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NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

A WORD IN YOUR EAR

SELECTER

6/7/8 — 32/3/4

MADNESS

Pauline and Charley of Selecter. *Pic: Anton Corbijn.*

NME CHARTS

Week ending February 23, 1980

UK SINGLES

This Week	Last Week			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(1)	Coward Of The County	Kenny Rogers (United Artists)	4	1
2	(2)	Too Much Too Young	Specials (Two Tone)	4	1
3	(5)	Someone's Looking At You	Boomtown Rats (Ensign)	4	3
4	(9)	Captain Beaky	Keith Michell (Polydor)	2	4
5	(10)	And The Beat Goes On	Whispers (Solar)	3	5
6	(4)	I'm In The Mood For Dancing	Nolans (Epic)	6	4
7	(17)	Rock With You	Michael Jackson (Epic)	2	7
8	(19)	Carrie	Cliff Richard (EMI)	2	8
9	(8)	I Hear You Now	Jon & Vangelis (Polydor)	6	8
10	(13)	Save Me	Queen (EMI)	3	10
11	(—)	I Can't Stand Up For Falling Down	Elvis Costello (F Beat)	1	11
12	(29)	So Good To Be Back Home Again	Tourists (Logo)	2	12
13	(21)	Baby I Love You	Ramones (Sire)	3	13
14	(3)	It's Different For Girls	Joe Jackson (A & M)	5	3
15	(6)	My Girl	Madness (Stiff)	7	1
16	(14)	7 Teen	Regents (Rialto)	5	9
17	(18)	Three Minute Hero	Selecter (Two Tone)	3	17
18	(20)	Ghost Riders In The Sky	Shadows (EMI)	2	18
19	(—)	Atomic	Blondie (Chrysalis)	1	19
20	(7)	Babe	Styx (A & M)	6	4
21	(24)	Living In The Plastic Age	Buggles (Island)	3	21
22	(12)	Living By Numbers	New Musik (GTO)	4	12
23	(—)	Jane	Jefferson Starship (Grunt)	1	23
24	(23)	Buzz Buzz A Diddle It	Matchbox (Magnet)	4	15
25	(30)	Too Hot	Kool & The Gang (Mercury)	5	22
26	(—)	So Lonely	Police (A&M)	1	26
27	(—)	On The Radio	Donna Summer (Casablanca)	1	27
28	(—)	Underpass	John Foxx (Virgin)	1	28
29	(—)	Take That Look Off Your Face	Marti Webb (Polydor)	1	29
30	(—)	Right In The Socket	Shalamar (Solar)	1	30

UP AND COMING:

All Night Long — Rainbow (Polydor).

Touch Too Much — AC/DC (Atlantic).

Singing The Blues — Dave Edmunds (Swan Song).

Do That To Me One More Time — Captain and Tennille (Casablanca).

UK ALBUMS

This Week	Last Week			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(2)	Last Dance	Various (EMI)	3	1
2	(3)	One Step Beyond	Madness (Stiff)	14	2
3	(1)	Pretenders	Pretenders (Real)	5	1
4	(4)	Regatta De Blanc	Police (A&M)	18	1
5	(5)	Short Stories	Jon & Vangelis (Polydor)	4	5
6	(11)	Kenny	Kenny Rogers (United Artists)	2	6
7	(7)	The Specials	(Two Tone)	15	7
8	(15)	Metamatic	John Foxx (Metalbeat)	2	8
9	(10)	I'm The Man	Joe Jackson (A & M)	3	9
10	(5)	Off The Wall	Michael Jackson (Epic)	20	3
11	(28)	End Of The Century	Ramones (Sire)	2	11
12	(—)	The Nolan Sisters	Nolans (Epic)	1	12
13	(8)	Permanent Waves	Rush (Mercury)	4	8
14	(—)	Just For You	Des O'Connor (Warwick)	1	14
15	(—)	Get Happy	Elvis Costello (F Beat)	1	15
16	(9)	Bee Gees Greatest Hits	(RSO)	12	6
16	(12)	September Morn	Neil Diamond (CBS)	4	12
18	(14)	Abba's Greatest Hits Vol 2	(Epic)	14	1
19	(20)	Outlandos D'amour	Police (A&M)	36	7
20	(19)	Parallel Lines	Blondie (Chrysalis)	62	1
21	(—)	London Calling	Clash (CBS)	5	14
22	(—)	Golden Collection	Charley Pride (K-Tel)	2	22
23	(29)	Sunburn	Various Artists (Warwick)	2	23
24	(22)	Flex	Lene Lovich (Stiff)	2	22
25	(24)	Eat To The Beat	Blondie (Chrysalis)	19	2
26	(—)	Captain Beaky & His Band	Keith Michell (Polydor)	1	26
27	(—)	The Fine Art Of Surfacing	Boomtown Rats (Ensign)	7	7
28	(18)	The Wall	Pink Floyd (Harvest)	9	4
29	(—)	Kenny Rogers Singles Album	(United Artists)	2	25
30	(17)	Video Stars	Various (K-Tel)	6	4

UP AND COMING:

Flogging A Dead Horse — Sex Pistols (Virgin).

Tell Me On A Sunday — Marti Webb (Polydor).

Soldier — Iggy Pop (Arista).

Argy Bargy — Squeeze (A&M).

Going Steady — Soundtrack (Warwick).

Too Much Pressure — Selecter (Two Tone).

US SINGLES

This Week	Last Week		
1	(2)	Crazy Little Thing Called Love	Queen
2	(1)	Cruisin'	Smokey Robinson
3	(8)	Longer	Dan Fogelberg
4	(7)	Yes I'm Ready	Teri DeSario/K C
5	(3)	Coward Of The County	Kenny Rogers
6	(5)	Rock With You	Michael Jackson
7	(10)	On The Radio	Donna Summer
8	(4)	Do That To Me One More Time	The Captain & Tennille
9	(15)	Working My Way Back To You	Spinners
10	(12)	Desire	Andy Gibb
11	(12)	Romeo's Tune	Steve Forbert
12	(14)	An American Dream	The Dirt Band
13	(6)	Sara	Fleetwood Mac
14	(25)	Another Brick In The Wall	Pink Floyd
15	(24)	Him	Rupert Holmes
16	(18)	September Morn	Neil Diamond
17	(20)	Daydream Believer	Anne Murray
18	(23)	Second Time Around	Shalamar
19	(11)	Deja Vu	Dionne Warwick
20	(29)	How Do I Make You	Barry Manilow
21	(9)	This Is It	Kenny Loggins
22	(27)	"99"	Toto
23	(—)	Too Hot	Kool & The Gang
24	(16)	I Wanna Be Your Lover	Prince
25	(28)	When I Wanted You	Barry Manilow
26	(—)	Refugee	Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers
27	(19)	Why Me	Styx
28	(—)	Heartbreaker	Pat Benatar
29	(13)	Don't Do Me Like That	Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers
30	(22)	Ladies' Night	Kool & The Gang

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

US ALBUMS

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	The Wall	Pink Floyd
2	(2)	Damn The Torpedoes	Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers
3	(3)	Off The Wall	Michael Jackson
4	(5)	Phoenix	Dan Fogelberg
5	(4)	The Long Run	Eagles
6	(6)	On The Radio Greatest Hits	Donna Summer
7	(7)	Kenny	Kenny Rogers
8	(8)	Cornerstone	Styx
9	(9)	Tusk	Fleetwood Mac
10	(11)	September Morn	Neil Diamond
11	(13)	The Rose	Original Soundtrack
12	(10)	Freedom At Point Zero	Jefferson Starship
13	(22)	Permanent Waves	Rush
14	(17)	The Whispers	The Whispers
15	(14)	In Through The Out Door	Led Zeppelin
16	(12)	Gold & Platinum	Lynyrd Skynyrd
17	(15)	Bee Gees' Greatest Hits	Bee Gees
18	(18)	Keep The Fire	Kenny Loggins
19	(20)	Midnight Magic	Commodores
20	(16)	No Nukes: The Muse Concerts For A Non-Nuclear Future	Various Artists
21	(26)	In The Heat Of The Night	Pat Benatar
22	(23)	Deguello	ZZ Top
23	(24)	Prince	Prince
24	(19)	Live Rust	Neil Young & Crazy Horse
25	(25)	Where There's Smoke	Smokey Robinson
26	(21)	Wet	Barbra Streisand
27	(27)	Head Games	Foreigner
28	(28)	The Gambler	Kenny Rogers
29	(—)	Flirtin' With Disaster	Molly Hatchet
30	(30)	Jackrabbit Slim	Steve Forbert

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

5 YEARS AGO

Week ending February 16, 1975

1 Please Mr. Postman ... Carpenters (A&M)
2 January ... Pilot (EMI)
3 Make Me Smile (Come Up And See Me) ... Steve Harley & Cockney Rebel (EMI)
4 Sugar Candy Kisses ... Mac & Katie Kissoon (Polydor)
5 Angie Baby ... Helen Reddy (Capitol)
6 Goodbye My Love ... Glitter Band (Bell)
7 Shame Shame Shame ... Shirley & Co. (All Platinum)
8 Black Superman ... Johnny Wakelin & The Kinshasa Band (Pye)
9 The Secrets That Keep You ... Mud (Rak)
10 Now I'm Here ... Queen (EMI)

10 YEARS AGO

Week ending February 16, 1970

1 Love Grows ... Edison Lighthouse (Bell)
2 Let's Work Together ... Canned Heat (Liberty)
3 Leaving On A Jet Plane ... Peter, Paul & Mary (WB)
4 I Want You Back ... Jackson Five (Tamla Motown)
5 Temma Harbour ... Mary Hopkin (Apple)
6 The Witch's Promise/Teacher ... Jethro Tull (Chrysalis)
7 Venus ... Shocking Blue (Penny Farthing)
8 Wandering Star ... Lee Marvin (Paramount)
9 Come And Get It ... Badfinger (Apple)
10 Two Little Boys ... Rolf Harris (Columbia)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending February 19, 1965

1 I'll Never Find Another You ... Seekers (Columbia)
2 Tired Of Waiting For You ... Kinks (Pye)
3 You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin' ... Righteous Brothers (London)
4 Game Of Love ... Wayne Fontana & The Mindbenders (Fontana)
5 Keep Searchin' ... Del Shannon (Stateside)
6 Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood ... Animals (Columbia)
7 The Special Years ... Val Doonican (Decca)
8 Funny How Love Can Be ... Ivy League (Piccadilly)
9 It Hurts So Much ... Jim Reeves (RCA)
10 It's Not Unusual ... Tom Jones (Decca)

"See, I told you The Boomtown Rats would make a fokkin' comeback! Our single's up to 3, our album's back in at 27 and this is our reply to everyone who t'ought we were finished and troid to get rid of us! If The Clash are so fokkin' great how come their single an' album aren't doing as well as ours? Paul Weller knows NOTHIN' about (cont page 94)." Modest Bob Geldof reassures consumers that he still needs their vote. Pic: Kate Simon.

REGGAE

(1) Humble Yourself ... Asher & Trimble (Rockers)
(2) Eternal Day ... Sifford Walker (Southeast Music)
(3) Jah Children Rising ... Roy Dobson (Black Pearl)
(4) Bad To Worse ... Burning Spear (Spear)
(5) One Jah One Aim ... Hugh Mundell (Rockers)
(6) Don't Break Your Promise ... Chosen Few (Studio 1)
(7) Jah Say ... Junior Delgardo (Incredible Juks)
(8) Rockers Mood ... Augustus Pablo (Rockers)
(9) Susan ... Freddie McKay (Mistic)
(10) We All Feel The Pain ... Barry Brown (Secret Agent)

Chart supplied by: Maroon Tunes, 19 Greek Street, London, W1.

DISCO

(1) And The Beat Goes On ... Whispers (Solar)
(2) Too Hot ... Kool & The Gang (Mercury)
(3) Jazz Carnival ... Azymuth (Milestone)
(4) We Got The Funk ... Positive Force (Sugarhill)
(5) Music Makes You Feel Like Dancin' ... Brass Construction (UA)
(6) I Wanna Be Your Lover ... Prince (Warner Bros)
(7) Rock With You ... Michael Jackson (Epic)
(8) Rappers Delight ... Sugarhill Gang (Sugarhill)
(9) Don't Stop The Feeling ... Roy Ayers (Polydor)
(10) You Know How To Love Me ... Phyllis Hyman (Arista)

Chart supplied by: Powerhouse Roadshow Tel: (01) 368-9852.

INDIES

(1) Food for Thought ... UB40 (Graduate)
(2) Tribal Look ... Toyah (Safari)
(3) Where's Captain Kirk ... Spizz Energi (Rough Trade)
(4) Sheep Farming In Barnet ... Toyah (Safari)
(5) Judy In Disguise ... Silicon Teens (Mute)
(6) Victims Of The Riddle ... Toyah (Safari)
(7) Money ... Orion (Charlie)
(8) Terminal Love ... The Boys (Safari)
(9) Long Grooves EP ... The Long Grooves (Charlie)
(10) Alternative Ulster ... Stiff Little Fingers (Rough Trade)

Chart supplied by: Spartan Records, London Road, Wembley, Middlesex.

NEWS of Mac gigs

HOOK HERE IN APRIL

DATES AND VENUES for the previously reported spring tour by Dr. Hook have now been confirmed. They play nine major concerts, including three in London and two in Glasgow, and there's a possibility of at least one more show being added.

The itinerary comprises Glasgow Apollo (April 24 and 25), Manchester Apollo (26), Liverpool Empire (27), Birmingham Odeon (28), London Hammersmith Odeon (30 and May 1), Brighton Centre (2) and London Rainbow Theatre (3). Promoter is Danny Betesh of Kennedy Street Enterprises, who has still to name the support act.

