and Vangelis (Polydor).

5 YEARS AGO

Week ending January 7, 1975

1 Streets Of London — Ralph McTell (Reprise)
2 Down Down — Status Quo (Vertigo)
3 Lonely This Christmas — Mud (Rak)
4 Juke Box Jive — Rubettes (Polydor)
5 My Boy — Elvis Presley (RCA)
6 You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet — Bachman-Turner Overdrive (Mercury)
7 Wombling Merry Christmas — The Wombles (CBS)
8 The Inbetweenies/Father Christmas Do Not Touch — The Goodies (Bradley)
9 I Can Help — Billy Swan (Monument)
10 Get Dancing — Disco Tex & The Sex-O-Lettes (Chelsea)

10 YEARS AGO

Week ending January 7, 1970

1 Two Little Boys — Rolf Harris (Columbia)
2 Ruby Don't Take Your Love To Town — Kenny Rogers & The First Edition (Reprise)
3 Melting Pot — Blue Mink (Philips)
4 All I Have To Do Is Dream — Bobbie Gentry & Glen Campbell (Capitol)
5 Sugar Sugar — Archies (RCA)
6 Suspicious Minds — Elvis Presley (RCA)
7 Tracy — Cuff Links (MCA)
8 Yester-Me, Yester-You, Yesterday — Stevie Wonder (Tamla Motown)
9 Good Old Rock'n'Roll — Dave Clark Five (Columbia)
10 Without Love — Tom Jones (Decca)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending January 8, 1965

1 I Feel Fine — Beatles (Parlophone)
2 Yeh Yeh — Georgie Fame (Columbia)
3 Downtown — Petula Clark (Pye)
4 Somewhere — P. J. Proby (Decca)
5 Walk Tall — Val Doonican (Decca)
6 Girl Don't Come — Sandie Shaw (Pye)
7 I Could Easily Fall — Cliff Richard (Columbia)
8 Terry — Twinkle (Decca)
9 Go Now — Moody Blues (Decca)
10 No Arms Could Ever Hold You — Bachelors (Decca)

UK ALBUMS

This Week	Last Week			Highest position	Weeks in chart
1	(2)	Greatest Hits	Rod Stewart (Riva)	7	1
2	(5)	Regatta De Blanc	Police (A&M)	12	1
3	(1)	Abba's Greatest Hits Vol 2	Abba (Epic)	6	1
4	(6)	The Wall	Pink Floyd (Harvest)	4	4
5	(19)	20 Hottest Hits	Hot Chocolate (Rak)	2	5
6	(3)	Love Songs	Elvis Presley (K-Tel)	5	3
7	(14)	Peace In The Valley	Various (Ronco)	2	7
8	(10)	Eat To The Beat	Blondie (Chrysalis)	13	2
9	(12)	Off The Wall	Michael Jackson (Epic)	14	3
10	(28)	Bee Gees Greatest Hits	(RSO)	6	10
11	(8)	ELO's Greatest Hits	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	4	8
12	(14)	One Step Beyond	Madness (Stiff)	8	12
13	(4)	20 Golden Greats	Diana Ross (Motown)	6	2
14	(17)	Tusk	Fleetwood Mac (Warner Bros)	10	2
15	(—)	London Calling	Clash (CBS)	1	15
16	(—)	Parallel Lines	Blondie (Chrysalis)	56	1
17	(26)	Wet	Barbra Streisand (CBS)	6	17
18	(29)	Outlandos D'amour	Police (A&M)	30	7
19	(—)	Fawlty Towers	Soundtrack (BBC)	1	19
20	(18)	The Specials	Specials (Two Tone)	9	8
21	(7)	Night Moves	Various (K-Tel)	5	7
22	(—)	Discovery	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	27	1
23	(21)	Crepes & Drapes	Showaddywaddy (Arista)	4	15
24	(23)	Tranquility	Mary O'Hara (Warwick)	2	23
25	(—)	Kenny Rogers Singles Album	(United Artists)	1	25
26	(—)	Astaire	Peter Skellern (Mercury)	1	26
27	(—)	All Aboard	Various (EMI)	1	27
28	(25)	Sid Sings	Sid Vicious (Virgin)	2	25
29	(—)	Sometimes You Win	Dr Hook (Capitol)	5	14
30	(—)	The Secret Policeman's Ball	Various (Island)	1	30

UP AND COMING:

All Aboard — Various (EMI).
Portrait — Don Williams (MCA).
25 Golden Greats — Bachelors (Warwick).
Platinum — Mike Oldfield (Virgin).
Glory Boys — Secret Affair.
Symphony In Black — London Symphony Orchestra (K-Tel).
3D — Three Degrees (Ariola).

The Pretenders, after what seems like a decade in the climbers, finally make the Top Ten with 'Brass In Pocket'. Ms Hynde is pictured 'working out at the gym' in order to build up those vital back muscles — so important for any drummer. (That was The Applejacks you berk — Ed.)
Pic: Pennie Smith

US SINGLES

This Week	Last Week		
1	(2)	Rock With You	Michael Jackson
2	(1)	Escape	Rupert Holmes
3	(3)	Do That To Me One More Time	The Captain & Tennille
4	(4)	Ladies' Night	Kool & The Gang
5	(9)	Coward Of The County	Kenny Rogers
6	(6)	Jane	Jefferson Starship
7	(7)	We Don't Talk Anymore	Cliff Richard
8	(8)	Please Don't Go	KC & The Sunshine Band
9	(5)	Send One Your Love	Stevie Wonder
10	(10)	Cruisin'	Smokey Robinson
11	(15)	Don't Do Me Like That	Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers
12	(13)	Head Games	Foreigner
13	(14)	Cool Change	Little River Band
14	(16)	This Is It	Kenny Loggins
15	(17)	The Long Run	Eagles
16	(11)	No More Tears	Barbra Streisand/Donna Summer
17	(19)	I Wanna Be Your Lover	Prince
18	(20)	Sara	Fleetwood Mac
19	(21)	Deja Vu	Dionne Warwick
20	(24)	Don't Let Go	Isaac Hayes
21	(22)	Better Love Next Time	Dr Hook
22	(25)	Third Time Lucky	Foghat
23	(12)	Babe	Styx
24	(27)	Yes I'm Ready	Teri Desario/K C
25	(18)	You're Only Lonely	J D Souther
26	(23)	Take The Long Way Home	Supertramp
27	(—)	Do You Love What You Feel	Rufus And Chaka Khan
28	(30)	Wait For Me	Daryl Hall & John Oates
29	(—)	Romeo's Tune	Steve Forbert
30	(—)	Crazy Little Thing Called Love	Queen

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

US ALBUMS

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	The Long Run	Eagles
2	(2)	On The Radio Greatest Hits	Donna Summer
3	(5)	The Wall	Pink Floyd
4	(4)	Bee Gees' Greatest Hits	Bee Gees
5	(3)	Cornerstone	Styx
6	(6)	Journey Through The Secret Life Of Plants	Stevie Wonder
7	(7)	In Through The Out Door	Led Zeppelin
8	(8)	Damn The Torpedoes	Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers
9	(9)	Tusk	Fleetwood Mac
10	(11)	Kenny	Kenny Rogers
11	(10)	Wet	Barbra Streisand
12	(13)	Off The Wall	Michael Jackson
13	(14)	Phoenix	Dan Fogelberg
14	(12)	Midnight Magic	Commodores
15	(15)	Freedom At Point Zero	Jefferson Starship
16	(18)	Night In The Ruts	Aerosmith
17	(20)	Live Rust	Neil Young & Crazy Horse
18	(16)	Head Games	Foreigner
19	(29)	No Nukes: The Muse Concerts For A Non-Nuclear Future	Various Artists
20	(19)	Rise	Herb Alpert
21	(21)	A Christmas Together	John Denver & The Muppets
22	(17)	Masterjam	Rufus & Chaka
23	(23)	Keep The Fire	Kenny Loggins
24	(—)	Gold & Platinum	Lynyrd Skynyrd
25	(27)	Down On The Farm	Little Feat
26	(22)	Breakfast In America	Supertramp
27	(26)	Greatest Hits	Rod Stewart
28	(24)	One Voice	Barry Manilow
29	(—)	Deguello	ZZ Top
30	(28)	Flirtin' With Disaster	Molly Hatchet

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

REGGAE

(1) Pablo In The Hill — Pablo (Rockers Int)
(2) One Jah Alm & Destiny — Hugh Mundell (Rockers Int)
(3) Poverty — Michael Prophet (Freedom Sounds)
(4) Bucket Bottom — Prince Allah (Freedom Sounds)
(5) Nice Time — Barry Brown (Thrill Seekers)
(6) Pure & Clean — Earl Zero (Freedom Sounds)
(7) Slave Queen — Judy Mowatt (Asham Dam)
(8) Rastafari Tell You — Judah Eskendeir (Studio One)
(9) I Want To Be There — Silvertones (Studio One)
(10) Forgive Them — Johnny Osborne (Studio One)

CHART SUPPLIED BY: MAROONS TUNES, 19 Greek Street, London W1

DISCO

* denotes import

(1) Love Injection — Trussell (Elektra)*
(2) Safari — Modern Sound Corporation (Sunshine)*
(3) Rappers Delight — Sugarhill Gang (Pye)
(4) Jazz Carnival — Azymuth (RCA)
(5) Music — Al Hudson (MCA)
(6) Christmas Wrappin' — Kurtis Blow (Mercury)*
(7) Mellow Mellow — Lowrell (Pye)
(8) Is It Love You're After — Rose Royce (Warner Bros)
(9) We've Got The Funk — Positive Force (Pye)
(10) Cor Don Blue — Sticks Hooper (MCA)

CHART SUPPLIED BY: HMV RECORDS, Oxford Street, London W1

INDIES

(1) Stations Of The Cross — Crass (Crass)
(2) Where's Captain Kirk — Spitz Energi (Rough Trade)
(3) You Can Be You — Honey Bane (Crass)
(4) White Mice — Modettes (Mode)
(5) Raincoats — Raincoats (Rough Trade)
(6) Art And Language — Red Crayola (Art & Language)
(7) Ear Com Three — Various Artists (Fast)
(8) Rats & Monkeys — Art Bears (Ralph)
(9) Silent Command — Cabaret Voltaire (Rough Trade)
(10) Hand Place — Pressler Morgan (Hearthen)

CHART SUPPLIES BY: ROUGH TRADE
202 Kensington Park Road,
London W1

NEWS

Pretenders stage coup

THE PRETENDERS have now confirmed details of their most important tour to date, plans for which were revealed in our Christmas issue. The 30-date itinerary comes at a time when the band are making a big impact with their single 'Brass In Pocket', and coincides with the release of their debut Real Records album 'Pretenders', produced by Chris Thomas. After the UK outing, they'll be undertaking their first tour of America where the LP is already out and has met with critical acclaim.

Tickets are already on sale at a number of venues; elsewhere box-offices will be opening shortly. Dates are Portsmouth Locarno (January 29), Keele University (30), Coventry Tiffany's (31), Cromer West Runton Pavilion (February 1), Loughborough University (2), Bristol Locarno (3), Cardiff Top Rank (5), Bradford University (6), Hull University (7), Newcastle Polytechnic (8), Manchester University (9), Sheffield Top Rank (10), Leicester University (12), Liverpool University (13), Aberdeen University (15), Dundee University (16), Glasgow Tiffany's (17), Edinburgh Tiffany's (18), Malvern Winter Gardens (20), Canterbury Odeon (21), Norwich East Anglia University (22), Colchester Essex University (23), Birmingham Top Rank (24), Brighton Top Rank (26), Uxbridge Brunel University (27), Guildford Civic Hall (28), Cambridge Corn Exchange (29), Dunstable Queensway Hall (March 1), Leeds University (2) and London Hammersmith Palais (4). Support acts have still to be finalised.

Blondie: still more

BLONDIE have added a fifth night at London Hammersmith Odeon to their current triumphant UK tour. It's on Monday, January 21, and follows their other dates at that venue — on January 11, 12, 13 and 20. But it's no use rushing to the box-office for tickets, because it's already sold out on the strength of held-over applications. Rockabilly band Whirlwind, whose new single 'Heaven Knows' is rushed out this week by Chiswick, are the support act — as they have been throughout the tour.

At the pre-Christmas Blondie party, Debbie Harry mentioned that the band are planning a return visit to Britain later this year. But their London spokesman commented: "It's the first I've heard of it. They may feel in the excitement of the moment that they'd like to come back, and certainly their 1980 plans are still quite fluid, but there's absolutely nothing definite fixed right now."

Clash latest

THE CLASH have decided to feature a number of different guest acts on their current tour, following the withdrawal of Toots & The Maytals from the support spot. Ian Dury played with them at Aylesbury last Saturday, and Tradition at Canterbury on Sunday. Prince Hammer appears at Crawley (tomorrow, Friday) and Hastings (Saturday), with Lew Lewis set for Ipswich next Monday (14), and among upcoming guests are Prince Far I and Joe Ely. The Clash have now confirmed their gig at Glasgow Apollo on January 22, but Blackpool Tiffany's (24) is cancelled, and on February 12 they play Bournemouth Stateside Centre instead of Portsmouth. A new booking is at Derby Kings Hall on February 21, and Bristol Colston Hall (25) is now definite.

It's porridge for Cornwell

AS NME closed for press it was learned that The Stranglers' lead singer Hugh Cornwell was last Monday at West London magistrates' court sentenced to eight weeks in prison on charges of possessing cannabis, cocaine and heroin. He was also fined £300.

Along with co-defendant Paul Loasby, a director of Harvey Goldsmith Entertainments who was charged with possessing cocaine, Cornwell intends to appeal and is currently free on bail.

Both had admitted the charges and pleaded guilty.

The arrests resulted from what Police Sergeant Colin Hidgetts described as "a routine road block" last November at Hammersmith Broadway — when a small quantity of "white powder" was found on the 26-year-old Loasby. He and Cornwell, whose age was given as 30, were arrested after small quantities of other drugs were found in the car.

Neither had any previous convictions and Timothy Langdale, defending Cornwell, told the court that The Stranglers' guitarist was a science graduate who had given up a promising career in medical research to found the group in 1974.

Cornwell, he said, was in no way addicted to drugs but "fell into the more casual attitude that this part of society has about drugs. It is not an attitude that remains casual."

Defending Loasby, Martin Heslop said that he was also a graduate of impeccable character and did not use drugs though he was frequently offered them. On this occasion, though, he had accepted the cocaine. Heslop said that Loasby was aware of the seriousness of his position as his employers demanded high standards, and a conviction of this sort could affect his travelling to America and Japan.

Sentencing the two men, magistrate Eric Crowther commented: "You are two intelligent men of mature years, who have a great influence on the lifestyle of teenagers and who should not cause damage to the moral and physical well-being of those who admire you. Both of you have a university education which makes your involvement in the drugs scene even more contemptible. "You have deliberately chosen to flout the law."

The Beat join Selecter tour

THE BEAT — who have been making a sizeable impact with their Two Tone single 'Tears Of A Clown', though they have subsequently signed with Arista — are now confirmed as special guests on the upcoming package tour headlined by The Selecter, plans for which were reported last week, with all-girl band The Body Snatchers as opening act.

The tour itinerary is currently being finalised and will be announced next week, but *NME* understands that it opens on February 15 and runs for five weeks, playing at least 30 dates — which means that the package will be in action virtually every night. A spokesperson said the tour will visit most major cities, taking in at least two major London dates, comparable with the autumn Specials-Selecter-Dexy's package.

● The Specials themselves will headline another UK tour in May, coinciding with the release of a new album. Meanwhile the band, who spend the whole of February touring the States, have a live EP called 'Too Much Too Young' issued this weekend — it was recorded at London Lyceum and Coventry Tiffany's during the Two Tone tour, and features 'Guns Of Navarone' coupled with a medley called 'Skinhead Symphony'.

MORE NEWS: PAGE 32

Squeeze skinsman GILSON LAVIS

Squeeze fix 15 concerts

THE FIRST 15 dates have now been confirmed for the winter tour by Squeeze which, as previously reported, they are setting up as compensation for the curtailment of their autumn tour due to recording commitments. The LP which caused all the trouble, titled 'Argy Bargy', will be issued by A&M in early February to coincide with the tour — and the dates set so far are:

Cambridge University (February 11), Reading University (12), Southampton University (13), Canterbury Odeon (14), Norwich East Anglia University (15), Colchester Essex University (16), Dunstable Queensway Hall (17), Leicester University (March 1), Bristol Locarno (2), Loughborough Town Hall (4), Brighton Top Rank (5), Nottingham University (7), Birmingham Odeon (8), Sheffield Top Rank (10) and Wakefield Unity Hall (11).

A further string of dates during the second half of February has still to be finalised, as well as a few more in March — including a major London show. Squeeze, currently touring Europe, will be visiting Australia before returning for the UK trek. As previously reported, they begin a six-week U.S. tour later in March, and are planning another British outing in the summer.

Robinson's band for 1980

AFTER TRB, COMES S27

TOM ROBINSON, who disbanded TRB last summer, has now formed a brand new outfit which he describes as totally different from his original unit. And to stress the point, he's omitted his own name from that of the band, who will be known as Sector Twenty Seven (S27). The line-up comprises Robinson (vocals), co-writer Jo Burt (bass), Stevie B (guitar) and Derek The Menace (drums).

Commented Robinson: "TRB finished for good last year, and Jo and I have since formed S27 completely from scratch. It's a bit early to think about records, so we'll concentrate on gigging and fresh material for the time being. This is an exciting band to be playing in, and quite a change from anything I've tried before. I doubt if our new set will contain more than a couple of TRB numbers, if that.

"So long as promoters don't start billing S27 as The New Tom Robinson Band, we should have a chance to develop the new unit gradually in its own right, rather than attempting to trade on an old reputation."

Next week, the band begin playing a series of low-key college and club gigs around Britain and Northern Ireland, though no dates have been announced officially. Explained manager Colin Bell: "We shall be putting gigs in at short notice, and I doubt if we'll have time to advise the Press."

Even so, *NME* understands that two Robinson gigs are being advertised at Scottish venues next week — Inverness Keppoch Inn (January 15) and Aberdeen Ruffles (16). And it won't please Tom to know that the outfit is being billed, in both cases, as The Tom Robinson Band! See also page 11.

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Strange Little Girl

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'Every Day Hurts'

RCA

COLLEGES ROCKING AGAIN ON BBC-2

Lynott lands his own TV special

PHIL LYNOTT will have his own 50-minute solo TV showcase in BBC-2's new series of *Rock Goes To College*, which began this week — it will feature and coincide with the release of his solo album, due out later in the winter. The new series has a regular early evening spot on Mondays, and confirmed screenings so far are by Joe Jackson (January 14), The Specials (21) and Spyro Gyra (February 6). Also upcoming — though transmission dates are not yet set — are Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers, Robin Trower and Foreigner.

The Ramones appear in the same channel's *Old Grey Whistle Test* next Tuesday (15) along with Sore Throat, and studio guests on January 22 and Cowboys International and The Inmates. The February 19 show will be a special, filmed in Miami and spotlighting The Knack.

● Tomorrow (Friday) there's an *OGWT* extra, a 'Pick Of The Year' show running almost two hours (11.10pm - 1.05am) and featuring many of the acts who appeared in the series during 1979. These include **The Police, Siouxsie & The Banshees, Gary Moore, Ultravox, The Revillos, Joe Jackson, The Buzzcocks, The Shirts, Rachel Sweet, Johnny Winter, Tom Waits, Devo, John Cooper Clarke, 999, Steely Dan, Bruce Springsteen, Spyro Gyra, Van Morrison** and **Rickie Lee Jones** — plus tracks by **Patti Smith, Tubeway Army, Elvis Costello, Bob Dylan** and **Frank Zappa**.

PHILY LYNOTT

Tull showcase this weekend

JETHRO TULL are the subject of an hour-long documentary film, produced and directed by David Buckton, to be screened by BBC-2 tomorrow (Friday) at 8pm. The film mainly concentrates on the many activities of front man Ian Anderson, but also shows the band in the recording studios, at home and in concert on their American tour.

● This is also the last chance to see in action the band's former bassist John Glascock, who died on November 17 after a heart attack. Dave Pegg is currently filling his spot in the line-up.

LIZZY'S TOUR — IT'S MARCH

THIN LIZZY — who promised, after pulling out of last summer's Reading Festival, that they would tour extensively in the New Year — will be fulfilling that commitment in March. They have set the month aside for a full nationwide outing, which will cover most of the country's leading venues, and details are expected to be announced within the next few weeks. Their original intention to tour in January and February proved impractical, while they were still in the throes of finding a permanent new guitarist, but it's understood they are now close to naming their new member.

CHARLIE GIRL STEPPIN' OUT

CHARLIE DORE, whose debut album 'Where To Now' was issued by Island last month, is about to embark on her first headlining tour. Together with her band Back Pocket, she visits **Uxbridge** Brunel University (February 8), **Oxford** Polytechnic (8), **Wolverhampton** Polytechnic (9), **London Victoria** The Venue (12, tickets £3), **Slough** College (13), **Swansea** University (14), **Bath** University (15), **Manchester** University (16), **Leeds** Florde Green Hotel (17), **Cambridge** University (18), **Norwich** East Anglia University (19), **Keele** University (20), **Bristol** University (22), **Sheffield** University (23), **Nottingham** Trent Polytechnic (26), **Leicester** University (27), **Huddersfield** Polytechnic (29) and **Newcastle** University (March 1). As a prelude, they play **London** Marquee tonight (Thursday).

Feelgoods woo Wendy

DR. FEELGOOD lived up to their name last week, when they saw in the New Year in the delicious company of Wendy Wu of The Photos. The band had cause to celebrate, as they had just completed a strenuous four-month tour, which kept them on the road through seven countries since the late summer. As for Wendy, she obviously found some solace after the disappointment of The Photos having to cancel a string of December gigs, due to laryngitis and general illness within the band — though they'll be back in live action before 1980 is very much older, with gigs at Port Talbot Troubadour (January 17), London Southbank Polytechnic (18), London Strand King's College (24) and Uxbridge Brunel University (25). And The Photos are planning a series of headlining dates next month, to coincide with the mid-February release of their next single — and as a prelude to their debut album, due in the spring.

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Hall & Oates: London dates

DARYL HALL & JOHN OATES fly into Britain later this month to play four nights at London Victoria The Venue — from January 25 to 28 inclusive. It's their first visit to the UK since mid-1977, and these are the only dates they are doing in Europe at this particular time — they are, in fact, stopping off in London en route to Japan. They play two shows on both Friday and Saturday (25-26) at 8.30 and 11.30pm, one show on Sunday at 9pm, and one on Monday at 8.30pm. Tickets are on sale now priced £5, and the visit has been arranged by Ian Wright of the MAM Agency.

LINDA'S JAUNT ROUND BRITAIN

LINDA LEWIS sets out next month on her first UK tour for three years, visiting Glasgow King's Theatre (February 10), Bristol Colston Hall (12), Coventry Theatre (13), Nottingham Trent Polytechnic (14), London Drury Lane Theatre Royal (17), Birmingham Town Hall (18), Manchester Ashton Tameside Theatre (19), Slough Fulcrum Centre (21), Portsmouth Guildhall (22), Reading Hexagon (23), Bournemouth Winter Gardens (24), Worthing Assembly Hall (25) and Southport Theatre (29). Her tour is preceded by the release of a new Ariola single on January 25 — titled 'Sleeping Like A Baby' and produced by Mike Batt.

Ticket prices are £3, £2.50, £1.75 and £1.25 (Glasgow, Bristol and Birmingham); £2.50, £2 and £1.50 (Coventry and Manchester); £5, £4.50, £3.50 and £2 (London); £3, £2.50 and £1.50 (Slough and Southport); £3.50, £3 and £2.50 (Portsmouth); £2.75, £2.25 and £1.75 (Bournemouth) — and all these are on sale now. Arrangements for Nottingham and Reading were not confirmed at press time.

SNAGS FOR RAINBOW

A COUPLE OF unexpected snags have hit the upcoming UK tour by Rainbow, reported by NME four weeks ago — their projected gig at Bristol Hippodrome on February 24 has been cancelled because the theatre management is concerned about crowd reaction, and there is still uncertainty about the precise date of their concert at London Wembley Arena.

The Wembley show was originally announced as February 29, but subsequently the arena box-office has been denying all knowledge of it. Apparently this date was given out prematurely, prior to confirmation, and an alternative date is now being finalised. A spokesman for the promoter said the London gig will still be at Wembley "at around the same time", exact details to follow next week.

As reported, the tour opens at Newcastle City Hall on February 19 and 20. And it's preceded by a new Rainbow single due out on February 1, titled 'All Night Long' — it's a re-mixed extra loud version of a track from their current 'Down To Earth' album, and the B-side is the previously unissued 'Weiss Hein'.

OFF THE RECORD

DESTRI RIDES AGAIN

BLONDIE keyboards man **Jimmy Destri** is producing a compilation album featuring five up-and-coming New York bands — **The Student Teachers, The Bloodless Pharaohs, The Revions, The Cometeens** and **The Fleshtones**. The LP will comprise two tracks by each outfit, and Destri (in conjunction with Marty Thau) had completed more than half of it before Blondie's current UK tour. It's being made for Ze Records, who are distributed here by Island, and British release is planned for early March. The cover is being specially designed by David Bowie, with whom Destri has worked on several previous occasions — and with whom he will continue to work on sessions in the future. Destri told *NME* that, if the LP is successful, he will then turn his attention to a similar project involving London bands.

● Splash Records (distributed by Pye) have issued what they claim to be the first single actually manufactured this year — they say that pressing began in the first minute of 1980! Titled 'Stay With Me', it's by five-piece Isle of Wight outfit **The Pumphouse Gang**, and is available as a seven-inch and limited edition 12-inch.

● Sniff Records release the single 'At The Discotheque' by **The Wimps**, as the follow-up to the band's 'Hamburger Radio' EP. Obtainable through Rough Trade, or by post at £1 (including P&P) from 21 Florence Mansions, London NW4.

● **Mark Andrews & The Gents** are currently recording their debut A&M album, with producer Simon Boswell. It's scheduled for early March release.

● The new **Lene Lovich** album 'Flex' is released by Stiff on January 18. It's preceded this weekend by the single 'Angels' taken from the LP, though the B-side 'The Fly' is not on the album.

● **Joan Armatrading**'s new A&M single, out on February 1, is 'Rosie'. From the same label come the **Yellow Magic Orchestra** with their single 'Space Invader' (January 18) and album 'Technopolis' (February 1), a new **Dickies** single 'Fan Mail' (January 25) from their album 'Dawn Of The Dickies', and **Henry Badowski's** second single 'My Face' (also January 25).

● This weekend Mad Records issue 'Descriptive Improvisations' by **Dave Maddison**, an album of electric guitar music running 43 minutes and costing just £2 (including P&P) — from Dave Maddison, 5 Andrew Street, Easington Colliery, Co. Durham.

● Reggae band **Pressure Shocks** were forced to cancel a handful of pre-Christmas gigs, as sessions for their debut album were over-running. They now plan to go back on the road in mid-February, to tie in with the LP's release.

● **Metabolist** this week release their first album 'Hansten Kiork' on their own Dromm label. Available through the usual alternative outlets, or by mail order priced £3.50 (including P&P) from Jacqueline Bailey, 18 Rokeby House, Calstor Road, London SW12.

● Out on EMI this weekend is the **Queen** single 'Save Me', which the band featured to good effect on their December dates around London. From the same label comes 'Money Money' by **Kevin Ayers**, to be followed by his new album at the end of this month.

Springsteen, Beach Boys: March LPs

THE NEW and long-awaited album from **Bruce Springsteen** has finally been scheduled for March release by CBS, though it is still untitled. It's a single set only, but a double LP is expected to follow soon afterwards, as Springsteen — who spent the greater part of 1979 recording — has a large amount of material in the can. CBS have also set a March 7 release for the new **Beach Boys** album 'Brothers, Cousins And Friends', and this is preceded on January 18 by the reissue of their 'Surfs Up' LP on the company's mid-price label. Two other upcoming albums, still both untitled, are by **The Only Ones** (March) and **Boz Scaggs** (April).

● **The Only Ones'** new single 'Trouble In The World' is out this weekend, as is the latest from **Janis Ian** 'Have Mercy Love'. And from CBS on January 18 comes the new **Aerosmith** album 'Night In The Ruts'.

REST OF THE TOUR NEWS

KC & THE SUNSHINE BAND arrive here next week to play four dates, their first in this country since 1975 — and on all but the opening night, their special guests will be disco stars McFadden & Whitehead. Both acts were originally scheduled to appear in the Biggest Disco In The World in Birmingham this month but, when that event was cancelled, these concerts were arranged instead — two shows at **Glasgow** Apollo (January 17), two at **London Hammersmith** Odeon (18), and one each at **Deeside** Leisure Centre (19) and **Stafford** Bingley Hall (20).

THE CHI-LITES return this month for a short club tour, visiting **Birmingham** Night Out (January 21-26), **Manchester** Golden Garter (28-February 2), **Windsor** Blazers (4-9), **Leicester** Bailey's (11-16) and **Watford** Bailey's (18-23). Their only confirmed concert is at **London Lewisham** Town Hall on February 3.

RONNIE LANE — who was scheduled to play a couple of autumn dates at **London** The Venue, but subsequently pulled out because his new band wasn't fully together — is now all set to go on the road, and details of a month-long tour are currently being finalised. Lane will be supported throughout by Jimmy Lindsay and his new band Rasuji.

SUZI QUATRO plays her first British date for almost a year on January 24, when she headlines with her band at **London Victoria** The Venue. And Japan are set to play two nights there on January 29 and 30. Other new Venue bookings, not mentioned elsewhere, include Willie Johnson's Solid Senders and Blast Furnace's Revenge (this Saturday), The Mike Westbrook Band (22), The Blues Band, The Dance Band and Stonebridge McGuinness (31), Aswad (February 1) and Kokomo (2).

THE CHIEFTAINS are on tour next month, visiting **Norwich** Theatre Royal (February 3), **Bristol** Colston Hall (4), **London** Royal Albert Hall (5), **Watford** Town Hall (7), **Croydon** Fairfield Hall (8), **Stratford-on-Avon** Royal Shakespeare Theatre (9), **Slough** Fulcrum Centre (10), **Portsmouth** Guildhall (11), **Poole** Arts Centre (13), **Maesteg** Town Hall (14), **Sheffield** Crucible (15), **Accrington** Sports Centre (16), **Birmingham** Hippodrome (17), **Fareham** The Maltings (18), **Brighton** Dome (19), **Derby** Assembly Rooms (21), **Manchester** Free Trade Hall (22), **Edinburgh** Usher Hall (23) and **Redcar** Coatham Bowl (24).

PHIL DANIELS & The Cross are playing a series of **London** dates to promote their debut album, issued by RCA on January 28 with their name as its title. So far set are Camden Dingwalls (January 22), Clapham 101 Club (24), Marquee Club (28), Kensington Nashville (29) and West Hampstead Moonlight Club (February 1). Others are being lined up.