Tickets are on sale now at all venues, priced £5, £4 and £3 (Glasgow and Brighton); £5 and £4 (Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham); and £5.50, £4.50 and £3.50 (London). All shows start at 7.30pm, except the two London venues (8pm).

This is Dr Hook's first UK tour since October, 1977, and it comes at a time when enthusiasm for the band has been re-kindled by their No. 1 hit 'When You're In Love With A Beautiful Woman' and its follow-up 'Better Love Next Time'. Their current album 'Sometimes You Win', already a chart success, is being re-activated to tie in with their visit — and there will also be new product to coincide with their arrival, details to follow shortly.

Dr. Hook are Dennis Locorriere and the one with the eye-patch Ray Sawyer (both lead vocals and guitar), Rik Elswit and Bob 'Willard' Henke (both guitar), Bill Francis (keyboards), Jance Garfat (bass) and John Wolters (drums).

Rats in fight to overcome hometown ban

THE BOOMTOWN RATS are hoping to play two concerts in Dublin this weekend — in the same specially-constructed auditorium that was used for the Pope's visit last year! The frame structure, called the Dublin Dome, has been erected on Leopardstown Racecourse and is said to be acoustically superb. The band are due to play there this Friday and Saturday, and all 7,000 tickets have been sold — but at press-time, the Rats were still waiting to hear the outcome of their appeal against a local magistrate's decision not to grant a music licence. They say they're determined to perform in Dublin this weekend, come what may — and if the decision goes against them, they'll find a last-minute alternative venue. Next week they head for America as the last leg of their world tour.

● Rats guitarist Pete Briquette marries Virgin Records artist Jane Aire in his hometown of Dublin next Monday (25).

MADNESS told *NME* this week that their next single will be 'Beat Pete', a song about a cop who tries to get promoted — it will be released after their American tour, which began earlier this week. They are also being lined up for a British tour in the spring, when they get back from the States, and their new album is due in July.

THE SOLOS, currently supporting The Tourists on their UK tour, subsequently headline their own tour of London venues — including Clapham 101 Club (March 1), Camden Dingwalls (3), Fulham Greyhound (4) and West Hampstead Moonlight Club (5). The Edinburgh band's single 'Talking Pictures' is out this week — it's on their own Solos label, and not on EMI's Cobra outlet, though it's still distributed by EMI.

THE ANDROIDS OF MU are playing a free concert at London W.10 Acklam Hall tonight (Thursday), as compensation for the cancellation of their gig at that venue on February 4, due to transport and electrical problems.

THE NIPS — and not The Ruts, as reported last week — support Dexy's Midnight Runners at Penzance (tonight, Thursday), Bath (Friday), Manchester (Saturday) and the last five dates of Dexy's current tour (March 4-8). The Nips also have London headliners at Billy's Club in Dean Street (February 28) and Covent Garden Rock Garden (March 10).

ELVIS COSTELLO has invited Clive Langer & The Boxes to appear as special guests on his UK tour throughout the whole of March. Langer, producer of Madness, will have his own single issued to coincide with the tour — details not yet available — and his backing band comprises Martin Hughes (drums), James Eller (bass) and Ben Bearson (keyboards). Nottingham Sherwood Rooms has now been added to the tail end of the tour on April 1, and the March 22 gig is switched from Lasswade Sports Centre to West Calder Regal Suite.

SIOUXSIE & THE BANSHEES still haven't found a permanent new guitarist, and consequently have no tour plans for the foreseeable future. But they do have a new single due for Polydor release on March 7 — titled 'Happy House'. It has two tracks on the B-side, 'Drop Dead' and Celebration'. It features their new regular drummer Budgie and guest guitarist John McGeoch of Magazine.

DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS were forced to cancel five dates in their 'Straight To The Heart' tour last week — at Nuneaton, Sheffield, Coventry, Kidderminster and Middlesbrough — because singer Kevin Rowland was suffering from nervous exhaustion and strained vocal chords. They say that all these gigs will be re-scheduled as soon as possible.

PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY, whose new single 'Laughing Academy' (the title track from their current album) is out this week on Liberty United, are busy writing and preparing a new LP — it's planned for early autumn release to tie in with their next UK tour. Meanwhile, they're set for a European tour in May — their first outing since guitarist Malacabala became the fifth member of the band in November.

THE BODYSNATCHERS finally joined The Selecter's UK tour, just in time for the opening date last weekend. They were originally announced as one of the support acts (Holly & The Italians are the other), but then withdrew following a dispute with Two Tone. This has now been resolved and they're back in the package. Their debut single, a double A-side featuring 'Ruder Than You' and 'Rock Steady', is due for release shortly through Chrysalis.

Shows in London & Stafford

FLEETWOOD MAC pay their long-awaited visit to Britain in June, as the climax to their current world tour. They play four concerts in this country — one at Stafford and three at Wembley. These will be the band's first concerts in this country for over three years, during which time they have achieved worldwide success with their 'Rumours' and 'Tusk' albums.

They headline at Stafford Bingley Hall on June 16, followed by London Wembley Arena on June 20, 21 and 22. At both venues, ticket prices are £7.50, £6.50 and £5.50. The Stafford show starts at 7.30 pm, and the Wembley gigs at 8 pm.

Tickets for Stafford are available now from Mike Lloyd Music at Hanley, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Turnstall; Sundown Records of Wolverhampton; Piccadilly Records of Manchester; Lotus Records of Stafford; and Cyclops Sounds of Birmingham. For London they are available by postal application only from Mac Promotions, PO Box 2BZ, London W1A 2BZ (enclose SAE, cheques and POs only, allow 21 days for delivery). Promoter is Barry Dickins of ITB.

Mac have a new single issued by WEA on February 29 titled 'Not That Funny', a remixed version of a track from their 'Tusk' LP, and the B-side is 'Save Me A Place'. It's probable that their new album will be issued in June to coincide with their visit.

Mac's STEVIE NICKS

ROYCE ROLLS

ROSE ROYCE fly into Britain next month for their first tour of this country since October, 1978 — a 13-date itinerary promoted by Straight Music. And as a prelude to their visit, the Whitfield label (distributed by WEA) releases their new single 'Ooh Boy' this weekend, together with a 'Greatest Hits' compilation album.

The group have concerts at Southampton Gaumont (March 21), Bristol Colston Hall (23), Brighton Top Rank (24), Sheffield City Hall (25), Edinburgh Odeon (27), Glasgow Apollo (28), Bradford St. George's Hall (30), Manchester Apollo (31), Birmingham Odeon (April 1), London Hammersmith Odeon (2 and 3), Coventry Theatre (5) and Deeside Leisure Centre, Chester (6).

Tickets are on sale now, priced £4.50, £3.50 and & £2.50 at all venues — except Hammersmith (£5, £4 and £3) and Brighton (all at £3.50). A support act has still to be named.

Inmates tour moves back to next month

THE INMATES have put back their month-long British tour, reported two weeks ago, which had been due to open yesterday (Wednesday). They say this is due to their current success in America where, as the result of extremely favourable reaction, they have now extended their tour through to the end of this month. The MAM agency is now re-scheduling the band's UK itinerary to start in early March, and a revised date sheet will be announced shortly. The Inmates apologise to ticket-holders and say that every effort is being made to arrange dates at the original venues

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Stranglers single and London date

THE STRANGLERS return to action next month with a new single, followed by a major London concert and various overseas jaunts. The London show will be in the first week of April, as part of the week of concerts to mark the 50th anniversary of the Rainbow Theatre — it could be April 3, but at presstime promoter Harvey Goldsmith was still juggling the week's events. Subsequently the band leave for shows in Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece, as well as their long-awaited concert in India — and a short visit to the United States is also being arranged.

These plans have been laid despite the fact that Hugh Cornwell's appeal, against his six-months jail sentence on drugs charges, has still to be heard. It now seems likely to come to court in mid-March, but there's every reason for optimism in that Goldsmith's right-hand man Paul Loasby (who was also given a prison term along with Cornwell) had his sentence quashed last week.

The band's new single is a double A-sider featuring 'Bear Cage' and 'Shah Shah A Gogo'. The first title is a new composition recorded recently at London's AIR Studios — and album tracks were laid down at the same time — while the other is taken from their current LP.

● Full details of the Rainbow birthday week are expected shortly, but it's known that one of the other headline attractions will be the new-look Lynyrd Skynyrd band, who have just begun working in the States under the name of Rossington Collins.

Police beat takes in uncharted territory

THE POLICE have pulled a fast one on The Stranglers by staging a concert in India before them — it's in Bombay on March 26, and is the first rock gig in that country since Hawkwind played there over a decade ago. The band have also lined up another "first" for March 28, when they become the first British rock band to perform in Cairo.

These are among the highlights of their current world tour, which has already taken in the United States and Japan. They're at present in Hong Kong until next Wednesday, then go on to New Zealand (February 29-March 4), Autralia (5-19) and Bangkok (21). The European leg starts on March 31, with the first major gig in Athens since The Rolling Stones played there in 1967, and the first week of April takes in concerts in Italy, Germany and Switzerland — with subsequent travels still being finalised.

Two films are being made of their global jaunt — one is their own production of in-concert action and "assorted skirmishes", and the other a BBC-TV documentary for screening later in the summer. And later in the year, there'll be a book of the Police tour.

● SKIDS vocalist Richard Jobson was last week cleared by Dunfermline District Court, after pleading not guilty to a charge of breach of the peace — he was able to convince the bench that there was insufficient evidence to convict him, and the charge was thrown out of court, followed soon afterwards by Jobson!

Helen ready for London

HELEN REDDY comes to London in the spring, belatedly catching up on her cancelled Palladium dates a year ago. She is set for two major concerts — at the Royal Albert Hall (May 5) and Wembley Conference Centre (18) — though tickets and booking arrangements won't be available for another week or so. Between times, she'll be filming her own TV show and playing some European dates. Capitol Records haven't so far been advised of the visit, so haven't yet scheduled any product to coincide.

Linda extra

LINDA LEWIS, who has been forced to cancel several dates on her current tour, has now added a few more concerts to the tail end of her itinerary — including another London show at The Venue in Victoria on March 13 (tickets £4). Other new gigs are Sheffield University (March 14), Manchester University (15) and Bradford Night Spot (16).

NEWS ROUND-UP

BLAST FURNACE'S REVENGE support Joe Jackson in his mini-tour next week (see Gig Guide), and have gigs in their own right at London Kensington Nashville (tonight, Thursday), Uxbridge Brunel University (this Sunday), London North Polytechnic (February 29), Coventry Warwick University (March 6), London Islington Hope & Anchor (7) and London Clapham 101 Club (9).

THE JAGS are on the road at High Wycombe Town Hall (this Saturday), London Herne Hill Half Moon (Sunday), London Fulham Greyhound (February 26), Southampton University (27), Bournemouth Stateside (28), Birmingham Aston University (29), Egham Royal Holloway College (March 1), London Fulham Golden Lion (2) and London Kensington Nashville (3).

IAN MATTHEWS has called off his proposed spring tour of Europe, which was to have included a show at London Victoria Venue on April 3. No reason has been given, nor has the tour yet been re-scheduled.

TEDDY PENDERGRASS, who was to have visited the UK in early spring, won't now be coming at that time. He was to have headlined at London Rainbow on April 18, among other dates, but it now seems unlikely that he'll be here before the autumn.

SLADE have gigs at Watford Town Hall (February 26), London Camden Music Machine (29 and March 1), Cardiff University (4), Norwich Cromwells (6), Reading Charles Hall (7), St. Austell Cornish Riviera (8), Stockton Fiesta (10), London Marquee (11) and Jersey Behan's (14 and 25).

ROCKING DOPSIE, leading exponent of cajun and zydeco music, returns to the UK at the end of this month with his band The Cajun Twisters. They play Liverpool Eric's (March 3) and London Camden Dingwalls (4, 5 and 6), prior to touring Europe for the rest of next month. But they'll be back here to play more gigs in the first week of April, details currently being finalised.

SUPERCHARGE play Lampeter St. David's University (tomorrow, Friday), Nottingham University (29), Southampton University (March 1), Ormskirk Edge Hill College (7), Liverpool Christ College (14), Scarborough Penthouse (21), Workington Technical College (24) and London Fulham Golden Lion (30). Their new single, a revival of 'Cool Jerk', is issued by Criminal Records on February 29.

SAXON, the heavy metal outfit currently headlining their own one-nighter series, have been booked as support act on the eight-venue Nazareth tour next month — opening at Glasgow Apollo (March 8) and climaxing at London Hammersmith Odeon (18). They also appear as special guests in four of Rainbow's concerts — Stafford Bingley (this Sunday), Deeside Centre (February 27), Wembley Arena (March 1) and Brighton Centre (4) — which means the postponement of their own gig at Retford Porterhouse on March 1. Their second Carrere album, as yet untitled, is due for early April release.

CHARLIE DANIELS has broken his arm in five places, so following the lead given by his Epic Records label-mate Ellen Foley! The accident occurred when the arm was caught in agricultural machinery, when he was working on his Tennessee farm. Although he must spend two months convalescing, the word is that Daniels and his band will be touring Britain again this summer.

WILD HORSES are being lined up for major British tour in April and May, in support of their debut album (with their name as its title), for release by EMI on April 11. Prior to this, they have a new single 'Face Down' / 'Street Girl' issued on March 14, and they play a three-night stint at London Marquee Club on February 27, 28 and 29.

SQUIRE have upcoming gigs at London Clapham 101 Club (this Saturday), Torrington The Plough (March 9), High Wycombe Nags Head (13), Wolverhampton Lafayette (16), Leeds Polytechnic (19), Basildon Town Centre (27), London Victoria The Venue (28), Brighton Buccaneer (29), Croydon Crewdaddy (30) and Norwich Cromwells (April 1). More dates are being finalised.