ROCKIN' DOPSIE & The Cajun Twisters, foremost purveyors of zydeco music who toured Britain successfully last summer, will be returning here in March for a more extensive outing. Their itinerary is at present being finalised by Asgard, who will be announcing details shortly.

DEF LEPPARD are gigging nationwide at **Aberdeen** University (January 18), **Dundee** University (18), **Glasgow** Tiffany's (20), **Edinburgh** Tiffany's (21), **Ayr** Pavilion (22), **Liverpool** University (23), **Oldham** Tower Club (25), **Newcastle** University (26), **London** Marquee (27 and 28), **Bradford** University (30), **Middlesbrough** Rock Garden (February 1), **Stockport** Ritz (4), **Leicester** University (5), **Exeter** University (6), **Cramer** West Runton Pavilion (8), **Retford** Porterhouse (9), **Bristol** Granary (11), **Cardiff** Top Rank (12), **Exeter** Routes (13), **Aylesbury** Friars (16), **Loughborough** Town Hall (18), **Sheffield** Top Rank (20), **Grimsby** Central Hall (21), **Withernsea** Grand Pavilion (22), **Nottingham** Boat Club (23), **Leeds** Fforde Green Hotel (24), **London Camden Music Machine** (27) and **Newcastle** Mayfair (29).

CLIFF RICHARD stars in a special memorial concert for his former recording manager Norrie Paramor, who died last autumn, at **Croydon** Fairfield Hall on February 8. Ron Goodwin conducts the orchestra and the show, which is in aid of the Stars Organisation for Spastics, will be attended by the Duchess of Kent. Tickets go on sale on January 16.

KEVIN COYNE presents a programme of poetry and prose at **Nottingham** Midland Group on January 24, as part of a four-day season at the venue devoted to his work. On January 23, there's a screening of *The Institution*, the film he made with Ian Breakwell. And for four days from January 21, there's an exhibition of his drawings.

JUDAS PRIEST have switched one of the venues in their previously reported tour, now visiting **Deeside** Leisure Centre on March 23 instead of **Liverpool** Empire. And it was announced this week that tickets for the **Bristol** Colston Hall gig on March 9 will go on sale on February 9. This week Judas begin recording their new album (their first studio set for two years) in Nice, and hope to have it ready for release to coincide with the tour. Iron Maiden support on all dates.

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HOW WAS IT in Liverpool last year?

"Liverpool has been great! It really has. All these ace bands coming through. A lot of the best groups haven't broken through yet. But it's still as bitchy as ever. We all hate each other. Always fighting and putting each other down — but it's good fun."

In 1979, Liverpool was a place of action, a locale swarming with disparate and distinctive beat groups. Dalek I disappeared into the cold, but left a legacy that would touch those duos, trios and quartets more familiar thanks to the hip, self consciously post-modernist Zoo and Factory Records — Orchestral Manoeuvres, Teardrop Explodes and Echo And The Bunnymen.

And then there was Pink Military. Or sometimes Pink Military Stands Alone. "The latter wouldn't fit on a poster advertising one of our gigs," explained singer Jayne in deadly earnest to a curious Liverpool fanzine, "so we shortened it."

What is it about Liverpool that has inspired these bands' piercing stylisation and interconnecting methodology? The weather, the football team, the desire to escape a stern environment? In 1979, as an interesting example of how modern rock was developing after the traumatic punk interruption, look to the spirit of Liverpool. Singles like Orchestral Etc's 'Electricity', Dalek I's 'The World', and Echo's 'Pictures On The Wall.' And, out of sight but not sightless or irrelevant, the transitional Pink Military.

"In the last year we've been very quiet and stayed out of things, but it's been a planned thing really, "Jayne and co-ordinator John tell me unemphatically. "We didn't want to play much — we weren't ready for it, we were working towards something. Now, we're ready to make a brilliant LP. Everything we write we like, everything we do we like — and 1980 is going to be great!" Jayne breaks into a frantic giggle.

THOSE OF you familiar with the Liverpool legends will know the name Jayne. Hair in daring plaits and coloured madly, hollow eyes and mocking cheeks, she was an extrovert amongst extroverts in Big In Japan.

For many a month these crafty conceptualists worked slaphappily within the framework that combines discovery and enjoyment, wrapping the analytical decadence of Deaf School within an intuitive punk uncommon sense. They were poisoned out of existance by expectation and routine.

"It just became a job," Jayne shrugs. "It's awful fun when it gets like that."

Big In Japan left behind the yellow packaged 'Big In Japan' single, recorded inside the first week of their existence, a tantalising Zoo remembrance EP and the opening track of the excellent Liverpool compilation 'Street To Street' — an instrumental.

A short while after Big In Japan had to go, a record of vague, fuzzy noises appeared, again on the label of the Liverpool club Erics: an EP from Jayne's new gang, Pink Military Stands Alone, recorded live. A record with the atmosphere, rattle and chatter of a 'Max's Kansas City,' lacking shape and reason. John and Jayne helped by friends . . . and strangers. Pink Military have never had a permanent line-up.

"One of the reasons we haven't got a band is that we tend to attract maniacs," begins Jayne, boasting in a way. "The first band we had was just full . . . the bass player was like a 6' 2" hippy with hair down to his elbows, and he was just so paranoid he thought the whole world was against him. We had this really bad week with him, and then I met him in Erics and he said, Jayne, I've really got my head together, and I'm going to be alright from now on, and then somebody came up to me and said your bass player's just taken forty valium! I mean, it took forty valium to sort his head out. We've just had a drummer, and he was only in town for three weeks, and he ended up on the Tuesday night before we came down to do the Peel session having the shit beaten out of him. There were so many people after him, and he'd only been in town three weeks. He ended up in hospital."

Why do you attract maniacs?

"I'm attracted to people like that," she laughs. "I mean I knew that drummer was going to be trouble from the moment I met him. But I'm just attracted to freaked-out people, and that's really what the band is about, freaked-out people. But it got to the point where Roger (Eagle, of Erics) sat me down and said he thought I should be a little more careful with the people that I put in the group. I don't know where we find them!"

I WAS all ready to train up to Liverpool one morning to interview Jayne and John. Then Jayne rang me up, as overpowering on the telephone as she is in real life.

"Paul, instead of you coming up to Liverpool to see us, I've got to go and see Clive (Lancaster, producing the first LP) in London 'cos I didn't while I was in London over the weekend, so why don't I come down to London and you give me the money you would have used to come up to Liverpool and claim it from expenses?"

The cheek. I interview her in the *NME* review room — John's there but he has to fight to get a word in — and she tells me of a similar method she used to win the services of Clive Lancaster as producer.

"I rang him up and said to him, you know how you always say I'm your best friend and how you'll do anything for me, well will you produce our first LP?

"After the way I'd asked he couldn't do anything but say yes!"

As we settle, ready to talk over an intruding tape recorder, I mention that interview in a Liverpool fanzine whose name we've all forgotten. The interviewer had been relentless in his questioning, no doubt shocked into attack by Jayne's apparently light and trite manner.

"The kid that did it was a little 15-year-old, and he was such a little bastard," she recalls with relish. "At one point — oh it was dead funny — he said do you listen to the Banshees because lots of people say that you're like them, and he said why is she famous and successful and you're not?" Another amazed, disturbing laugh.

While we're on the subject, the Banshee comparison is horribly chauvinistic — and inaccurate.

"I've never really listened to them, to be honest. I don't like contemporary music much. Especially when people start to say you're like the Banshees — I won't listen to them in case they become some sort of influence.

"It was like Big In Japan, people used to say you're really like Siouxsie And The Banshees, but it was only because at the time there were only two women about, it was Sioux and Poly, and if you were ugly they said you were like Poly, and if you weren't so ugly they said you were like Sioux."

Jayne relates all this with a hint in her fruity voice that says more than her words. Comparisons or idiocy don't bother her at all; she finds it quite funny. Let others trip over their own prejudices.

Pink Military: Post-Modernist Pop Music

by

Paul Morley

Pink Military stand together (L-R): Jayne, John, Neil, Michael. Pix: Kevin Cummins.

THE LIVE Erics EP was an odd, messy debut. Playing it was like emerging into a nightclub where a group was halfway through an erratic performance, half-attempting to distract a bored audience, not really bothered about poor sound and clinking glasses. And there! You can hear a member of Teardrop Explodes bitching away. Jayne laughs.

"After Big In Japan broke up and everything, where we'd got so slick and into studios and everything, so bogged down in it, Roger Eagle said do a live EP, it'll be *awful!*" — Jayne gleefully stretches the syllables — "and we thought why not, and we did it and we thought it was so bad it was great! I listened to it for the first time in months the other day and thought, God this is really good. I mean it's just so awful . . ."

Pink Military were always going to be a group?

"Well, it is. We're doing the LP this month. It's always been a case of not finding the right musicians, so we borrow other people's. Who can we split up now? We write the material, get a melody line, bass line, a bit of synth, and we give it to the musicians and they come up with something and that's great. Because you have this concept in your head and then when you hear how others interpret it, it can totally change — and for the better. You can actually listen to it and see it a lot clearer."

The 12-inch four-track Erics EP 'Blood And Lipstick' was the first substantial sign that Jayne could translate her ideas into compelling, expansive music. Four pieces of persuasive, deceptively imprecise music, cruising on the fringes of disco, dub and electronics, curiously contorting rhythm and effect, using haunting melodies. It was a record full of surprises, with enough dark detail and edgy passion to place it beyond mere 'entertainment'. Did you ever hear it? Records are rarely so seductive.

JAYNE LOVES the way the group evolved so accidentally and naturally. The scattered, nebulous noise of the live EP, the devastating caricatures of disco and such on the second EP, which pointed the way towards numerous departures, and the LP will be. . . "We're really into Piaf and Newley at the moment. Cabaret, that's what we're working on at the moment, but with like heavier undertones. It confuses people when I say cabaret."

She is of course looking towards a new definition of the word. Private but not pompous, intense not sickly. Edith Piaf and Lou Reed. The proper application of cabaret in rock has always worked wonders.

Pink Military's introduction of austere, illuminative cabaret values came accidentally, the result of some offbeat work on 'I Cry' from 'Blood And Lipstick'. It awaits development, I wonder if it's the mystery and bad taste of cabaret that appeals.

"It's a lot of bad taste, it's both. When people first heard 'I Cry' they freaked and said it was terrible, said it was like the kind of thing you's hear in a New York gay club, and we said that's great, we'll put it out.

"I don't like cabaret that's just wet, all love songs, but people like Piaf. There was some real heartbreak, heartbreak and emotion, and for the last two years or whatever it's been a really cold period in music, really boring. I don't think music should be like that. A piece of music that makes me feel an emotion, happy or sad, that's what I'd like to get. Sort of moving things, mean".

She rocks back in her chair in laughter, popping a bubble she'd been blowing. Psychedelic, I clumsily mutter. She shakes her head.

"No, I hate it."

I labour the point. Hippy revival.

"No, it's nothing to do with that." She stiffens, mildly irritated. "That's horrible. Like I find The Clash really moving. I hate anything bland. And I like good pop. Good funny pop music, because that moves me as well. I love The Distractions, they're so good."

You could get caught up in the futurism fiasco, I nag. Jayne mumbles distantly. Doesn't that bother you?

"No!" Jayne comes into focus. "I want a hit record, Paul! Everybody wants a hit, but I'd love to be able to do it on Erics label, independently. That would be great. This LP is going to be really great, but it's going to be better because it's independent, and we've done everything ourselves. . . that feeling of being with it from the moment you wrote the song to the moment it comes out."

"There are two major labels who want us, but we're putting them off, because it's really important for everyone involved, Erics included, 'cos like they put so much into our work. We're not saying we'll never sign up but right now we don't need to."

That you're making an LP, after two completely unorthodox EPs, shows you take no notice of any unwritten rules and regulations.

"We'd decided to make an LP from the very first day we came together. We bend the rules and that's really good. Two years ago you didn't do LPs on a small label, but it's so much easier now. Like it was just, me and John got together, wrote a song on the piano, and thought, Oh we'll make an LP."

PETE YORK's theorising on post-modernism — today's usage of yesterday's future visions — in the current *Harper's And Queen* is brilliant, making up for his failure with Mod and appealing if only because it means nothing to the archetypal rock consumer. It confirms the inferiority and triviality of pop as art, and emphasises its incidental vitality and effectiveness.

Pink Military are unerringly and magnificently post-modernist: relating to the past, but pushing it away; selecting and rejecting fragments of period style, art, fashion, and mixing it with their own discoveries. Pink Military are a bag of all sorts, a shaky mix-up. Post-modernistic, and also post-punk.

A true contemporary rock group. Cultish. Confused. Confusing. Blatantly eclectic. Electric. Determinedly independent. No claim to authenticity. Unpredictable. Pink Military's curiosity, compassion, tackiness, polite anarchy, impatience, self-consciousness, self-deprecation, star wish, love of kitsch, love of 'the future', their sense of fun — see this places them perfectly in the present. Pop as pure play. Pop as possibility. Pop as one glorious, unerasable mistake.

"Post-modernism — this curious relationship with the past." The art attitude couldn't stay away for long.

IF THE Liverpool Dole Office is reading this — and no doubt you are, ready to slip it with your other press cuttings — all this doesn't necessarily mean that Jayne, who sends her love, is a star and extraordinarily rich. You must be more patient.

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TRAVELLING through Lisbon it is impossible to avoid the scars left by the Portuguese revolution earlier in the '70s. Slogans and technicolour political murals provide a vivid reminder of the country's recent upheavals, everywhere buildings are daubed and coloured with messages of terse extremism.

Supertramp are as 'popular' in Portugal as

The Hotel!

they are almost everywhere else on the continent. (It may or may not be significant that during the revolution the social axioms and lustrous musical technology of 'Crime Of The Centry' became a firm favourite with the country's pop pickers.) The band will play two dates at a large indoor stadium in Cascais, a city some 25-30 miles from Lisbon, performing to an audience of 8,000 each night. The first performance will be celebrated by the presentation of some gold discs to the band courtesy of A&M Portugal; it is also their first ever Portuguese performance.

My purpose in coming to Cascais is to see the Supertramp family (a term favoured by the band's official circular and as good a way as any to describe the whole massive organisation) in action on and offstage, to talk with the band about their music, its implications and relevance for themselves and their listeners, to unravel the intricacies of the process behind the end products (live shows and vinyl) which they produce.

I haven't come to bury Supertramp: they're a band who've always interested me, especially in the light of their enduring success, worldwide as well as in Europe, where they seem to have a bigger following than almost any band you care to mention. I've come to jab and jibe, taunt and tease, to engage in a conversation of two varying perspectives. Being more used to working with rock'n'roll at its most basic grass roots level, I'm obviously interested to find out what affect Supertramp have felt during the recent years' rock 'revolution'.

But what appears to be a fertile prospect will, over the 2½-day stay afforded to myself and photographer Mike Laye, crumble into a quagmire of exasperation, depression and negativity. We become the fall guys for spoilt superstar antics, charades and facades enacted to keep the Supertramp fantasy firmly intact.

The whole project gets off on the wrong foot when we arrive at the hotel on the afternoon of the first gig to discover that the band aren't even staying there. It transpires that multi-instrumentalist John Helliwell and bassist Dougie Thompson *are* there but under pseudonyms. Fine, but as permission for the interview will later be withdrawn on the grounds that insufficent empathy exists between myself and Supertramp, it hardly seems as if they were doing their best to encourage this 'empathy'. Manager Charlie

The Dinner!

Provost will later talk of how they usually like to bring the journalist into the whole operation for two or three days — well, I don't consider being left to moon around a strange hotel and then make my way to an unknown venue in a foreign country, integration into their operation. Not that I'm complaining about the absence of a permanent chaperone, it just appears a mite hypocritical to say someone has no common ground with you when you've given them little chance to provide evidance to the contrary.

TRAVELLING to the venue with an assortment of young (under 21) concert-goers, I discover none of them have actually come to see Supertramp, they've come to marvel at the seldom encountered spectacle of a rock'n'roll show. They know no other vocabulary than a force-fed diet of the contrived, traditional and theatrical arrangements of rock favoured by Doctor Feelgood, The Stranglers and The Tubes. Supertramp will do little to enhance their horizons, it all boils down to an acute paucity of choice; they remain slaves to the whims of Anglo-yankee mass acceptance, the industry's product control and packaging. Our whirlwind tour of A&M Lisbon revealed a professional closed shop of TV personalities, radio presenters and other agents of market control. The industry's closeted staleness is the anathema of activism.

Charlie Provost is the slightly overweight and carelessly bearded Canadian half of the Supertramp management. Inside the venue he greets me with firm sincerity and mild enthusiasm. But the warmth of his initial salutation will steadily dwindle with each encounter during my stay until the last time I see Charlie we walk past one another as if in parallel universes. Charlie likes to decorate his tour jacket with an assortment of badges, one of which I find hysterically hypocritical. It's inscribed "Question Authority".

Filling me in on a few details, Charlie unveils problem number two. Rick Davies, an essential half of Supertramp's songwriting partnership, will not under any circumstances talk to *NME*. He even refuses to have his photo taken for the article. Provost qualifies Davies' reluctance by claiming he is suffering from tour fatigue to the extent that he wouldn't be up to giving a satisfactory interview. Talk behind the scenes sees Rick emerging as something of a recluse, reluctant to do the tour and deliberatly remaining something of an enigma.

Mulling disinterestedly over a plate of potatoes, cabbage and nut roast, I'm

The Waiter!

introduced to the band's Scottish bassist Dougie Thompson, an agreeably cocky Celtic character who, sympathetic to the toils of a long day's travel, agrees to do the interview the following evening. Our ineffectual banter waves between personal and business matters. Yes, all the members of the band are married and the proliferation of offspring presently scurrying around the dressing room is explained by the fact that at this stage of the tour the band's kin and kinfolk are travelling hand in hand and the Supertramp family is at its capacity

With no record player, Dougie gets very little opportunity to listen to much music but he does like a few tracks on the new Police album (him, Keef and Ted Nugent — we *must* be twigging something here). The band have not taken up permanent residence in America but is seems like a logical resting point for the present. They still have British citizenship and plan to keep it.

"I don't think that's something anyone wants to lose," philosophises Charlie. (It's notable that anytime I have contact with the band Charlie's presence looms imposingly over the proceedings.) Dougie leaves, reaffirming his desire to do the interview the following evening. After the gig I'm briefly introduced to Roger Hodgson and he's game for a chat before tomorrow's gig as well.

BACK AT the hotel *there's* a reception of quite breathtaking lavishness. Culinary delights and delicacies mingle with an abundance of choice Portuguese beverages. As the reception runs its typically boring and self-congratulatory course I find refuge in sinking deeper and deeper into a wine glass. Members of the entourage eventually relieve the tedium with a disgusting display of rock'n'roll decadence. All manner of exquisitely prepared food is strewn around the room and ground into the carpet. It's left for a group of Portuguese women to clear up the mess, undoubtably sickened to see the abuse of supplies they'd be hard pushed to afford.

The following day Mike Laye and I are left to our own devices; in the evening we return to the Pavilion for the second Supertramp performance and the band interview. But immediately we enter Provost starts to put a damper on our plans and draws the shutters of non co-operaton. He informs me that no photos are to be taken in the dressing room and there will be no time available for portraits the following morning (Mike has so far only been allowed access to the visages of

The Beach!

Thompson and Helliwell). He *will* allow snaps to be taken during the interview — and that, as will soon be revealed, is Catch 22.

Roger Hodgson is engaged in a post-dinner tete-a-tete with Provost. Glancing over, Provost's eyes meet my own and a faint suggestion of wariness flashes across his face. Thinking nothing of it, I approach Roger to request an interview; his reply and our subsequent exchange leads me to believe that I had been the subject of their dialogue.

"I've been thinking about this, and I don't think there's sufficient empathy between us to do an interview," he says, to my complete amazement.

He's perturbed by a casual remark made the previous evening to Charlie. When asked how familiar I was with the band's work I'd told him I'd become very familiar with it in the past few weeks. Taken at face value, a true enough statement — but quite misleading in that it did not reveal the hours spent tackling the content of 'Crime' when it was originally released. Belying the frivolity of 'Dreamer', the rest of the album was made of sturdier stuff — and quite unique for the period in which it was released, a hefty slab of the album dealt with topics not all that far removed from those later to receive a widespread airing in the punk epoch: social disaffection and disillusionment, the British school system and the alienation of the small man in the face of all-powerful bureaucracy.

The 'Crisis What Crisis?' album on the other hand held nowhere near the same clout or refreshing individualism, and I was disheartened to see an almost blatant dilution of formula at work. Finding more invigorating

Continues page 41

"I became a fall guy for spoilt superstar antics," complains roving reporter Gavin Martin.

Brochure pix: Mike Laye

"Untrue," answers the Cosmic courier Roger Hodgson. "We just didn't like the look of you."

Harvey's familiar vivid style of story-telling dominates. . . .

The album is a deceptive achievement for Alex Harvey — more prepared and subtle than his previous works, less rock 'n' roll, more interpretation and careful emotion. His writing still has bravado, but he seems wiser and more reflective now. Another pair of songs of the calibre of "Wait For Me Mama" and "The Whalers" to replace the album's two oddballs, and Harvey would have had a near-faultless vindication of his former status. —

John Orme, M.M.

Alex Harvey delivers enough on this record to make me hope that someone from the RCA office will call right off and tell me where and when I can rectify my error in never having seen him onstage.

Sandy Robertson, Sounds.

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THRILLS

ELVIS:

This Year's Model In Danger

Pic: Chalkie Davies

ELVIS COSTELLO'S long-awaited new single, 'I Can't Stand Up For Falling Down,' backed by the composer's version of the Dave Edmunds hit 'Girls Talk,' will be released on January 18.

Contrary to speculation, it won't appear on either the Radar or Two-Tone labels.

'I Can't Stand Up For Falling Down' — originally an old Sam & Dave B-side — will inaugurate Off-Beat Records — a self-financed independent operation run by Costello's manager Jake Riviera.

Grab your copies quickly, because it could be the last Costello single in quite a long while!

When, a few months ago, Radar Records was closed down by its parent company Warner Brothers, Costello (together with Nick Lowe) became an unwitting pawn in a power struggle.

Warners claimed rightful possession to the artists, whilst the artists themselves insisted that their association with Radar was a strictly verbal release-by-release arrangement with Lauder. Seeing as Lauder was no longer with Radar and that the operation had been discontinued, therefore, they were free to seek a new distribution for those records produced for Riviera-Global.

That was five months ago.

Initially, 'I Can't Stand Up' was going to be a one-off Two-Tone single (007), until such time as Off-Beat was operational, but as Two-Tone is a co-operative, the release date of January 11 clashed with a live Specials EP and the new Selecter single. This meant the Costello singe would be delayed almost a month which didn't coincide with imminent Costello tour dates. Meanwhile, acetates of 'I Can't Stand Up For Falling Down' have been receiving extensive Capital Radio airplay.

Word has reached *NME* that Warners have filed an injunction to prevent the BBC from airing acetates of the record in their possession. This seems to be one of a number of write being prepared by Warners. None of this is helping Costello's career. For instance, his new album was completed three months ago.

As matters are currently in the hands of solicitors and the like, it is difficult for either Costello or Riviera to comment publicly on the situation. However, it would appear that Costello has no intention of signing with Warners and attempts to persuade him to do so are unlikely to make him change his decision.

The word on the wire seems to infer that should he find himself locked into a Springsteen situation then Costello will either quit the business entirely, or just confine his career to being a road band.

ROY CARR

THRILLS

Devo re-enact their Albertos take off. Pic Tom Sheehan.

Albertos Devolving

"Berts In The Bog" says C. P. Lee

IN AN epic session of wallbanging, CP Lee, of Alberto Y Lost Trios Paranoias' notoriety informed the *NME* this week that he wanted to "see the 'Berts down the bog".

The Berts are finally disbanding after a protracted seven year illness of the wallet in which they headlined over such future heavyweights and moneymakers as Blondie, The Police and The Stranglers. And, whilst not exactly bitter at seeing others move on up whilst the Berts trod water, CP, like the rest of us has his own bills to pay, family to support and need to be acknowledged as a genius.

Formed by CP Lee, Jimmy Hibbert and someone called Bob, the Berts started in Manchester performing locally a series of CP-penned comedy scripts before deciding upon the introduction of a rock music element that accidentally turned into quite a good band who even now are to be witnessed in the excellent *Never Mind The Bullocks* that packed out London's Mayfair Theatre at its premiere and has been playing to apathetic half-empty houses and vitriolic critics ever since. (Review to follow next week) The Berts are running there (sharing the house with Sooty and Matthew Corbett) until the 18th (CP's birthday).

But all is not lost. "It's simply that the Berts will be doing no more rock gigs as the Berts," CP explained. "We have," he added, "exhausted the gamut of emotions."

Jimmy Hibbert elaborated by explaining that Alberto Y Lost Trios Paranoias will not play in Spain again until Franco's dead.

Though Bruce the drummer and elder statesman of the band wants the band to stay together as a more rigid combo, CP says that the band (as he sees it) will disperse into a series of loose and leaky umbrella formations adhering to the Berts' founding ethos of "a firm dedication to music that should be played out of tune in a state of total inebriation."

True to form, CP (as founding father of) the Charlie Parkes Hood has released an atrociously funny reggae version of "The Ballad Of Robin Hood" (see Nick Kent's review) on Paranoid Plastics backed with Space Invaders in which your man credits himself as "Vlerg Brain". The rest of the Parkes are simply the rest of the Berts minus Jimmy, plus Mog from The Smirks.

Parallel to the Parkes — who intend touring in February or March under the aegis of the March Of The Slobs Tour — there's another CP spin-off, Gerry And The Holograms soon to release a single, 'Ha Ha Said The Clone', and a disco single by The Village Idiots, 'Shot Down By Both Sides', with lead guitar by former Buzzcock Pete Shelley.

Further CP output at time of writing has included the world's first unplayable pre-scratched black vinyl limited edition single, the world first unplayable picture disc replete with applique Hush puppies motif and *another* spin-off masquerading as Bet Lynch's Legs wherein the remaining musical Berts and CP play and whistle respectively through restructured versions of 'High Noon' and 'Ghost Riders In The Sky'.

In conclusion and by way of explanation for all this rapid quasi-musical schizophrenia, CP had simply this to say: "We're just gonna keep on doing it until someone starts buying it."

PETE ERSKINE

THRILLS

S-27. l to r: Jo Burt, Robinson, Derek The Menace, Stevie B. Pic: Stevenson

S-27: Robinson's Magic Formula

JUST WHAT is this thing they're calling S-27? A new line in biological warfare? Or a medically-proven formula for dandruff shampoo? Toothpaste? Clue: it is none of these things. The true nature of S-27 was revealed on New Year's Day at a private gathering in a room near Clapham Junction, with *Thrills* in attendance.

S-27 is, in fact, the name of Tom Robinson's new band, successor to the late-lamented TRB. They are now engaged in a series of low-key live try-outs designed to break the combo in, and to test its viability. A four-piece, the group comprises: Tom, now to be found on rhythm guitar; Jo Burt, an old friend who plays bass and co-writes much of the material; Derek The Menace on drums, and boyish lead guitarist Stevie B. The plan is to build up towards wider public exposure over the months to come, but gradually, by a long schedule of low-key touring.

"The most important thing," Robinson commented, "is to wipe the slate completely clean, so that the new thing stands or falls in its own right. There's a long way to go yet, and we're deliberately keeping these first appearances very small and low-key so that we can be guided by the reactions. So if people do want to listen they can do; if they'd rather go to the bar and have a drink they can do that."

On one point he's adamant: S-27 won't trade on the reputation of previous Tom Robinson bands, and will explore very different directions musically. "There have been offers — like one to do a tour of Portugal, and for a lot of money — for us to go out as The Tom Robinson Band again and sing '2-4-6-8', but what's the point? Well, I suppose money is the point. But, y'know, I've already got a car, I can pay me rent . . ."

S-27, also known as Sector-27, ("we wanted as neutral a name as possible, with no connotations whatsoever"), are still at a rough and rudimentary stage in their collective development, having been together in this formation for less than a month. A preliminary hearing does suggest, nonetheless, that the group's sound could prove rather more imaginative than the stolid and sometimes stodgy TRB.

Tuesday's performance, put on for a small group of friends (including Peter Gabriel) in Clapham's 101 Club, demonstrated a noticeable improvement in songwriting strength, as well as some appealing guitar work by Stevie B. Robinson is staying too cautious to proclaim unbridled optimism just yet, but says that it's "really exciting, to have your neck stuck out this far . . ."

Unfortunately, he still wears boring pullovers.

PAUL DU NOYER

THRILLS

The Lone Groover — Benyon

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This competition is open to all readers resident in the UK, Eire, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, except employees (and their families) of IPC Magazines Ltd, the printers of *New Musical Express*, the staff of the Electronic Dream Plant and robots. The Editor's decision is final and results will be published in a future edition of *NME*.

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THE LAST ELVIS INTERVIEW

IF YOU believe everything you read in the American scandal sheets then in the two years since Elvis Presley died he's spent more time speaking on the psychic short-wave band than he did throughout his entire lifetime.

As he never allowed himself to be the subject of an extensive and probing interview almost everything known about Presley's private life has, been second hand and stemming from suspect sources.

Wanda June Hill is one of the many who claim to have had a personal relationship with Presley but Wanda at least has the transcript of an interview to back her up.

It's her personal memoirs that make up the bulk of *We Remember Elvis*, a costly (limited edition of 2,500) hardback published by Morgan Press. Though it also includes starry-eyed fan tributes, the admission price of $17.50 pays dividends in the form of an interview conducted by Wanda with Elvis between November 1976 and June 1977.

Despite blowing a lifetime scoop when Elvis asks "You're not going to ask me any personal questions like how many times a night I get laid?" and she responds "I don't think anyone is really interested in that!" she does manage to extract a few interesting insights from Elvis who, at times, is self-effacing and bewildered as to why he was still able to sell-out the largest auditoriums in the land.

It was the lack of any real challenge, his belief (even at the very end) of his own invincibility and the lack of managerial direction that led to his downfall. Elvis reckoned that a good movie script might get the adrenalin flowing once again, but admitted: "I don't look good enough now. I'm too fat for cameras."

Recalling the first years of his career, Elvis reveals that his late mother was far from enamoured with both rock 'n' roll music and the success that constantly kept him away from her maternal supervision. She was most upset by the way girls behaved in public at his shows and by their boyfriends wanting to punch her son out.

"She had high hopes for me. She wanted me to sing gospel . . . actually that was my ambition . . . to join a gospel group."

Elvis claims that the very first time he appeared in public, he didn't lack confidence in his talent — just nerve. "I was scared. I didn't know why people were screamin'. I thought they didn't like me!"

When Colonel Tom Parker arrived on the scene and took over Presley's management in November 1955, he saw to it that the screams got louder, going as far as to pay professional screamers to create chaos. Elvis remembers one such lady who was employed "to give me a bad time" getting quite carried away in a drug store ramming her hands down the inside of his pants.