JAPAN, who recently played a sell-out concert at London Victoria The Venue, return there early next month to headline two shows on March 4 and 5. They'll have a new single released by Ariola to coincide, titles as yet undecided.

BILLY PRESTON & SYREETA are now expected to arrive in Britain for concert appearances towards the end of April, a Motown spokesman said this week. Meanwhile, their new single 'It Will Come True' — the follow-up to their smash hit 'With You I'm Born Again' — is issued this weekend.

RADIO LUXEMBOURG are to broadcast America's near-legendary 'Grand Ole Opry' show live from Nashville on Saturday, April 26 — the first time it has ever been transmitted overseas. The two-hour show (9-11pm) will be relayed by satellite, featuring a line-up of some of the world's top C&W acts, details to follow shortly. 208's Bob Stewart will be in Nashville to present the programme.

THE FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS, who have just finished a round-Britain tour as support to Rockpile, have a couple of London dates in their own right early next month — at Victoria The Venue (March 2) and Islington Hope & Anchor (3). They'll also be appearing in BBC-2's *Old Grey Whistle Test* on March 11.

DEF LEPPARD have added Rickmansworth Watersmeet (February 25) and Bournemouth Town Hall (26) to their current lengthy tour . . and THE VAPORS have added two London gigs to their current outing, at Covent Garden Rock Garden (March 1) and Kensington Nashville (8).

THE BIG 'O' RETURNS TO UK

ROY ORBISON returns to Britain next month for a lengthy concert and cabaret tour, highlighted by a major London show at the Dominion Theatre. Promoted by Arthur Howes, the dates are **Nottingham** Commodore Suite (March 21), **Manchester** Apollo (22), **Southport** Theatre (23), **Stoke** Jollees (26-29), **Peterborough** ABC (30), **Luton** Cesar's (31), **Birmingham** Night Out (April 1-3), **Bournemouth** Winter Gardens (4), **Birmingham** Night Out (5), **Bridlington** Spa Theatre (6), **Blackpool** ABC (7), **Windsor** Blazers (9-10), **Ipswich** Gaumont (11), **Chatham** Central Hall (12), **Windsor** Blazers (13), **Brighton** Dome (18), **London Tottenham-Court Rd.** Dominion (19) and **Croydon** Fairfield Hall (21). More dates are being added.

MAX BOYCE sets out on yet another concert series, less than three months after finishing his last tour. Tied in with the release of his new EMI album 'In Touch With Max Boyce', he plays **Brighton** Dome (March 10-11), **Canterbury** Odeon (12), **Ipswich** Gaumont (13-14), **Cambridge** Kelsey Kerridge Centre (15), **Bournemouth** Winter Gardens (19), **Crawley** Leisure Centre (20), **Guernsey** Beau Sejour Theatre (22), **Jersey** Gloucester Hall (23), **St. Albans** City Hall (28), **Wolverhampton** Civic Hall (29-30), **Plymouth** New Palace Theatre (April 2-5), **Bradford** Alhambra (7-9), **Middlesbrough** Town Hall (10-11), **Scarborough** Futurist (12), **Stockport** Davenport (14-15), **Pwllheli** Butlin's Gaiety Theatre (18), **Reading** Hexagon (22-23), **Rhondda** Leisure Centre (24) and **Swansea** Brangwyn Hall (25). Promoters are Kennedy Street Enterprises.

RED BEANS & RICE promote their debut Chiswick single 'That Orivin Beat' (issued on March 7) with **London** gigs at Camden Dingwalls (tonight, Thursday), W.1 Gulliver's Club (February 27 and 28), International Students House (29), Finchley Torrington (March 2), Institute of Education (20) and Putney White Lion (21). Out of town, they play **Stafford** North Staffs Polytechnic (tomorrow, Friday), **Coventry** Lanchester Polytechnic (Saturday), **Coventry** Warwick University (Sunday), **Cardiff** Casablanca (March 3), **Stroud** Rapid Eye (14), **Swindon** Town Hall (15) and **Croydon** The Star (19).

METRO, who've just completed their second album for EMI, begin a 20-date headline tour at the end of this month. The first 11 dates to be confirmed are **Sheffield** University (February 29), **Southampton** University (March 1), **Ripon** College of Ripon and York St. John (7), **Nottingham** Boat Club (8), **Doncaster** Romeo & Juliet (10), **Wolverhampton** Polytechnic (12), **Exeter** St. Luke's College (14), **Blackpool** Norbreck Castle (22), **Leeds** Fforde Green Hotel (23), **Sheffield** Limit Club (25) and **Cheltenham** North Glos. College (26). A single from the new album, as yet untitled, will be issued in early March.

Metro's PETER GODWIN

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Judas: new elpee held for ransom

JUDAS PRIEST will not, after all, have a new album released to coincide with their major British tour next month — and the reason is that the master tape has been stolen, and is currently being held for ransom!

The band spent the whole of January working in the South of France on the new LP, at an estimated cost of £35,000. On completion, the 24-track master tape was flown to New York earlier this month for mixing — and within a few days it disappeared from the studio.

Within hours, a ransom note was received, demanding 100,000 dollars for the return of the tape. The matter was immediately put in the hands of the New York police, who revealed that this is a developing crime — "certain criminals are beginning to realise the vast costs involved in making albums, and the consequent value of master tapes," said a spokesman.

The band have been advised by the police, as a matter of policy, not to pay the ransom — but they are still undecided whether to take matters into their own hands and fork out. In any event, the tape cannot now be retrieved in time for the album to be issued next month. Even so, their tour goes ahead — without any new record product to promote.

Front Rod BARRIE MASTERS

RODS ARE HOT ON THE TRAIL

EDDIE & THE HOT RODS, whose autumn tour was severely curtailed by recording sessions, go back on the road next month now that they've finished work in the studios. They've been set for a 16-venue outing by John Giddings of the MAM Agency — including a major London concert at the Lyceum, and with the possibility of more to come. A new single, title as yet undecided, will be issued by EMI to tie in with the tour — and the long-awaited album is due in the spring.

Dates are Newcastle Polytechnic (March 5), Liverpool Eric's (6), Manchester University (7), Sunderland Polytechnic (8), Fife St Andrew's University (9), Edinburgh Tiffany's (10), Durham University (11), Hull College (12), Colchester Essex University (14), Norwich East Anglia University (15), London Strand Lyceum (16), London North Plytechnic (17), Swansea Institute of Education (20), Aberystwyth University (21), Sheffield Polytechnic (22) and Redcar Coatham Bowl (23). Support act on all dates is Gem Records band The Killermeters.

Crooks on the loose

THE CROOKS are going on the road with their headlining 'Jailbait Tour', in support of their debut album titled 'Just Released' on the Blueprint label, due out on March 3. It contains 12 tracks, all band compositions except for the Small Faces number 'Understanding' — it was produced by Simon Boswell, and includes a guest appearance by The Rumour horn section. One of the tracks, 'All The Time In The World', is issued as a single this weekend.

With more dates to be added, those confirmed so far are London West Hampstead Moonlight Club (tomorrow, Friday), Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic (February 29), London Marquee (March 1), Croydon Crawdaddy (5), Portsmouth Rotary Club (7), Southampton The Griffin (8), Middlesbrough Teesside Polytechnic (15), Huddersfield Coach House (16), Nuneaton 77 Club (17), Norwich Croonwells (18), London Fulham Greyhound (21) and London Victoria The Venue (28).

OFF THE RECORD

Seger album — tour soon?

BOB SEGER'S long-awaited new album 'Against The Wind', his first for nearly two years, is being rush released by Capitol on February 29. And this could well herald a burst of new activity by Seger, as *NME* understands that he is being lined up for a British tour in the spring. The LP, which features backing by the Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section, contains ten Seger compositions. It's preceded this weekend by a single, 'Fire Lake' / 'Long Twin Silver Line', the A-side featuring guest vocals from Eagles Glenn Frey, Timothy B Schmit and Don Henley.

● **XTC** have their follow-up to 'Making Plans For Nigel' released by Virgin on March 14 — it's a new song called 'Wait Till Your Boat Goes Down.' Meanwhile, the band's Andy Partridge has his solo album 'Take Away (The Lure Of Salvage)' issued on February 29, under the name of Mr. Partridge.

● **Booker T & The MG's**, recently in the Top Ten with their oldie 'Green Onions', have another 1968 track issued by Atlantic as the follow-up on March 7 — 'Hip Hug-Her'.

● The new **Earth Wind & Fire** single, issued by CBS this weekend, is 'In The Stone' from their album 'I Am'. A somewhat longer version appears on the three-track 12-inch version.

● **The Cockney Rejects**, at present on tour to promote their 'Bad Man' single, have an album set for March 7 release by EMI. Optimistically titled 'Greatest Hits Vol. 1', it was produced by Jimmy Pursey.

● **The Purple Hearts**, whose new single 'Jimmy' was announced last week, will have their debut album 'Beat That' issued by Fiction Records in mid-March.

● **Secret Affair's** third single 'My World' appears on the I-Spy label this weekend. And instead of promoting it here, they're off on a European tour at the end of next week.

● Accrington band **The Cybermen** have issued their second single on their own label, a double A-sider coupling 'You're To Blame' and 'It's You I Want', and packed in a picture bag. Cost £1 (plus a 32p stamp) from Rockaway Records, Newhouse Cottage, Sandy Lane, Accrington, Lancs.

● Up-and-coming Manchester band **The Freshies** are taking the bold step of releasing their own video cassette. Called 'White', it runs for 30 minutes and should be available late next month at around £16 — exact details to follow.

● Manchester band **Years** have their first single 'Come Dancing' available from Rough Trade, Pinnacle and most shops in the centre of Manchester. Upcoming in late March is a six-track EP by **The Cliches**. Both releases are on Years' own Tuff-Goin-Music label

Jam and Rush: special singles

THE JAM have their new single, the follow-up to their smash hit 'Eton Rifles', issued by Polydor on March 3 — it's a double A-sider featuring 'Going Underground' and 'The Dreams Of Children'. It will also be available in a limited edition of 100,000 with an extra live EP containing 'Away From The Numbers', 'The Modern World' and 'Down In The Tube Station At Midnight'. The two-record package sells at £1.49, and the new single on its own (without the live EP) at the regular price of £1.05.

RUSH, currently high in the charts with their album 'Permanent Waves', have a specially packaged 12-inch single issued by Mercury on February 29. It contains three tracks — 'The Spirit Of Radio' from their current LP; 'The Trees' from the album 'Hemispheres', and the live 'Working Man' from their first set 'Rush'. It retails at £1.99 and comes in a four-colour bag. There will also be an orthdox seven-inch version comprising edited versions of the first two titles.

Genesis turning it on

GENESIS have a new single issued by Charisma on March 3, as a prelude to their upcoming sell-out tour, titled 'Turn It On Again'. The B-side is 'Behind The Lines', and both tracks were penned by Tony Banks, Phil Collins and Mike Rutherford.

● **Gerry Rafferty** also has a single released prior to a major British tour. Titled 'Bring It All Home', it's out this weekend on Liberty United. He is at present working on a new album for early spring release, coinciding with the March 30 opening of his tour.

Subs get mobilised

● **UK Subs'** new Gem Records single, issued on February 29, is 'Warhead' — appropriately packed in a full-colour flak jacket bag, with a limited edition pressed in brown vinyl. There are two B-side tracks — an instrumental titled 'The Harper' and the band's version of Lou Reed's 'I'm Waiting For The Man'.

● The long-awaited solo album by **Daryl Hall** is now scheduled for April release by RCA. Titled 'Sacred Songs', it was produced by Robert Fripp and contains ten tracks —eight penned by Hall, one by Fripp and one collaboration.

● Cherry Red, who recently released an album of bubble cover versions called 'Hybrid Kids', have now taken a single from it — 'McArthur Park' by **The Bartons** coupled with 'Wuthering Heights' by **Jah Wurzel**. It's out this weekend.

● Latest single from **James Brown** is 'Regrets'/ 'Stone Cold Drag', released by Polydor on February 29.

● The debut album by **Steve Miro & The Eyes** is 'Rude Instrusions'. It contains 12 tracks and is issued by Object Music next week.

● **Michael Jackson's** former hit 'Ben' is reissued by Motown this week, and it's coupled with 'Abraham, Martin And John' by **Marvin Gaye**. Both tracks are several years old, but re-appear now because they're included on the hit compilation 'The Last Dance'.

● **Wilko Johnson** has a single out on March 7, his first since his split from Virgin 18 months ago. Titled 'Down By The Waterside', it's on Rockburgh Records, whose chief Sandy Robertson co-produced it with Wilko. Currently touring Europe, Johnson and his band will be playing British dates in April, details to follow shortly.

Magazine—late extra

MAGAZINE's next single, following hot on the heels of their recently-realeased 'A Song From Under The Floorboards', is issued by Virgin on March 7. It's called 'Thank You (Falet Timme Be Mice Elf Agin)' — which, if read phonetically, actually means something! The B-side is the more conservatively titled 'The Book'. The band's new album is to be called 'The Correct Use Of Soap' — it comes out on April 18, and they'll be playing UK dates around that time.

● Channel Records are a new Bristol independent label, who release their first single in early March — 'Baby Come Back Home'/'Get Down (Cause I Love Your Body)', a double A-sider by local band **Nite Watch**. The label is also eager to listen to demos by aspiring bands — contact is through their distribution company, Relay Records (01-579 6125).

● The very first **Hawkwind** album, with their name as its title, is reissued this weekend — in response to demand from the new generation of fans, say Liberty United

● **Misty** have reached an agreement with Spartan for the distribution of their own People Unite label. First release to benefit is the band's new double A-side single 'Rich Man'/'Salvation'. And their 12-incher 'See Them Ah Come'/'How Long Jah' is reissued.

● Russians In Space'/'The Solution To All Problems' is a single by Essex outfit **Camera 3**, recorded with the assistance of Metebolist. It's on Service Records of 99 Centre Drive, Epping, Essex, to whom all enquiries should be directed

● **The Rhythos** have issued a single on cassette, coupling their version of 'The Locomotion' and 'Remember (Walking In The Sand)'. It's available from Rice Records, Flat 10, 13 Linden Gardens, London W2. Send an uncrossed postal order for 45p, plus a recipe which includes brown rice! The idea is to compile a book of recipes, to be given free with the first Rice album

● The long-awaited compilation album 'Best Of **Roy Ayers**, which has been delayed several times, is finally issued by Polydor this weekend. It contains full-length versions of his most popular tracks, including the classic 'Running Away'. Ayers is currently working on a new studio album for late spring release.

● Original Procol Harum keyboards man **Matthew Fisher** has a solo album, with his name as its title, issued by Mercury this week.

STUDENTS

SEE PAGES 58 & 59

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Skank right up and meet the better whirlpool. See Selecter walking down the street,

a Gang Of Seven pooling the resources of complementary opposites while dressing sharp and stepping proud.

In the '80s, it's the new rock ideal: to be cool and righteous at the same time, to be a soul rebel and strive against Babylon while still having the best clothes on the block.

Selecter eat contradictions for breakfast and spit them back out by opening time as a resolved, unified whole.

Hang these over your bed: they are male and female, black and white; they create new music out of old, they smear the dividing line between musics until it's not so much invisible as irrelevant. Not because they thought they 'ought' to, but because that's the way it is.

They're part of a 14-a-side assault team from a town not noted for its previous cultural contributions, and — up until recently but not for much longer — the lesser-known half. When they film the 2-Tone story, it'll make *The Dirty Dozen* look like *Krapp's Last Tape*, what with its 14 principal characters and everybody from Madness and The Beat to Bernie Rhodes and Elvis Costello among the supporting cast and featured players.

SELECTER (l to r) Compton Amanor, Neol Davies, Pauline Black, Gappa Hendrickson, Charley 'H' Bembridge, Desmond Brown, Charley Anderson.

To the disenchanted by-stander, the whole 2-Tone eruption must look like some massive invasion of a small army of humans in mohair suits, pork-pie hats and shades; some black, some white — one's a girl, one's a dread, one's got no teeth — all simultaneously highly good-humoured and vaguely threatening, enjoying their clothes and their music and their dancing without ever seeming narcissistic or self-obsessed, commenting on their environment and their relation to it without seeming to preach.

If you like what you see, you're seeing positive proof that white and black British youth can share a common music and common ideals. Mid-'60s bands like The Equals — then under the leadership of Eddy Grant, who wrote the powerful and prophetic 'Black Skin Blue Eyed Boys (Ain't Gonna Fight No Wars)' for them — and soul bands like The Foundations, Geno Washington's Ram Jam Band and Jimmy James' original Vagabonds implicitly made the same point, but in a far gentler '60s way and certainly not with such militant lyrics.

If you *don't* like what you see, you're seeing a new fad for nostalgic adoption of elderly sartorial and musical idioms, a reactionary barrier set up in the path of the drive to the '90s. There are, after all, no pictures of refrigerators on the sleeves of 2-Tone singles, and no tributes to the 1936 Olympic Games. Much of the criticism directed at 2-Tone by such an unlikely pair as Stiff Little Finger Jake Burns and Skid Richard Jobson is off-target simply because they would be far more appropriately directed at the Mod bands who provided the prologue and the scenery to the arrival of The Specials, The Selecter and — what's that phrase again? — the whole 2-Tone *thing*.

The 2-Tone *thing*: it's basically the 14 members of The Specials and The Selecter plus their respective managers, but it's also a power in the musical land and a record label with as strong an identity as Stax, Motown, Chess or Channel One; a label with a 100% track record of hits unequalled by Apple or RAK or any other label. Certainly unequalled by EMI, CBS, A&M or any of the big initials in the alphabet soup: hence all the 'ska' records being whacked out by the biggies in the fight to have some of your attention. 2-Tone seems like a law unto itself; no-one compares the 2-Tone bands to anyone except other 2-Tone bands.

Plus it's all fashionable as hell: such a neat package. Buy the records, see the bands, count all the manufacturers selling the right ties and shoes and badges. 2-Tone has Practical pluralism: everybody's up front. Seven people saying *watch that and watch this too*; seven people saying that if you resist the pressure you may be defeated but you will not be corrupted.

Meat: what the sound and the motion are about, what the seven are about, what the songs are about, what 'the whole 2-Tone *thing*' is about. And what we talk about.

CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY passes the hat around the duochrome set. Black & whites: ANTON CORBIJN

A COMPLACENT little voice is telling the world that he likes blue-beat as Pauline Black drifts into a room in the Chrysalis Records edifice. A big white room it is, the walls paying silent tribute to the astonishing number of times that Jethro Tull have appeared on the cover of *Melody Maker*.

She seems to be in perpetual motion: a small, agile form under the trilby. Her features are alert and expressive and, when she arrives at her next destination — the Radio 1 studio that puts out *Round Table* — her cool, pointed comments effectively dominate the programme. Alongside Pauline, her fellow contributors — bluff, amiable Jake Burns, reasonable, earnest Anne Nightingale and pinkly self-possessed Kid Jensen — all sound as if they're floundering, equivocating, flannelling. Pauline Black expresses herself very clearly.

Her manner is crisp to the point of being unnerving, but by the time she's arrived at the very expensive Chinese Restaurant where Chrysalis (2-Tone's distributors) are entertaining the band, Pauline has unbent sufficiently to accept a sweet sherry and converse enthusiastically about Billie Holliday and the classic blues singers of the '20s and '30s.

Selecter are established at the restaurant's back table, one of the ones with a revolving cakestand in the middle — a clear indicator that you are in the sort of Chinese restaurant where you can have all you can possibly eat for only a million pounds a head. Organist Desmond Brown is neither impressed nor amused by this opulent kitsch. "I would feel more like a yuman bein' at McDonalds," he remarks mordantly. He's sitting with 'Gappa' Hendrickson, Selecter's other singer. After the meal, Desmond and Gappa will make their excuses and leave on the grounds that they have more entertaining plans for the evening than taking over the upstairs bar at The Venue and doing an interview.

Charley Bembridge — generally known as 'H' — sits next to Gappa. He plays drums. Silent, massive and bearded, huge arms folded, he looks the sort of person that only the most dedicated troublemaker would consider provoking. Flanking him, in an outrageously subtle suit, is Neol Davies, songwriter and guitarist. ('Neol' is pronounced as plain old 'Neil', rather than as the first two syllables of 'neolithic'). The fact that Neol is the only white in the band might be considered important by some people, but none of those people are in The Selecter.

That leaves Pauline and Charley Anderson, your man on the Fender bass. Charley's startling red locks are pulled up into a tam and his wisdom teeth have him under serious manners, which is why he's concentrating on the fish dishes. Just a couple of days previously he'd gone to see Mikey Dread toasting to tapes at a Clash gig, and in conversation had discovered that he and Mr Campbell had been schoolmates back in Jamaica seventeen years ago.

Right at the end of the soup course comes the final arrival: Compton Amanor, the youngest member of the band and second guitarist, fresh from a difference of opinion about matters sartorial at the door. The reception committee had attempted to separate Compton from his hat. "How can I be a rude boy without me hat?" he asked indignantly.

Much Chinese food is consumed before the majority of the party move on to The Venue. Tonight, it's Peter Barden's turn to be the cheese in Richard Branson's mousetrap, slugging away at his keyboards while the waitresses put in the eight-hour shift that will earn them the £3 (plus tips, if anyone has tipping money left after paying for their drinks) that the *wunderkind* of hip capitalism pays them.

And a hard evening's talk begins. Pauline, Neol and Charley take on the mantle of spokespersons, while H keeps a stern watch on the proceedings and Compton stands ready to chip in where necessary.

CSM: *Do you find it offensive when all the 2-Tone bands are lumped together and not considered as individual bands with individual identities?*

Pauline: I consider it to be the usual thing. People who would say that would only be journalists and media. When we took out the 2-Tone tour, there were three bands — Selecter, Specials and Madness — and the punters who came to see us appreciated the differences between the three bands, and that's good enough for me. If people choose to go on about the 2-Tone *thing* as if it was an entity in itself, that's their problem. The people who come to see us know better. And Madness did *not* drop out of the tour. We knew that they were going to go halfway through, as they had other commitments to fulfill, which is why

depth and meaning and value, but anything that's adopted fadwise, written up fadwise in the nationals and championed fadwise can also be discarded fadwise by customers hot in pursuit of the cuter suit and the neater beat. Touters of rival fads may long for its demise for reasons other than those primarily aesthetic.

But now The Selecter have the public ear craned in their direction, and they earn the acclaim with sound, meat and motion.

Sound: a ska-beat colliding with the power and agility of modern rock and reggae, set to songs which ring strictly contemporary resonances in terms of their structure and content alike. Ska may be the taproot, but The Selecter don't sound like old ska records any more than the Stones sounded like Howlin' Wolf. For better or for worse, it *is* a new music.

Motion: the better whirlpool and a group consciousness (*homo gestalt*, anyone?) that — *sans* contrivance — means that while no-one is emphasised, no-one is ignored.

Dexy's Midnight Runners came in to fill the bill.

Neol: The kids who listen to the music understand the individual differences. It's just the media who flatten everything out.

Yeah, but Jake Burns — a fellow musician — said on Round Table that he was "sick of 'the whole 2-Tone thing' "...

Pauline: He is one individual musician who is into a very different form of music.

Neol: What he probably meant is that he's sick of the way that the media are presenting 'the whole 2-Tone *thing*', because as a musician he reads the music papers just like anybody else.

Charley: And he believes what he reads even though he knows that he will read a certain amount of crap. He's sick of it because it is not put over in a way that justifies 2-Tone, what 2-Tone really means.

What's your personal definition of what 2-Tone does really mean?

Neol: It means a hell of a lot. It means a non-seperation of things, like the way the whole world tries to separate everything away from everthing else, things and ideals. For all of us, it means a bringing together and seeing everything as a whole in its entirety, seeing it in its context ...

Charley: ... and using music as a common language, as a common ground, using the music to put over 2-Tone. If 2-Tone was just reggae music, just straight reggae music, it wouldn't mean as much as playing reggae with rock music, with funk music, with other music. If it works in music, it can work any other way, but if you try and split that down, it takes a lot away from the foundations."

Neol: We don't set out to preach, but ...

Pauline: We get a lot of people coming together at our gigs who would previously have stayed with their own little spheres of music, and that's *good*. Our music is for anyone who wants to hear it.

Compton: The audiences come to listen to the music. They're very varied people, but the one thing they have in common is that they've come to have a good time. If they're not there to have a good time, if they just want to fight, then as far as we're concerned they can fuck off, you know? It's them that the unification is coming from. We're not standing up there preaching it or nothin', it's just happening naturally, because it's a music formula that everyone can dig. The whole pattern of the music — grooves and lyrics — is very basic, it's something that everybody can relate to. And it's just the way it happened. There is no real formula.

How do you counter charges from people like Richard Jobson that what you're doing is regressive or reactionary?

Neol: It's because of the media that there's such a revivalist / nostalgia tag attached to it, whereas it's not at all like that. What we're doing is *now*. We're not just regurgitating something that's been done before, we're creating something new. There's nothing like 2-Tone ever existed in the past.

Compton: The original ska records didn't have the influence of '70s reggae and '70s rock.

Neol: This is it. The way certain journalists have written about certain things has led to matters being distorted. One of the songs we sing called 'Carry Go Bring Come' deals with media distortion.

> **"There's no point sitting around like the punks did and getting completely depressed about the whole thing ... You've got to see it through."**

Yeah, but a story can get distorted simply passing from one person to a couple of others. It's inherent in all human communication, not just media.

Neol: That's what the song deals with, right through to its broader context in media, but if anyone says it's not modern he's wrong. That statement just doesn't apply.

Charley: Whoever said that don't know what the fuck he's talking about. People are saying *this* is wrong with 2-Tone or *that* is wrong with 2-Tone. They use 2-Tone as a scapegoat for their own fuckin' problems.

2-Tone has certainly shaken up a lot of people in the record business, has a lot of hits without a massive organisation ...

Pauline: We took it back into a live medium. It's getting to be too much of bands just going into studios. We don't just stand on a stage and pose, and we're not arty-farty. We just get down and do it, and we're saying fairly heavy things like 'Everyday things are getting worse' and we're concerned and the rest of it. That's something people can relate to. There's no point sitting around like the punks did and getting completely depressed about the whole thing. What we're saying is, 'Bloody hell, you *are* having a bad time, but nonetheless you've got to see it through and somehow you're gonna do it if you're in the right frame of mind to do it.'

Charley: And we're sayin' this to everybody: black people, white people, red people, China people . . .

Pauline: You don't see too many red people about . . . sorry, reddy Charley!

Charley: And that is why. It's so acceptable; it is accepted by so many people.

Pauline: The media has become frightened by what we have done. They say we're just ska revivalists, that we attract people who just want to fight. They're frightened.

Neol: They're completely missing the obvious point about what we're doing. By simply doing what we do and being who we are, we *are* rock against racism. It's as simple as that. We also create the facility for other groups to express themselves through music without being subject to the whims of A&R departments who don't really care. We haven't contrived anything. We're simply saying something that to us is very honest, and doing it in a straight-forward way.