"He (Parker) had paid her . . . she had seen me but she hadn't seen me work and then when she saw that, and me up close . . she was gung-ho to rape me!"

Contrary to legend, young Elvis didn't screw around. Celibacy wasn't his idea, but The Colonel's. "I wasn't permitted to have girls with me . . . none . . . And it would have helped . . . done me a lot of good!"

During the interview he refuted rumours that he was about to elbow The Colonel. "He's done right by me . . . I couldn't have done it without him."

When tackled about patriotism and politics, his views make those of John Wayne seem like a traitor. So what kind of music was Elvis listening to at the time of this chit-chat?

"The Eagles and Aerospace," the latter being presumably a reference to Aerosmith. He also admitted to bending an ear to gospel, country, rock and a touch of the old classics.

He reckoned there was a '50s nostalgia trend afoot of which he approved. "There are a lot of beautiful songs being sung. There's all sorts of messages being said through music . . . which I think is good because it seemed like it's gotten out of hand until it was all a lot of psychedelic noise. I'm glad to see it reverting back to where there is melody . . . beautiful lyrics . . . a human expression."

Apparently, Elvis was a phone addict and someone called Ken Payne was a person with whom Elvis would kill time. From an account of a phone conversation Ken had with Elvis in May 1976, The King was ready to cash in his chips. Speaking about a recent show, Elvis revealed, "Sunday night — after I got out there — I was so tired . . . I was so fuzzy. I couldn't think straight." Nevertheless, Elvis insisted that he was in good health.

"I figure this'll be the last year so I'd like to hit every major city — every state in the United States this year. This is the Bicentennial, so if I hit 'em all, then I can retire . . . not feel like I short-changed anybody. I think when we quit doin' the road shows . . . that Priscilla and Lisa will move back home."

ROY CARR

Big Red Pix: Jill Furmanovsky

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Stars And Their Parents No. 1: Mr. and Mrs. Pop

Pic: Erica Echenburg

THE MIGHTY Pop proves that even subhumans got kin-folk when, visiting Detroit young *(young?)* Jimbo chanced upon a couple of Ann Arbor trailer-camp refugees claiming to be The World's Most Forgotten Boy's most forgotten parents.

Checking the would-be father's punk hair-style (acquired, in fact, during Osterberg Snr's military days when the gung-ho junior commando got his coiffure caught in a particularly nasty helicopter propellor accident) the Godfather Of Punk realised that — *jeepers!!!* — these were the bonafide article and that "Iggy's Pop" (as the ageing schoolteacher gets referred to en masse by his delightful pupils) plus his good lady were Osterbergs through and through.

This touching shot captures our hero reeling from the full impact of the encounter.

Ma and Pa smile approvingly, having carefully examined the state of their son's arms.

Four Elvises, Four Brothers — No Sisters

WHO ARE these geeks? They're all brothers (Barrett) like The Ramones, Everlies and Osmonds, but they look like Elvis Costello. Their biggest influence is Richard Hell's sunglasses and their finest song is called 'Beware Of Flying Carpets'. They come from San Francisco and may look like a complete fabrication, a flight of some wackoid fantasy, but they are, we are assured, *for real*. This is No Sisters, a West Coast pick to click with sensible people and opticians. They are very short-sighted and so will you be if you forget the name. Remeber where you saw 'em first. Legend hath it that you'll be seeing them again. Fair do's.

MAX BELL.

THRILLS

LOWRY CARTOON COMP

Results!

FIRST, a word about the response to the competition. It was great! The people who've made *Gasbag* the nation's premier read really are as abusive, megalomaniacal, mentally agitated and obsessed with trivia as a detached observer would have surmised. Plus they're two-faced and ever ready to fawn and flatter when necessary. Sterling qualities! Fortunately rock and roll bands and record company types are *even worse* so they make great targets for the slugs and arrows of outraged punters.

To those of you filled with a black rage because your contribution isn't in the runners and riders, I'm sorry. I've tried to make a representative selection of the themes that recurred most often, plus one-offs and nutters.

Main Grovel: I know how infuriating it must be to those of you who tried to make your point in the accepted cartoon format that some bastard wins with a poster idea, *but* it is funny, suss, puts the finger on most things that come to mind when thoughts turn to dreck, and is generally a good idea, don't you think? The rest of the runners-up we'll be showing on these pages over the next few weeks.

P.S. Thanks to the many contributors who drew me as a half-pissed stick insect churning out cartoons to order and making a small fortune. Naturally I haven't included any of these, nor the several that featured John Peel (?!)

RAY LOWRY

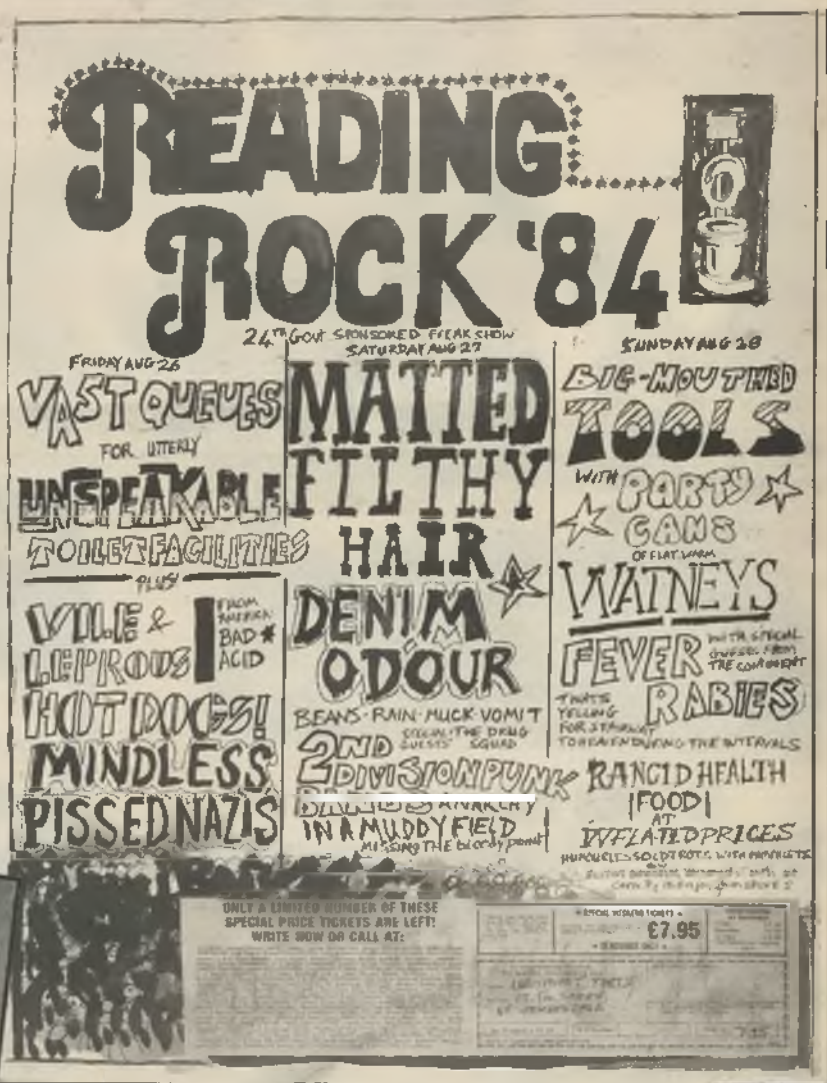
AND THE WINNER IS
John Kenneth Hall, of New Tupton, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, wins the complete original set of the Lowry Clash-USA cartoons plus an autographed copy of the new Clash double album, 'London Calling.'

Equal seconds:
Chris Kennedy, Wallasey. Carlton Roberts, Jersey. Rob Walker, Tooting. Stan Rahy, Kettering, Northants. Kieren Phelps, Surbiton. Richard Smith, Shepperton. A Robinson (aged 8), Arlington, East Sussex. Anthony Davison, Beeston. Alan Gray, Exeter. Bob Bodger, Peterborough. Garry Davies, Fareham. Gareth Jones, Loughborough. Stephen Smith, Bradford on Avon.

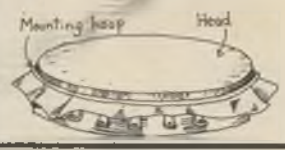
These receive an original Lowry cartoon. We'll also be featuring the best cartoons in *Thrills* in forthcoming weeks.

The Winner!

John Hall's Nightmare Vision Of The Authoritarian Future Of Rock'n'Roll



How to Mount a Skin Head on a Banjo



Start with a skin at least 3 to 4 inches wider than the banjo rim, (i.e., use a 14 inch skin for an 11 inch rim). Take off the old banjo head as well as the tension hoop and brackets. Remove the broken skin or plastic from the mounting hoop of the old head and save the hoop. Soak the new skin down in cool water. Be careful, as hot water may shrink it. Place the wet skin on top of the banjo rim and place the mounting hoop on top of it, bringing the hoop approximately 1/4" down the side of the rim all the way around. On top of that,

In answer to all your requests here is the explanation to that tricky everyday occurance 'How to mount a skin head on a banjo' as shown by the Musicians All-Rounder published in 1928. In case the print proves too small in our reproduction the gist of it says.

First select your skin-head. Then by means of charts and diagrams persuade him that The Angelic Upstarts are performing over a convenient well. When your skin-head expresses dis-satisfaction on not being able to see over the said well, suggest that he might stand upon a raised dais to gain a better viewing. When he has agreed it is then you gently slide the banjo beneath his Dr Martens. And voila! Your skin head is mounted! Then your only problem is explaining away the non-appearance of his idols.'

Coming soon! How to erect a mod on a baby grand! Balancing an acid-head on the neck of your uke the easy way! A-Z of punk / piccolo merging!

YOUNG WIFE CONFESSES: I TORTURED A MILLION OTHER HOUSEWIVES!

"My evil husband forced me to sing backing vocals on Mull of Kintyre!"

SHOWBIZ INVESTIGATION BY PAUL DU NOYER

Lissom Linda Eastman was just the ordinary everyday daughter of a street corner chemist owner and millionaire. Life was simple . . . until she met Paul. Little did she know the handsome young man she fell for was one of the infamous Beatles! At first, life with Paul was one long honeymoon. He vowed to leave behind the dissolute world of all-night Beatle recording sessions, and the two love-birds settled down to form a group of their own. They bought sheep and had kids, like normal rock stars throughout the world. But in Paul's heart there still burned a twisted desire to prove he wasn't just another ex-Beatle. Her heart sank that fateful day when he told her: "Darling, I want you to do something for me. I've written this song type thingy called 'Mull Of Kintyre' and I want you to . . . Linda, what's wrong? You've gone all funny kind of thing. Linda! Linda, don't do it! Don't — AAAAAAAARRGGH . . . . ."

(Now read on).

THERE ARE THOSE who would suggest that you might as well talk to Linda McCartney about rock'n'roll as ask Barbara Cartland about Rugby League Football.

Maybe she would say the same: she thought I'd end up being bored, and couldn't see why *NME* would want to talk to her in the first place.

After ten years married to one of the few functioning national monuments this country can boast, the picture-taking girl from New York City and its famous legal-eagle Eastman clan has had a less than easy time of it in the hands of her detractors, old Beatles fans and press alike.

Charges have tended to include her musical inexperience, an unfashionable hair-style, stealing your sister's heart-throb and general downright unlikeability. In point of fact all these allegations are entirely unfair, except for the first three.

I met her at Liverpool's Royal Court Theatre, the little and needy old venue which Paul, ever the local-lad-made-fabulous, had chosen to kick off Wings' latest tour. It was their first such outing in three years, and only the third since Wings' formation back in '71.

Ten yards away, against the room's glass doors, were pressed noses belonging to The Great British General Public. Out on the Liverpool streets, one story went, some touts were clearing 2000% profit on tickets for tonight's Wings show.

How did it feel to be a Band On The Run again?

"Oh, I've been on the road *forever*. I enjoy it when the vibes are good; it's when the vibes are bad I don't enjoy it. It's changed a lot from the beginning to now, it's a lot better because the band's a lot better. It's totally different to play in a band where everyone seems to *like* each other, and this is the first one.

"I'm more confident nowadays 'cos I know chords better! I don't sing quite as out of tune," she laughs.

You came in for a lot of stick early on, didn't you?

"I still do."

Did it come as a surprise?

"Yes, I didn't realise. Because I led a pretty free spirit kind of life, it was just me and my cameras, and I wasn't noticed to be criticised. And if I was noticed it was 'Hey, she's a pretty good photographer isn't she' and I'd have a loon with people. Getting criticised is like being back at school, because I wasn't good at it, was I?

"It's obviously more fun when you can have a laugh and not take it too seriously. But I'm nervous on and off through life. Don't you get nervous? I'm not a natural talent so obviously I'm gonna get nervous."

So, with no musical background or talent, why did she join the group that Paul was forming?

"I loved music. I was a rock'n'roll kid, though I never sang or played keyboards or anything. It was Paul. We were up in Scotland after The Beatles had split up and he had nobody to play with, friendship-wise, so he said 'Let's get a group together' and I said Yeah because I'm always jumping in at the deep end."

How did you take the criticism?

"Well we were touring and didn't really have much time to react. I suppose subconsciously, super-ego and sub-ego and all that kind of stuff, it affected me a lot. But my attitude was I didn't really care what people say about me if I like what I'm doing. It probably made me sing *more* out of tune because everyone was saying I was out of tune, y'know, it made me more nervous about what I was doing."

JUST FOR a moment, Linda's voice acquires the hard New York edge I'd somehow supposed it would have

"I always want to get the people who said it, go kick them in the teeth, 'cos it's just the way I am, y'know? I never *met* any of them, y'know, that was the biggest joke. They were all telling everyone what I'm like and I never even met them. So obviously I got a bit vicious."

What made you carry on?

"It was wanting to be with Paul that kept me in it. It's really because of Paul that I keep doing it. It's not the sort of thing I'd do normally, because it's not where my talents really lie — not that I have any talents anyway.

"I'm enjoying it, it's hard to really talk about. There's a lot I'd like to say to *NME*. . ."

Go ahead.

"But I never can think of it at the time!"

Shame.

"I don't think it's as serious as all the word-people say it is. It's all a bit phoney, even talking to you. I could tell you my philosophies but what do I matter? What does it matter what I'm saying?

"Well. . .I believe in not killing animals if you're interested in that. We have a lot of sheep and we don't kill any of them and we don't cut their balls off either — so we got a lot of sheep. We don't need to kill them for money so we don't. To me, taking money for a dead body, I wouldn't get off on that. I'm total vegetarian: no fish, no friendly little chickens.

"The earth is very important to me — earth things, roots — much more important to me than concrete and space-age and all that, because to me all that's bureaucratic, and a lot of flannel. For me personally, all that 'progress', that's regress really. What's there is what we should preserve."

BUT WE digress. As a band, Wings have often seemed unstable and erratic in terms of personnel and output. How much can we expect for the current outfit (wherein Linda, Paul and Denny Laine are joined by guitarist Laurence Juber and drummer Steve Holly)?

"I don't think we've gotten our potential on record yet — maybe 'C Moon', or 'Band On The Run' where Paul played drums and things and could get what he wanted. But we've had other Wings and he's tried to tell them what he wants and maybe they can't do it, or don't wanna do it. This group is the closest we've gotten so far and it's only the beginning. It'll grow musically. The trick is to get a few laughs out of it, but if everybody's saying you're rubbish, you don't laugh.

"Paul's a funky musician, and he can get that feel over when he doesn't have to get hung up, telling everybody what to play. The Beatles were all funky, four funky people who loved rock'n'roll and playing together. When you have something like that and it breaks up, it takes time to get it back again.

"People are always digging, digging away, and it's just like being at school, y'know, when the teacher tells you you're no good. Your attitude. . .half of you wants to please the teacher 'cos our society is. . .we have a totally false society, and achievement and competition, to win, is what everybody pats you on the back for, which is totally rubbish.

"So half of you wants to please the teacher and half of you wants to tell the teacher to fuck off, y'know?"

And with that it was time for the gig and Linda had to go. And she went, because Wings are not the kind of band to keep people waiting.

At 37, with four children, two careers, one farm and an awful lot of sheep, it must be all go for the mellow, unexpectedly friendly, and occasionally nervous Mrs Linda McCartney.

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...THE ONLY ONES...

TROUBLE IN THE WORLD New Single OUT NOW 7963

Dexy's Midnight Runners (l–r in outside shots): Steve Spooner (alto sax), Pete Williams (bass), Carlo Rolan (vocal, guitar), Big Jimmy Patterson (trombone), J.B. (tenor sax), Al Archer (lead guitar). Not shown: new organist and drummer, Andy and Groker. Pictures: Mike Laye.

Dexy's: Funky Butt Fassst!

Roy Carr visits the Land of the Midnight Runners

"I've got no respect for anybody or anything . . . I'm not talking about worship, I mean RESPECT. What I'm talking about is feeling and soul power. Knowing that something is real and feeling it. We get called arrogant . . . sometimes you know you're right but that doesn't make us arrogant. We can feel the power . . . some of you here tonight can feel the power . . . but there are loads of people who just can't feel it. I feel sorry for them. But take men like Big Jimmy, he plays the trombone, drinks a bottle of whisky a day and is going to be dead in a year's time. But it's alright Jimmy, 'cause you've got RESPECT . . . 'you can feel the soul power . . . you know what it is, RESPECT!!'"

—An extract from Carlo Rolan's onstage 'Respect' rap.

IT'S THE third day of Christmas at the Electric Ballroom, and a number of kids cocking an ear to Carlo Rolan's righteous rhetoric haven't got the faintest idea what he's going on about, but judging from the general reaction they're outnumbered by those who have.

From the outside looking in, events seem close to overtaking the eight Birmingham-based blue-eyed soulsters calling themselves Dexy's Midnight Runners. In less than a month, Rolan has cast the life expectancy of Big Jimmy — Dexy's lanky crew-cut Scots 'boneman — back from five years to just one, whilst collectively they've gone from the warm-up slot on the recent Specials/Selecter Two-Tone trek to currently mapping out their own headlining tour.

However there are a number of pressing problems still to be surmounted — Big Jimmy's obsession with drowning himself in his country's most popular liquid export and the breaking-in of both a new organist and drummer being the least of them.

During the last six months, while their Black Country bluebeat brethren have firmly established themselves as a force to be reckoned with, Dexy have intentionally been keeping a very low profile, in an attempt to avoid being categorised as either Two-Toners or Mk.2 Mods.

As various sweat-soaked Dexys rummage through the pile of debris they call their personal effects in a cupboard dripping with condensation which also serves as a dressing room, Rolan and his diminutive guitarist Al Archer set about clarifying a few points.

The fact that anything carrying the Two-Tone brand name is currently synonymous with instant chart success whilst their first single for Oddball, 'Dance Stance,' is still bubbling under isn't causing them undue concern. In fact, in July, Dexy passed on a Two-Tone deal to sign with the EMI-distributed Oddball set-up.

"We didn't want to become part of anyone else's movement," claims Rolan. "We'd rather be our own movement."

"If we had seriously wanted to jump on the current bandwagon," says Archer, "we could have been Secret Affair ages ago. But we were very conscious of the fact that we might become too closely associated with that very strong Two-Tone image, when in fact we're into a whole different approach.

"A lot of people have already come to expect a certain type of music, a particular beat and a most definite image, from every new band signed to the label and automatically it's all down to whether or not you're as good as The Specials."

Fair comment, but I'm more interested in the fact that so early in Dexy's career, Rolan feels he has to defend himself against accusations of arrogance in his onstage raps. This turns out to be a rather grey area of conversation.

"Maybe," Rolar ponders, somewhat unsure of how the rumours originated, "it's because onstage we give the appearance of being slightly cold and distant.

"Speaking for myself, I feel quite isolated from other musicians outside of this band simply because I don't seem to have anything in common with them. Even before we started this band, Al and I used to hang out in discos listening to things like James Brown's 'Sex Machine' and War's 'Me And Baby Brother', whereas all the other musicians in Birmingham were regular concert-goers — they'd go and see Mott The Hoople or Bowie. Me, I rarely ever went to gigs."

Whatever their individual backgrounds, Dexy's Midnight Runners are another in what seems like an endless succession of Birmingham-area bands using the '60s as a springboard into the '80s. Whereas their neighbours have excavated the blue-beat / ska motherlode, Dexy are reclaiming some of the long lost civilisation.

Rolan might display respect for the Stax, Atlantic and Motown label triumvirate, but surprisingly he claims to have been equally influenced by such British progenitors as Georgie Fame, Cliff Bennett, Zoot Money and Geno Washington.

"The greatest soul singer in the world," is how Rolan refers to Geno when introducing the song.

Rolan defends Geno's talent with as much vigour as The Osmonds defend Marie's virginity. It transpires that when only 11, not only was Geno Washington the first live act he ever saw — his older brother took him long to a gig — but when the idea of Dexy's Midnight Runners was first conceived in January 1978, Rolan turned to the recorded output of the flamboyant soulster.

"I was totally fed up with everything else at that time and so I started listening to all of Geno's old records and any other soul singles I could pick up for 10p around the markets."

By July '78 the first line-up was rehearsing and exactly a year ago began playing around local youth clubs where they built up a strong 14-15 year-old following.

"They were the kind of places where they only sold lemonade and crisps," Rolan recounts.

Since then it's been a gradual process of phasing out the oldies quotient in favour of their own material, gaining strength through the course of numerous personnel changes. In particular, the brass team of two saxes and Big Jimmy's gutbucket trombone combine to produce a rich raspy blast which no other British soul band has previously attained. This is achieved without cute choreography, frilly satin shirts or crowd-baiting histrionics.

The cloth may be of traditional design, but the cut is most decidedly contemporary.

As a frontman, Carlo Rolan is quite subdued. In fact, he spends a large part of the set strapped to a guitar. The group policy seems to favour a slow burn rather than an instant flash.

"Sure," explains Rolan, "I could go out there and do that 'are-you-having-a-good-time-I-wanna-see-everybody-clappin'-their-hands' routine whilst the band just pumped out a Stax bass riff, but what's the point? I wouldn't stoop so low as to insult the audience's intelligence.

"If it ever seems like we're holding back it's because we're trying to avoid that kind of approach. We couldn't do that and ever hope to retain whatever integrity we possess. And it's because we hold back on the visuals that we've been marked as being cold and distant!"

And arrogant?

"Could be!"

...TROUBLE IN...
...THE WORLD...
THE ONLY ONES New Single OUT NOW 7963

SINGLES

● SINGLE OF THE WEEK

SISTER SLEDGE. Got to Love Somebody (Atlantic). George Clinton may well be soul's current kingpin but Messrs. Nile Rodgers and Bernard Edwards are driving mighty close behind — albeit steering a very different model — and with the exuberant Sister Sledge on hand as foils for their composing and arranging talents, they are proving themselves more and more a tough team to shut down.

Rodgers and Edwards are true craftsmen in the classic tradition of Holland, Dozier & Holland and Hayes & Porter. They go straight for the cast-iron strong hookline and build from there, streamlining the arrangement into a small masterpiece in design, notable for a strong disco pulse and instant catchiness, but transcending the form's niggling repetitiveness in favour of economy and melodic ingenuity. 'Got To Love Somebody' is a fine example, the hook/chorus dovetailing beautifully with a haunting chord progression for the verse. It almost goes without saying that Sister Sledge themselves put on their usual regal performance whilst the uncredited sax player is superb in a brief, strident but poignant solo.

Reviewed by Nick Kent

THE ONLY ONES: Trouble In The World (CBS). Let's forget about the world for the minute and examine the troubles belabouring one of our finest groups and this disturbingly bad single. After two excellent self-produced albums and several equally strong singles, all of them doomed to commercial failure, the band have chosen to go into the studio with one Colin Thurston (who engineered Bowie's 'Heroes' album, Iggy Pop's 'Lust For Life' and produced Magazine's controversial 'Secondhand Daylight' long-player) behind the recording console. Preliminary reports were that all was going splendidly, but this first extract from the liaison is bad news.

The basic problem is one of arrangement and production. The band's instrumental strengths have always come from their stoutly individual utilisation of the two guitars, bass and drums set-up, but 'Trouble' comes galloping forth in a blur of tinny synthesisers. Perhaps Thurston is attempting to recreate the textural momentum of Bowie's 'Heroes', but here it simply falls flat. Peter Perrett sounds unbearably off-pitch amidst this barrage of trashy electronics whilst the bass and drums merely grant the song an almost Abba-like Europop dynamic.

The saddest aspect is that the song itself, once one strips away the layers of ridiculous embellishment, is actually pretty good and could have easily have joined that pantheon of fine Perrett songs, were the tempo to have been slowed down and the arrangement geared more to the band's habitual execution. As it stands, 'Trouble In The World' could easily be a Peter Perrett solo single, as the spirit and personality of The Only Ones is totally absent throughout. The most depressing record I've heard in ages.

FUNKADELIC: (Not Just) Knee Deep Parts 1 & 2 (Warners). The irrepressible Clinton starts out on this escapade sounding a touch too close to the Stevie Wonder precinct of bland synthesiser noodling before brusquely subverting the placebo preface into the twilight zone of weirdly-pitched harmonies, a demon bassline and a swerving coiled-spring of a melody. Part 2 brings on a stupendous guitar solo, whilst the chorus and basic dynamic weave with typical treacherous mischief. Impeccable lunacy from one of the few genuine geniuses working with the new music medium.

LENE LOVICH: Angels (Stiff). Breaking stride with Stiff's recent lacklustre output, Lene Lovich and Les Chappel turn out a record of some ingenuity. Superficially — and this is a condition not uncommon regarding Ms Lovich's product — the precociousness quota dives straight into the red as the lady trifts like Kate Bush under the influence of some weighty hallucinogenic fronting a backdrop of silly mock-bombast: in this instance, a kind of Joe 'Telstar' Meek pop version of 'Ride Of The Valkyries'. More intimate acquaintance however reveals compelling subtleties. Lyrically, for example, the song deals with the lady's encounters with the Dutch Hell's Angels and every aspect — from the words to the disorientating production — matches self-effacing mock-operatic humour to an unsettling quiver of menace. (Note in particular a chilling bass-riff dominated middle-eight and the sinister sound effects as the song builds to its end). Much too sharp and subtle for Kate Bush fans, its chart potential may well be hamstrung by its excellence. Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenya would definitely approve however.

FRANK ZAPPA: Joe's Garage (CBS). The modern day composer refuses to die. Unfortunately the same is true of Frank Zappa, who in a recent interview summed up both himself and his painful failure to say anything constructive in the last ten years. "I think cynicism is a positive value," quoth the gnarled old auteur/voyeur. "The more I can encourage people to be cynical, the better job I think I've done."

'Joe's Garage' is the title track of a triple 'concept' album (wowee zowee) which finds the wonderful Mr. Zappa dredging the shit-pits once again for more toilet humour, jokes about cripples and sexual perverts plus the obligatory half-arsed plot to corral all this crap with. The single however simply gives us a typically Zappa-esque (i.e. ultra-cynical, lacking any style or substance) commentary on a rock band success and break-up cycle in a fashion that Nick Lowe succeeded in doing with twenty times more wit, verve and style in 'They Call It Rock'. Musically, it masticates on most of Zappa's usual clichés. Cynicism be damned, this is downright pitiful.

PHILIP RAMBOW: Rebel Kind (Wild In The Streets) (EMI). Always the bridesmaid, never the blushing bride, Philip Rambow has hardly had an easy time of things. A lucrative deal courtesy of EMI should have granted Rambow's talents both sympathetic context and lucrative outlet, but the hex appear to linger, principally with regard to the production of Rambow's first releases for the label. Whether it's EMI or just producers Pete Jenner and Hugh Burns who view Rambow in Springsteen king-of-the-streets drag I don't know, but 'Rebel Kind' is a sorry exercise in redundant embellishment that detracts from instead of bolstering Rambow's songwriting. Like tamesville, daddy-o.

CHEAP TRICK: Way Of The World (Epic). One of the choicer cuts from the somewhat disappointing 'Dream Police' album, though I'd have preferred to hear the powder-keg bombast of 'House Is Rockin' With Domestic Problems' blowing out car radio speakers instead. A reasonable example of Cheap Trick's general form, it mates 'Who's Next' era Townshend guitar gymnastics with 'White Album' Beatles powerpop but comes out sounding more than simply the sum of its parts due to the band's excellent sense of dynamics.

REVILLOS: Motor Bike Beat (Snetzo).

SUZI QUATRO: Mama's Boy (Rak).

The Revillos are Fay Fife and Eugene Reynolds of the late, lamented Rezillos, whose taste for splicing together trashy comic-strip sci-fi imagery with hard-hitting rock action deservedly won them a fair following in their short career. Unfortunately Messrs. Fife and Reynolds were not the actual well-spring of inspiration for the band, as it was John Callis who composed most of their material. 'Motor Bike Beat', written by Fife and Reynolds, attempts to conserve the trashy pizzazz of the old band with mixed results. As disposable pop it works well enough, whilst the nods to hot-rod and surfing music of the early '60s grant the number a minor league charm. But the song is nothing more or less than a slightly more stylized but infintely less well-produced approximation of Chris Spedding's 'Motorbikin'.' Conclusion: Fife and Reynolds should zero in on Mike Chapman for future production chores.

The Chinnichap duo's speciality is slick-sounding, punchy pop dance toons, as their work on Suzi Quatro's new effort more than bears out. A trite song (penned by Suzi and hubby Len) backed up by low-rent Spectoresque soundscape, Chapman still manages to dredge up a formidable clout to the proceedings whilst apeing Uncle Phil's classic production sound.

In fact, forget The Revillos. Isn't a Suzi Quatro comeback imminent? No? Oh well, back to the *Happy Days* lot, lass. Just consider it your term of purgatory for inspiring the likes of Joan Jett to foist themselves on us.

DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS: Dance Stance (Oddball/EMI). An eight-piece Birmingham-based outfit, the Dexys will doubtless be dragged in alongside the Two-Tone boys, which is a drag because they hitch their cart not onto the ska or bluebeat bandwagon but on more straightforward '60s white boy soul outfits, like Georgie Fame's Blue Flames, the Zoot Money Big Roll Band and Cliff Bennett's Rebel Rousers.

'Dance Stance', their first single, is basically tarnished by a tinny, often unintelligible sound but still provides more than enough individuality and style to warrant placing them under heavy scrutiny. With a rough-hewn sound halfway 'twixt Rico's Specials session-work and the old Rebel Rousers sound, the number has a nice Stax-like swagger going for it even though the lyrics, which are based around a run-down of famous Irish folk of prestige and infamy (Oscar Wilde, Edna O'Brien, Brendan Behan etc.), are otherwise incomprehensible.

BOOKER T & THE MGs: Green Onions (Atlantic) OK, so you tell me how to describe perfection? Even speaking as one who considers 'Soul Clap No. 9' to be the MGs' true artistic pinnacle, the sublime moody plod of Booker T. Jones' organ and Duck Dunn's bass goosed up by Steve Cropper's curt rhythmic stabs, kept on a slow burn by the late, much lamented Al Jackson's impeccable drumming, is impossible to denounce on any grounds whatsoever. The considerable bonus of 'Boot Leg' on the B-side makes for a piece of product not to be sniffed at.

MILLIE JACKSON & ISAAC HAYES: I Changed My Mind (Spring). The incorrigibly feisty Ms Jackson has just released her best album to date — 'Live And Uncensored' — where she puts all female competition on the soul sweepstakes way, way back in the shade, so this pairing off with the pompous has-been Isaac Hayes seems a bizarre move to say the least. '

■ *Continues over*

■ EP OF THE WEEK

NINE BELOW ZERO: Pack Fair Square/Rocket 88 (M&L). Nine Below Zero are a band I've not had the pleasure of clocking live, but if this four-tracker is any indication then The Inmates have got some stiff competition on their hands.

Unlike far too many homegrown R&B outfits both past and present, Nine Below Zero instinctively relate to the swagger and verve of the music they've chosen to bone up on. 'Pack Fair & Square' swings with the same masterly abandon as J Geil's textbook rendition, while the vintage 'Rocket 88' and Freddie King's 'Torn Down' simply refuse to let up. Only Little Walter's 'Last Night' is in the least bit reprehensible — the slow blues is a treacherous form for white boys to tackle, and Dennis Greaves' slightly clumsy vocalising teeters on the brink of shoddiness. Otherwise, this EP is a proper little gold-mine and worth a fair old pilgrimage to track down. Me, I can't wait to go home and play it again.

SINGLES

■ *From previous page*

Changed My Mind' is a typical minor league 'The Way We Were' exercise in anguished "au revoirs" charged to the hilt with all the usual bitter-sweet mystical/lyrical cliches. Jackson sings magnificently, of course, with an ease and perfect sense of drama that only adds to the clumsy hollowness of Hayes' gravel-voiced attempts at emotion.

The actual crazy logic of teaming these two up — Jackson the brash, testy liberated woman vs Hayes the ultra-macho sex machine male chauvinist — gets at least a vague look-in on the B-side 'Do You Wanna Make Love' where Jackson's regal sense of sexual bravado completely trumps poor old crazy baldhead Ike's verbal grumblings.

JERRY LEE LEWIS: Every Day I Have To Cry Some (Elektra). Of all the early Sun rockers, Jerry Lee Lewis remains the greatest simply because, over any other consideration, he's believed from the first that he's condemned himself to eternal hell-fire damnation for playing what he believes to be devil's music but goes right on doing so despite the consequences. Vain, mean, inevitably completely strung-out on alcohol and pills of all varieties, Lewis has also outlasted them all, and last year proved his pre-eminence amongst the original hierarchy by releasing 'The Killer', his first album for Elektra and a stunning return to form.

Both 'Everyday I Have To Cry Some' and B-side 'Who Will The Next Fool Be?' come from that album, the former being a pretty maudlin weepie enlivened only by Lewis' demented yowls and hiccups about two-thirds of the way through. 'Next Fool' is far better — a bar-fly blues that finds the killer whipping it out with total bacchanalian abandon. Singing like a man who's just drunk a full bottle of bourbon out of a nearby spitoon, he concludes an instrumental break (prefaced by a stupendous James Burton guitar solo) with a kamikaze attack on the keys that would make even Cecil Taylor's jaw drop in awe. Doesn't stand a hope in hell's chance of being a hit but that scarcely matters. To quote the maestro: *"Give my regards to Broadway/And tell 'em they can kiss my arse."*

NICOLETTE LARSON: Back In My Arms Again (Warners). Along with 'Stop In The Name Of Love' and 'Reflections', 'Back In My Arms Again' is probably the finest performance The Supremes ever gave on record. In fact, it's one of those numbers so inseparably tied to the original performers that cover versions are virtually out of the question. Nicolette Larson however evidently doesn't think so. Or, maybe more to the point, Ms Larson's producer Ted Templeman doesn't think so, because like the Peter Asher-Linda Ronstadt producer-singer coalition that has spawned godawful versions of the likes of 'Ooh Baby Baby' and 'Tracks Of My Tears', Larson and Templeman just bolt on in with the usual LA session heavies and knock out a piece of product that aborts the original, leaving just a vapid residue of terminal blandness where once stood a masterpiece of design and execution.

In America, these dire pieces of product often sell thousands and thousands of copies, turning the instigators into both millionaires and suitable subjects for sycophantic articles in *Rolling Stone*. In Britain, they don't sell many copies. In fact, they hardly sell any copies at all. This is why — even with Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister and petrol at over £1 a gallon — we, the British, are fundamentally a superior nation.

End of patriotic declaration.

THE SPORTS: Who Listens To The Radio? (Sire). Well, I do for one, lads, but not as much as you lot obviously do, particularly when an Elvis Costello record appears on your wavelength. Reading The Jags' splutterd excuses for how their record *just happened* to sound exactly like our El, my only interest regarding this second bunch of rabid Costello copyists will be to check just what feeble excuse they'll feel obliged to concoct. That's if the thing's a hit of course, in which case I wouldn't be at all surprised to encounter a Mr Riviera or an emissary thereof knocking on Sire's door. That's if I were The Sports, of course, which I'm not. Thank Christ.

NEIL DIAMOND: September Morn (CBS). So sickly sweet — a hideous meting of Diamond's Forster Grants and Brut aftershave deep-throated 'angst' with cocktail lounge piano plus 2001 violinists straining and soaring against the entire dark ages of Schmaltz — that even Michel Legrand would wince in the windmills of his mind.

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On The Box

Friday January 11
THE STERILE CUCKOO: Alan J. Pakula's 1969 directorial debut (was once known as *Pookie*, and that seems as good a word as any to describe this overlong comedy romance. Liza Minnelli is Pookie, one of those winsome neurotics that for some reason Americans find attractive, and for the best part of two hours she forces herself on shy freshman Wendell Burton. **(BBC 1)**

Saturday January 12
LITTLE CAESAR: Edward G. Robinson is Enrico Bandello in Mervyn Le Roy's 1930 classic based on the capers of Al Capone. The first of a new Saturday series of gangster flicks and this — a tight little 80 minutes — is one of the best. **(BBC 2)**

BILLY JACK: One of the surprise money-spinners of the early '70s, *Billy Jack*'s mushy mix of schematic set-pieces and simplistic idealism (with just a dash of quaint Indian lore) seemed to strike a chord in hippiedom's west liberals. Written and directed by Tom Laughlin (who plays the laconic title character) in 1971 under the pseudonym T. C. Frank. After its success, Mr Frank went nutty and tried to do a Capra with his '77 follow-up, *Billy Jack Goes To Washington*, one of the dumbest movies of all time. **(BBC 2)**

Sunday January 13
RYAN'S DAUGHTER: Magnificent or mundane, depending on whether or not you can relate to an unlikely romance between Irish colleen (English Sarah Miles) and British soldier (American Christopher Jones). Robert Mitchum looks glum, as well he might, as the cuckolded husband and John Mills' hunchback crippled mute limped off with the Oscar. David Lean, in 1970, thought it was a good idea to make this small scale idea as an overblown 3hr epic. **(ITV all regions)**

THE HALLELUJAH TRAIL: Trouble is, the Beeb have got nowt to shout about when they drag out John Sturges' horribly miscalculated 1965 'comedy' western. Burt Lancaster, Lee Remick, Brian Keith and Donald Pleasence mug relentlessly for 165 minutes. **(BBC 1)**

Monday January 14
ZULU: Richard Burton does the narration and leads the Men of Harlech choristers as Cy Endfield's 1964 epic (yes, another one) fills the screen with dead black bodies around the British mission at Rorke's Drift. Real Certificate U stuff. Michael Caine's pretty funny as a tuff officer. **(ITV London)**

Tuesday January 15
NEWSFRONT: At last, a 'little' film and Phillip Noyce's highly-regarded Australian pic — about the rivalry between '50s newsreel outfits — comes to TV less than eighteen months after its British cinema screenings. *NME*'s Harry George wrote in *Silver Screen* (23.12.78): "Just as the newsreels are 'the eyes and ears of Australia', so we perceive events through their makers' lives . . . The effect is of a continuous present, stresses matter-of-factly absorbed. There are no minor characters, just some we see less than others. For unprocessed humanity and a lot of laughs, *Newsfront* is hard to beat." Yes, Harry, but is it any good? **(BBC 2)**

PLAY MISTY FOR ME: Clint Eastwood as DJ Dave Garland, who lives to regret a casual sexual liaison with basket-case Jessica Walter. An unpleasant psycho-drama but, in 1971, Eastwood showed immense promise on his directorial debut (since fulfilled with *The Outlaw Josey Wales*). His mentor, Don Siegel, pops up as a bartender. **(ITV London)**

Thursday January 17
OH MR PORTER: A comic classic from 1938 with Will Hay as the seedy, incompetent station master of an antiquated railway station in Northern Ireland. Fine support from Moore Marriott and Graham Moffatt and directed by French-born Marcel Varnel. Funny, that — I thought they had no sense of humour. Oh, and Danny Baker reckons that comparing Will Hay to Harry Worth is like associating Lenny Bruce with George Carlin. **(BBC 2)**

Monty Smith

Big Clint's back on the box again.

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Silver Screen

Goin' South

Directed by Jack Nicholson
Starring Jack Nicholson, Mary Steenburgen, John Belushi and Christopher Lloyd
(CIC)

LET'S hear it for the little big film as, whilst Hollywood railroads ever bigger budgets behind ever more lavish and vacuous spectaculars, one of the best American actors of his generation cracks the directorial whip for the second time and makes, of all things, a comedy Western.

Goin' South is hugely likeable, a good yarn that grows in and after the telling, and it'd be a shame if it fared no better over here than it has in the US of A where, by most accounts, filmgoers haven't exactly been burning down box-offices in their haste to see it. Nicholson's movie doesn't pretend to be anything like the greatest story ever told about the 'wild' West, but it might well be the shaggiest — shaggy as in dog, coyote and Henry Lloyd Moon (Nicholson himself), a wily, bragging, cowardly and decidedly fifth-string outlaw.

The setting is Texas shortly after the Civil War, a period when the state found itself so short of men it decreed that, as long as he wasn't a murderer, any man sentenced to be hung could be reprieved by any woman who reckoned he could be more usefully employed as her able-bodied husband.

Moon is reprieved twice, once by an elderly lady who drops dead the moment he lays arms around her, and then again by the pretty Julia Tate (Mary Steenburgen, of whom we shall surely see much more). His relief is shortlived though as Julia makes it plain as midday that a) she won't be sharing a bed with him and b)he has work to do, digging long hours down a mine on her property that she's sure is lined with gold.

And so we're prepared for an impressively sustained bout of romantic horseplay. Julia plays it cool, seeing in Moon nothing more than a means of avoiding the amorous attentions of a local landowner and, eventually, clearing off to Philadelphia, whilst Moon aims much lower, merely intent on seducing the woman.

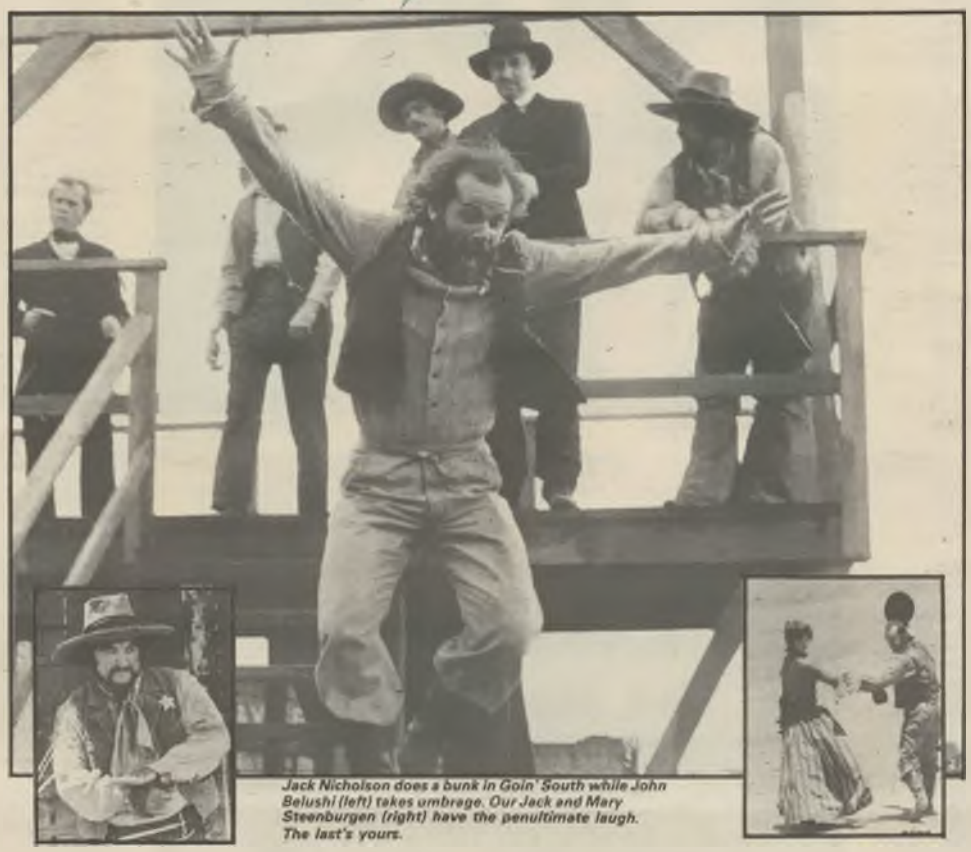
Each of them exposes the other's exaggerated faults. Slobbish at and under the table, Moon makes a mockery of Julia's social pretensions, which include her idiosyncratic habit of daintily hanging chairs on the walls between mealtimes. Julia in turn shreds Moon's burgeoning machismo, succeeds on occasions in reducing him to a speechless impotent pulp. Mixing themselves and us a surprisingly delicate cocktail of one part overstatement and one part understatement, Nicholson and Steenburgen act beautifully; their constant juggling of roles and emotions could so easily have become bothersome and predictable, but never does.

This comedy of manners is just one of the film's points of play. Whilst, ironically perhaps, *Goin' South* is plainly a much better film in most respects than many of those it affectionately sends up, it also goes to great lengths — but small pains — to populate its Texas with fools, knaves and buffoons. Sheriff Towfield (Christopher Lloyd) is a ridiculously longshanked bungler, and his miniscule Mexican deputy (John Belushi) a complete incompetent. Moon's old gang are an absurd collection of the dwarfish, gap-toothed and paper-brained criminal classes, and one suspects that it was only hard-headed Hermine (Veronica Cartwright parodying an Annie Oakley-type cowgirl) who made any of their ramshackle raiding at all possible.

The slapstick encouraged by this motley bunch contrasts nicely with the more subtle gamesmanship between Julia and Moon, inevitably overlapping it at times. Almost everybody manages to double-cross everybody else, gunfights are rapidly reduced to bunfights, and Moon's final, despairing attempt at banditry concludes with a thoroughly exasperated Towfield demanding "Are you going to rob this stage or not, Mr. Moon?"

The film's wider, 'historical' view is just as short-faced. *Goin' South* makes little secret of its eagerness to chew up every available popular myth about the Old West and then spit them out like so much tobacco wad. Moon, for example, is first seen racing for Mexico, making it and hooting for joy until, his face dropping several miles, he sees that Towfield and posse are crossing in pursuit — so much for the sanctity of the borderline (and the intentionally 'epic' cinematography of the incident only pricks a bigger and better hole in the balloon). Altogether an outsider at very long odds, *Goin' South* deserves your bet.

Angus MacKinnon



Jack Nicholson does a bunk in Goin' South while John Belushi (left) takes umbrage. Our Jack and Mary Steenburgen (right) have the penultimate laugh. The last's yours.

Breaking Away

Directed by Peter Yates
Starring Dennis Christopher and Dennis Quaid
(20th Century Fox)

WITH the help of some unashamedly commercial offerings *(For Pete's Sake* for example, and *The Deep)*, Peter Yates, a British director who's been established in Hollywood for the last decade, has bought himself the time to make *Breaking Away*, a pet project that he and screenwriter Steve Tesich have been working on for some years.

Four friends slouch through the sunshine to their secret hideout, a disused quarry that serves them as an outdoor swimming-pool. Summertime in Bloomington, Indiana, is as lush as it sounds it ought to be, although the landscape is no more green than these four. They've just completed their schooling, and since they have neither the ability to pass exams, nor their parents the funds to absolve them of the necessity of doing so, they won't be going on to college. In fact, they won't be going anywhere. All for one, one for all, they have decided to lead lives of communal idleness.

In a community like Bloomington, though, not attending college is a fundamental handicap, since social and cultural life there is dominated by the campus.

The one of the four who manages to bridge the great divide, albeit temporarily, is Dave, the film's central character, whose twin passions are cycling and Italy. To this end, he attempts to turn himself into an Italian cyclist, something he pulls off with amazing aplomb — certainly well enough to take in a student called Cathy, who's entranced by tales of his large family back home in Napoli.

Home, unfortunately, is much nearer at hand, and, worse still, his WASP-ish father can't stand Ities.

So it is, you guessed, a film of innocence and adolescence, as four teenagers struggle with the exacting and conflicting demands of family, career and girls; but it's Dave's aberrant behaviour, a source of wild amusement, that provides the requisite novel twist to such potentially pedantic themes.

In another sense, *Breaking Away* offers a fresh perspective on traditional problems, since the road to maturity is examined from the point of view of the townies (cutters, as they're apparently called over there); the college kids on view — and it's a long way from *Animal House* — are aggressive, arrogant and overbearing (well, maybe not so far.)

Yates, whose most notable undertaking is probably *Bullitt*, said that what he wanted to recapture was the delirious flush of naive excitement that comes from directing your first feature (try telling that to Chris Petit); it's a warm, unpretentious film with acutely-observed characterisations and a genuinely witty screenplay.

Oh, and there's this fantastic cycle-race at the end. . .

It's all so brimful of honest-to-goodness enjoyment, only misanthropes of particular fortitude will want to miss it.

Bob Woffinden

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Knock it on the Head Boys

From the company that brought you Grease! Saturday Night Fever! Sgt Pepper! The Bee Gees! . . . We proudly present (roll on drums, sound of cash registers limbering up) — The Head Boys!! "Who?" asks Bob Edmands

"PEOPLE USED to say to us: 'You're off your head, boys'," says Lou Lewis, lead singer and guitarist with the Head Boys. "but we thought The Off Your Head Boys was too long a name, so we shortened it to Head Boys."

At this, The Head Boys' pixie publicist B P Fallon pipes up: "You know of course there's a different meaning for Head Boys in the States."

B.P. seems to be the sort of person who'd know about such things. "Giving head" is an American expression for oral sex, and no doubt Head Boys is some sort of gay slang.

George Boyter is totally undaunted. "Well whatever it means in the States," he says, "we're The Head Boys now for better or for worse."

In the expectation of the band's record label RSO, it's for the better. A stick-on label on their first album says: "Includes the hit single 'The Shape Of Things To Come'."

As it happens, this particular song failed to make the Top 30, and Lou Lewis, who's no relation to his Southend namesake Lew, is more than a little annoyed by this record company ploy.

"We are the ones who will say when we're a success," he maintains. "Nobody else."

RSO is an unlikely label for a young band. Robert Stigwood's multi-million pound company that brought you The Bee Gees and John Travolta doesn't have a lot of new wave credibility, but it'll probably help their chances in the States. In fact, The Head Boys are already making some head way in America. Both the single and the album are in the top hundred, and that's without the band ever leaving Britain.

"We heard that the response by radio listeners was frightening," George reports. "The number of favourable phone calls they got after our stuff was played was amazing."

Clearly, it's not just the fact that they're on a label with a strong American track record that's getting a positive response. They actually write very strong pop songs with good commercial melodies and they perform the material with enough vigour to establish their rock credentials.

The Head Boys come from Dundee, sort of, and from Edinburgh, sort of. To be accurate, George and Lou played in a band together in Dundee, packed it in, wrote some songs together in the Edinburgh area, and then formed The Head Boys to play them.

"Basically," says Lou, "we decided to do it differently to most bands. The usual theory is that you make it big by doing a lot of gigging. But there are hundreds of bands doing a lot of gigging and not making it. We decided that we stood a better chance by writing songs and making demos than going on the road. So we actually sold all our gear to pay for the demos."

At the Edinburgh studio where the demos were recorded, George and Lou met The Head Boys' keyboard player Calum Malcolm, who worked there. Calum is a versatile musician able to play hard and aggressive as well as in a more cerebral classical style.

"The point about Calum is that he knows nothing about rock music at all," explains George. "He'd tell us about these amazing demos that bands had recorded in the studio, with great original songs. Then he'd play them to us, and the bands would be doing something like 'Honky Tonk Women'. But I think he's good for us *because* he doesn't know much about rock music. It means he's more original."

With drummer Davy Ross completing the line-up The Head Boys still didn't gig until after they'd got a deal.

Their first break was when George and Lou got a publishing deal for their songs with EMI, but the EMI label wasn't interested in them as a band. One guy at EMI liked them. He's called Charlie Eyre, and they've dedicated the album to him. He now works for A&M, but it was Charlie who brought them to the attention of RSO after flogging round companies with the tapes.

"We made a decision early on," says Lou, "Unless the A&R people at a company wanted to meet the band, we weren't interested. At RSO, they were really good. They were very nice. Talked to us like human beings. No big speeches about what they wanted to do for us."

"Well, one guy gave us a big speech," George comments, "But by then it wasn't necessary anyway. Most of them were really good."

RSO weren't the only label to send people up to Edinburgh to meet The Head Boys, even though there were no gigs to see, and that's usually a prerequisite of leaving the office.

Lou, who shelters behind shades and a permanent one-day beard, is 24. George, tall, blonde, and PR-conscious, is 22. Their music sounds a good deal more mature than that, though.

In one way, their impressive melodies and literate lyrics remind me of 10CC, though they'd probably hate the comparison as they don't set out to be clever-clever. Their easy command of pop and rock styles also reminds me of the versatility The Boomtown Rats showed on 'Tonic For The Troops'. George and Lous admit that the Rats were an inspiration, but that was when Geldof and Co were just starting out.

"I don't want to knock them," says George, "but I think their latest stuff is over-arranged. Too many strings and things. Not as powerful as their early stuff."

Lou Lewis says he thinks a rock band should sound like a rock band. That's why The Head Boys stick to simple arrangements with guitar, bass, drums, and keyboards.

Another of The Head Boys' assets is that they write about ordinary people and make the songs interesting. Their subjects include typists, librarians, and (a little salaciously) schoolgirls. Lou and George don't quite see this as a virtue. They go into a long bit of justification for their material. How they've not been down to London very often. How they've hardly been on the road.

The suggestion is that once absorbed more thoroughly into the business their approach will become more sophisticated.

It's quite clear they've missed the point. When you consider the number of narcissistic songs by jaded superstars, the uncorrupted style of provincials like The Head Boys is very welcome.

Long may they stay naive. (Some hope.)

Lou and George Headboy — *Pic: Jill Furmanovsky*

Who is this Lillee'n' Thomson woman anyway?

Lillee and Chappell are *(Censored — Ed.)* but Fred Dellar is here to tell you that some Australian *(Censored — Ed.)* are good Sports.

STEVE CUMMINGS gives one of his nervous laughs.

"Kim Fowley liked us. He put it in the paper that we should go to London and play at the Marquee. But I didn't like him much. When I met him, he seemed a bit creepy."

Cummings is lead singer and songwriter for The Sports, a band who vie with stablemates Jo Jo Zep And The Falcons for the title of Melbourne's hottest new band. And recently Cummings and Co. turned up in London to perform their second tour of duty in Pommieland, at the same time fitting in recording dates for what will be The Sports' third album. Things are looking good for them. One of the band's singles edged into the U.S. Top 50 only a few weeks ago and the sales of their 'Don't Throw Stones' album, released Stateside by Arista, are currently looking quite healthy.

"But we only started the band for fun," muses Cummings, a former member of such outfits as Marlon and The Exes and The Palace Brothers. "We used to do loose rockabilly and New Orleans type stuff, mixed in with a few things of our own. Ed Bates, our original guitarist, used to write with me then. But the only music he really cared about was Lonnie Mack and that sort of thing."

While Bates was with the band, they cut their first album for Mushroom Records, with Jo Jo Zep leader Joe Camilleri handling production. Camilleri, a 30-year-old rocker, had previously been a Palace Brother.

"He was also the only person I knew who had ever made a record," admits Cummings. "Which is why we asked him to produce the album!"

Since then, everything's happened. The Sports worked with Graham Parker and The Rumour on a down-under tour and subsequently got signed to Stiff, who brought the band to Britain and released an EP here. Then things soured and the sextet signed a UK deal with Sire, who are currently touting a revamped version of 'Don't Throw Stones', The Sports' excellent second album, which was produced by Pete Solley.

But though Solley has been working with the band on their latest Sire enterprise, Cummings admits that he and the one-time Snafu keyboardist haven't exactly seen eye-to-eye. "Each time I've made a record with him there's been an argument and I've ended up not speaking to him."

However, Solley, who also produced Jo Jo Zep, is much in favour with the band's management. When he last recorded The Sports in Oz, he was given carte blanche when it came to mixing, heading back to London with the tapes under his arm.

"We just got the final record and that was it," says Cummings ruefully.

On the face of things, Melbourne rock would appear to be black influenced. The Sports initially headed into R&B and recently have been teasing in more than a smattering of reggae. Also, Jo Jo Zep have recorded such Nuns as Joe Liggins' 'Honeydripper', 'Otis' 'Security' and Bobby Womack's 'It's All Over Now'. So is black beautiful in Foster-quelling territory? Not so, says Cummings.

"Black music hasn't really caught on in Australia. Not soul or anything. The Commodores came over recently and James Brown was around last year. But he was only in cabaret and it was 30 dollars to get in. Joe Camilleri's like a white James Brown and great onstage. He's a good singer and a fine sax player too in his Junior Walker kind of way. Wilbur Wilde, Zep's other sax player is also good. Elvis Costello had him playing with his band when he came over."

Queensland's the toughest place to play in Oz, claims Cummings. "It's like red-neck territory there. The police wear their Deep South cop type of uniform and even the government can't keep them under control. But Tasmania's a really weird place. They've got this group called Beethoven down there and they're really into a time-warp. They're only about 15 and they sound just like The Beatles. They also wear top-hats and play Rickenbackers. Kim Fowley's supposed to have picked them up and in taking them to America where he'll give them a more happening name."

That figures.

Steve Cummings

The continuing saga of everyday people
Joe's Garage Acts 2&3
Frank Zappa's new double album.
Uncle Frank welcomes you and extends an invitation to meet the folks – Father Riley B Jones; Mary, a simple girl with chafed knees; Sy and Mrs Borg; and last, but certainly not first, the Utility Muffin Research Kitchen Chorus.
Their story is no Emmerdale Farm. So turn off the TV and come over to Joe's Garage Acts II & III. And while you're at it, lay out some money for Frank's new single. It's called 'Joe's Garage' too, but it's not on the album. So you'll have to show some cash before we hand over the goods!
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SYNTHESISERS THE CONCISE NME PRINT OUT PART TWO

POMP

THE trouble with synthesisers is actually playing them, accepting their status as sound-generators and starting from scratch. Mechanical keyboards were included in early synth design to make them more accessible to 'musicians', who were unfamiliar with the principles of electronic music construction. (The musicians, it seems, came to Mohammed). This resulted in the imposition of a pre-ordained status of 'keyboard', like a piano or organ, which the synth has never shaken off, and the subsequent application of piano and organ techniques. This is where things first went wrong ...

An early example which sticks in the mind is **Keith Emerson's** synth-break in 'Lucky Man', from **ELP's** first (1970) album. It presumably stuck in a lot of others' minds, too, as did the notion of keyboard artist, synth as ICBM in an arsenal of sonic weaponry, and suchlike. These notions went hand-in-hand with the idea of Classical Rock, best summed up by German jazz critic Joachim Berendt's comments on Emerson: "One of those outwardly perfect musicians who mistake superabundance for surpriseveness ... (he plays) in a 'Wagnerian', bombastic sense, literally subjugating the audience in displays oriented only towards commercial success."

Quite. Spearheaded by ELP, Yes, and the more interesting and experimentally inclined **Pink Floyd**, legions of dreadlocked bands made their assault. Genesis, **Greenslade, Jethro Tull, PFM, Gentle Giant, Curved Air, Barclay James Harvest, Seventh Wave**, etc, etc, reinforced recently by the even worse American exponents like **Styx** and **Kansas**. For some reason, these bands seem to appeal mainly to fifth-form grammar school boys — art seen as that which is most obviously grand.

With these bands, the audience becomes the viewer of a spectacle, rather than a listener, and the effect is something along the lines of "Gosh, if he's clever enough to perform all those tricks then he's clever enough to be my guru!" Which is of course, nonsense, as anyone who's listened along with records will tell you. Unless they're a closed interest in keeping their fans in ignorance.

The moderns, perhaps in sympathy with the Punk/New Wave, made capital of machinery complexity, with **Gary Numan, Patrick Moraz, Vangelis Papathanassiou** and **Rick Wakeman**. Wakeman's stage show was a perfect example of a film Spinal Tap attempt to show the effect of too much alcohol — keyboards as far as the eye of the technician is magnified.

Along the same lines, but with a slight integrity count, were the Experts, synthesiser pioneers **Ian Bevan & Krause, Cecil & Margouleff** (Tonto), **Roger Powell** and **Larry Fast** (Synergy), **Beaver & Krause**, who worked with everyone who was anyone on the West Coast (and quite a few who weren't), made three albums of their own, most successful of which was 'Gandharva' (1971). Cecil & Margouleff, besides earning their daily bread programming synths for the likes of **Stevie Wonder**, made a couple of albums as Tonto, one of them the highly influential 'Zero Time', and one as Cerberus. **Jean-Michel Jarre's** massively successful 'Oxygene' took on a similar format, as did the work of pseudo **Walter Carlos** and base Tomita. Carlos' 'Switched On Bach' (1968) is probably the most influential synthesiser album of all time, unfortunately. This, and its sequel 'The Well-Tempered Synthesiser', consisted of synthesised chunks of classical music, the synth here being used to duplicate the timbres of 'real' instruments. 'Sonic Seasonings' (1972) was more of the same, except that he did actually write the music for that one. One wonders why he bothered using the synthesiser.

Tomita, being Japanese, did exactly the same thing, better, only a few years later. 'Snowflakes Are Dancing' (1974) was the first of many, and just as redundant as Carlos' exercises. Carlos and Tomita are worthy of the respect accorded mathematicians and computers (for their transliterations), but not composers.

Keith Emerson of ELP at play

There is a difference ...

Finally, this quote by a Japanese SF author from the sleeve-note to Tomita's 'The Bermuda Triangle' (1979) serves to typify the attitude of pretentious bullshit exhibited by all in this section:

"Perhaps a new concept: Science Fiction in Sound. Through this can we overcome realistic daily life, our time and physical limitations and convert our fantasy imagination? We can, and through that we can reach into limitless space, touch the super intellect, be any object or being and real ourselves, all powerful, into the universe."