Charley: When it all started, there were black and white people involved, and people would look at it and try to make it out to be something else, because it is not just one section. It is *everybody*, right? They will label it as this and that instead of just coming to the gig and listening to the music. They get so wound up about what it isn't and what it should be and where it's going and where it ain't going, so we've got to come down and explain to you what it is. It's just plain, simple facts. Black people and white people going out together, enjoying themselves and havin' a good time.

Have you found racist violence at gigs decreasing since you started?

Charley: It never happened in the first place, which is the whole fuckin' thing about it. I heard on the radio at two in the morning that there was a riot at a punk gig and I read in the *Daily Mirror* next day that there was a riot where The Specials and Selecter were playin'. What happened was that we went to Hatfield that day and we were walkin' around the precinct just looking for somewhere to eat and we saw these drunken bastards saying that they were coming to the gig later to cause some fun, just some fascist besterds who got drunk and had nothin' better to do. They came to the gig later on wavin' carvin' knives and a few people got hurt, but how the media did it up was 'Riot at punk concert' and all this fuckery."

Neol: It's this fear of accepting the way things can be. Certainly in the popular press no-one seems to like the idea of black people and white people getting on together. They're trying to promote the opposite. They have to keep things separate and neatly pigeon-holed.

Well, we know where most of the nationals are at, but among people I know, a lot of people get scared when — particularly at Madness gigs — they see a crowd of skins with BM badges . . .

Neol: Yeah! They should be fuckin' scared! What are you going to bloody do about it, just sit back in your armchair and be scared about it? Or are you going to start thinking about what is going on? Are you going to be scared and retreat and leave things as they are or are you going to get up off your arse and *start thinking?* It's only the people who sit around in armchairs who get scared. The people who come to the gigs aren't scared. It's the ones who sit around cynically who're scared, and they fucking well ought to be, because they haven't got much longer!

Charley: Madness make a mistake and they say things which start a backlash because they weren't said in the right way. They said they didn't care who came as long as they had a good time. Well, they're there, and what can be done about it? What we can do about it is to show them, and Madness was showin' them by goin' out on 2-Tone in the first place.

Continues over

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■ *From previous page*

How can they be on 2-Tone and support 2-Tone *and* be for what the British Movement stand for? It don't make fuckin' sense.

Pauline: If we have a gig, we have black and white people turn up: punks, mods, skins. They have a good time, dance to the music, listen to the lyrics. You may get a National Front element, but they come in from outside and they don't come to listen to the music, but to disrupt it. We're totally against everything that the National Front stand for, but what do they want us to do? Not have the gigs?

The way it was put across in that interview Madness did with *NME*, they started saying totally ridiculous things which I know none of them meant. The girl who did that interview just wound them up so they were coming out with all sorts of defences. She was on the attack all the time.

Charley: The whole thing was so confused that you couldn't make head or tail of it. One minute they were saying one thing, the next something completely different. It would be like you taking what we say and giving it to your editor and him taking one thing out of it and leaving the rest, like Neol saying 'We are rock against racism' and making a headline out of it, use the headline to back up and the rest is just little small bits.

Hold on! The whole point of a headline is to represent the piece as accurately as possible . . .

Neol: We're not saying that you go out to distort things as your design, but it's very often the result because you use it as a vehicle to say certain things of your own instead of what the other people are saying. With regard to the criticisms of unsavoury people coming to the gigs, the people making the criticisms aren't the ones who are coming to the gigs, the people making the criticisms aren't the ones who are doing anything about it. We're the ones in that position, and when people criticise us we don't give a fuck because we know what we're doing. We are living what we feel about certain things.

Pauline: We have unified even with the National Front and any other racist organisation that you care to name coming to disrupt it. Now *that* is going to carry on until there is a much more fundamental thing resolved in society. Now, I'm *not* into giving free publicity to the Front, but we're not into ignoring them either. I want to categorically state — and I want you to put in your article — that The Selecter is totally opposed to everything that the National Front and every other fascist organisation stand for.

We never thought you weren't.

Pauline: Well, the *Evening Standard* thinks differently. They ran a picture of us and captioned it, 'Don't rock with the sieg-heilers.' Six blacks on stage with one white guy and they said that! We're supposed to be the sieg-heilers! *That's* the kind of *bullshit* that's been going around.

Charley: That's the kind of bullshit that is thrown at 2-Tone.

Pauline: They made real fools of themselves, but that's their problem, not ours. As Neol said, we have done what Rock Against Racism couldn't do, because they're so busy patting themselves on the back being nice little trendies.

Neol: What we're talking about is the middle-class contentment that's rife in this country, that keeps everything nicely pigeonholed and safe. They're scared.

Pauline: Maybe they know the odd Rasta, so they pat themselves on the back and think they're against racism. If a black person moved in next door to them, they'd be the first up the road petitioning to get them out. That's their affair. We know what we're doing.

Neol: What we're talking about is fundamental issues that a lot of people are more than prepared to just forget about and sweep under the carpet. Nobody likes talking about things that make them feel uncomfortable, so you get all the world's problems perpetuating themselves, and all the nasty, shitty parts of life never come out in the open. We're bringing them out. Before 2-Tone, what was going on before that? There was a nice neat little punk scene and a nice little reggae scene . . .

Yeah, but there was a heavy punk-reggae connection right from the early days of '76-'77. Without wishing to detract from the 2-Tone achievement . . .

Neol: Well, how many punks were middle-class and patronising? Eh? How many punks went to art college? You know that as well as I do, Charlie.

A middle-class background and a bourgeois sensibility are not the same thing.

Neol: Yeah, well, what I'm talking about is the middle-class ideal, not an individual's background. A lot of people have that middle-class ideal without actually being middle-class.

Charley: It's the same danger, because of the way that they used the punk scene which was the best thing that happened in the '70s. It broke down all the barriers. Now there's a lot of people jumping onto the bandwagon, into the clothes and everything else just to say '2-Tone is great'. But if the meaning of 2-Tone is put over in the wrong way, it can have a bad effect on people who really believe in 2-Tone.

Neol: 2-Tone is not there to provide the answers. It's there to maybe ask some questions. In one of the reviews of our album it said that we didn't provide answers or alternatives. We're not here to give answers. Nobody is. I can't tell you how to live your life, you can't tell me how to live mine. We've all got to think for ourselves, and that's what people don't do enough.

Pauline: The way I figure it is: I am tired of justifying myself. We do what we do, people come to our gigs, they pick up on it, they like it and it is those people that I care about. Journalists can just go take a fuck.

Thank you.

Pauline: We've given you a bit of a hard time, haven't we?

Charley: We're all very nice people really.

Pauline: I'm not nice! I'm not nice at all.

Compton: And I'm the rudest and most horrible of all the rude boys.

AND the cassette plays poptones. Selecter's vehement, paranoid generalisations about the media may seem illogical from a group and a movement who have covered a good few newsprint acres in the past few months, but much of their coverage in the national press must be considered qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

While they've neither been ignored or dismissed, they have been smeared and trivialised, which could be ascribed to Madness' public image rubbing off on mediapersons to whom any 2-Tone band might as well be any other 2-Tone band — after all, they all sound the same and they all look the same and next year we'll all be into something else anyway, right?

Wrong. Every Selecter record sold is a vote of confidence that white youth and black youth are less far apart than our enemies would have us believe. And if that's just a fashion, I want it in my high street, now and forever.

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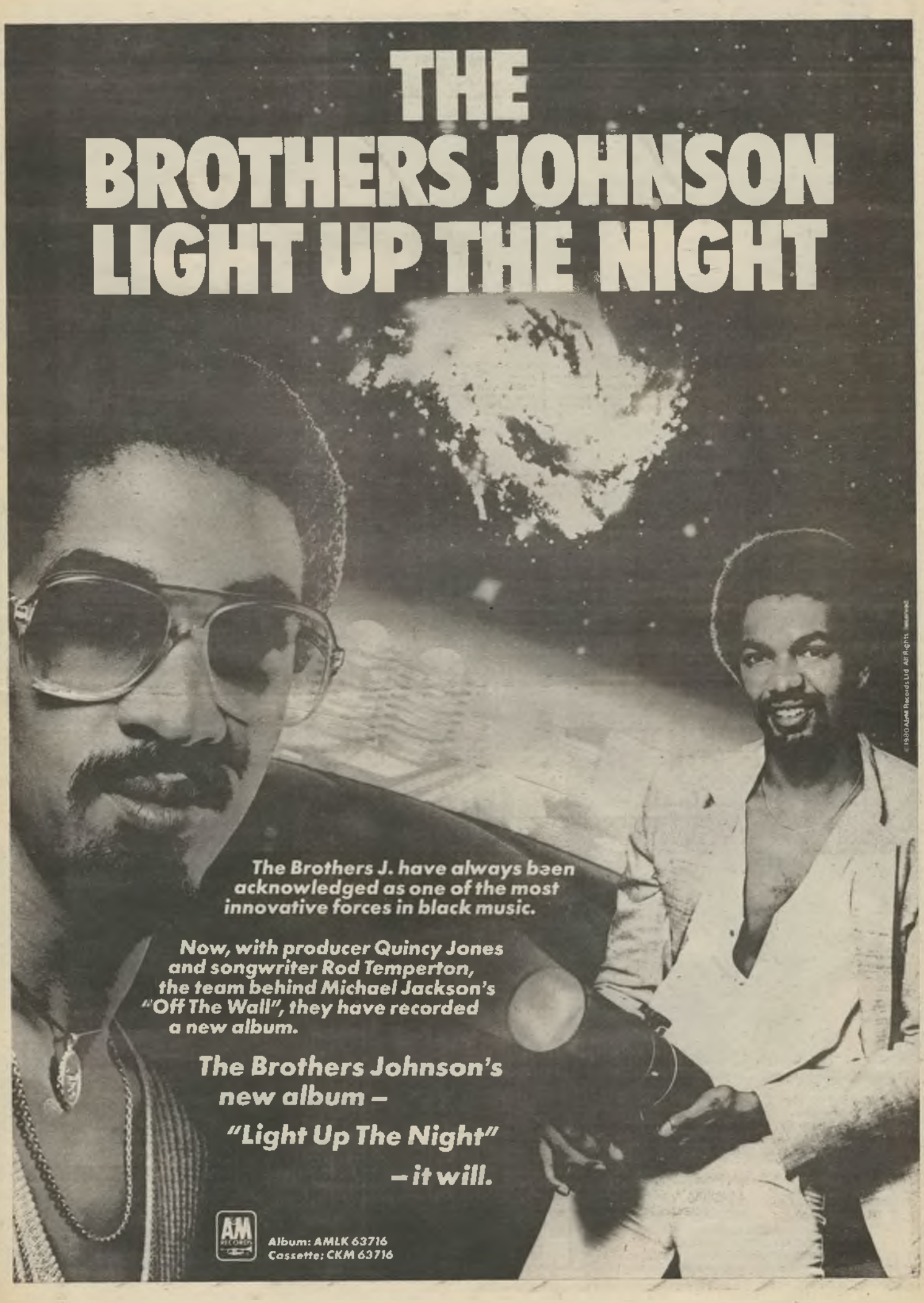
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Thrills!

BILL QUITS!

"That's it for me mate," says silent Stone.

THE pop world reeled last Monday, stunned at the shock news that Wild Man Of Rock Bill Wyman intends to quit The Rolling Stones!

Comparing Bill's imminent departure from rock music with John Lennon's enforced self-isolation from the music scene, last Monday's *Daily Express* carried an interview with Bill in which he announced that he intends to ask for his cards come 1982.

"That's it for me, mate!" Bill eloquently explains to reporter David Wigg." I only got into rock'n'roll for a bit of fun and to see the world for a couple of years."

Music has become too great a part of Bill's life, he means (he seems to have only just realised how central a place it plays in his existence).

"I refuse to let it dominate my life," he forthrightly proclaims.

Most surprising of all is the news that the bassist has not yet announced his decision to the other members of the band. "I don't think it's any of their business," says Bill, who obviously has little faith in theories of the near-mystical union of souls thought to result from playing together in groups. "They wouldn't tell *me*."

The year 1982 Bill has subsequently claimed should read 1983, because it will mark the twentieth anniversary of his time with the Stones. And, besides, Bill adds in a press statement in response to the interview "a lot can happen in that time and I may change my mind."

Bill in tabber days.

Even so, he shows something like near-prescient wisdom with. "I'd rather pack it in while we are up at the top. Another few years and we might be pushing it. I don't want to be a middle-aged rock'n'roller. Probably some people think I am already."

"Quiet, down-to-earth, with a dry sense of humour," writes David Wigg, "his idea of pleasure is entertaining painters, writers and musicians at his home; photographing animal life, or gazing at the stars from the Nice observatory. He has just compiled the photography for a book on the artist Chagall, a close friend and neighbour."

Bill's plans for the future are likely to be an extension of his photographic hobby. "I wouldn't get involved with another band, either as a performer or on a management level. I want a complete change," he proclaims decisively.

Bill says he certainly wouldn't want his son, 17-year-old Stephen, to join a rock band: "I think the life is very destructive. My head's very screwed on — more than some people I know in this business. Some can handle our lifestyle; others can't."

On a more serious note Bill tells David Wigg that he's longing to get back on the road — although perhaps it's the dough he needs as much as the roar of the grease-paint. "Charlie and I need to go on the road to keep our homes together," he says, adding how Mick 'n' Keef's song-writing royalties make the Glimmer Twins much better off than the Stones rhythm section.

And to think that the other Stones only let him join in the first place because he was the only person they knew with a decent set of amps!

LIGHTNIN' HOPKINS

Thrills!

SKIN HEAD ART!

A sample print from 'Lament Of The Terraces'

IF THAT'S NOT A CONTRADICTION

AT the Swarthmore Centre, in Leeds a cosy Community Arts Centre, "skinhead artist" Michael Furbank is holding a one-man exhibition and performance based on skinhead images.