Get the picture?

Rick Wakeman

EARLY SYNTHIPOP

EVEN as early as the late '60s, **David Saville** was making use of techniques developed by experimental composers, such as tape transposition, to achieve the "cartoon voices" of **The Chipmunks** (the forerunners of Crosby, Stills and Nash), and studio effects have been a staple part of pop ever since. In the early '60s producers such as **Joe Meek** in Britain and **Brian Wilson** in America pioneered the use of such techniques on records by **The Tornadoes** and **The Beach Boys**, and **George Martin** made extensive use throughout the '60s of a variety of effects on **The Beatles'** records, discovering/inventing some along the way.

The first use of the synthesiser as a keyboard instrument in pop can be attributed to The Beatles, too, on their 'Abbey Road' album (1969). Also worthy of mention, in this respect, are a couple of one-hit wonders of the early '70s: **Walt Buffer's** 'Popcorn' (1972) and **Chicory Tip's** 'Son Of My Father' (1972). The latter was a creation of the now-famous **Giorgio Moroder**, the former, a massively successful-oddity, was the first all-synthesiser pop single, a disposable piece of tarty enought corny pop which would probably make the charts again if released in the current climate, being not commonly dissimilar to many amateur undertakings ...

POMPOPITY

Three of The Tubes show their form

TODD Rundgren's music is an almost unique combination of pop and pomp, the result of a head-on collision between real technical ability and a musical sensibility derived mainly from the early '60s 'British invasion.' At times, however, the two tend to separate out like cream and skim-milk. Worst of the latter is 'A Treatise On Cosmic Fire' (from 1974's 'Initiation'), the culmination of all Todd's tendencies towards pomposity. A gargantuan edifice of pretentiousness, this side-long piece is the single greatest argument against LSD and mescaline synthesisers that I can think of. Incidentally, Roger Powell (synth-player in Todd's Utopia) earned Robert Moog on the R&D of the Moog Synthesiser, in a testing capacity.

Electric Light Orchestra use a similar combination of pop and pomp, but more comfortably (in safety), reaching neither the highs nor the lows that Todd is capable of. Modern music of mediocrity, for massively mediocre people.

The Tubes' music is determined to a certain extent by their theatrical aspects, and tends to become completely overblown at times. But going for them is shot through with satire. The Tubes' bourgeois onslaught is the sound of composers being pushed off, deflating slowly the the dissipating bubbles of Michael Cotten's synthesiser. 'Young And Rich' (1976) is excellent, never short of satire and immaculate music.

ZAPPA

FRANK Zappa, who studied in the '50s at Darmstadt (a fertile musical breeding ground for such as Stockhausen, Berio, Kagel, Ligeti and Boulez), introduced into his compositions many of the techniques (Musique concrete, etc) associated with contemporary classical music; he also employed the talents of one of the most inventive of all synthesiser - players, **Don Preston**, who was later to work with (among others) The Residents.

Gong, in their early years, used a similar combination of jazz, rock and modern classical music, but substituted an absurd hippie mythology for Zappa's incisive satire (to their detriment). Synth operator **Tim Blake** has now joined Hawkwind, aptly enough, and guitarist **Steve Hillage** continues to produce his albums of increasingly pompous and mystical stuff, in which the use of synthesiser figures heavily.

Frank Zappa

JAZZ

ALTHOUGH pianist **Bob James**, in collaboration with experimental composers **Robert Ashley** and **Gordon Mumma**, can be credited with the first attempts to bring about some fusion of jazz and avant-garde compositional techniques (such as tape collage and treatments) on pieces like 'The Wolfman' (1964), it was undoubtedly **Miles Davis'** epoch-making 'Bitches Brew' album of 1969 which opened most doors for synthesiser footsteers. In its wake came the **Chick Corea, George Duke, Jan Hammer** and **Herbie Hancock**, all of whom have been guilty at one time or another of tritiating away their talents on sexually-permissive vocality or populist hoke-funk.

Hammer's 'The First Seven Days' (1979) is a peculiar case of the latter, which the latter is typified by all Hancock's mainstream outings since 1973's 'Headhunters.' Prior to this, however, Hancock made the vastly underrated 'Sextant' (1972), employing the admirable talents of programmer **Dr. Patrick Gleeson** to exemplary effect. Of all the fusioneers, only **Weather Report's Joe Zawinul** consistently uses synthesisers with any degree of sensitivity — although again, recent albums testify to an increase in the technofilash quotient.

Other American releases worthy of note are **Paul Bley's** 'Synthesizer Show' album of 1978, probably the first of its kind, and **Annette Peacock's** 'I'm The One' (1972), notable for its vocal treatments.

In Europe, things have been somewhat different. **The Soft Machine** used a variety of treatments on their earlier albums, though the current incarnation is guilty of all the fusion crimes of the above-noted, without even the saving grace of the early Softs' humour and imagination.

Exploring American **George Russell's** "Pan-mythic" piece 'Electronic Sonata For Souls Loved By Nature' (1969) is, however, one of the best fusions of jazz with other elements that I've heard. Containing taped fragments of natural or treated noises, voices and music, it comes close to Stockhausen's Ideal of a Universal Music. As a bonus, it also employs names such as **Terje Rypdal, Jan Garbarek** and **Jan Christensen**, and paves the way for the 'Third Stream' chamber-jazz of the ECM label.

Barre Phillips, who, as Bob James' bassist in the '60s, made a solo album (1969) 'And Qn'l along the lines of James' experimental efforts, produced in 1978 the excellent 'Mountainscapes,' an album dominated by the synths of **Gil Mantin, John Guerin** and **Steve Fabishaw** but which nonetheless avoids the pitfalls of fusion jazz.

Fusion quintet **Lookingglass** make extensive use of synthesiser modifications, on all instruments except bass, and take the cold, amorphous edge off by utilising innovations like touch-sensitive keyboards, which allow more human nuances to shine through.

The best jazz synth-player of all, however, is neither European nor American, but Saturnian! **Sun Ra** (for it is he) is the only improvising synth-player to achieve any degree of expressivity on the instrument, as his later albums attest. Engineering, moving, and ghost humorous, Sun Ra nimbly avoids the cliches associated with synthesisers. Truly, 'The Music Of The Spheres!'

On the whole though, jazzers' use of synthesisers exhibits all the faults of the pomp-rockers: long, pointless, inventive solos, bombast and gimmickry in a genre where emotion and subtlety count for much, it's hardly surprising that artists like **Cecil Taylor, Keith Jarrett** and **McCoy Tyner** prefer acoustic piano as a means of expression.

Miles Davis

DISCO

THE first extensive use of synthesisers in soul music came in 1972 with **Stevie Wonder's** 'Music Of My Mind' and 'Talking Book' albums, though it was left to **Graham Central Station**, on their eponymous first album (1973), to realise the possibilities of the drum machine or rhythm generator (quickly referred to as the album as "funky box"), a device popularised a year later on **George McCrae's** 'Rock Your Baby'.

Disco really came into its own in 1978, however, with the work of **Giorgio Moroder** and **Pete Bellotte**, who, on **Donna Summer's** records, took the functional precision of synths to its, its, logical conclusion. Neatly extracting the musical robotism from Kraftwerk's minimal music, they produced records which set that concept in a chillingly contemporary setting. "Soul", in this context, becomes a euphemism for rigid danceability — hence the term "disco". Moroder's "I Feel Love" MCP (1979) is a tour-de-force, as much form and functional as a Brancusi. As it should be.

Donna Summer

NEW POP

DEVO's Mark Mothersbaugh

THERE always has been pop (or as it sometimes is called, music) and there will be pop. Pop is that which passes (lasts) to the walls of your room, and sound to your environment like the chesspieces in the corner and the track lighting on the ceiling, something you use to fill up ear-space which your ears are unchanging, ruining their sensitivity.

The best pop record of the last year (and beyond, in fact — see the "Pop Music" list below). Perfectly constructed, perfectly crafted, this would sell a million celebration of heart and mind, with soul in abundance. And it was produced, incidentally, on a Moog synthesiser. Pop is not, necessarily, a dirty word. Pop is not, necessarily, a dirty word. Pop is not, necessarily, a dirty word

Waiting For The Gift Of Sound And Vision

THE '70s were on their deathbed, slowly and sweetly slipping away from natural causes when they brought David Bowie in to say goodbye.

The parting ritual took place in different styles in different places; where I live it involved a few close friends, a bottle of Jack Daniel's and a small, indistinct black-and-white television set tuned to the *Kenny Everett Video Show* on Thames Television.

And there was Bowie in the last few minutes of the '70s, taking his farewell in a manner appropriate to one of the decade's most-travelled rock artists: with a new video of an old song.

When Bowie actually prepared this video version of 'Space Oddity', the prospect of using it as his formal farewell to the decade he had virtually dominated may not have been uppermost in his mind; but then in rock and roll, what a thing is has always come in a poor second to what it appears to be.

Similarly, the 'real' reason for Bowie's recent reliance on old material — the double 'John I'm Only Dancing' single with its 1972 promo visual, the updated audio-visual presentation of 'Space Oddity' that appeared on Kenny Everett's show and the similarly updated video of — is purely academic. Whether it is because of some writer's block, a contractual difficulty, or just plain laziness need not concern us. Suffice to say that the rock and roll decade ended with David Bowie and chalk the rest up to Jungian synchronicity.

Therefore, we will discuss David Bowie, rock video and the ascent of gestural detail into shared mythology.

The rest of Everett's New Year's Eve show had been par: a few promotional videos of pop stars slotted into hi-tech goonery and antediluvian running jokes plus a couple of dance routines by the highly skilled and conscientiously risque dance troupe Hot Gossip. In its original incarnation *The Kenny Everett Video Show* had simply constructed elaborate framing devices for the video clips, now — as befits a holiday special — the frames had run riot and crowded out most of the pictures.

Promotional videos are fascinating simply because they give performers and their hirelings more opportunities to incriminate themselves than a simple musical recording, or even a straightforward filmed performance, could ever do. If probably took The Boomtown Rats' 'I Don't Like Mondays' fandango to make the point crystal clear to even one as obtuse as the present writer: the contest now is not just to make the best record, but the best video. Artists now not only have to be musically suss, but visually suss: the object of the exercise is to make a video that emphasises the key aspects of the record in question and demonstrates with clarity and vision exactly how the artists — or their employees — see the world and their place within it.

Preceding Bowie on that Everett show were others: Bryan Ferry's Roxy Music — once considered to be Bowie's contemporaries and peers — weighed in with a desperately silly performance wherein Ferry, unintentionally self-cast as an ageing gigolo losing his looks, performed Wilson Picket's 'In The Midnight Hour' surrounded by bored musicians and frenetic gogoettes in vinyl boots, so that's *them* in the dumper.

Hot Gossip were terribly shocking — oh yes! — with the same old lick: black male dancers acting terribly macho and white female dancers acting totally numb playing mildly sado-masochistic games in a manner almost as erotic as a general anaesthetic.

Cliff Richard was on hand also, being 'one of the lads' by participating in a running gag with Everett in which he'd attempt to sing 'Travellin' Light' or 'Livin' Doll' and get ordered out eight bars in, but he also had his own video to do, so the miraculously spry and unwrinkled principal boy of the Festival Of Light appeared singing 'Devil Woman' (you know the one, it goes *"Beware the devil woman, she's gonna get you from behind"*) clad in a tight black leather and vinyl outfit while a blonde model in a leopard-print leotard languished in a cage.

The exact same kind of soft-core bondage imagery favoured by Hot Gossip, in fact, but one presumes that the lack of bodily contact, the fact that no black persons were involved and the purifying presence of the Bible-thumping choirboy himself defused the somewhat suspect implications. The entire spectacle bore an unnerving similarity to Bowie's 'John I'm Only Dancing' video.

The grandmasters of modern video pop — The Boomtown Rats, in case you hadn't guessed — unveiled *their* newest spectacle in which they got to play at war movies to the accompaniment of 'Someone's Looking At You' (from 'The Fine Art Of Surfacing' and presumably also their new single). While the 'Mondays' clip was at least loosely based on the idea of the artist 'performing' the song, this one was a development of an image connected so loosely with the song that sound and vision worked at total cross-purposes, distracting rather than reinforcing.

The actual send-off for 1980 was a live in-studio performance by The Greedies (the Pistols/Lizzy glee club) of their totally absurd Christmas single, but it was little more than a signal to this viewer that it was time to refill the glasses and cue up 'London Calling' at an anti-social volume, and the programme effectively ended with Bowie.

HE appeared, neat but haggard, fit to look vaguely psychotic in the manner currently popularised by David Byrne, strumming at a 12-string guitar and performing the opening section of 'Space Oddity': a sparse, ominous arrangement for piano, acoustic guitar and rhythm section that recalled nothing so much as the sound of John Lennon's 'Plastic Ono Band' album.

Suddenly he dropped the guitar and walked off-camera — for one crazy, swirling moment the possibility suggested itself that this might be another variant on the Cliff Richard gag — only to reappear continuing the song in a padded cell. From then on the performance oscillated between the cell and strange footage derived equally from Bowie's original 1969 video of the song and his performance in Nicholas Roeg's *The Man Who Fell To Earth*, wherein Bowie — in space-cadet uniform — sat in a suburban kitchen while a housewife performed household duties and common objects levitated crazily about the room.

In this manner, the profound alienation already apparent when the song is taken at face value — astronaut leaves planet, reviews the situation, considers his options and decides to stay away — escalates to new levels. We now have a man wishing that he was in a position to make a total withdrawal from life - as - we - know - it. An appropriate image for the '70s, where most people's existence represents a trap — i.e. something to be escaped — and a more appropriate one still for Bowie, a man who has reinvented himself continually in a desperate, thrashing attempt to escape the confines of his own personality and — when he ran out of selves — took the one he inhabited around the world in an attempt to lose himself somewhere in the Third World.

All such attempts are, of course, futile. Bowie cannot escape the trap. He *is* the trap. That's what he's been singing about for the last ten years.

From trying to escape into imagined futures or fractured visions of the present, he now moves to the past. Throughout the decade, 'old' Bowie records have periodically surfaced into the charts: "Space Oddity" and 'Life On Mars' (to name but two) have become hits long after their original release dates, as has 'John I'm Only Dancing' currently, while in '73 Bowie took a headlong dive into the '60s with 'Pin-Ups'.

Rock and roll has never quite come to terms with its past, and Bowie has ghosts to fight peculiar to his own nature. The spectre he battles currently is named Gary Numan.

Numan mimics Bowie in a manner expert in its grasp of detail and style, though artless and shallow in its scope. The exact shape, size and texture of Numan's frozen, aimless gesturing need not concern us here, but his success does: he sells far more records than Bowie does these days. This autumn, I found a stack of copies of Bowie's then-current single 'Mr DJ' remaindered out in Woolworths in Whitby, Yorkshire for the considerable sum of 25p. It was a fairly safe bet that it would have cost more to purchase a copy of Numan's 'Cars'.

The circumstances were hardly unique — Bowie had, after all, been outsold by The Sweet during his supposed glam heyday — but still noteworthy. The week that Gary Numan first made it onto *Top Of The Pops* with his promising then-newie 'Are "Friends" Electric?', Bowie was having a video shown to boost his rising 'Boys Keep Swinging.'

Numan performed his ditty from behind painted-on cheekbones, staring eyes, a bank of synths and lighting derived from that used by Bowie on his 1975 'Station To Station' tour. Bowie, for his part, had taken the all - boys - together nudge-nudgery of The Village People and tossed it into a maze of mirrors.

You will, I trust, recall 'Boys Keep Swinging', a mock-jolly ode to the joys of Being A Chap. He performed the song in multiple roles, singing the verses as a kind of ghastly parody of John Travolta, dancing with manic desperation as if compelled to grin and cavort by some outside agency; a nasty, unnatural exhilaration.

For the choruses, he appeared in tacky, ugly drag, an impersonation of a drag queen rather than an impersonation of a woman. Each incarnation was tawdrier than the last, and each time he advanced across a catwalk in crabbed, arthritic mimicry of a model's stylised walk, tearing off his wig and smearing his make-up in mute allusion to the horrific climax of Roman Polanski's excruciating, wrenching movie *The Tenant*. A twin allusion to this upsetting and neglected film seemed to be made both in the title of his current album 'Lodger' and in the cover pose, where a broken and dishevelled Bowie is seen on an operating table about to be subjected to major surgery after a near-mortal injury. Whether these allusions were intentional is — as previously stated — largely irrelevant. In the video age man is no deal with t'ings as they are. Man a deal with t'ings as they appear to be.

The end result was that Numan had a number one hit and went on to become a huge star, blah blah. Bowie's single died on its feet.

The implications are obvious. Bowie's video startled, offended and upset people. With the peculiar depths of psychological nastiness of which Bowie is so spectacularly capable, he attacked the viewer's sense of self by appearing equally false when playing a 'man' or a 'woman' and by implication accusing male and female viewers alike of playing absurd and demeaning roles. He also made sure that no-one who had seen the video would ever hear the song again in any light other than that in which he had just presented it. This light was unpleasant, and by implication so was the record. Result: flopsies for David.

Of course, the joke was on Bowie. The video was intended as a promotional tool, a device to sell more product. In that respect, it failed dismally. Bowie literally handed large sections of his audience to Gary Numan on the proverbial, uh, plate.

Numan had, of course, assumed the mantle of Bowie's old gestures, tactics and noises. In gestural and mythological terms, he was more Bowie than Bowie was. So if Gary Numan is David Bowie, then who is David Bowie?

WHO *is* David Bowie? (ha ha ha). This is, of course, not my problem or, for that matter, yours (unless you *are* David Bowie, and if you want to be, you can be. Don't fancy it myself much, though). We've got our own traps to worry about.

Bowie would be in a lot less trouble if he were a film director, which is what he wants to be, because that's where the action is, artwise. In the video age, writers only produce scripts, and musicians only soundtracks. Bowie is patently not an actor (though he pretended to be one for an unconscionably long time) and he wants to be a director in the same way rock artists have wanted to be novelists, poets, painters, diarists, flashers, aristocrats, politicians, prophets, thugs, avengers, oracles, heroes (just for one day) or even other rock stars.

Thus the gestural detail of Bowie's earlier work becomes deposited into the collective account we hold at the Bank Of Shared Mythology, where it becomes freely available for any rocking citizen who has need of it to make a withdrawal at any time. It's all there, alongside Jagger's pout, Presley's curled lip, Townshend's levitating-foetus leap and windmilling arm (the latter gesture borrowed from Keith Richards so adroitly that Richards himself had to have the heist pointed out to him at a later date), The Beatles' song constructions, Rotten's sneer and stare, everything in Dury's 'Sweet Gene Vincent' as a shopping-list of *his* contributions, Berry's riff and duckwalk, Joe Strummer's belligerent bark, Sid Vicious' hairstyle and jacket . . . INPUT! INPUT! INPUT!

All recognition-codes, personal quirks of individual artists and performers, things done on the spur of the moment, techniques and totems evolved for a specific purpose, all embalmed and elevated. All the devices and trademarks are quite devoid of any significance other than that which we give them. De Niro was wrong: the motif ain't "This is this", but "This *means* this, this *symbolises* this, this *can be interpreted as* this . . ." Push this button, receive this emotional response . . . finally, it all comes down to how skilfully motifs are manipulated, whether the manipulation is/appears to be/is interpreted as being conscious or unconscious. It efficacity is its criterion.

Video gives rock and roll more buttons to push. It also means that rock chaps must learn to decipher and then codify a visual language which manipulates the mythology in the same way that their music does (and modifying or dismissing the mythology still means dealing with it). A new set of skills to master, therefore, a new set of reasons for doing so. Video won't kill the radio stars — and it isn't even sufficiently advanced to make comparisons with the fate of silent movie stars who couldn't hack it in the talkies more than just a matter for idle speculation — but it'll place a few new demands on them. They will have to ask themselves certain questions and then convince others of the answers.

Among these questions: who are you? What are you? What are you singing about? Why? What world does your work inhabit? What is your role within this world? What is our role within your world? Are you telling us anything we need to know? Can you convince me to get a haircut or a jacket just like yours? Why should I buy your record? (If I like the video and don't happen to feel the need to invest in videodisc or-tape equipment, will owning the record mean that I can be reminded of the video whenever I wish to be so reminded?)

In this age of grand illusion, an artist's stylistic devices (or an audience's, for that matter) can persist far longer than the artist's need for them. Last Saturday I saw The Clash in Aylesbury, and they found themselves confronted by a 'punk' audience with an insatiable desire to jump up and down and spit at the stage. The Clash did as much as anybody to create this audience, yet the audience's needs could probably have been fulfilled far more easily by the U.K. Subs or some such combo who have evolved *specifically* to be spat at. Similarly, Bowie's audience clearly estimated his work to be worth no more than Gary Numan's.

Numan has clearly perceived Bowie in exactly the same terms as Bowie's audience did (Numan being himself a part of that audience, differentiated principally by the ability to put his perceptions into practice) and, as such, has a vision of what that audience wants which is far clearer than that of Bowie himself.

Similarly, The Clash's audience seems to be making demands of The Clash which would be far better served by any gang of thrashers perpetually rewriting The Clash's first album. The Clash have made their own withdrawals from The Bank Of Shared Mythology (Eddie Cochran, Mott The Hoople, Slade, in a way, Lee Perry) but what they have deposited may soon end up financing attempted coups against them.

Pete Townshend has, of course, been wrestling with all this since Paul Weller was in short trousers and bully for him, while Keith Richards assumes that he will always have an audience and sees no reason why their concerns should ever be any of his business. The Stones had their own little video back-a-ways with 'Respectable', where they fell through a wall and had a good giggle, but such games did not seem to suit them. Audiences may consider that they are tired of old gestures, but all they're tired of are the people performing these gestures. Rather, they would like to see the gestures performed by people nearer their own age and postal district (which is why so many of the old-time punk bands were compared at the time to the Stones and The Who. Are we twigging something here?)

Commerce is healthy at the Bank. Deposits and withdrawals seem to balance (roughly, at least) and since rock is a fairly persistent symptom of contemporary civilisation, it would appear that this music and attendant culture that a few of us find so fascinating is going to be along for the whole ride, however long that is.

NOT VERY long is the increasingly widespread prognosis and there seems very little that you, I or anybody in the rock industry or audience can do about it. The Four Wise Brudders from Queens told me just the other day: *"This is the end, the end of the '70s/this is the end, the end of the century"*, and that is a message clear enough for even the most intelligent person to understand.

As governments and private citizens alike, all over the world, conspire to increase the *per capita* share of misery as much as is humanly possible, all we can ask of our entertainers is that they entertain us in a manner that fights back against everything that wishes to destroy us.

The '80s beckon like a black hole. Bowie may well lose himself in it, the way he's been trying to lose himself for years. Others face it, perhaps in disarray, perhaps falteringly, but they turn their faces towards the darkness and sing a song that means something. Everybody does what they can and demonstrates how much or how little they are capable of. Impotent or not, rock rages against the dying of the light.

Or maybe it's just another video scenario, just another image for the screen, another item for the shopping list. If that's the case, then there's nothing, really nothing to turn off.

By CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY

Pictures:
TOM SHEEHAN (London)
JOE STEVENS (New York)

Playback One + London + Space Oddity

Playback Two + New York + John I'm Only Dancing

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WHSMITH

ALBUMS

The pop games people play

THE PRETENDERS
Pretenders *(Real Records)*

SO at last this is The Pretenders' debut album, one of the first releases in the '80s from last decade's new rock rulers: so eagerly anticipated, yet ironically not one which will make or break reputations.

No, 'Pretenders' — for the public at least even if not those tetchy pop paper people — floats on the snug assumption that The Pretenders are a major act. But considering they've achieved pop acceptability with only three consecutive hit singles, then it is remarkable so much can be established by so little.

Thanks principally to the over zealous thrashings of *Melody Maker* — a music paper desperate to create for itself '70s credibility and often miscalculating to the extent of overkill — Chrissie Hynde and her boys were 'hot property' and — ahem — front page news long before they did anything to justify such acclaim (and some would argue that they *still* have that to do).

In any case, the hits 'Stop Your Sobbing', 'Kid' and 'Brass In Pocket' are all included here, as are two of the B-sides. So what we have is not so much an 'eagerly anticipated debut album', but an LP of which half is greatest hits history and the other seven tracks probably their next three singles. Excuse the cynicism, but when rock'n'roll was supposed to restore some of its own dignity, and values at the end of the '70s, these sort of business shenanigans hardly do the cause much good.

In fact, so much about The Pretenders is reminiscent of '60s pop games that any claim they are innovative is completely invalid. Simply their success and new rock 'credibility' is a result of their own conceit and the image that has created.

Of the three singles, the first was a cover of a tremendous Ray Davies song (and a very good impersonation of Sandie Shaw), the second ('Kid') was an appalling mix of Shadows and Blondie and 'Brass In Pocket' was — well brilliant. The Pretenders' greatest moment or more importantly, Chrissie Hynde's.

Like everything she does there is something familiar about it. Her music invariably reminds you vaguely of something in pop history, and on this album we have a collection of influences from the Velvets ('The Phone Call') through The Beatles (on Pete Farndon and James Honeyman Scott's instrumental, 'Space Invader'), the '60s British beat boom, right up to Blondie and The Police. Certainly the white reggae base of 'Private Life' echoes Stewart Copeland's drum style; yet with a tough, intelligent and sensitive lyric from Hynde and delivered with superb vocal phrasing, it's the best thing on the set.

Unfortunately there is not a lot of competition. The new, unreleased material — all seven songs, but we'll discard 'Space Invader' right now for having all the instrumental dexterity of a bricklayer with two left hands — usually has something distinctive, but the band seem unable to give it an edge. That's what prevents The Pretenders being a brilliant rather than an enjoyably ordinary band; and it's also what prevents the material being 'classic'.

In a way Chrissie Hynde's efforts with 'Precious', 'The Phone Call' and the plaintive 'Lovers Of Today' are almost wasted by the insensitivity of Pete Farndon (bass), John Honeyman Scott (guitar) and drummer Martin Chambers. Although there are times when they have their moments (Farndon's is on 'The Wait' and Scott's on 'Private Life'), quite often they sound as if they're playing under a wet blanket — which has little to do with Chris Thomas' production because he does an excellent job in bringing out a staggering range of textures in Hynde's voice.

Perhaps the band aren't in Hynde's league. Despite being unable to disguise her influences — 'Mystery Achievement' works on a riff not a whole lot different to the Spencer Davis Group's 'Keep On Running' — she has a rare and special talent both as a performer and a writer.

Unlike so many other women in pop, she manages to combine an obvious sensuality ('Up The Neck' conjures up an image of her writhing about the floor) with intelligence and a sensitivity to a wide range of emotions. Lyrically her songs are successful enough to suggest she'd make a great actress too.

But maybe all that publicity bullshit, her arrogant stage manner and the rather elitist attitude that surrounds the band makes me judge this album too harshly. It doesn't justify their reputation — but then very little could.

Tony Stewart

Now, it's no use sulking, dear, that won't help. *Pic: Pennie Smith.*

West Coast comeback shock

Durutti Column's Vinni Reilly (try saying that quick).
Pic: Daniel Meadows.

THE DURUTTI COLUMN
The Return Of The Durutti Column
(Factory)

JORMA KAUKONEN
Jorma *(RCA Import)*

HERE'S to two puzzling artefacts, both made in the spirit of non-fashion. The Durutti Column return in streamlined form (in a sandpaper cover) and so does Jorma Kaukonen (in a day-glo cover).

One Vinni Reilly is in charge of the former party, assisted by Martin 'Zero' Hannet on switchblade doctoring, funny noises, tape loop and 'free' plastic single. The last time you heard them (January '78) The Column had vocal assistance and a pliable rhythm section. Back then Reilly was recovering from the Nosebleeds, learning about volume attack and beginning to experiment with psychedelic decay. Durutti sang self-deprecating, jokey, subversive songs which had the cheek to mix in tracks from 'Truckin'' alongside twilight images of the new digital age.

Reilly hasn't exactly spent the recent months adopting a style to suit the present image. His new music is reflective, smooth and quiet. He bends, phases and duets ice blues into the bob and weave of chopped down cross currents; solitary melodies are picked through a sketchbook of recollections. Even though Reilly has precedents for his method (Gary Duncan, Garcia, J. P. Coffin in America; Ollie Halsall and Ayers-vintage Oldfield in GB) the results are individually inspired, emerging from personal experience, love, death, the seasons, affairs with guitars.

'The Return Of The Durutti Column' is perfectly realised, correctly ambient and inventive music; the beauty of it is that Vinni Reilly offers it when he does and how he does. Maybe the punks will sneer and think it's hippy noodling, but the hippies probably won't dare to listen anyway.

Obversely, and equally perversely, Jorma Kaukonen also returns with just himself for company now that Jack Cassady does the bass chores for SVT, a nondescript 'new wave' travesty, and Jefferson Starship reap the rewards of platinum effluvium without anyone bothering to question their motives.

Jorman *can't* be trading on his past. He rejoices these days under a mop of spiky pink hair, has his back mapped out in tattoos, goes out on his twelve-string own in dismal clubs where the same stupid funks who dig his ex-band's witless twaddle, boo and hiss and generally give him a hard time.

'Jorma' is a very clearcut album, recalling some of the highs on Tuna's underrated latter day discs. It's straight down the line electric blues, heavily phased across the board and intricately fleshed out with Kaukonen's customary gravel vocal and sweeping, grandiose picking. On 'Roads And Roads &' or 'Song For The High Mountain' he states his case for reconsideration with admirable class and an estimable dedication to the forms of Leadbelly, Gary Davis and Sleepy John Estes. The best song on a very good album is the original scratchy good-bye Louisiana pick-up blues called 'Too Long Out/Too Long In' by which anyone's empathy with Kaukonen's idiosyncratic delivery will stand or fall.

The traditional retreads are fairly incongruous; 'Vampire Women' is a subtle incision that sucks you dry but 'Da-Ga Da-Ga', a madman's lament and a bogus religious piece of nonsense, is as good a way as any to end Jorma Kaukonen's first real solo album.

No comparisons are necessary with these vastly different records, there are only similarities in intent and the fact that both are the product of fertile minds harnessed to the ability to make an extremely pleasant noise without ever stating the obvious.

There may be ten years between the cause but there are none between the effect.

Max Bell

Laugh And The Nurds Laugh With You

MILLIE JACKSON
Live and Uncensored
(Spring/Polydor)

A couple of nights back I was re-discovering Millie Jackson's 'Caught Up/Still Caught Up' albums and wallowing in the ecstasy of what arguably were the two of the most hard-hitting and soulful experiments in '70s black music. Two days later I'm faced with reviewing the new Millie album and at a loss to grab the correct adjectives for such a puerile set of titillating trash.

Here, spread across four sides, we have a bunch of what we suppose are working grown-ups sitting on the edge of their seats and laughing like crazy whenever their bozo of the burlesque Jackson says "shit" or "goddamm". And does she ever say it, chucking away her voice and her unmatchable back catalogue so she can rush into her 'raps'. She even admits it herself as at one point she says "Shit, I knows y'all only buy mah rekede t'hear me tark dirty", so slapping herself and the assembly on the back.

Ms Jackson and her crowds would delude themselves that they are somehow gathered for a let-loose let - ya - hair - down night of adult(ress) devil may care hoe-down that the police are forever waiting to bust. It's all too much like those letters to *The Sun* that take a pride in letting the world know how ignorant and free of society's restrictions their six year-old kid is because he/she wiped a bogie on the reverend's hat. Wot a larf! Ohh that Damien'll be the death o'me!

Here Millie Jackson opens her act by lecturing the audience on how she's gonna have to find "an outside fire" coe "her man" is "taking his log elsewhere". The crowd bellow because in this mature gathering *they all know exactly what she means!* Bette Midler almost gets away with the same stuff because she acknowledges — albeit in the script — that this is all drivel in the Milton Berl 12-shows-a-day greasepaint tradition, but Millie removes her brain on the premise of "jus' actin natchul".

I should think that the words 'vulgar' and 'sordid' are two words that nobody amongst the baying dribblers who paid to howl at ol' badass here would ever dream of using because only 'hung up' prudes wouldn't find such female liberty refreshing. But that is exactly what this double album is. And as for the swingers wiping their eyes at each new swear word — well, I bet each and every one of them have extractors in their 'bathrooms'.

Danny Baker

Millie Jackson. Pic: Pennie Smith

SORDID

Wilson Picett. Pic: Pennie Smith

RAUNCHY

CECIL McBEE
Alternate Spaces
(Indie Navigation Import)

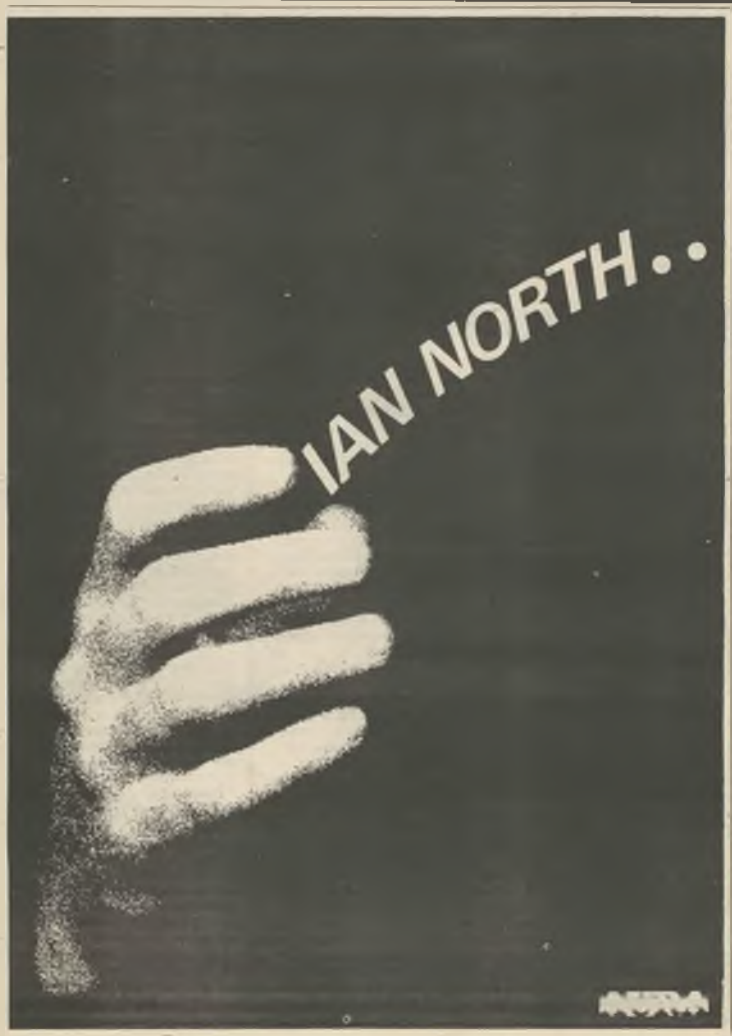
NEW York mix'n'match that goes some way towards demonstrating where the jazz dilemma lies. Post-New Thing players have worked in groups of ever-decreasing size; if you gotta be free then you don't want too many buddies cramping your style, huh? But a 'conventional' sextet, as here, too often makes music of convention. What it needs are wayward designs or firecracker players.

The short fuse boys here are reedman Chico Freeman and Famoudou Don Moye, a drummer possessed if ever one was. Yet both are thwarted: Moye is reduced to token percussionist behind Allen Nelson while Freeman is mixed way down throughout, his bedazzling soprano distant and muffled on 'Come Sunrise'. The onus is on the men who calls the shots, and bassist McBee pivots the themes around his own playing — fair enough, it's his date, but they seem short on interest.

Ironic that pianist Don Pullen's jabbing chords seem too portentously 'modern' to ring true in this setting. He does better with the shadowy lyricism of 'Consequence', McBee adding a touch of old-world arco. Main honours to Joe Gardner on trumpet; the sweet heat of his solo on the title track had me putting back the stylus for more.

That's my trouble. McBee's a seasoned player and on its own terms the session has considerable charm. But, yeah, I want MORE!

Richard Cook



Back In The Real World

WILSON PICKETT
I Want You *(United Artists)*

"THE music business then — whitey owned it. We wuz all used, abused and ripped off." — Wilson Pickett, *NME*, November '79.

So what's changed? Wilson Pickett has never been in control of his own destiny. Like any great singer — and I'd rate Pickett as possibly the greatest of them all — he's only as good as his material, and with rare exceptions his material these past twelve years has been rotten.

And for all his bluster, Pickett is still being used, etc. by "whitey", here represented by keyboard sessioneer Jean Roussel and ex-Sharks drummer Marty Simon, who shrug off their former roles as sidemen to take responsibility for "Musical Direction and Arrangements", as well as copping writing credits on six out of seven tracks. The album's also produced by one Andre Perry. Surely not another whitey, Wilson?

Anyway, what it comes down to is another weak album by another soul giant we have known and loved. UA's choice of single is one of the worst tracks: a horrible mundane disco item called 'Groove City', full of desperately 'danceable' hackneyed riffs culled from sundry equally dreadful disco records of these 'Fly Robin Fly' years.

Nowhere else does Pickett sink to such abject formularisation, though 'Live With Me', written by Pickett with Don Covay in one of the more uninspired moments either of them can have suffered, tops it for schlock value. 'I Want You' and 'Shameless' are aimless doodles that give Wilson a chance to test his tonsils. More to the point are the funk amalgams 'Superstar' and 'Granny'; the latter in particular shows Simon can still call on that tension that used to electrify Sharks.

Which makes it all the more amazing that hidden amongst all this junk is one solid gold soul masterpiece, a miraculous track called 'Love Of My Life' which stands tall alongside any of Pickett's major works — 'Midnight Hour', 'Mustang Sally', 'I'm In Love' . . . 'Love Of My Life' is that good, and it shows Pickett's power undiminished.

The bass carves out a taut, metallic riff, the guitar chicken scratches demented morse code signals, the horns scatter in staccato counterpoints, the backing singers croon like candy, Simon tries to punch holes in his snare skin, and across this compulsive, stripped-down Earth, Wind & Fire terrain rages a man possessed: Wilson Pickett, howling and screaming and shouting like only Wilson Pickett can.

Two notes to UA: (a) you won't come across a better single this year — screw the charts, great singles should be released; (b) If you could buy Mr Pickett a week in the studios with Maurice White you'd have the first great soul LP of the '80s.

Back in the real world, the Wicked Pickett will no doubt go right on being a hasbeen.

Phil McNeill

IMPORTS

THE fortunes of Antipodean rock are decidedly on the upswing. For following Sire's acquisition of The Sports, comes news that WEA have signed Jo Jo Zep And The Falcons, Illegal have done a deal with the new and improved Split Enz, and that Virgin are planning to provide Mental As Anything with their first British album release in early February.

Mental As Anything, whose 'Get Wet' (Regular) album has been in the import racks for a couple of weeks now, could prove the best bet in a strong field. A Sydney-based quintet, the band boasts four good songwriters in Martin Plaza (vocals, guitar), Reg Mombasa (vocals, guitar, slide guitar), Greedy Smith (vocals, keyboards, harmonica) and Peter O'Doherty (vocals, bass) — only drummer Wayne Dalisle failing to get his name on the writing credits. And though all the songs fit into a similar, lightweight, often humourous style, the band's instrumental approach is of the glorified rag-bag category, with wheezy Farfisa, Creedence-inspired guitar riffs and wayward Kinks-like slide licks being clamped on to the thrashes of a rhythm section which could be listed under 'contemporary — basic'.

Amazingly, everything gells: Martin Plaza's rum-flavoured singalong 'The Nips Are Getting Bigger' vying with Mombasa's 'Business And Pleasure' jaunty jig for a gig, and Smith's amusing 'Another Man's (Sitting In My Kitchen)' for top slot in the please-the-lughole stakes. *"Should I stay or should I go?/Someone tell me please 'cause I don't Know/It's not a question of morality/I just don't want him hitting me."*

Decry And The World Looks The Other Way

MORBID

John Cale. Pic: Joe Stevens

PAUNCHY

Frank Zappa: Pic: Robert Ellis

JOHN CALE
SABOTAGE/LIVE

JOHN CALE
Sabotage/Live *(Spy Import)*

THE cover of this, his first album in almost five years, shows John Cale wearing the only sensible accessories for the true cold war paranoiac: dark glasses and a hard-hat — not a bad thing, given the present delicate state of detente, especially for someone who can't exactly boast of having all his marbles together in one place.

A scholarship classical student who brought white noise to rock'n'roll with The Velvet Underground and produced seminal debuts by Iggy Pop, Jonathan Richman and Patti Smith as well as creating an impressive body of his own fringe work involving people as far afield as Terry Riley and Little Feat, Cale could lay a fair claim to being one of rock's crucial unwritten influences.

Since the dissolution of the band that made 'Fear', 'Slow Dazzle' and finally 'Helen of Troy', he's toured with two bands of unknowns, the second of which cut this album — warts and all — in the midst of a US club tour last year. What they lack in finesse they make up for with a remorseless drive that equally befits Cale's cold-blooded, gut-churning music of fear — but puts the weight on the gut-churning.

In fact it's surprising that there isn't a song about a mass-murderer amongst them; instead, for the first side at least, Cale is in the grip of post-nuclear mental tremors, raving obsessively about espionage, atom bombs and the dogs of war. 'Mercenaries (Ready For War)' ushers in these themes with a tirade on the infidel soldier whose wage is *"just enough to make him want to kill you/But not enough to make him want to die for you"*; the song's delivered with all the delirium The Patti Smith Group must wish they could still muster. 'Baby You Know', 'Evidence' and 'Dr Mudd' explore other aspects of the same shadows. It's not what you'd call a cool appraisal, but it certainly captures something of what lies just around the corner in many citizens' minds, and the band back it up with a streamlined, menacing hard rock that crawls like a tank.

The side ends with a version of 'Walking The Dog' that, like Cale's earlier version of 'Heartbreak Hotel', slows down the song to reveal the buried, brooding imagery of the lyric. The second side begins with an epic ballad called 'Captain Hook' that dispels the mounting dread and weaves in its place a lavish portrait of the sun setting on the ages of Empire and sail: *"Tried to break the back of India/But she broke the back of me."* Cale whispers that we should take the song with a pinch of salt, but his Kiplingesque views of England provide a strong and original antidote to his other devils, and are quite a treasure when you collect the set.

The rest of the side plays out with sublime feel for mood construction. A light love song sung by Deerfrance, who recently lent her fragile voice to Tom Verlaine's album, leads into the title track. 'Sabotage' is performance insanity of the kind The Pop Group strive for but which Cale is better equipped to bring off. More of his implacable ravings figure here: *"What you find in books,"* he screams, *"LEAVE IT THERE!"* And then the album ends in some kind of respite with a sad folk dirge that tells of earth resting lightly on the dead as air rests heavily on the living.

At a time when much music is being dragged down by uncertainty and hesitation, the ferocious live bite of 'Sabotage' (which after so many double-live contract-fillers reminds you what a live album should be) takes it a lot further than it probably goes. If Cale had been able to record in a studio with a band that really matched the dexterity of his songs, the results might have been better, but not nearly so raw and compulsive. As compulsive as banging nails into walls.

And remember: don't leave home without your hard-hat on, as Lenny Bruce might have said.

Paul Rambali

Back To The Garage

FRANK ZAPPA
Joe's Garage Acts II & III
(CBS)

FRANK Zappa always seemed like a defiant anachronism with a knack of appearing timeless. Above it all. Away from it all. On this double disc parts 2 & 3 and scenes 9 to 18 of his hard-hearted story, Zappa seems simply lost, floating in a void though rolling in money. But that's OK. He can probably qualify his malevolent and moralistic ramble as much as I can scorn its inadequacy and indulgence. In my world it sucks; in his it's probably a definitive statement.

Funny, I used to think Todd Rundgren was going to end up like this, unwillingly shocked into an uncomfortable intellectual poignancy and making marketable use of superior tastes to soothe the half-opened ears of a despicable nation. Zappa always wanted to be violently temperamental but, when he's so normal, it hurts. His compensation was to match his awkward talents with a spiteful churlishness that became quite endearing, but very unconvincing.

The three parts of 'Joe's Garage' is all or nothing of Zappa's worldview. Zappa's projection is a society deep in a grotesque, machinistic slumber following psychological, technological, economic and democratic breakdown, laced with faceless authority and hollow characters, where music is eventually banned — for its corrupting influences and its potential as a leader of man.

'Joe' is not autobiographical, Zappa has stressed, but who can't recognise a character seething with pent-up paranoia and condescension and naivety at the injustice of the world when all he wants to do is play his guitar, therefore ends up moving through nightmares and farces of helplessness, isolation and orgy, taking refuge in playing imaginary guitar inside his head.

This allows numerous opportunities, especially in the latter scenes, for Zappa to fret his way through some of his more sterile, and particular solos in years. Breathtaking.

'Joe's Garage' is a twisted fable of the human will in the face of inhuman opposition, a fairy tale of decadence, manipulation and competition. Joe journeys towards death or the blinding light, but he seems alright, a booji boy even. As a story, it plods, the plot slops all over the place, here dense, there shallow, loving a cheap shock and getting caught up in its own obvious, open-ended destination. It's elaborately assembled, but its American success will have been due more to its soft sounds and lovable eccentricity than to any craft or intention. Musically it's a light, complex but undemanding match of fairycake funk and wishy-washy psychedelia, with idiotic voices (Zappa and others) merrily or gravely intoning lines for the mass public to giggle at.

Zappa's become an anonymous and ignorant adult entertainer, neither hero nor anti-hero, tangled in the excess and programming he thinks he parodies and perverts. But who cares? The guy's a prat, for all his vocabulary.

Paul Morley

relates the betrayed hubby of Smith's saga, thus proving remarkably sane yet delightfully dotty at the same time. The whole album is a bit like that — which is why I'll head for the 'aye' corridor at division time.

'Living In The Land Of Oz' (EMI-Oz) is a sampler which slots together various Oz-rock cuts by **Jo Jo Zep, Stiletto, Alby James, Mondo Rock** and **Ross Wilson**, though only the cuts by the first two bands make much in the way of impact, Stiletto, who I haven't heard before, proving more than capable in a vaguely Blondie-like manner. The Zep tracks, once of which is 'Security', released here on the Rockburgh compilation, also include a re-vamp of Joe Liggins' classic 'Honeydripper', culled from The Falcons' 'Live In Concert' (EMI), recorded at Martinis, Melbourne, around Christmas, 1977. And this live album — which is likely to be issued here by Rockburgh in the not too distant future — is the one to get, containing as it does; driving workouts on oldies such as 'Down The Road Apiece', handled *a la* Chuck Berry, and the perennial 'Route 66', plus 'Yes Indeed', a gutsy, horn-headed original from the pen of Wayne Burt.

Since 'Live', Jo Jo Zep have moved on, 'Screaming Targets' (Mushroom) their current release, produced by Pete Solley, proving not only that the band has become more sophisticated but also that Elvis Costello's trip down-under has obviously made friends and influenced people. But all in all, down on the Tropic of Capricorn they're beginning to work things out for themselves. Start buying the corks for your hat now!

Fred Dellar

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

Compiled by Derek Johnson

UFO played a handful of gigs before Christmas, but their tour proper gets under way this weekend with concerts at Liverpool (Sunday), Glasgow (Monday), Aberdeen (Tuesday) and Edinburgh (Wednesday). Above: the band's ever-present front man Phil Mogg, captured in action by George Bodnar during their last UK outing.

Thursday

Birmingham Mercat Cross: **The Clinic**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Orphan**
Blackpool Jenkinson's Bar: **Excel (for three days)**
Burntwood Troubadour: **The Amazing Dark Horse**
Colwyn Bay Dixieland Showbar: **Ginger Baker's Energy**
Croydon Fairfield Hall: **Gordon Giltrap**
Glasgow Apollo Centre: **Alex Harvey's New Band**
Halesowen Tiffany's: **Quartz**
Hull Wellington Club: **Law Lewis Reformer**
Jersey St Helier Behans West Park: **J.A.L.N. Band (for three days)**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Pointed Sticks**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **The Roll-Ups**
London Catford The Squire: **Rusty 'n' The Renegades**
London Clapham 101 Club: **The Jump**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Bauhaus**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Holly & The Italians**
London Kennington The Cricketers: **Lacey's Allstars**
London Kensington De Villiers Bar: **Gold Dust Twins**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Blast Furnace's Revenge**
London Marquee Club: **Charlie Dore's Back Pocket**
London Mayfair Theatre: **Alberto y Lost Trios Paranois in "Never Mind The Bollocks" (currently until February 2)**
London Shepherds Bush Trafalgar: **Speedball/The Pinks/Number Six**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Jay McShann Trio**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **Yakety Yak/Gina 'n' The Rockin' Rebels**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **The O.K. Band**
London Victoria The Venue: **Annette Peacock**
London Waterloo Royal Victoria: **Freddy's Festwarmers**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Lonnie Donegan**
London W.C.1 New Merlin's Cave: **Big Chief**
Maidstone The Royal Albion: **The Pulsaters**
Middlesbrough Madisons: **High Flames (for three days)**
Newton Abbot Seale Hayne College: **Matchbox**
Norwich Cromwells: **Chris Farlowe**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Drug Squad**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gaffa**
Port Talbot Troubadour: **The Boys**

Friday

Barkingside Old Maypole: **Flying Saucers**
Bath Moles: **Metro Glider**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Bright Eyes**
Birmingham Elizabethan Days: **The Traitors**
Brighton Alhambra: **The Guvnors**
Bristol Clevedon Youth Centre: **The Shattered Dolls**
Bristol Trinity Church: **Gina 'n' The Rockin' Rebels**
Carlisle Twisted Wheel: **The Accelerators**
Crawley Leisure Centre: **The Clash**
Coventry Ryton Bridge: **Streetlite**
Derby Sinfin Moor Club: **Strange Days**
Dundee Art College: **The Alwoodley Jets-/Bombers UK**
Gloucester The Alternative Venue: **The Boys**
Grimsby Community Hall: **Slaughter & The Dogs**
London Acton King's Head: **Paz**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Axis Point-/Bunk Dodger**
London Camden Southampton Arms: **Jellyroll Blues Band**
London Clapham 101 Club: **The Rackets**
London Elephant & Castle Southbank Polytechnic: **Billy Karloff Band**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Crooks**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Blondie-/Whirlwind**
London, Holborn Princess Louise: **The Scoop**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Bodysnatchers**
London Kennington The Cricketers: **Manyana**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Pointed Sticks**
London New Cross Royal Albert: **Rubber Johnny**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Greg & Nigel's Folk and Blues Night**
London Roehampton Digby Stuart College: **Long Tall Shorty**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Jay McShann Trio**
London Southall White Swan: **Spider**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Groundation**
London W.C.1 New Merlin's Cave: **Esmond Selwyn's Jazz Fabrique**
Newcastle City Hall: **Alex Harvey's New Band**
Newcastle Polytechnic: **Roy Sundholm Band**
Nottingham Trent Polytechnic: **The Marvelettes**
Poole Brewers Arms: **Program**
Sheffield KGB's: **The Negatives**
Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic: **The Mekons**
Stockport Warren Bulkeley Jazz Cellar: **Al Cohn**
Weymouth Dorset College of Further Education: **The Act**
York College of Ripon & St John: **Electrotunes**

Saturday

Aldenham Walhall College: **Matchbox**
Basingstoke Magnum's: **The Rackets**
Bath University: **Roaring Jelly**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Liquid Mirrors**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Strider**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **School Sports**
Blackpool Dixieland Showbar: **Chris Farlowe**
Blackpool Norbreck Castle: **Roy Sundholm Band**
Brighton The Northern: **Airport**
Cardiff Abyss Club: **Lucifer**
Chester College of Higher Education: **Power Exchange**
Cromer Crabs: **Jane Bond & The Agents**
Dudley J.B.'s Club: **The Boys**
Hastings Pier Pavilion: **The Clash**
Immingham County Hotel: **The Classics**
Kendal Brewery Arts Centre: **Al Cohn**
Kirkcaldy Birksgate Hotel: **The Alwwodley Jets/Bombers UK**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Inner City Unit/D.I. Band**
London Camden Electric Ballroom: **Pointed Sticks**
London Clapham 101 Club: **The Act**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Soft Boys**
London Hackney Adam & Eve: **Rusty 'n' The Renegades**
London Hammersmith Lyric Theatre (free, lunchtime): **Bob Kerr's Jazz Friends**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Blondie-/Whirlwind**
London Herne Hill Half Moon: **Electrotunes**
London Peckham Newlands Tavern: **Billy Karloff Band**
London Regents Park Cecil Sharp House: **Cyril Tawney**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Jay McShann Trio/Al Cohn**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Big Chief**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Groundation**
London Victoria The Venue: **Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders/Blast Furnace's Revenge**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Metro Glider**
Manchester Pips: **Cathy Ellis & The In Crowd**
Sheffield Philadelphian Club: **Strange Days**
Stockton The Teesside: **Carl Green & The Scene**
Stroud Subscription Rooms: **Medium Medium / Scream And Scream Again / Blurt**
Taunton The Market House: **The Shattered Dolls**
Torquay The Pelican: **Vardis**
Torquay 400 Club: **Gangsters**
Walsall Pelsall Community Centre: **Jaqui & Bridie/Misty/Dandy**
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime): **The Pests**
Wolverhampton Lafayette: **Mistress**

Sunday

Birmingham Odeon: **Alex Harvey's New Band**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Prima Donna**
Birmingham Shirley Red Lion: **The Crack**
Birmingham (Yardley) The Swan: **Video**
Bradford College Vaults Bar: **Easy Rider**
Bristol Locarno: **The Clash**
Bromley The Northover (lunchtime): **Bill Scott & Ian Ellis**
Burnley Bankhall Club: **J. G. Spoils Rock Band**
Chiddingly Six Bells: **Airport**
Glenrothes Rothes Arms: **The Alwoodley Jets/Bombers UK**
Leeds Florde Green Hotel: **Quartz**
Leeds Haddon Hall: **The Classics**
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: **Windows**
Liverpool Empire Theatre: **UFO**
London Battersea Nag's Head: **Jugular Vein**
London Camden Dirgwalls: **Law Lewis Reformer**
London Charing Cross Duke of Buckingham: **The Invisibles (for four days)**
London E.17 Chestnut Tree: **Roaring Jelly**
London Finchley Torrington: **Red Beans & Rice**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Flys**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Blondie-/Whirlwind**
London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: **The Boyle Family**
London Herne Hill Half Moon: **Terminal Snacks**
London Kennington The Cricketers: **The O.K. Band**
London North End Rd The Cock: **Aura**
London Oxford St 100 Club: **The Blues Band**
London Putney Half Moon: **John Martyn Band**
London Soho Pizza Express: **The Deanery Three**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Monty Sunshine Band**
Luton The Unicorn: **The Rackets**
Manchester Openshaw Old House At Home: **Vince Dugdale Band**
Newbridge Club & Institute: **The Boys**
Newquay Central Hotel: **The Winners**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Medium Medium**
Southend Shrimpers: **Bastille**
Uxbridge Brunel University: **Pointed Sticks**
Walsall Dirty Duck (lunchtime): **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Monday

Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Gangsters**
Birmingham Sound House: **Quartz**
Blackpool Jenk's Bar: **The Passage**
Glasgow Apollo Centre: **UFO**
Glasgow The Platform: **Al Cohn**
Guildford Bunters: **Spider**
Ilford Cauliflower Hotel: **Original East Side Stompers**
Ipswich Gaumont Theatre: **The Clash**
Leeds Heaven & Hell: **Butterflies**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Sunset Boys / Will Hung / Stig Stig Putrid**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Sound / Blitz**
London Harrow Rd Windsor Castle: **The Rackets**
London Knightsbridge Pizza On The Park: **Jay McShann**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **The O.K. Band**
London Putney Half Moon: **Earl Okin**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Penny Royal**
London W.14 The Kensington: **The Trendies**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Party**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gwaihir**
Sheffield City Hall: **Alex Harvey's New Band**
Southampton Brittenne Park Hotel: **Toulouse**
Southend Zero 6: **Musicians Workshop**
Sunderland Boilermakers Club: **Flying Saucers**

Tuesday

Aberdeen Capitol Theatre: **UFO**
Aberdeen Ruffles: **The Beat/The Shapiros**
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Brujo**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Killer**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Speed Limit**
Bury The Derby Hall: **Bronx/Venom**
Crawley Waters Edge: **The Rackets**
Fleet Fox & Hounds: **Celebrated Ratlifle Stout Band**
Gateshead Progressive Club: **Flying Saucers**
Inverness Keppoch Inn: **Tom Robinson Band**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Bad Manners**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Holly & The Italians**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **Brett Marvin & The Thunderbolts**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Al Cohn / Roger Kellaway Trio**
London Stratford North-East Polytechnic: **Patrik Fitzgerald**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **The Jump**
London W.14 The Kensington: **Metro Glider**
Norwich Cromwells: **The Running Dogs**
Quorn Blacksmiths Arms: **Roaring Jelly**
Sheffield Polytechnic: **The Alwoodley Jets/Bombers UK**
Walsall Dirty Duck: **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Wednesday

Aberdeen Ruffles: **Tom Robinson Band/Standard Issue**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Brujo**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Rainmaker**
Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: **Roses**
Brighton Top Rank: **The Ramones**
Bristol The Stonehouse: **Creature Beat**
Cheltenham Plough Inn: **Roadsters**
Denton Prince of Wales: **Blitz**
Derby Bell Hotel: **The Speedy Bears**
Edinburgh Odeon: **UFO**
Leicester De Montfort Hall: **The Clash**
London Camden Dingwalls: **UB 40**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Straight 8**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Metro Glider**
London Knightsbridge The Grove: **Free Beer**
London Marquee Club: **The Boys**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Dana Simmonds & Greg's Folk and Blues Showcase**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Jay McShann Trio**
London Wimbledon F.C. Nelson's Club: **Klondike Pete & The Huskies**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **White Rabbit/Strange Fashion**
Newbury RAF Greenham Common: **The Marvelettes**
Northwood HMS Warrior: **Turbo**
Norwich White's: **The Rackets**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Gwaihir**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Some Chicken**
Sheffield Oaks Hotel: **Al Cohn**
South Woodford Railway Bell: **Original East Side Stompers**
St Helens Railway Hotel: **Mistress**
Swansea Technical College: **Lucifer**
Swinton Duke of Wellington: **The Trend**

THE RAMONES are coming over at last, after several projected 1979 visits proved to be non-starters. Their 1980 tour kicks off at Brighton on Wednesday. The inevitable Joey Ramone is pictured here by Chris Horler.

NEW YORK GIG GUIDE

Compiled by Joe Stevens

MONDAY (14): Lincoln Centre — **Luciano Pavarotti**; Syncopation — **Raw Sugar**; Sweet Basil — **Chuck Wayne**; Gilderslaeves — **Tokyo Power**; Reno Sweeney — **Ann Jillian (four days)**; Duplex — **Raiman & Hayes**.
TUESDAY (15): Hurrah — **XTC / Nash The Slash / 8-Eyed Spy (two days)**; Ones — **Mojanya**; Radio City — **Pearl Bailey**; Other End — **Kenny Rankin (two days)**; Duplex — **Linda Holland (two days)**; My Father's Place — **Brothers & Sisters**; Westbank Cafe — **Cold Front**; Fat Tuesday's — **Cecil Taylor (five days)**; Knickerbocker Saloon — **Junior Mance (six days)**; Kenny's Castaways — **Rachel Faro**.
WEDNESDAY (16): My Father's Place — **Edgar Winter**; Lone Star Cafe — **Bellamy Brothers (two days)**; Syncopation — **Randy West (four days)**; Westbank Cafe — **Grace Testani**; Jazz Forum — **Jill McManus**; Sheraton Centre — **Billie Butterfields (seven days)**.
THURSDAY (17): Pastime in Amityville — **David Johansen**; Avery Fisher — **Zubin Mehta**; My Father's Place — **Kasim Sultan**.
FRIDAY (18): Hurrah — **Fingerprintz / Individuals / Joey & The Pats (two days)**; Bottom Line — **Mink DeVille (two days)**; Emerald City — **The Shoes (two days)**; Nashville East — **Chubby Checker**; Capitol — **Weather Report**; Stickball — **Octaroon**; Kenny's Castaways — **Video (three days)**; Silver Dollar — **Full Hand / Inner Spirit**; Carnegie Hall — **Stanley Turrentine / Mars**; Emmett's Inn — **Uncle Floyd Show**.
SATURDAY (19): Hunter College — **Our Hitler**; Tower — **Pleasure / Lenny White**; My Father's Place — **The Ratters / The Plasmatics**; Stars — **Mel Lewis**.
SUNDAY (20): Max's Kansas City — **The Lords**; Avery Fisher — **James Galway**; Capitol — **Rick Nelson**.

LIVE PAGE

01-261 6153

marquee

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Sat 12th January
CLOSED

Sun 13th Jan (Adm £1.50)
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Plus SUPPORT + JERRY FLOYD

Weds 16th Jan (Adm £1.50)
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Thursday 10th January £1
R 'n' B Night featuring
BLAST FURNACE'S REVENGE + The Lines

Friday 11th January £1
POINTED STICKS (Stiff's Latest) + The Neutrinos

Saturday 12th January £1
HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS + Bobby Henry

Sunday 13th January £1
SOFT BOYS + Device

Monday 14th January £1
RED BEANS AND RICE + Gareint Watkins

Tuesday 15th January £1
THE QUADS + Support

Thursday 17th January £1
R 'n' B Night featuring
LITTLE ROOSTERS + The Cannibals

Beelzebub

A DEVIL OF A DISCO

Saturday 19th January
Rock A Billy Rebels
MATCHBOX
Bop Street Kids

in the 2,000 CAPACITY BIG HALL, 8 pm
Tickets £2 In Advance
Tickets are available 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

Beelzebub

A DEVIL OF A DISCO

Saturday 26th January
SUZI QUATRO
+ Support

in the 2,000 CAPACITY BIG HALL, 8 pm
Tickets £2.75 In Advance

Advance tickets from Saffron Records, Trinity Street, St. Austell, and from Virgin Records

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CARLYON BAY, 2 MILES EAST OF ST. AUSTELL OFF THE A390
TELEPHONE PAR (072-681) 4261

POINTED STICKS

Stiff's latest signings
from Vancouver
Thurs 10th Jan Nottingham
Fri 11th Jan Nashville
Sat 12th Jan Electric Ballroom
Sun 13th Jan Brand Concerts
Don't miss them!