A 19-year-old former art student and Buddhist — he's quick to note the similarities between Buddhists and skinheads, the shaven heads and austere trappings — Furbank arrived at his current skinhead style via a rejection of the excessive dressing-up that went with punks.

"From all the cults from teddy-boys to punk-rock, the skinhead image is the image which hasn't been commercialised," he explains. "It's very difficult for people like Zandra Rhodes to do fashionable updates of Dr. Marten boots and Levi trousers. Because of its basic purity, the classic look of the skinhead, I've adopted that as my image."

"I wouldn't call myself a skinhead — I'm really acting the part of being a skinhead. Basically, I'm an observer."

Possibly because of their ingrained belligerence, the skinheads have never really been observed too deeply: again, their monochroma image doesn't make for good colour supplement material. And yet, they're fundamentally different from all other youth-culture tribes in at least one respect: whereas other tribal groups attempt to say that each member of that tribe is an individual, the skinhead tribe represents the opposite pole of regimented uniformity (Sham *Army*, anyone?). Individuality seems ruthlessly minimised, subsumed under the collective tribal identity.

Furbank sees this, quite bluntly, as rooted in sexual repression: "One of the points I'm trying to make is that the only way blokes can touch and come into contact with each others' bodies without fear of being labelled 'gay' is through violence: it's part of the sexual repression which has caused a lot of violence and frustration." To a large extent, he's undoubtedly right. The original, late '60s skinheads emerged and flourished in the East End of London and the industrialised parts of the North and Midlands, at a time when hedonism and permissiveness (real or imagined) were being touted by the media as the order of the day. It seems more than feasible that the conflict between (on the one hand) the strict, Victorian working-class attitude to sex, and (on the other) the unattainable — because essentially middle-class — liberal ideals, could have given rise to the skinheads' peculiar form of conservatism. (Remember *The Family Way?)*

Furbank's venture titled *Lament Of The Terraces (Skinaphobia)* — occupies two rooms, one for the exhibition and one for the performance. The exhibition consists of a series of photographs

■ *Continues over page*

Skinhead artist Michael Furbank

Police News:

STRUMMER BUSTED LYDON HASSLED

AS is their custom The Clash followed up their February 10 Portsmouth show by inviting fans back to their hotel.

At the Queen's Hotel in nearby Southsea a party got under way. It was the twenty-third birthday of co-manager Kosmo Vinyl and some celebration was called for. Even Maurice Oberstein, CBS Records UK MD, was present.

Blockhead/Clash keyboardman Mickey Gallagher had had his misgivings about staying the night in Southsea and drove to London. On a Blockheads tour the police had attempted to bust the Dury band in a nearby town. "They're very self-righteous in all those towns along the South Coast," he told *Thrills*, and said he thought the party was bothering the hotel staff. "There were kids asleep in chairs in the lobby. It seemed obvious that there were going to be problems."

When the desk clerk called the police, officers at first only checked the band's bedrooms to verify the clerk's complaints that large numbers of Clashfans were sleeping on the floors.

"I think," suggested Kosmo Vinyl, "that when they were doing that they couldn't really avoid having a quick sniff and called in the Drugs Squad."

The band's rooms were searched. As the police came through the door Joe Strummer was stretched out reading The Bible. He and Topper Headon were the only band members to have "substances taken away for analysis." Headon's apparently being pills prescribed to counter-act pain from the crack in his pelvis received after an accident earlier in the tour.

Four roadies also had "substances" taken away. It is not known whether charges will be brought.

Commented Clash co-manager Andrew King: "I always think drug busts are worse than cold hotel rooms but not as bad as the PA breaking down."

Although metaphysical conspiracy theories can't be entirely ruled out, the raid on The Clash's hotel seems largely the result of unhappy circumstances.

More iniquitous and intimidating, though, was the police invasion three days later of John Lydon's home, the second such raid in a month.

At 6.30 a.m. on the morning of Wednesday February 13 (unlucky etc . . .), the occupants of the Chelsea house, who include PiL guitarist Keith Levine, were awakened by what the Virgin press release describes as "a loud and frenzied knocking at the door".

Before anyone could get to the door it was hacked down by an axe-wielding cop — one "Jumbo" as he's apparently known to his colleagues. Eleven uniformed police then invaded the house, to be met at the top of the stairs "by an understandably worried Lydon, who, not knowing what was going on, was holding a ceremonial sword while prepared for the worst".

After causing considerable disruption to the premises the only "illegal" object that could be found was a miniature tear-gas container. These pen shaped objects can temporarily blind an attacker, whilst also staining the assailant's face for identification purposes. One would have though that a fellow like John Lydon, who has suffered physical attacks in the past might feel justified in possessing such a "protective security spray". Besides, in the United States, and possibly in Europe where a fan made a present of the spray to Lydon, they are perfectly legal.

No matter. Lydon was taken to Chelsea Police Station and eventually released with no charge being preferred. He must, however, report to the station on March 13, by which time forensic tests will have been carried out on the device.

The Virgin Press Release points out that: "When the band's publicist rang Chelsea Police Station inquiring as to the circumstances surrounding the detention of Lydon, he was met with 'Oh, you mean the Mr Lydon'. The inquiry seemed to be treated as a matter of some humour by the officer concerned."

The *Thrills* memory banks flicker to the 'Groupie Cops' of the late '60s who so delighted in busting rock stars...

FATHER BROWN

Thrills!

INSIDE DOPE SPECIAL

DICK TRACY reports from Amsterdam on the First International Cannabis Legalisation Conference.

AMSTERDAM is a beat city, an open city, a city of canals, a city of drugs. A longtime home for heretics from all over the world, it's a fitting place for the First International Cannabis Legalisation Conference.

The Conference is being held in the Kosmos which, along with the Milky Way and the Paradisio, make up Amsterdam's Golden Triangle, free areas where hash smoking is tolerated without official interference.

From the very first morning it's clear that the electric clash produced by bringing together all the disparate people associated with the herb at one place and time will result in something akin to random madness holding sway for the next three days.

There's almost an incident on the first morning between a black reggae musician and a white American, reputedly an expert on the medical uses of marijuana. The rasta's sitting cooled out in a chair, dreadlocks concealed inside large purple hat, music centre blaring dub. The stocky American with his red nylon windbreaker and briar pipe is playing pinball. Suddenly he turns: "Would you mind turning that off. It's really very annoying."

The gap between the cultures, between book learning and experienced lifestyle . . .

THE CONFERENCE is opened by a member of Holland's Stuf Vri Party. He tells us: "The submarine has surfaced. Welcome to the light."

Then comes one of the best energy charges of the weekend. Simon Vinkenoog, beat poet, long-time activist, speaks in a wordrush that comprises poetry and prison letters, quotes from Julian Beck, Herbert Marcuse and Ken Kesey. He tells us we are "victim accomplices" in a "war against hysteria." Throughout the conference he is there, interjecting sharp little phrases, always stimulating, always encouraging. His contribution is essential.

Downstairs, away from the speeches, there are two main spaces. One of these blossoms into a full-scale market of goods from all over the world; the other is where they sell food and drink. There are armchairs, palms, an ornamental pond and close-circuit TV relaying the speeches upstairs. The first time I look at the screen, however, they're playing videotapes of the Notting Hill riots.

Later, I deliver my findings on the inconsistencies of the media coverage of the Paul McCartney case as my contribution to the Cannabis and the Media Workshop. Space does not allow a detailed rerun but it seems likely that the McCartney quote "I will never smoke marijuana again" was invented by newsmen who knew what their editors required.

Little reported was the fact that McCartney told Tony Robinson at Amsterdam airport: "I think we could decriminalise marijuana and I would like to see a really unbiased medical report on it. We're all on drugs — cigarettes, whisky and wild, wild women. The older generation make marijuana out to be some kind of terrible thing. I have been in jail for ten days but I didn't go crazy because I wasn't able to have marijuana. I can take it or leave it . . . Sometimes I prefer a drink."

After the workshop, sensing a dangerous, placid concesus of feeling amonst the delegates I spoke to Hidehiro Marui, lawyer for Japan's Clear Light Society. He represents Koh Akutagawa, founder of CLS, who was prevented from coming to the Conference by the Japanese Foreign Ministry refusing him a passport. This was because, in 1977, Koh was indicted for growing 37 marijuana plants. He has been fighting the case ever since, and it has now reached its ninth hearing.

The case is being fought on the grounds that every Japanese has the right to "private happiness". Furthermore, he points out that the marijuana laws were imposed on Japan during the American Forces' occupation after the Second World War. Hundreds of experts have testified on Koh's behalf. Hidehiro says attitudes towards marijuana are changing in Japan, but the thinking of the judges is still "very old".

As for the McCartney case, he claims that the Government deliberately set out to bust him in order to demonstrate to young Japanese what the status quo felt on the subject, and to demonstrate to other Western bands who tour there, Japan being one of the world's largest music markets, that their entourage could be searched at any time.

IT IS NT until the second day that the haze clears and it becomes possible to begin to get a fix on what this Conference is really all about. I am upstairs listening to a speaker when someone sidles up and whispers: "Direct action meeting now taking place downstairs." The subversives are emerging.

I arrive to find some fifteen people grouped at a round table in earnest discussion, members of direct action herb groups from around the planet.

There are many problems under discussion, underpinned by a basic disagreement that separates the people in this room from the conference organisers. To these people, the Herb is part and parcel of a whole cultural liberation movement which can only be achieved through direct action. The second group want to separate the Herb out and make it legal through institutional means.

There is much talk of tactics. There's an American scheme called Friday at Five whereby they encourage every herb smoker in the US to light up at the same time, at the symbolic end of the working week. The Italian says that in his country smoke-ins are legal but become illegal if you pass the joint.

There are plans for planting the herb in public parks, for international smoke-ins. A guy from Geneva invites everyone over in June to demonstrate outside various UN headquarters there. The Teepee woman says they are holding their Stonehenge festival around the same time when, as she explains, "we smoke cannabis in stone circles."

An earnest Yippie American grower talks out forcefully about building up alternative sources of supply. He has already built up a considerable seed bank and there was a notable communication between him and the Jamaican brothers.

During one break I talk to two CAMP (Coalition For The Abolition of Marijuana Prohibition) women who add some local colour to the Shortergate story. As they put it: "The reason why so many people hate Gregg Allman is that, after he shopped his friend, he went on to be more successful and people were going along to his concerts and cheering him like a hero." There was a look of disgust on her face. "We march on his concerts: "There were other darker stories as well. Maybe one day those can go into print too.

THE FOLLOWING morning I'm down at the hotel bar with the Jamaicans — Freddie Hinckley, a psychiatrist at the Belle Vue mental hospital and his colleague Dr Jackson, an immaculately dressed plastic surgeon.

Freddie believes it is important

■ Continues page 59

Merry prankster Lydon, Wobble, Levine

PIL Wind Up

LITTLE Johnny Lydon was pissed off that day up at Manor Studios.

It seemed like he'd been up there sitting around on his arse for simply hours as he awaited the arrival of the tardy Wobble and Keith Levine.

John called his financial master, the Virgin Records Inc.

He explained his unhappiness to a certain female employee of the company, a lady whose name is best left out of this tale, for her downfall may yet be brought upon her shoulders by her notorious — nay, infamous — love of possie.

Understanding the PiL singer's plight The Young Lady agreed to make a number of phone calls to attempt to locate the errant pair of musos.

After several numbers had been abortively dialled The Young Lady made a call to the PiL household itself.

By chance Keith Levine had just entered the front door.

What were he and Wobble up to? she inquired. Weren't they aware of the fitful state of distress that their actions were causing John?

After first extracting a vow of secrecy from The Young Lady, Keith decided to come clean. Wobble, he told her, was at that very moment auditioning for the bass-playing gig in Ricky Lee Jones' band.

Moreover, he, Keith, had already accepted the post of guitarist and in two days time was due to fly to America. Reiterating his request for The Young Lady to keep all due silence with regard to this top secret matter Levine rang off.

Within two minutes his phone rang again . . . and then again . . . and then again: assorted Virgin godlings like record company boss Simon Draper — and even the Vernons Yard true Diety himself, Richard Branson (the second most successful man in British pop — Sunday Telegraph) — were in great distress: why was PiL splitting up in such an unseemly, underhand manner? Did Keith and Wobble really believe there was a future for their modern music with our Ricky?

It is not known what replies were given by Keith.

It is not known if The Young Lady at Virgin has of late been given to serious self-reflection.

KEN LOCKIE

Elvis: It's The Clone Stranger

ORION, the latest in a line of masked singers, denies that he is Elvis Presley or even that he is a reincarnation of the late lamented heavyweight.

He claims that it is a coincidence his voice sounds exactly like Presley's (sigh) but he still refuses to take his mask off. In fact he is so vehemently opposed to revealing his facials that he is trying to get a passport that has a photograph of him (ahem) actually wearing his mask.

This is not proving an easy task, for some reason Uncle Sam is opposed to the idea.

Meanwhile, radio stations who play his latest single, 'Honey', are being plagued by callers asking "Who is that man?"

After a thorough *Thrills* investigation we can say categorically that Orion is not the Pelvic one.

He can't be, can he?

COLONEL TOM ZORRO

This is an advertisement for WH Smith and it's written all rough and round the wrong way like this so you won't pass it by. (Good thinking eh?) Congratulations on reading this far and keep up the good work because if you read to the end it'll pay off. What this ad is getting round to is telling you about a record offer that's going to pick you up and throw you against the wall. Or hopefully onto a bus that'll get you to WH Smith and into the bit where you see this ↓ From now until March 1st. they're selling all their STANDARD 7 INCH SINGLES — records and a whole, massive gigantic, huge, enormous bunch of golden oldies for a mere 85p each! Now aren't you glad you stayed with us?