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Wednesday January 9th £1.20
Heavy Metal Night featuring
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Thursday January 10th £1.20
GIRLSCHOOL + Cahoots

Friday January 11th £2.20
HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS + BOBBY HENRY AND THE RISK

Saturday January 12th £2.20
SCREEN IDOLS + Numbers

Monday January 14th £1.20
FLYING COLOURS + THE ACT

Tuesday January 15th £1.20
ELECTROTUNES + Gazer

Wednesday January 16th £1.20
CRAZE + Martian Schoolgirls + The Mice

LICENSED BARS - LIVE MUSIC - DANCING
8pm - 2am MONDAY TO SATURDAY
OVER 18s ONLY

HOPE & ANCHOR

UPPER STREET
ISLINGTON, N.1

Thursday 10th January £1
HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS

Friday 11th January £1
BODY SNATCHERS

Saturday 12th January £1
U B 40

Sunday 13th January 75p
THE Q-TIPS

Monday 14th January 75p
BRAINIAC 5

Tuesday 15th January £1
DOLLY MIXTURE

Wednesday 16th January 75p
KNOX

Thursday 17th January 75p
BOBBY HENRY

DINGWALLS

RHYTHM 'N' BOOZE

THURS 10
STIFF'S LATEST
POINTED STICKS
FRI 11
AXIS POINT
SUPPORTED BY
BUNK DODGER
SAT 12
INNER CITY UNIT
SUPPORTED BY
O.J. BAND

SUN 13 R & B NIGHT
LEW LEWIS REFORMER
TUES 15
BAD MANNERS
WED 16
U.B. 40
THURS 17
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THE BRECKNOCK
CAMDEN
Friday, 11th January

Your alternative for the Eighties

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20 Carolgate, Retford, Notts.
Tel. 0777 704981.

Friday January 11th Adm £1.50
(New Wave)
GODS TOYS

Saturday January 12th Adm £1.50
(Heavy Metal)
SLEDGEHAMMER

WIMBLEDON THEATRE

The Broadway, S.W.19
Tel. 01-946 5211
Sunday 20th January 1980
By courtesy of Beggars Banquet

MERTON PARKAS

Commencing 7.30pm. Tickets £2, £1.75 & £1.50 from Box Office
A benefit concert in aid of Little League Football.

Werner Muller Presents
DOGWATCH
plus Salamander Red
Friday 11th January at
Oak Tree, 1 Western Av., W3
East Acton Tube

THE GREYHOUND

Fulham Palace Road

Thursday January 10th 50p
CLAYSON AND THE ARGONAUTS

Friday January 11th 60p
CROOKS + Directions + Odds

Saturday January 12th £1
RED BEANS AND RICE + 9 Below Zero

Sunday January 13th 75p
THE FLYS + Oxy and the Morons

Monday January 14th 50p
THE SOUNDS + Blitz

Tuesday January 15th 50p
RED NITE + Nuthin' Fancy

Wednesday January 16th 50p
TEN POLE TUDOR + Metrogliders

LLLLL presents
The
RAMONES
plus THE BOYS

Rainbow Theatre, London

Saturday 9th February 8pm
Tickets £4.00 £3.50 £3.00 £2.50
Available from Box Office. Tel. 01-278 3148.

The Lines

Live: NASHVILLE 10th Jan
101 CLUB 15 Jan

The Single: On The Air

BRUNEL UNIVERSITY

Kingston Lane, Uxbridge, Middlesex
Tel. Uxbridge (89)39125

FRIDAY JANUARY 18th
THE MEKONS
+ SUPPORT
TICKETS £1.30 IN ADVANCE, £1.50 ON DOOR
SATURDAY FEBRUARY 16th
ROCKPILE
(FEATURING DAVE EDMUNDS & NICK LOWE)
+ Support
TICKETS £2.50 IN ADVANCE, £2.80 ON 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.

LIVE PAGE

THE BRIDGE HOUSE
23 BARKING ROAD, CANNING TOWN, E16

Thursday January 10th 60p
* ROLL UPS *
Album out now Low Dives for Highballs

Friday January 11th 70p
GERRY McAVOY JAM
with Dave Edmunds, Louis Martin & Ted McKenna
+ Canis Major

Saturday January 12th 60p
THE BLUES BAND
+ The Cannibals

Sunday January 13th 50p
TOUR DE FORCE
+ The Flatbackers

Monday January 14th 50p
THE CLERKS
+ The Gym-Slips

Tuesday January 15th 50p
NEVER NEVER BAND
+ Stagestruck

Wednesday January 16th 60p
WASTED YOUTH
+ The Strets

Thursday January 17th 60p
* ROLL UPS *

SAD MO STRANGERS G

9th TWO BREWERS, CLAPHAM
10th BRECKNOCK
15th GOLDEN LION
16th TWO BREWERS
17th 101 CLUB
19th JOHN BULL, CHISWICK

Final single released 18th Jan. Available initially from Rough Trade or directly from Brave Tales (£1 inc. p&p)

BRAVE TALES
BRAVE TALES 639 Fulham Street, LONDON SW6 3RE 01 736 1835

SCREEN IDOLS
Live at the Music Machine
Saturday, January 12th
Album "Premiere" available on Cobra now

MARK ANDREWS AND THE GENTS
plus
THE FLATBACKERS
At The Moonlight Club,
West Hampstead,
Thurs January 10th & Thurs January 17th

DUKE OF LANCASTER
Approach Road, NEW BARNET
(beside BR New Barnet)

Thursday January 10th
THE VIDEO'S
Friday January 11th
RED NITE
Saturday January 12th
JOY RIDE
Sunday January 13th
CANIS MAJOR
Tuesday January 15th
SPOILS

THE Venue
160 VICTORIA ST, SW1
(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.

Weds 9th–Thurs 10th Jan £3.50
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Sat 12th Jan £3.00
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Tues 22nd Jan £3.00
THE MIKE WESTBROOK BRASS BAND
Wed 23rd Jan £3.00
THE INMATES
Thurs 24th Jan £3.75
SUZI QUATRO
Fri 25th to Mon 28th Jan £5.00
DARYL HALL and JOHN OATES
(2 shows Fri & Sat)
Weds 30th Jan £3.50
JAPAN
Thurs 31st Jan £3.00
THE SPRING CRUISE
Featuring the Blues Band, Stonebridge McGuinness and the Dance Band

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THURS 10th JAN £1
+ The Lines
DASHVILLE

WINDSOR CASTLE
309 Harrow Road, W9
Wednesday 9th FREE
RIFF RAFF
Thursday 10th 50p
THE CARPETTES
Friday 11th 50p
ROARING 80's
+ The Jump
Saturday 12th 50p
TENNIS SHOES
+ Holidays
Sunday 13th FREE
FULL MOON
Monday 14th FREE
THE RACKETS
Tuesday 15th FREE
SMALL WONDERS
Wednesday 16th FREE
RIFF RAFF
Open all 12 Mon-Sat Close 10.30 Sun
Westbourne Park Tube 01-229 6483

THE MOONLIGHT CLUB
100 West End Lane,
West Hampstead N W6

Thursday, January 10th £1
MARK ANDREWS and the GENTS
+ The Flatbackers
Friday, January 11th £1.50
THE NEVER NEVER BAND
+ The Speedy Bears
Saturday, January 12th £1
SOX + Metrogliders
Monday, January 14th £1.50
LONG TALL SHORTY
+ Speedball
+ Eddie Steady Go
Tuesday, January 15th £1
LIPSTICK + Performance
Wednesday, January 16th £1
A to Z + The Backnumbers

Please phone before setting out to check, but bookings major credits accepted

WHAT'S ON AT THE ROCKGARDEN
BAUHAUS
THU JAN 10 £1.75 English, Never been to Anthrax, Sorrow, Silent Work.
UB40
FRI JAN 11 £2.25 Short fat Two-tone stuff, but succeeding in their own direction with Specials & Dangerous M.M.
THE Soft Boys
SAT JAN 12 £2.25 Imagination and talent and now with choice of the finals
The DECORATORS
SUN JAN 13 £2.50 Three Rows
MONDAY CLOSED FOR PRIVATE CHARITABLE FUNCTION
TUESDAY
HOLLY GOLIGHTLY & THE FLATBACKERS
WED JAN 16 Brilliant but popular Rock
STRAIGHTS
VALENTINES
THU JAN 17 Great Northern Rock
The Doors open at 8.00 (except Sunday when its 100 till 12). Hot Pie & Cockles, night thru. Our restaurant is open 6-3 (Sundays last orders at 11.45pm Monday-Thursday, Saturday). We are on the corner of King St & James St and Queen Street Tube from Kyle Street.
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ALBERTO Y LOST TRIOS PARANOIAS
are in their new show
NEVER MIND THE BULLOCKS
(a light-hearted look at the Black Death)
at the MAYFAIR THEATRE 8pm nightly
Tickets £2 £3.25 £3.95 Box Office 01-629 3036
must end soon - book now!

OUTLAW AND JOHN SHERRY PRESENT
WISHBONE ASH
HAMMERSMITH ODEON
Friday, February 1st
Extra Show, Saturday, February 2nd
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FROM PREMIER BOX OFFICE; LONDON THEATRE BOOKINGS; TICKET MACHINE

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NEWS ROUND-UP

Petty, Parkas & Passage

TOM PETTY & The Heartbreakers have switched one of the dates in their upcoming UK tour, reported in our Christmas issue. They now play Southampton Gaumont on March 3 instead of February 29.

THE MERTON PARKAS play a one-off benefit concert for the Little League (U.S. and British children's exchange scheme) at London Wimbledon Theatre on Sunday, January 20 — tickets £2, £1.75 and £1.50. This is likely to be their only date until the early spring, as they are currently rehearsing, prior to recording a new album for Beggar's Banquet.

THE CHORDS — the band launched and fostered by Jimmy Pursey until they went their separate ways — are being lined up for a tour to start at the end of this month. It will aid promotion of their new Polydor single 'Maybe Tomorrow', released on January 25 and featuring 'I Don't Wanna Know' and 'Hey Girl' on the B-side.

PATRIK FITZGERALD plays his first 1980 date at London North-East Polytechnic (Stratford Precinct) next Tuesday, January 15, and is lining up other dates to follow.

THE PASSAGE have brought in two members to replace out-going bassist-singer Tony Friel. They are vocalist John Snowdon (ex-Sheffield band The Limit) and bassist Martine Hilton (ex-Property Of . . .), who join originals Lorraine Hilton (keyboards) and Dick Witts (drums), so bringing the band up to quartet size. The new line-up debuts at Blackpool Jenk's Bar (January 14) and Manchester Polytechnic (17).

SHAM 69 are planning a full British tour for the early spring, to coincide with the April release of their new Polydor album. The band begin a three-week eight-nation European tour this weekend, but will finish off the LP in February, prior to spending the whole of March touring the States.

UK SUBS, who go into the studios next week to start work on a new single and album, have a one-off date at London Camden Music Machine on January 26.

HOLLY & THE ITALIANS have slotted in a couple of last-minute London gigs — at Islington Hope & Anchor (tonight, Thursday) and Camden Music Machine supported by Bobby Henry (Friday). They're already set for Covent Garden Rock Garden next Tuesday (15).

Osibisa record deal, gigs

OSIBISA have been signed by Pye to a three-year deal (they were previously with Bronze), and their first single under the deal is released on January 25, titled 'I Feel Patter Patter'. To coincide with this, they are playing a string of concerts, visiting Leicester Polytechnic (January 24), Guildford Surrey University (25), Bournemouth Winter Gardens (26), Croydon Fairfield Hall (27), Colchester Essex University (30), St. Alban's City Hall (February 1), St. Austell New Cornish Riviera (2), Worthing Assembly Hall (4), London Queen Mary College (7), London College of Printing (8) and London Victoria The Venue (9).

TOYAH ON THE TRAIL

TOYAH, the band fronted by the ebullient Toyah Willcox, go back on the road at the end of next week for a 17-venue tour — including three London dates. They visit Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic (January 18), Hitchin College (19), London Marquee (20), Cardiff Top Rank (22), Bristol Granary (23), Blackpool Norbreck Castle (24) Huddersfield Polytechnic (26), Leeds Fan Club (27), Doncaster Institute (28), Nottingham Trent Polytechnic (29), Norwich St. Andrew's Hall (31), London Southbank Polytechnic (February 1), Reading Bulmershe College (2), Torquay 400 Ballroom (5), Port Talbot Troubadour (7), Harrow Technical College (8) and London Camden Music Machine (9). A double A-side single will be issued by Safari later this month, details to follow shortly.

ENIGMATIC MEKONS

THE MEKONS have now confirmed two dates at London Marquee on January 30 and 31. Changes in their gig sheet announced last week are the cancellation of Canterbury Art College (January 17), the switch of Manchester Polytechnic from 25 to 24, and the addition of Stoke North Staffs Polytechnic (25). The band have also issued an enigmatic statement saying they are now ready to move into an area of music previously held sacred, and hope to be incorporating some of the developments into forthcoming gigs. *(The mind boggles).*

THE JAM and The Clash are allegedly interested in taking part in an open-air Rock Against Racism event, to be staged in South London's Brockwell Park during Spring Bank Holiday weekend in late May, though neither band has confirmed this claim. Forever striving for new subjects to rock against, this one is going under the banner of 'Rock Against Thatcher'.

SPIZZ of Spizz Energi was taken ill last week, and has been forced to cancel gigs for the next fortnight, resuming at High Wycombe Nags Head on January 24. After completing promotion on the current single 'Where's Captain Kirk?', the band will subsequently be known as Athletico Spizz 80, in keeping with Spizz's policy of a name change every year.

LIVE!

The Laurel And Hardys Of Rock And Roll At It Again

The Clash
Ian Dury & The Blockheads

Aylesbury

THE CLASH; my feelings aren't strong, just warm. Tonight I'm in an army of one.

I've never been caught up in the whirlwind back-to-front lashes that come snapping at the heels of their every last statement; never been over-concerned as to whether they're lagging behind, or surging ahead of, the gargantuan Clash myth; whether it's banner, a veil, a blank canvas, a millstone around their guitar necks. I've felt elated by them, but never involved enough to feel cheated.

If this 'official' tour-opener proved anything it was that The Clash finally have the cohesion to edge much of this theorising into the side-aisles. There's still a massive chasm between their overblown romanticism — typified by 'London Calling' and 'The Guns Of Brixton' — and their intended feet-on-the-street directness of sentiment. It's either been tempered by the acceptance that cloud-headed idealism is their main driving force, or that, musically, they're now much broader, and so much more articulate. Probably both.

Whatever, the myth looks momentous in its sleek new American threads. Jones and Simonon flank Strummer, weaving gangling patterns in shirts with sawn-off sleeves and plainclothes cowboys boots, Jones throwing it all out of balance with flailing scissor-legged leaps — as visual as his guitar is distinct — suspended under the most vivid and carefully restrained lighting rig.

For tonight clash have Lew Lewis for three numbers to chisel his mouth-harp into the superstructure — most effectively on 'Train In Vain" — and for all but two, Blockhead Micky Gallagher on keyboards, who, though initially sounding a welcome addition, simply fills in cracks that are often better left open and seems neither superfluous nor very constructive.

They turn in a furious, grinding assault course of a set, keeping in a compact, diverse mix of the past best — from 'Police & Thieves' to 'White Man' — and laying open ample scope for the new album. It's sometimes patchy, sometimes engagingly loose — as in the gorgeous chunky reggae 'Bankrobbing Song' — and sometimes breathtaking in its intensity and sheer spaciousness of sound.

'London Calling' gets dispatched early on, and almost crucified by Strummer's hopeless vocal. Simonon gives 'The Guns Of Brixton' similarly duff treatment (little better than the album version), so it must say something for the quality of both numbers that they aren't killed stone dead.

The pacing's dodgy overall, steering well clear of a conventional gradual climb (a mistake, I'd venture), but just occasionally — 'Jimmy Jazz' and the tumultuous 'Clampdown' — getting about as near to perfection as is humanly advisable.

I'm no great Clash fan, but they won. Can't be bad.

Repaying dues after The Clash support at the Kampuches Benefit were Dury and the Blocks, following what's commonly known as a 'spirited' warm-up by psychedelic punk pioneer Kris Needs and the new Vice Creams.

The Blocks come on fighting fit, intent on converting as many of The Clash contingent as Clash had won over Dury fans.

Bringing on "handsome person number one" (Mick Jones) to add an unassuming rhythm part to 'Sweet Gene Vincent' makes it easier for those who've never met Dury before, but due to the follow-spot operator's total misunderstanding of the gesture, Jones gets the megastar spotlight while the Blocks toil away somewhere in the dim background.

Unlike The Clash, the set's more or less an affirmation of style as opposed to a crack at breaking any new ground. As such, it's a fairly level event, not helped in the early stages by a miserable sound mix. There's a few minor changes: Gallagher's slightly re-arranged keyboard accents (in place of Chaz Jenkel), and a shift of emphasis onto Davey Payne who completely reservices 'Clevor Trever' and, in 'Plaistow Patricia', seems hell-bent on getting sounds out of his tenor sax that can strip paint at 50 yards.

This being a support slot (and he doesn't play too many), Dury condensed the current set down to its failsafe skeleton. The fact that precious few of these were from 'Do It Yourself' makes you wonder what his next move will be.

He's been in this position before and came up trumps. The only difference now is the stakes are higher.

Mark Ellen

All pix Pennie Smith. Clockwise: The Clash, Simonon, Strummer and Ian Dury.

U2
Soul Boys

Moonlight Club

TWO Newcomers playing in NW6 either side of the Xmas go slow. Plenty of gaps in the gathering for the U2 show, but of the two they're the ones with obvious commercial potential. Standing on toes rubbing elbows for Soul Boys, but only because they were supporting local stars Spizz Energi — who have yet to change their name for the new year.

Early contact with the assured U2's physical sound probably won't leave you struck by their presence, dear. Aesh! A very rational and functional sort of taut pop, you'll think. Industrious, but lacking invention.

Peel away the layers of prejudice you inevitably feel when faced with yet another pop lineup playing bouncily with swift Ramone riffs, moral melodies and mobile structures and take some evasive action. Don't look straight on, come in at an angle.

U2 are sharp and subtle and cynical, shyly seductive in an uncompromising way like The Pretenders or The Au Pairs. A pop that isn't pap and pad, a safe cushion of cliches and convenience, but angles, urgency, deflections. U2 are style plus spontaneity, an uncouth grace, an agile synthesis of abusive and abrasive ways to use up all that evil and inviting '60s-'70s tradition. Subversive pop can be so stimulating — don't you think? — slapping and stinging when you least expect it, beautifully bittersweet.

Of course, U2 are still young and free of any kind of bizzy contradictions, so I can have my fun with no guilt. And if the wild wit and serious rave of U2 won't turn you on, they look so cute.

Pretty drummer, odd bassist, tense guitarist, and to deliver their jittery balance of amiability and aggression a lead singer who could well grow to be something of a nuisance when U2 are *TOTP* regulars but right now adds new tingles to the greedy Bobsie presence. Like naughty Mork the unpredictable alien he's irrepressible, irritating and accidentally, incidentally and purposefully incisive. A multitude of targets are shot at, a few are bound to be hit.

U2 are from Dublin, showband roots not a total secret. A group made for loving and leaving, for burning into view and then burning up. When a group's in view it's so hard for them to envisage being a nonentity again. You have to sigh. But for now — U2, here they are.

U2 are deceptive. Soul Boys are just plain puzzling.

To start from the top, or the front anyway, a whole puzzle in itself. Singer and left-handed-upside-down guitarist for this blank faced trio has extravagantly dark latin looks that laugh all over Travolta and a complexion as soft and smooth as his inverted guitar playing is fashionably scratchy and wretched. The group want to be disconcerting, so his looks, dominated by delicately decorated eyes, are appropriately if unusually moody. His voice adds a crazy ingredient of disorientation.

No need for them to try to be weird, though try they do.

He sings in a strong voice that could obviously tackle pop-opera, and would perhaps sound more comfortable with Engelbert ballads. Like a tutored but casual Ian Curtis, he has the range and flexibility that the singers for Bunnymen and Human League strive for. On the night, words disappeared courtesy of heat, poor sound and buzzing conversation, but betcha Soul Boys are fractured, fractious romanticists, full of sin, doubt and confession.

The songs, long and short, also recall Velvet moments, but not in the obvious hectic manner. Soul Boys like shadows. They're also fond of meandering, using the bare guitar, a meticulous bass and sane drums to set up careful dirges, and have a more appealing tendency to keep it direct and drop together neat quick patterns that could capture alarm and ambiguity of Talking Heads, and no doubt want to.

Soul Boys intrigued me for ten minutes, and didn't bore me for the rest of their set. There are plenty of places that they have to go, plenty of changes they need to make, but they have the potential and ambition to overcome their indulgences and put more into their sound than they borrow. They're very precious; they need to toughen up.

But they're fronted by A Face, and that never does any harm. Here they come!

Paul Morley

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What we

Selecter. Pic Justin Thomas.

The Selecter
The Bodysnatchers

Dingwalls

THE LAST thing I heard in 1979 and the first thing I heard in 1980 were rocksteady ska rhythms from two bands connected with what must be last year's most successful independent label — Two-Tone.

As the dancing reggae beat of The Bodysnatchers saw out the '70s, a cross-section of Two-Tones — The Specials, Madness and The Selecter, purveyors of this infectious newbeat style — mingled with the punters and pressed enthusiastically against the stage. A few minutes into the New Year and a good half of that brigade (The Selecter) were onstage themselves, showing the way into 1980, and showing their precursors, The Bodysnatchers, the way too . . .

. . . Because, unfortunately, The Bodysnatchers, although heading in the right direction, have not yet found a route of their own. They are following too closely in the footsteps of the Big Three, without introducing any new ideas, and so allowing the Two-Tone stamp to hide their personal identity.

But there is plenty of room for development within the seven-piece (which includes keyboards and saxophone) all-girl line-up — none of them has been playing very long and all are learning together. But at the moment, with most of their concentration put into finding their way up and down fretboards and keeping in time, there is not much left for experimentation or diversification.

Their music is nearer reggae than ska — even more so than The Selecter — but with singer Rhoda's constant calling for Rude Girls (and Boys) and the band's two-tonic dress, their affiliations are obvious. They get into the spirit of things, are lively and vigorous — but not distinct enough. Because they have come so far after only three months together, suggests that the scope and capabilities are there.

As Two-Tone's next likely proteges they'll get all the help and encouragement they need, the only danger being that they may become even more restricted in their musical direction. (The reason Madness broke from Two-Tone was their awareness of the need to branch out on their own, and The Beat have voiced the same opinion).

Despite these reservations, The Bodysnatchers are definitely one of the bands to watch out for in 1980; as are, of course, The Selecter.

They played better than ever this evening, or at least were more enjoyable back in a small venue. Pauline seems to click with any audience the moment she walks onstage, but tonight there was an added familiarity. With her quick, joyful running, dancing and Cockney stage-talk it was impossible for the punters not to be filled with the same zest for The Selecter's ska'd reggae, spiked tonight with a highly addictive New Year spirit.

'James Bond', 'Carry Go Bring Come' and 'On My Radio' were obvious favourites and the most ecstatically received. A colourful mixture of people surged towards the music, leaping and reeling at random, drunk on atmosphere as much as alcohol, and The Selecter reciprocated with all their usual unrehearsed capriciousness, dashing about and knocking each other over in their enthusiasm, whilst never missing a note.

Motorheaders Lemmy and Phil (thy) Animal, and Shane Nip mingled with crew cuts, spiked barnets and dreadlocks — proving once again The Selecter's massed and mixed audience appeal.

What better recommendation for the '80s?

Deanne Pearson

did on New Year's eve

The Slits

New York

ANOTHER American debut of another new British band at Hurrah's. But this is New Year's Eve and the ticket is 25 bucks — probably a record admission price for a new wavish band.

This produces an odd audience mix of really committed punters, suburban student couples out for an evening, and a few interested media types. The floor in front of the stage is packed tight and expectations are high.

Singer Ari appears first on the dark stage, dancing and miming while the DJ spins some roots sounds. Then Viv and Tessa come on and the three dance around with spastic, funny movements, warming up the space for the sound. They are augmented by Pop Group drummer Bruce Smith and Penny Tobin on percussion and unfortunately inaudible keyboards.

Strike up the band! The Slits hit hard from the start, move you with a surprising jolt. The rhythm, though reggae based, isn't smooth and seductive like much reggae but angular, jarring and requires you to attune your ears to get a grasp.

The set is shaky at the start, tentative. They are feeling out the new ground of a strange new land.

Ari doesn't much like the small stage at first. She looks at Viv (just there) and at Tessa (just there) and looks at the audience and tells us, "I'm a mover. I don't know what to do like this." But she warms to it, a real charmer.

Expressive face, piles of dread-locked hair which she hid under a tall hat at first but later shook out and like she said, she is a mover, a dancer, looking for new moves. By mid-set she was well into step and The Slit's uncompromising rhythms picked up force and began to work magic.

They were not going to be pushed into a show-business attitude by the demands of the gig. They never even approached slickness or too much professional veneer. Not that the set didn't run smoothly; it did. But there was always room for mistakes and wrong turns to be made and salvaged, for personality to rear its imperfect but gorgeous head.

Ari complained about being sick, and even described the state of her bowels, complaining that you can't take a decent shit in America. She told us we were made to pay so much to get in, reminded us that we (mostly) hadn't heard their album yet, but that she'd advertise it. A funny, proud and winning woman.

You could come knowing nothing about The Slits, nothing about the Rasta culture that influences them, and yet you would know, by watching them, that the funny hair and clothes were not costumes put on for a show, but parts of their personalities, little bits of what makes them what they are.

Their songs are important stuff, personal and real. 'Spend Spend Spend' deals with the familiar syndrome of feeling depressed and going out to buy something to help you get over it. 'Ping Pong Affair' and 'Love Und Romance' cast a cold eye on dating, relationships and being alone. 'Typical Girls' sounds cutting but it's not nasty. The Slits see the scam of our social *"marketing ploys"* and call it as they see it.

It all works very well live, where the convictions they carry in their persons translates the recorded and fixed sentiments of the songs into comments on the instant, inviting reflection and dialogue. They prove too that the distinctiveness of their recorded sound can't just be credited to Dennis Bovell's production. This was a fortuitous intersection of a producer's proclivities with an artist's intentions. The sound grows from the material.

Their version of 'Heard It Through The Grapevine' is lean bringing out the moody, brooding feel of the lyric. Even better was a cover of Dennis Brown's great 'Man Next Door', complete with dub section at the end.

Towards the end of the set they were joined by Public Image guitarist Keith Levine and Gareth Sager of The Pop Group on sax for added, though unrequired, instrumental muscle. Levine was alright, but Viv's Scratchy loose and winging it style is so integral to The Slits that his presence was superfluous. Tessa's dub-wise and versatile bass playing also gets high marks.

The Slits are tough minded, inventive and rightly proud to be taking fine influences and making of them new sounds. They are not accomplished, smooth or fully realised. But diamonds in the rough can still shine.

Richard Grabel

The Slits in New York on New Year's Eve. Pic Joe Stevens.

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Simple Minds

Glasgow

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At the gig, a mass conspiracy of Glasgow's tallest people restricts your view. Each breath inhales cubic metres of noxious tobacco fumes to agitate unspecified respiratory infections. Dancers' careless limbs bruise, crush and flail from every angle; the cigarette burn from an unknown assailant throbs and turns poisonous; low grade ink stamped on your hand soaks in, causing industrial dermatitis, serious allergy or rare blood disease.

Every floor in the building is covered with broken glass, spilt beer, water and discarded cans. Nowhere is safe from lanthy queues, reckless drunks or plummetting glasses nudged from overhead ledges.

Yes, it's a college Christmas dance and we're all having a GREAT TIME!

Through the heat haze heads bounce around on jets of water at a funfair rifle range. That's the band. That's Simple Minds.

A year and a day, a 100 miles away on another 18 inch stage, Simple Minds so close you could try to make them smile, another college dance with most people next door at the disco. I thought I knew then what would happen. I was right. It's just more complicated.

'Life In A Day' was a disappointment; marred by lack of confidence in the studio and experiments with new arrangements — pointless, since they'd got it right the first time. Gigs since have been predictable, introverted, *cold*.

Five weeks, two miles away on another 18-inch stage, Simple Minds as local heroes in their home town for the first time ever. Only 'Factory' and 'Changeling' reached me on the balcony; the other new songs passed by in the distance like ghost ships.

Alienation, I would have agreed.

The central head, red-eyed and sweating, belongs to Jim Kerr. No longer the distant, unassuming Anthony Perkins of Rock (that was David Byrne all the time, really), he now demands your attention: what once seemed a hint of scheming malice now approaches forcefully-restrained psychosis. Tonight at least.

Rather than rely on a few stock movements and some basic charisma, as most others do, Jim has continued to

learn and develop throughout three years in bands. As a performer he has few equals.

The level of musicianship within the band has also improved enormously. That, at least, had been obvious at the previous gig.

They tackle, explore and manipulate the detailed atmosphere of the new songs with ease and strength, finally rediscovering and attaining the promise of a year ago. This is by far the best gig I've seen them play since enhanced memories of early days.

I can't say I'm entirely convinced by everything on 'Real To Real Cacophony', though I'm pleased that the band intend to be a constant source of invention and surprise. And, despite the Eno Obscure Records style of packaging, most of 'Cacophony' is far more commercial than others would have you believe. The older songs seem very clumsy in comparison.

Even 'In My Room', the second encore, a sort of psychedelic jungle-beat improvised for the John Peel show two days previously, is immediately impressive after being acclimatised to the new methods.

Dismissals of Simple Minds as early '70s pomp-rock retreads mean even less now than they have done all year. They have my interest again, and the *Daily Express* said they'd be incredibly successful plenty soon. It must be true.

In earlier, quieter moments End Game played live for the second time ever.

Recruited, rehearsed and composed for within the six weeks following bass player David Rudden's recent sacking from the Berlin Blondes, End Game (named after the Beckett play) at present, rely mainly on fairly simplistic, drifting patterns of bass and guitar, David Murdoch's attractive germ petrol keyboard motifs claiming more attention than Rudden's innocuous vocals.

Textural variation comes when Paul Wishart switches from guitar to sax or flute. The sax leaves no impression despite my attendance at both gigs. The flute is as dreary as measles.