WHSMITH

ARCHIVE FUN

Joe Meek: Cult Hero Inherits Earth Shock!

AS Jerry Lee Lewis arrives in the United Kingdom to play a string of dates it is time to advise the British public of the dreadful *attitude* displayed by this now forty-five year-old Louisianan the first time he appeared here in May, 1957. He just didn't realise that the stuck-up English would take exception to the boy's travelling with his new thirteen-year-old bride, Myra. Prob'ly most of the fuss was 'cos they found out she was his cousin, too.

As Jerry Lee himself said at the tahm, "I know lots of people married to thirteen year-olds." He is also reported to have said, "I couldn't understand what all the fuss was about ... Besides, back home everyone knew she was only twelve."

Even so, the grim-countenanced more morally correct Brits greeted Jerry Lee with the derision he deserved. "Go home, baby snatcher," audiences shouted. His hotel asked him to leave, and the twenty-seven date tour was cancelled.

And wouldn't rock'n'roll be more fundamentally intact today if further such ethical judgements had been made?

IN THE 13 years that have elapsed since Joe Meek decided to blow his brains out on the eighth anniversary of Buddy Holly's death, the pioneering British record producer has become the focus of a minor hardcore cult.

Perhaps best known for producing The Tornadoes ('Telstar'), John Leyton ('Johnny Remember Me') and The Honeycombs ('Have I The Right') amongst hundreds of others, Meek's suicide (and the fact that he didn't leave a will) resulted in a mass of litigation — mostly concerning unpaid royalties and the freezing of assets — which have still not been satisfactorily resolved. So, it's any one's guess what will become of the unreleased sessions Meek recorded in his flat-cum-studio in Holloway with The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Rod Stewart, Johnny Cash and Gene Vincent!

Nonetheless, periodically, The Joe Meek Appreciation Society (600 paid-up members) stage a wake. For devotees of the Meeksville Sound, it might be an opportunity to both marvel at his innovative studio techniques and relive their mis-spent youth, but for many of Meek's former artists it's more like a creditors meeting than an old school reunion.

This year spotted propping up the bar of The Nightingale in Wood Green were Mike Berry, Chas & Dave, Cliff Bennett, The Outlaws, Mike Cox and Ivor Raymonde. Innocent bystanders included three-fifths of Mott The Hoople, Yes-man Steve Howe (who didn't get a chance to jam), Capital DJ Roger Scott and a tattooed lady named Helen — well, that's what was written on her back! The Rough Trade mob were also present but Phil Spector sent a personal letter of apology for not making the trans-Atlantic trip.

Naturally, that old reprobate Screamin' Lord Sutch was to be seen holding court, having just returned from yet another sell-out German tour and recording a new LP in Hamburg. Seems he hasn't lost his touch, because for the session, his Lordship managed to blag both The Pat Travers Band and Cheap Tricker Rick Nielsen to put down the backing tracks.

Joe Meek is 50.

ROY CARR

Joe Meek

Skinhead Art

■ *From page 11*

of desolate northern industrial wastelands and figurative studies of latterday skins, some taking the form of posed tableaux which illustrate the links between skins, sex and violence, and a series of monochrome prints of heavily-stylised skinhead stances, technically similar to the 2-Tone figures. Furbank — no fool he — has had a load of T-shirts printed with these figures. Business doesn't appear to be too brisk, which is odd, because they're quite fetching, in an austere kind of way. Furbank says they're rather popular amongst the large BM/NF contingent in Leeds, a state of affairs which he doesn't particularly like.

"My own active involvement against the NF is through exhibitions like this," he says, and indeed, it's easy to see how more reactionary skins might feel insulted by his work.

The performance is less successful than the exhibition, mainly because of its obviousness and semi-confrontational nature. Indeed, its narrative content makes it more of a play, or mime, than a piece of performance art. Furbank crawls out of a large plastic bag (womb), and to the accompaniment of relevant chunks of period-piece music ('Blue Suede Shoes', 'Green Onions', 'Anarchy In The UK', etc.) tries on the trappings of the various subcultures, discarding each in disgust, with the exception of the skinhead gear. Clad in this, he regards himself in a large piece of aluminium foil (self-image), simulates masturbation with a Doc Marten boot, declaims loudly about silence, and eventually throws himself at the sheet of foil (suicide).

Despite the shortcomings of the performance and the dubious pseudo-poetical statements with which Furbank needlessly surrounds his work there was more than a germ of promise in the event. For to risk the wrath of a peer-group — especially one as famously violent as the skinheads — in honest investigation of their pyschological roots, takes great courage. To do so by offering positive alternatives to mindless violence — to set creation against destruction, as it were — takes courage and integrity.

ANDY GILL

Lowry — Not Only Rock 'n' Roll

Baby talks dirty
The Knack

The new single
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LIMITED EDITION
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MARTHA
AND THE
MUFFINS
MAKE
echo beach
a single Din9
METRO MUSIC
AN ALBUM DID1.
The Marquee, 22nd February
The Nashville, 23rd February
The Lyceum, 24th February

ON ALBUM — Cat. No. 6d 1.
ON SINGLE — 'Red Frame/White Light' Cat. No. DIN 6.
ON SLEEVE — Forthcoming colour change
ON TOUR — Feb 15 Eric's, Liverpool
16 Manchester Poly
19 Huddersfield Poly
21 Leeds, Fan Club
22 Ormskirk, Edgehill College
23 Dudley, J B's
25 The Castaways, Plymouth
26 Exeter Rouses
27 Trinity Hall, Bristol
28 Portsmouth Poly
29 London, Southbank Poly
Mar 2 University East Anglia
3 Kent University
4 The Music Hall, Shrewsbury
7 Retford, Porterhouse
8 Middlesborough, Rock Garden
9 Edinburgh, Valentino's
10 Dundee, Maryars Hall
11 Aberdeen, Ryffles
12 Glasgow, College of Technology
13 Sheffield, Limit Club
14 London, Y.M.C.A. Russel St
15 Liverpool University
ORCHESTRAL
MANOEUVRES
in the dark

dindisc

The Lone Groover

Benyon

Weller/Waller's Poetic Venture

Dave Waller

Notes from Hostile Street

FOR ALL the platitudes that were part and parcel of punk at the beginning, precious few members of the new establishment have actually 'put something back' into rock-related kulture at grass roots level.

So it is refreshing to report on the advent of Riot Stories, a small publishing company launched at the instigation of Paul Weller to encourage young, left-field writers and poets.

First publication to see the light of day at the start of the year was *Notes From Hostile Street*, a volume of poems from the pen of one Dave Waller, an old Woking accomplice of The Mohair One.

There's nothing too heavy in its 36 pages, although the extreme wordiness of lines like *"ambivalent manifestos of our nowheres"* are not exactly the sort of thing I'd have pictured your average Jam fan getting off on.

Still, where he sticks to sensibly-structured verse, Waller can be both witty and incisive in his observations.

Says Paul Weller: "In a way the whole thing was done for selfish reasons 'cause I'd always liked Dave's poetry and I wanted to have it all together in one volume.

"The thing is that I'm not ramming it down anyone's throats. I've tried to keep my name away from it as much as possible. It's just there."

And what of the standing of modern poetry with the rock audience in general? Most people I know still cringe at the thought of the stuff.

"People generalise too much. Two people could read the same book and one of them would get a lot from it and the other wouldn't get anything. It all depends what you read into it."

***Notes From Hostile Street*, by the way, will cost you 90p (including postage and packing) from Riot Stories, Flat 3, 1 Hyde Park Place, London W2.**

ADRIAN THRILLS

THRILLS

Lowry

"Here's some great news for you brass band freaks — we've just heard that there's been a right wing coup, instituted by leading factions of the armed forces."

White Light In The Darkness

WHEN ITV attempts to cater for teenage viewers, they never quite get it right but only rarely do they make such a mess of it as the BBC.

Thames, (over) thoughtfully-prepared *White Light* which started last week is in the rare tradition of the very best under-18 early evening shows, making no great deal about the fact that teenagers have their own awkward, special pressures and values, not scaled down, handed down adult ones.

Any serious contemporary pop-slanted teen programme is more or less obliged to pinpoint the appalling legal and moral injustices piled upon kids. Teenagers have it so rough, that when they have some sort of showcase for themselves they are forced to use the time to mouth off. This made *Something Else*, BBC's typically sludgy 'minority' programme, boring if righteous. *White Light* is not as boring, not as righteous, and in the first programme breathlessly communicated the farcical, incomprehensible petrified laws and barriers (in this show, specifically censorship facing teenagers) but blended in information, entertainment and posing as well. *White Light* actively acknowledged the teenagers' incorrigible world, like *Grange Hill*, like *Tiswas*, like little else.

It was fun, but because of all the Youth, agitprop creaked around the edges. Gary Crowley saved the day, although he creaked around the edges more than anything on TV since Charlie Williams in *The Golden Shot* — and was brilliant because of it. Crowley is an ex NME switchboard man, the only person I know who can sing XTC's White Album unaccompanied from beginning to end.

He left fellow presenter Jon Mack to get on with the serious bits and his exuberance lifted the show.

He handled the pop diary, roving reporters and this week's films. He couldn't stay still, rocking wildly back and forwards, eyes all over the place, and had difficulty reading the autocue. He was great. I hope the top TV people recognise his worth and he doesn't get too slick.

The reasonable Jon Mack neatly conducted a debate of sorts, an effective voicing of the daft censorship debacle. The kids in the studio, well spoken posers straight from the home counties, volleyed their questions at the apprehensively diplomatic Secretary to the British Board of Censors, inevitably making their points as logic was mostly on their side.

Elvis Costello and The Attractions played two songs. Mod Crowley warned us to look out for the Viking movement. The *Grange Hill* studio rabble dance like loonies to Blondie's new single. The show was very nearly fab. Given a real run and time to settle, *White Light* could be a good new voice — or at least part of a proper TV voice of teen angst, fun, energy and argument.

PAUL MORLEY

DANGEROUS VISIONS

Gary Crowley, Jon Mack

OBITUARY

LES PRIOR: an appreciation by C. P. Lee

LES PRIOR, who died peacefully at home on January 31, was an integral part of Alberto Y Los Trios Paranoias. We called him factor X, because you never knew from one minute to the next what outrage he was going to commit, not only on the audience, but also on the band. This was the key to his uniqueness, the blend of devastating verbal wit and tightrope walking bravado that endeared him to so many artists and audiences, not only with the Albertos, but as MC with the Stiff tours.

The instrument that Les played was the crowd, and on a good night he played it like a master. His freewheeling, improvisational verbalising made him one of Britain's best comedians, but by choosing to work within a rock setting his talent remained sadly unrecognised by the public at large.

Perhaps his peak came when he played the DJ in *Sleek*. This part gave free rein to his mischievous sense of the bizarre and rapidly developed into a show within a show. Here he developed a barrage of puns and gags that epitomised the sleazy world of the 'all purpose club': "Don't forget, Wednesday night is heavy night — come down and drink some cement . . . Here's one by Bob Marley and the Marleytiles, called 'Whisky In My Jah' . . . It's the Pink Freud — 'See Emily Play With Herself'."

All this was performed whilst Les battled with a turntable that possessed the capabilities of a British army mortar, hurling records and Les in the air with breakneck ferocity.

Translating any humour onto vinyl is tricky and translating Les's was trickier, but if needs be he could turn out funny tracks, made even funnier by his strangled vocals. On stage there were times when we never reached the end of the song because we were doubled up in hysterics at his singing. 'Pavlov's Dog' became his tour de force and all the time Les was well enough to perform we never dropped it from the set.

Les joined the Albertos on our third gig. He already knew he had cancer and that his time was limited. This was a contributory factor to his attitude to performing — he had nothing to lose and this gave his style an edge that he continually hurled himself over. Sometimes he'd fly and sometimes he'd fall, but whatever the outcome it was always a uniquely Les performance.

Despite his rapidly deteriorating condition Les never once complained, and when the end came it was a release for him and a loss for all of us. But for his friends who love him and for all the people who saw him in action he's left a legacy in our hearts that will never fade, because he gave us his greatest gift — that of laughter.

Pic: Chalkie Davies

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THINK PINK!

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Also available on cassette.

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VIPs: POP COMES FROM COLLEGE . . .

"THE V.I.P.S, new wave pop funbeat combo. Four sincere guys into T. Rex, Ramones, J. Richman, Beatles, Bowie, seek intelligent sincere audience for lasting relationship. Looks immaterial."

THAT WAS the touching little appeal which appeared on the sleeve of an LP released in Coventry in 1978. It was called — slight sound of suppressed groans all round — 'Music For Funsters' and marked the vinyl debut by a group of fresh-faced young hopefuls from Warwick University with a taste for Hawaiian shirts and a flair for wince-inducing self-promotion of quite spectacular tackiness. Somehow or other the sought-for audience never got around to answering that ad, even though John Peel played the record and felt moved to remark that if only it had been made by Freddie & The Dreamers 15 years before it would surely have been a hit.

There could, of course, be no higher recommendation. Yet even more wildly extravagant praise was soon to follow, as one V.I.P. relates: "We went on to do these demo-sessions with Chas Chandler, y'see" (the one-time Animal turned music-biz whizzperson) "and he'd scratch his head and say (speaking, apparently, in a bad imitation of a Northern accent) 'They're a load of rubbish. They can't play, they can't sing — but they've got something. Ah don't know what it is, but they've got something . . .' But he never found out what the something was."

What could the something be? Well soon we should have the chance to find out, because The V.I.P.s' career is just about set for its next Great Lurch Forward. Two years on from the 'Funsters' venture — self-produced and self-financed — they've been back in the studios, with Glitter Band producer Mike Leander this time, and finally signed themselves a major deal, with RCA's Gem label. The first fruits of the partnership should be evident by mid-March with the release of a 45 — probably an infectiously insistent ditty called 'Causing Complications'. And if they're allowed to follow that up with an album then the title being kicked around, as a pointed reminder of their time in the wilderness, is simply 'The Rejection Tapes'.