Pleasant rather disturbing, End Game have some good, if half-formed ideas. It's too early for a full assessment, but at least they don't sound like the Berlin Blondes.

Those French Girls are an oddly appealing mixture of dumb theatrics, self-effacing charm and high-quality songs ranging from clever pop novelty (their main strength) such as 'Sparkle', 'Regular Sex', 'Peppermint Lipstick' and the Russian folk-styled 'The Donkey Boys' through all shades in between to fairly successful dramatic items like 'Astronaut' and 'Shot Down In Flames'. Vocalist/composer Sean is a similarly appealing combination of pose, camp, natural friendliness and true star. I can even forgive him the occasional pretension and try to be understanding about the music, which hasn't developed too far from Cockney Rebel/Sailor.

Despite inevitably scant sympathy from the press TFG will continue their present acceleration, impressing audiences at least. It would be wrong to dismiss obvious talent for such superficial reasons as eyeliner, plucked eyebrows and unfashionable listening habits. Let's just hope they buy some new records.

Glenn Gibson

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ACROSS

1 Cards sure sound sweeter shuffled: A Kryptic Factor special!
5 Just an ordinary Jackson
6 Top of the disco talkover sellers (7,7)
9 Disco's prettiest star
11 & 8 Peroxided Tourist
12 Punk thrashers of the old school (3,7)
14 German model turned singer who fronted the original Velvet Underground
15 Phil Manzanera's occasional band; cut an album of the same name (5,3)
16 Legendary US R&B label for which Chuck Berry cut his greatest hits
17 A question about Yes!
20 & 3 Name by which reggae singer-writer Winston Rodney is better known
22 & 31 The Troggs Greatest Hit
24 John of Jethro Dull
25 Leader of the Idle Race when Roy Wood recruited him to ELO (4,5)
26 Sylvester Stallone's starring debut
28 '24 Hours To Tulsa' was his biggest '60s hit (4,6)
30 &34 She sneaked a ride with a cheapskate bus hopper!
32 Veteran rock'n'roller aka R. Penniman Esq. (6,7)
34 See 30
35 Soul singer whose US hits include 'Tired Of Being Alone' and 'I'm Still In Love With You (2,5)

DOWN

1 Frankenstein has a bit part in Blondie! (5,5)
2 It is starred (anag. 2 words)
3 See 20
4 Eric Burdon for instance
5 Ron with Jenny (anag. 2 words)
7 Carl or Robert
8 See 11
10 & 27 Currently disconnected (sic) but best known as Wayne County's backup band
13 & 18 Leader of US R&B band closely associated with B. Springsteen Esq.
15 Recent Dave Edmunds hit pick (5,2,6)
18 See 13
19 The Clash's label (in a manner of speaking)
21 Producer of 'London Calling' (3,7)
23 They got shoved out backwards!! Return of the Kryptic Factor!
25 West Coast snoozehead had a '78 solo hit with 'Life's Been Good' (3,5)
27 See 10
29 Swallowed in a whelk I ear (sic)!!
31 See 22
33 Cool it with the idolatry!

LAST WEEKS ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1 The Beat; 4 'Diamond Dogs'; 7 Eric Idle; 9 'Elected'; 11 'Emma'; 12 (Dave) Edmunds; 13 (Roy) Orbison; 14 Roger Daltrey; 16 'How Long'; 18 Eagles; 20 (Jimmy) Page; 23 'Living On An Island'; 25 (Derek &) Clive; 26 Steve Harley; 28 'Cut'; 30 'Airport'; 31 'Ticket To (Ride)'; 33 (Velvet) Underground; 35 'Blue'; 36 (Wings Over) America'; 37 Velvet (Underground).
DOWN: 1 'The Secret Policeman's (Ball)'; 2 'Because The Night'; 3 Rose Royce; 4 Del (Shannon); 5 Daevid Allen; 6 (Del) Shannon; 8 Les Paul; 10 Cher; 15 Ten Years After; 17 'Wings Over (America)'; 19 Apple; 21 Chic; 22 & 24 Julie Driscoll; 26 'Sir Duke'; 27 Lyceum; 29 Turner; 32 Eddie; 34 RCA.

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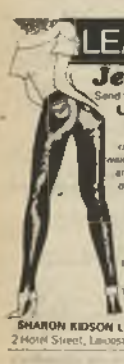

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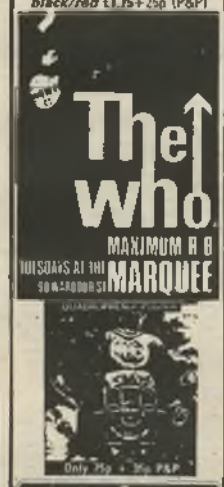

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ALBUMS EXTRA

WYNONIE HARRIS
Good Rockin' Blues
(Gusto)

TO the very end, Wynonie 'Mr Blues' Harris possessed more style than the entire Royal Enclosure at Ascot. When in the Summer of '69 Harris, then aged 54, realised he was dying from having persistently burnt both ends of the candle, he summoned together his countless friends at his Oakland home to celebrate the inevitable. What resulted was a bacchanalia that has passed into the realms of legend.

The master of the *double-entendre*, Harris was a risque R&B raconteur without equal, his speciality being lurid and kinetic tongue-in-cheek sit-coms that dealt predominantly with the everyday problems of scoring rot-gut whisky, the wildest of women and the elusive dollar. Dispensed against a jubilant jump band jive, it was precisely the kind of buck-dance backbeat upon which Bill Haley & The Comets built their popularity. Whereas in comparison Haley appears anaemically passe, Harris retains a timeless, red-blooded vigour.

Wynonie Harris wasn't the first artist to contribute to the mongrelisation of black and white music (shit-kickers yodelling the blues or blues-shouters refrying country corn), but he was arguably by far the most successful. For instance, Harris' biggest King label success '(Don't Roll Those) Bloodshot Eyes (At Me)' was in fact a cover of label-mate Hank Penny's Western-swinger and, incidentally, Harris' one and only minor British hit in 1955.

As it transpires, this was as a direct result of Bill Haley's 'Rock Around The Clock' 'corrupting' this country's youth. Even more ironically, 'Mr Blues' music was first brought to the attention of the British public via *The Goon Show*. With predictable regularity, The Ray Ellington Quartet would perform such Harris hits as 'Good Rockin' Tonight', 'Bloodshot Eyes', 'Adam Come And Get Your Rib', 'Grandma Plays The Numbers' and, though I don't believe Uncle Ray ever broadcast 'I Like My Baby's Pudding', he did receive a number of complaints for performing such lewd material.

Currently being imported into this country by the Midland Record Company, this double-pack transcends specialist-only appeal. Wynonie Harris' hey-day may have pre-dated the rock 'n' roll era, but he was one of the most influential precursors of the white-dominated genre. Elvis Presley may have claimed Dean Martin as his seminal influence, but the source of Elvis' salacious on-stage antics was his constant checking of Wynonie Harris whenever 'Mr Blues' played Memphis.

Here in its unhomogenised glory this 22-track tribute to the original lord of excess has somehow managed to weather the ageing process which invariably locks such recordings into the time capsule. Wynonie Harris' protege Melvin Moore has gone on record as insisting, "Wynonie was a mess, man, all he wanted to do was rock 'em and roll 'em to the very end." What a great epitaph.

Roy Carr

COSMIC HOLS

From page 8

The hotel band

The hotel redcoats

listening elsewhere during the last few years. S'tramp haven't occupied the bulk of my listening time.

However, when it was made known they were willing to talk with the *NME*, I sorted through memories and neglected albums, devoting a full two weeks to coming to terms with the strange Supertramp beast once more. Hence my remark to Provost the previous evening — the root of Roger Hodgson's sudden volte-face.

Sensing that perhaps Roger is edging away from the possibility of a frictional confrontation, I ask if he thinks that the person who conducts the interview should be a S'tramp aficionado. No, says Hodgson, citing *NME's* Tony Stewart as a writer who though not a fan has penned a number of pieces on the band which he admired. It's an example I find hard to agree with, since Tony's articles on Supertramp, although not gushingly sycophantic, did tend to have a favourable dispostion to their work.

Roger colours his explanation with a burlesque ritual which, despite his politeness, I find on reflection to be condescending and insulting. Using his hand as a kind of transcendental carrier pigeon travelling between his forehead and mine, he says: "I don't think I can communicate what's up here to what's up there."

The coach park

"But it only has to go down here," I reason, pointing to my cassette player.

"No," squeals Hodgson, "what's important is what goes on up here" (hand rising to our respective craniums once more). "What goes down there is bullshit."

Is this some sort of spiritual thing, Roger?

"Almost," he replies.

Not exactly delirious at the prospect of heading the wrong way up a mystical cul-de-sac, I say that if his mind is made up I can hardly force him to do the interview. I crack a feeble half-joke to relieve the tension: "Anyway I didn't bring any gelignite with me."

Turning to leave, I note the omnipresent face of Charlie Provost creasing into a giggle.

THE SUPERTRAMP organisation evidently recoiled at the appearance of unassuming youthfulness and incongrous punkiness. Hyper-sensitivity and overt caution blinds it to the fact that it has become everything they feared from me: bigoted, dogmatic and unco-operative. It's sadly indicative of the slide into superficialities and irrelevance of a band who once displayed a cogent grasp on reality.

They now refuse to make any concessions to prevailing circumstances and conditions. The show, a spectacle of almost overwhelming professionalism, is so obsessed with style that little else seems to register. The grandeur and entrancing completeness of the venture leaves no room for the audience to manoeuvre or act on impulse. The Supertramp live show slavishly works to the required perfection of its form and somewhere the (admittedly flimsy) thread of its content is buried under a morass of theatrics and cinematics.

Only by taking into account the world around them can they possibly hope to flourish and retain a sense of validity. The songs still strive to be something more than mere 'entertainment', from the plaintive soul-searching of *"Could you please, please tell me what we've learned/I know it sounds absurd but please tell me who I am"* to the frantic imploration of *'Fool's Overture' — "Live it up, rip it up, why so lazy?/Give it out, dish it/Let's go crazy, yeah!!"* — yet cocooned in their 'family' they float further and further away from reality and render their oft-expressed disire for social change worthless.

Their appeal is based on trivialising and generalising in three broad areas: rock-as-art-with-a-hammer-in-its-clutch, with lots of effacing polemics and sweeping social statements; rock-as-home-hifi-and-coffee-table-companion, smooth shining textures blending with the false smiles, the idle chat and the Axminster carpet; and *disco* — a strain most noticebly nurtured on 'Breakfast In America', with its stilted rhythms, mawkish sax and keyboards deployment.

Their music is so anxious to take its place that it tumbles, trips and falls over itself as it attempts to do so. A music of purely one dimension — the music of Supertramp is the music of Supertramp is the . . . and behind it lies — NOTHING! Lick that sickly sweet candystick but don't chew or you'll bite your tongue, suckers. The sound of George Harrison carolling with The Eagles in a pulseless symphonic sensurround which is as much John Miles as Rick Wakeman.

WHEN I returned home from Portugal I had a dream and at the end of my dream the entire Supertramp crew (the band have a total travelling cavalcade of permanent lightspersons, soundspersons and caterers as well as the wives and kiddies) were chanting with almost Kop-like resonance: "The winner of the game creates the dream". The chant seemed to start as a mere statement of fact but soon grew into an exercise in scornful chastisement. They were singing about rock'n'roll dreams and rock'n'roll games, of course, fiercely proud to be on the winning side.

So Supertramp have won their game and created their dream. It bears little relation to mine.

Maybe if we had had a chance to talk we could have understood each other's dreams a little better.

The dominoes table

The playing fields

GASBAG

Mail your rail to: Gasbag, NME, 5-7 Carnaby St., London W.1.

When one word leads to another...

THIS is a letter of wisdom and understanding. Very simply, the thesis is that I buy the *NME* for record reviews, not political harangues.
Antithesis: you racist idiot, piss off.

Both viewpoints are myopic. Right, racism is a highly emotive issue and the *NME's* attitude to it is unacceptable. The Christmas *Gasbag* showed your opinions. This is good, and objective journalism is, of course, a myth. What is not good is the way those opinions were presented.

Emotions are very easily controlled. Hitler was a master of this, and you haven't been doing too badly. What this *Gasbag* did was to exploit the emotions of your readers; what worries me is that I am not too sure you realised this. No doubt many readers were impressed, as I was at first, by your uncompromising stance — wow, I hate the NF and you know people really do think like that it's frightening and gosh, isn't the *NME* great? So *NME* promotes thinking for yourself? Not a chance, Monty Smith will do our thinking for us. *NME* deliberately fosters an anti-racist prejudice — I would like to draw attention to the word.
Prejudice, pre-judging . . . I hate the NF because the *NME* says hate the NF. What? What are the NF's views? Christ, I dunno, but Monty Smith says the NF are all shits and that's good enough for me. I am seriously worried that you do not realise the potential of your paper to influence people. It's OK to tell us your opinions, but to foist them upon us in such a horribly dogmatic and self-righteous way is not only politically irresponsible, it's fifth-rate journalism. I believe the NF is evil just as you do; where we differ is that I am not so convinced that I am right. Not only does *Gasbag* and the like (eg the cheap Banyon cartoon of the previous week) serve to instill prejudices that are as harmful and despicable as those of the NF, they also promote HATRED. I'm sorry, but hating the NF is no good. That gives them more to fight against. It means there really is something to be concerned about, something to be attached to. You see, it's emotion that is important here. This is where you sink to the level of your opponents. Hating the NF is just as intolerant as hating blacks. It's all good for the heart. And your reasons are no better than theirs.

Hatred promotes hatred; and what happens eventually is violence and death and the oppression of minorities. Is this what you want?

So, talk to them. And, yes, they are human beings, they will listen. Which is more than you are doing. Joining the NF, like subscribing to any political ideology, is very rarely a fully reflective, rational choice. Chance and emotion are usually the determinants. I hope that, in future, you will try and think a bit before exposing your feelings quite so blatantly to your readers.
Timothy, Weybridge, Surrey.

Well, you must have the patience of Job and are indeed fortunate that you're one of those wholly reasonable people who can see both sides at all times. I stick by what I wrote (and the views expressed were my own and not necessarily those of the editor or anyone else at *NME*) because — as I've said before — the one thing above all worth being dogmatic about is racism. Because it is the most insidious evil of all, the most pathetic example of man's folly, and maybe its propagators are to be pitied but I don't have the patience. And if you don't believe we already have violence, death and the oppression of minorities, then maybe you don't leave Weybridge much. I don't do anyone's thinking for them — I have enough trouble doing my own — and I'd hate to believe that our readers read and take account of only *NME*. Not when there's so much else to read. Stuff like Sven Hassel, say. — M.S.

Dear comrade, may I thank you for your brilliant debunking of Jan of Grimsby's claim that Stalin exterminated more people than Adolf Hitler, "the most evil twat of the 20th century". We all know that Stalin was kind and merciful, and had nothing to do with atrocities such as the mass graves at Katyu, where thousands of Polish officers were massacred by the Russians. Sven Hassel may be (and is) a crap writer, but is Solzhenitsyn? I suppose he must be as well since he's got the nerve to speak of these "non-existent" Russian concentration / extermination camps. Let's all be pro-Russia. Oh yes, and let's pretend Stalin didn't really exterminate more people than Hitler and then we can *all* maintain our "left-wing multiracial progressive comrade street-credibility" stance and parade our contrived social consciences for all our readers (and us) to admire. Aren't we hip — anti-Nazi but not anti-Soviet.

You probably won't print this as it might tarnish your hipness. Lenin had a word for moronic sheep like you — "Communism's useful idiots". And let's have a smart-ass reply from one of you prats claiming that Stalin and his comrades never did anything.
David, Newcastle.

A sad example of someone imposing their own thoughts onto someone else's writing. I never defended the Russians or old Joe, but I didn't castigate them whilst vomiting on Mr Hitler and therefore I am a card-carrying communist. Personally, I think every politician who's ever lived is stark, raving bonkers. — M.S.

This is a desperate attempt to clear the name of Sven Hassel of having any link of sympathy with the Nazis. I fail to see how any link can be brought by discrediting the communists because of his books. Under Stalin's state of terror attrocities were carried out that paralleled those of the Nazis. They go on today. The Soviet state of then (and now) was not a true communist state. None has ever existed, and none ever will. It is a good dream.

As for 'leave the Nazis alone'! This is an insult to those who remember the degradation of the Nazi regime. Thousands will not rest until every psychopath hiding in Paraguay, every SS man and every concentration camp guard is tracked down.

All power is corrupt, the only free state is the true anarchistic state. Never must the horrific past be repeated.
The one who's seen through all evil, reading.

One thing ruined your (as usual) superb Christmas issue and my festive piss-up, and that was the letters page. Dear Jan, to put it mildly, your letter misses the point; your letter trivialises murder, which is sad. Please, go out and buy a history book and read that instead of second rate pulp fiction. Nazis will never pay for their crimes.

And I could hardly call Danny Baker's article on swastikas 'full of his own ego trips'. Briefly, the swastika is a publicity guy's dream. It is instant and memorable. To eleven year old schoolkids who buy 'Sid Sings' it is a symbol associated only with their hero Sid. As such it will be misunderstood, drawn on books, desks and walls. The swastika means murder, not martyrdom. Danny's article was justified, because it had to be said. The evils of racism must never be hidden or understated. Thanks, Monty, for printing the letters. Hopefully they'll frighten a lot of people like me out of apathy. Oh, and Jan, I'm not a communist. I'm a believer in humanity.
John Yorke, Kingston, Surrey.

Sorry to drag out the 'Saga of the swastika' but I just couldn't believe my eyes when I read the Christmas *Gasbag*. Are there really that many mindless morons around that actually worship Hitler and all that he did and stood for? God help us, did that many people die in World War II for nothing?

As for that cretin from Grimsby: "six million people were killed in Nazi concentration camps. So what!" Yeah, goodwill to all men at Christmas. Huh!

I would like to thank Danny Baker for what he said in the review and also Monty Smith for the excellent *Gasbag* editorial. A.B. from Cambridge may have stated the review was not a record review, but then does a record such as this deserve a review. That is to say a record put out after a person's death, decorated with a swastika, purely and simply to make money for a record company. As was quoted in the letter from Saturday Ska Boys, the statement by Tyndall on what he finds so disturbing about black orientated music and people simply enjoying themselves at a disco or gig makes it essential for the music press to take a stand. Thanks *NME* for the stand you have made and keep up the good work and one day the Nazi poison will be removed from people's minds.
Tony Singleton, Chingford, London E4.

It seems that people are finding identity in different groupings, with different ideas and ideals so often and with so little commitment that it seems unsurprising that some of them hold and propogate fascist views. Fireworks portray both extremes of human nature as well as the middle so, if most of us agree that bands of Nazi children are not the company which we would choose, then the problem is not to form another hippy/punk or mod type of grouping to clear up the trouble but to find some way of getting rid of the framework and its limited scope for allowing people room for their expression and ideas. Who is it then who creates the divisions, the fashions and the hate, which gives space for the aggression? Well I think it's you who are the culprits.

It's never enough to promote a new mode of behaviour or clothing or music, the previous object of your insincere affections must be humiliated and despised. The Clash or Hendrix or Pursey or Lyndon or Lennon all seem to agree that the individual has to realise him/herself and escape the state, the school and so on. Why set these people against one and other, why divide those who need to be together? You are generating the hate which you so pompously and condescendingly condemn each week in your columns. You choose representatives of sets of ideas, puff them up to be superhuman and then ridicule and despise them because they fail to live up to your ideas of their ideals. If you don't like everything about your friends you don't shoot them dead, you meet where you can. Why can't we take what's constructive from the culture as we see it go by. People thinking for themselves: well it would put you lot out of a job for a start. Mick Farren, Charles Shaar Murray, Nick Kent — I've read your dreams on other pages at other times, but if you've lost sight of them and become so disillusioned there still is no need to become the oppressive establishment of your own generation.

Hip cynicism . . . is that your best? Jackson Browne lends his support to the Anti Nukes but according to your pages, he's just making token protests ignoring the real 'street' problems. Well where are *you* and what are you *doing*. The occasional radical article in a magazine full of sexist elitist garbage isn't very much is it? What are you *doing*, how do you *live*, how much energy have you left to give after the discos and television have dissipated it? The Establishment is and probably always will be strong in England. It has most of the wealth, most of the population, it has hippies, punks, it has mods and it certainly has the *NME*. There are other ways of living and other people over the country working and living in new environments, without competition and greed driving them, not trying to be the most hip, or the most knowledgeable but trying to find out about themselves and their surroundings. I just wouldn't like you to think that you are amongst them.
Arthur A. Aardvark, Rainbow, Norfolk.

I am speechless with awe and admiration, Arthur (Arthur? A curious name — is it your own?). You have sought knowledge, found it, bounced it around for a while and now, Arthur, you have shared it with us. God bless you. — M.S.

It's still the '80s and we're into totally non-sexist Bags. Men, women — we'll print letters from anybody, mate (says Monty Smith).

Why do people take music so seriously (especially rock-journalists)? They seem to think it clever to knock records, though the majority of the record buying public buy them anyway. They are probably trying to inflate their own egos as they've probably got as much chance of making a hit record themselves as I have of seeing this letter in print.

Why should a Sex Pistols fan think he/she/it is any better than an Abba fan or vice versa? Isn't this the age where we are told not to be afraid to stand up for what we believe in, or to quote Thin Lizzy "Do anything you want to". Yet should anyone have the courage to mention to a rock-journalist that they are a Doolays or Racey fan (and that does take courage), then they are treated as a psychiatric case.

I like new wave, rock *and* mod music as well as other types and I feel sick when I hear stories of the mods v punks etc. Surely it can't be the only one who likes both types of music. Even if people only like certain types of music, why the hell should they mock everyone else. People don't practice what their idols preach.

If anyone else says to me "How can you possibly like Abba and Led Zeppelin?", or if this letter gets printed, I shall literally eat my words.
A distant cousin of Anonymous, Oxford.

I am one of these underweight hippies, maan, who has been contemplating the universe for nearly a decade. In between smokes I sometimes have time to eat and listen to records. Those Floyd people have come close to the answer with the lines: "We don't need no contraception, we don't need no birth control."

This got me meditating and I have discovered the only real truth: Life is a terminal sexually transmitted disease. Isn't God a daisy!
Half deaf Jake, Dyfed.

Thank you so much for putting in the highly informative and even more useful *New York Gig Guide*. Many's the time I've been able to check through, find a group I've been dying to see for yonks, and simply catch the next available plane out there, a mere snip at a hundred odd quid.

Thanks again then.
Chris of Denham

Many other readers have sent in similar salutations. You know us, we aim to please. — M.S. (our man at Heathrow with the soiled copy of *Mayfair* and the overnight bag stuffed with duty frees)

T-ZERS ENJOYS CORDIAL RELATIONS

OKAY, fight fans, this is the big one. And have we got a bill for you? Not many, Benny. So step up and grab yourself a ring-side seat as we introduce, in the top left-hand corner, back from a two year rest prescribed by their accountants, starring in this week's lead *T-zer*, Ladies and Gentlemen, the **Brothers Floyd** Santam-weight tag team featuring **'Luscious' Dave Gilmour** and **'Handsome' Roger Waters** . . .

Not content with scoring the most anti-establishment number one in at least two and a half years (and we mean it, man), the **Pink Floyd** have revealed a hitherto hidden self-deflating side of their normally chronically pessimistic selves. They plan a 'world tour' for February that consists of five nights in LA and five in New York and, to top off this conceptual joke, they're hiring a crew of brick-layers to build a wall between themselves and the audience as they play! What have the old psychedelic bores been taking? . . .

Talking of psychedelia, **Tom Verlaine** and erstwhile garage poet buddy **Richard Hell** have buried their respective hatchets and are presently editing tapes from their Neon Boys days for release as an album . . .

Elsewhere in the Apple (New York to you, Buddy) at a birthday party for middle-aged reprobate **Keith "Make mine a Rhesus Positive" Richards**, another former **Dead Boy, Cheetah Chrome**, broke his wrist whilst making a mad lunge for the free booze, and **Lou "Kiss my ass" Reed** announced his betrothal to one **Sylvia Morales**, self-styled mixed media artist, whatever that means. **Lou** and his bride have bought a 148-acre farm in New Jersey with the money he saved from giving up drugs. How absolutely tedious it must be to be **Lou Reed** these days . . .

Almost as tedious as it must be to be **Cook and Jones** who, apart from driving another nail in their coffin with an abysmal rendition of 'Happy New Year' with fellow rock'n'roll dregs **The Greedies** on *Kenny Everett's New Year Video Show*, are currently working on an album in London with **Joan "You're only 16 once" Jett**, produced by bubblegum kings **Kenny Laguna** and **Ritchie Cordell** and featuring some old **Gary Glitter** material. In the wake of which, do you have any takers for a **Sweet** revival? . . .

Sartorial king-pins **Johnson & Johnson** raised £2000 for Multiple Sclerosis Research at their New Year's Eve charity bash at the Venue. **The Young Ones, Betty Bright, Madness** (question: why does no photo of cuddly twerp **Chas Smash** appear on the sleeve of the new Madness single?) and **Secret Affair** played — all except Ms Bright sporting Johnson attire. **Glen Matlock**, played — all except Ms Bright sporting Johnson attire. **Glen Matlock, Cook** and **Jones** (who?) **Siouxsie** and **Bob Geldof** decorated the fixtures. **Bob "what me, worry?" Geldof** remained tight-lipped and ashen-faced over the reason why the **Doomedtown Rats** have engaged the services of no less than four independent pluggers to boost the chances of their so-called pop song 'I Don't Like Mondays' in the US. **Mr Geldof** is believed to be still over six feet tall. This may soon change, writes **A Doctor** . . .

More late news from the festive season: **Joe Strummer** continued the sudden 'jamming' craze when he joined **Ex-Pil's Richard Dudanski** on stage at The Tabernacle church in Notting Hill. Name of the band was the **Ladbroke Grove All Stars** but **Lemmy** was nowhere to be seen. Should have looked under the tables, thinks *T-zers*. And at London's *recherche* Greyhound **The Jam** hosted a post-tour party at which Polydor Records showered the reluctant heroes with silver and gold albums. Finally, at **The Ramones** New Year's Eve beach party at New York's Palladium, **Dee Dee** (the silent member of the group) actually spoke to the audience, once to say: "Happy New Year One Two Three Four" . . .

Fellow ex-Bowery scumsurfers **Blondie**, not content with their featured part in *Roadie*, starring **Meatloaf** as the roadie and Blondie as the cowpoke outfit he roadies for whose repertoire includes such new wave classics as **Johnny Cash's** 'Ring Of Fire', are also going to record a song called 'Call Me' for the soundtrack to **Paul** *Blue Collar* **Schrader's** new film *American Gigolo*. To make matters even more confusing, **Todd Rundgren** has been producing his band Utopia performing a selection of new **Alice Cooper** songs for the soundtrack of *Roadie* . . . .

Back in the relatively sedate world of books, dapper 'sociologist' **Tom Wolfe** has netted $1.1m. for the paperback and movie rights to his new book *The Right Stuff*. He plans a 'Vanity Fair' type project on New York next and has just married art critic **Sheila Berger**. Presumably Tom's wedding present to her won't be a signed copy of his book about modern art and its criticism *The Painted Word*. **Tom Wolfe** is 48. . .

Balding technocrat **Gary Numan** granted the predictably patronising *Sunday Times* a rare interview last week. **Numan**, 21, confessed that "fans want to see heroes" (possibly some confusion here with a well-known **Bowie** album), that he has a problem with chemical smell-suppressants, and he had to move out of his parents' semi because 15-year-old girls where throwing themselves under his Corvette while their boyfriends lobbed bottles through the window because, says **Numan** impassivly, "they felt threatened by me." **Numan**, whose mother runs his fan club, adds that his favourite colour is black: "The Nazis look great and black's a nasty colour, innit." How absolutely frightening . . .

Punk rock group **The Clash** began their tour in Aylesbury with **Ian Dury** and his estimable **Blockheads** in support, and brought **Lew Lewis** on during their set for some more of this 'jamming' business. **Lew**, who will be replacing the sadly non-appearing **Toots And The Maytals** on some future dates along with, amongst others, **Prince Far-I, Mikey Dread** and **Joe Ely**, reportedly "loved it", since he'd never heard himself so loud. Meanwhile CBS have just put out a 12 (twelve) inch version dub-extra version of 'Armagideon Time' . . .

Reggae artiste **Bim Sherman** made an unexpected detour into Brixton nick after arriving at Heathrow t'other week. Even customs officers found the idea of a dreadlocked person wearing clubfoot-chic platform soles highly suspicious. On removing Bim's shoes they allegedly found them to contain a couple of pounds of compressed herb . . .

Possible title for the new **Stones** album currently in recording at NY's Electric Ladyland studio is 'Emotional Release'. The cover art will be by the bloke who did the, er, honours for 'Some Girls' and **The Strolling Bones** on one track reputedly attempt to take the mickey out of **The Bee Gees**. Sorry, for 'take the mickey', please read 'emulate' . . .

Last week's guest *Singles* reviewer **Tom Robinson** displayed such dedication to the task that he even invaded **Elvis Costello's** Hammersmith Odeon dressing room to try to get a copy of El's newie 'I Can't Stand Up (For Falling Down)'. Last week's resident modern layout person displayed such dedication to the talks that he even forgot to change the cover date of the ish from 1979 to 1980. He wins a complete set of **Gary Numan** albums . . .

Congrats to **Tony and Julie Parsons** on the birth of a magnificient bouncing (pogoing?) 9lb baby boy this Sunday past. Jool-Tones Jnr — or **Robert Kennedy Parsons** as he'll be known — has already turned down his first publishing contract.

"She sin't Debbie, she's my sister . . ." Ms Harry and sibling share a quick cuddle for photographer Kate Simon in New York recently when they bumped into each other at an annual Hairdressers' Convention. Debbie was reported to be "over the moon" and "pleased as punch" about the success of her latest long-playing platter 'Bleach To The Best'. Her sister was reported as saying, at different times, "Pardon?", "Excuse me, but I'm trying to talk to my sister, for Chrissakes" and "Have a nice day."

Those of us at *NME* who knew him were deeply saddened to hear of the death of Kevin Sperrow on Christmas Day. Kevin, a graphic designer, worked on many projects within the rock business and was a familiar sight at Dingwalls bar and other gigs. His openness and amiability, as well as his graphic talents, mean he will be missed by many.

So now we know what those cheeky Buzzcocks got up to out in Yankeeland. That's right, kids, shock-horror revelation that it may be, but those sensitive souls from Manchester couldn't stop themselves from indulging in a bout of public. . . BEER DRINKING!! The tell-tale signs in David Arnoff's exclusive photo are, of course, the labels on the bottles and those beakers brimming with a bit of the old amber tincture (Alright, alright, you berk. Surely, the point of the pic is that they're, er, canoodling? — Pic Ed.) (Oh, yeah, sorry. Didn't notice that. — Caption writer), Ahem . . . Peter Shelley and Steve Diggle go all silly over there.

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