Chirpy, tongues-in-cheek purveyors of hyper-danceable teenbeat romance, breezy-bright and lightweight ("We're into fun"), you can see they're not going to be everyone's glass of milk-shake, or even fizzy pop. So who really does love The V.I.P.s?

"I don't think a lot of our audience would consider themselves musically aware; they just come for a good time. And that's where our audience lies, people who don't regularly go to gigs. They come along and we don't make any great demands on their ears, we're easy listening, no hidden messages in the songs. And They're not going to be easily led by the music press, they're not fashion conscious — they're not conscious of many things at all. They're unconscious most of the time — no, don't print that! We luv 'em really."

True enough, the long months of slog through pub residencies to the more prestigious London venues have rewarded the band (Paul Shurey on drums, Andy Price on bass, Guy Morley and Jed Dmochowski on guitars) with a small but faithful following in various parts of the country. Unhappily, a somewhat premature attempt to break America was to prove less successful: "We found out there was a US fast-food chain called V.I.P. Restaurants, so the idea was to ring their head office and ask them if they'd sponsor us on a tour of their restaurants around America.

By PAUL DU NOYER
Pix: TONY MACLEAN

But we couldn't afford the phone call."

Although, thankfully, the group emerged late enough to miss out the whole ill-fated powerpop fiasco — and they believe their energy and lack of pretence should be enough to distinguish them from all that — a certain fondness for '60s styles and material meant they only narrowly escaped categorisation as mods, a movement for which they claim they never had any particular affinity.

Jed: "We're just doing what comes naturally to us."

Andy: "As soon as you stick a label on yourself, then when that fashion dies you go with it."

And Jed: "You've got to create your own trends, like Cliff: he's been through all those changes, and he's *still* rubbish."

For the future The V.I.P.s' major ambition is, as Jed confides, "to become a really big band . . . about a million of us in the end."

Ah yes, I see, I see, I said — as, slowly, I backed towards the door.

"Any more of your cheek and I'll lock you up with a Dennis Waterman LP. Now clear off . . ."

"Our aim is to become a really big band . . . about a million of us in the end"

"You've got to create your own trends, like Cliff: he's been through all the changes and he's *still* rubbish."

Cossack Vodka is an exciting drink with mixers,

DAVID BOWIE
ALABAMA SONG
SPACE ODDITY

FULL COLOUR POSTER BAG

RCA

SINGLES

SINGLE OF THE WEEK

BETTE BRIGHT: Hello, I Am Your Heart (Korova).
Nirvana in a milk-bar, a record for swinging lovers. The ample charms of Ms Bright send palpitations across Dennis Linde's mouth-wateringly sensual vocardiac dialogue. Although her version of this heart-choking love song doesn't differ in feel from the original (not even a change of gender) there are plenty of other sexually alluring touches, like an easy skanking lover rock backbeat, provided by the Cimmarons, and a swooning sax that pulsates with melody. Bette Bright's vocal was made in heaven. Her performance on

the B-side, 'All Girls Lie', is another enlightening experience and completes a perfect double act for producer/writer Clive Langer. A single of consummate taste — not just for this week but for all time.

Reviewed by MAX BELL

JACQUES: Keep On Joggin' (Part One) (Monument).
James Brown, Chic and Moroder notwithstanding, this was the best unnoticed rhythm of '79 and it's also by Dennis Linde, forced to adopt this discoid pseudonym by Monument's inability to notice any merit in the song other than its obvious topicality. The craziest of craze records, 'Joggin'' continues the Abilene marvel man's mastery of every vital contemporary sound from warped new country to space soul funk. Ought to be released immediately on 12".

PARLIAMENT: Party People (Casablanca).
This funk is junk by comparison. George Clinton shot his bolt long ago when he let over-diversification and rampant ambition rule his head and heart. Signs that Parliament and Funkadelic were straying well into moronic tedium like this lit up all through '79. This hints at no returning to form. Parliament mistake repetition for soul once too often and end up with egg all over their dull day-glo faces. George, your mothership just crashed. Pa-a-a-r-t-y 'till you drop (dead).

EARTH, WIND & FIRE: In The Stone (CBS).
Much the same can be said for E, W & F who, along with the above clones, threaten to become the new generation of Blood, Sweat & Tears, Chicago etc. while somehow retaining a hip credibility that's as speciously mystic as their daft songs. *'Every man I meet walkin' town / Feel the wonder pass his conscious mind'*. Yeah, run along Maurice. This is jive, a bad trip with Leonard Bernstein overblown tones, dressed up as radical chic for the coffee table set.

MATAYA CLIFFORD: Living Wild (Do It).
Mataya Clifford sounds like one of those dodgy female vocalists that American record companies are apt to sign by the cartful in the off-season. Actually it's a Him, of South African origin. 'Living Wild' is 'Hey Joe' remodelled with a subtle difference — the hero is innocent, never killed no man and indeed never had the gun in the first place. Case of mistaken identity officer, but there's no escaping the dance quotient in this black beauty, a hybrid of Curtis Mayfield, Arthur Lee and The Pop Group. Clifford puts the aforementioned fat cat establishment has-been funk acts right in the hole, too, because he doesn't drown the rhythm in a sea of strings and korgs. Let's hear it for the little man. Check it out.

LEE PERRY: Bafflin' Smoke Signal (Black Art); Disco Devil (Black Art).
There are four Scratch 12" singles available from your local pre-release shop right now and all of them cost an iniquitous amount of money. If it's possible to buy an American import for £1.50 how can a single import from Holland be justified at over three quid? (Answer: It can't). These slices of Black Art date from Perry's 'sane' period, before his renunciation of Rasta, but that doesn't mean ole Lee is exactly in control of his faculties here. That's half the fun. On 'Bafflin' Smoke Signal' Perry's water pipe catches fire and he sees the devil in the Vatican — a mild heresy to bubble through your brain while you're reading *Paradise Lost*. 'Disco Devil' is an equally effervescent charge until you decipher the lyric which falls foul (unless it's tongue in cheek) of Rasta's tendency to get self-righteous about nothing. Whether you like disco or not it certainly isn't an evil scourge. Lee Perry demeaned himself when he wandered into the same camp at Peter Tosh. It's easy to enjoy the joyous qualities of the sound but the religious connotations are so much horsesh**t.

TOM PETTY AND THE HEARTBREAKERS: Refugee (MCA).
This is just one of the best songs that Bob Dylan, The Band and The Byrds *won't* be writing in the '80s. Tom Petty has a whole bunch more. He still suffers from the stigma of unfashionable appearance; the same types who bend over backwards finding meaningful messages in Springsteen's act are always ready to find fault with the blond chipmunk. Unfortunately for them Tom is much, much more popular than all his pretty boy competitors and 'Refugee' is proof of his continuing power as singer and group leader. On the flip, 'It's Rainin' Again', Tom slides out on a different ledge. A quick shot of bottle-neck blues for all you old Rolling Stones fans.

PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY: Laughing Academy (UA).
I don't know where Punishment Of Luxury came in or where they came from but I do know that this sound has gone out. The awfully coy Punilux were once touted as some kind of neo-psychedelic outfit, but the only revival they're spearheading is a return to the cosmic waffle factory. Hey, all you alienated Yes, ELP, Genesis types, here's some proper music for ya. Play it to the vegetable patch and watch those turnips *spring* into life.

Illustration: Serge Clerc

BRIGHT LIGHTS, YANKEE DOLLARS

THE SKIDS: Animation (Virgin).
God, these people don't half take themselves seriously. Hit records, surreal covers, Bill Nelson producing and it's all fantastically modern — except that Jobson's diction is so dreadful it's impossible to gather dem pearls as they spatter out of the corners of this ample mouth. Truth is when the waste matter collides with the thermantidote the Skids are left skating on a disposable scrapheap of tired white vinyl. Their 'Animation' doesn't make it past the first frame.

AEROSMITH: Remember (Walkin' In The Sand) (CBS); DEF LEPPARD: Hello America (Vertigo); IRON MAIDEN— Running Free (EMI).
Slow, slow, quick, quick, slow, British and American heavy metal bands mooch around their cages like herds of wounded buffalo. Aerosmith, very much last decade's thing, make a completely wretched blancmange out of the obligatory nostalgia number. A competent R&B band with inflated pretentions. Aerosmith induce mild dyspepsia. Def Whatsit are even less subtle, working for the yankee dollar right from the outset with sycophantic pecan to all the biggest grossing American cities by using an old formula that dates back fo Olaf and Columbus. No doubt the Manhattan Chase provides special interest free facilities for the first time account holders. Iron Maiden? Poor Iron Maiden, tender of the noddle, they can only be likened to Swift's definition of troublesome vision: "Those foolish lights which conduct men through dirt and darkness, till they fall into a deep pit or a noisome bog"

THE VAPORS: Turning Japanese (UA). Despite its sugar-coated subliminal throwaway shall this record is so limp it came in on four wheels. Inside, vapid new men play with self-important cliches but only make the case for mandatory hari-keri. Japan, what a fascinating concept!

BILLY PRESTON & SYREETA: It Will Come In Time (Motown). Former Rolling Stone seeks blind man's wife for mutual masturbation therapy. Previous experience unnecessary but applicants must be willing to undergo extreme personal embarrassment. MOR license an advantage.

SNIPS: 9 O'Clock (EMI). Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water Snips, shark-toothed warbler, bites back with an utterly convincing pop beat that nags and shakes like prime time Pete Shelley. A charge of naked energy in a sea full of flat batteries. Midge Ure provides a rich and slick production but you won't be listening to that. Aching to be a hit.

GOD'S GIFT: Vicious People (Newmarket). Insect kingdoms erupt, raw hell is let loose and Gods Gift from Pendlebury sit squat over their creations obviously keeping some ghastly secret to themselves. Gang Of Four without the jokes or Joy Division with straitjackets, it's hardly most people's idea of a nice night out.

THE G.T.'s: Boys Have Feelings Too (Stiff). Yeah, whatever *did* happen to Jonathan King? The G.T.'s, Bruns and Jackie (hi, girls!)

■ *Continues over*

Singles

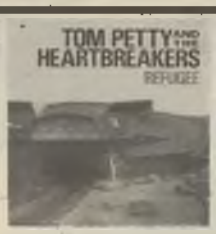
■ *From Previous page*

hail from Clapham, so they should have had ample opportunity to conduct a top of the deck survey on this trifling and hysterically unfunny pop bauble before releasing it on an uncaring public. It's all girls together on this darn-the-disco drudgery. Too bad they forgot to add a tune and that, innit? (Keep your hands off my feelings for a start.)

FAMOUS PLAYERS: Who's Kissing You (Page 43). Well-meaning competent rock bands are a drug in an overstocked supermarket. Limited shelf life.

CODEK: Me, Me, Me (MCA). From a void to avoid. Jean Marieux (who?) rabbits on at length about nothing whatsoever according to all the accepted EEC regulations. Robert Moog old son, you've got a lot to answer for.

BUDDY ODOR STOP: Buddy Odor Is a Gas! (Ariola). Ho ho ho. Ex-Gruppo Sportivo scriptwriters inflict their dreadful Dutch jokes onto a made-to-measure series of hack hooks. It stinks.



RACHEL SWEET: Fools Gold (Stiff). Stiff's juvenile lead is still an obscene reminder of Lena, Mickey and the young Eric as she prances like duckweed through the audition on G.P's old show-stopper. But soft, the musical director is wailing in the wings with a note of rebuttal! "Miss Akron 1978, you have won tonight's star prize, a pair of rubber gloves and a recording contract for two in Nashville". Tennessee? "Nope, the Cromwell Road."

SPEEDBALLS: No Survivors (No Pep). If their press hand-outs are to be believed Speedballs are that rarest of endangered species, a cult mod band. They seemed like nice enough lads in the pub but I can't imagine this woeful tale of mutilation and human carnage slipping through the play-list.

K.C. & THE SUNSHINE BAND: Let's Go Rock & Roll (TK). K.C. still makes out a fine case for the hoary genre on this intellectually undemanding soul romp. A pleasant cross between The Doobies and Gary Glitter, it'll be overtaking 'Please Don't Go' sometime this year (c. Old Moore.)

THE CUSTOMS: Let's Get It On (Shake). Not Marvin Gaye's reflective sexual plea but a rock-a-billy country romp from Cincinatti, Ohio where it might almost have stayed. Spirited and dull. Guitarist Pete Greenberg (used to slice up the riffs with DMZ) injects some much needed kick into the flip-side, Baker Knight's 'Bring My Cadillac Back', but the vocalist can't sing for toffee.

STICK SHIFTS: Automobile (Chiswick). The North London loonies at Chiswick uncover the acapella doo-wop talents of Graham Lister's Stick Shifts. Speaking as somebody who knows next to nothing about cars I can't agree that every boy needs an automobile although I'm nearly convinced that Lister is Australian because the down under 'Parramatta Road' told me so. Music for the juke-box or a road-side cinematic attraction. Good enough.

BET LYNCH'S LEGS: Riders In The Sky (Absurd). From Absurd's madcap world of phonographic funnies this is possibly the last shoot-out now that Chris Gill's 'I Like Blue Beat' stands on the verges of chart success (West Didsbury Top Ten). The Ampex co-op were responsible for bringing you such delicacies as 48 Chairs, Gerry & The Holograms and Nasfi Sandwich. 'Ghost Riders' completes a set of ten, comes all decked out in tremeloid and tin, promises to remain a permanent fixture on the wind-up victrola. Stan Jones' finest hour, 'Ghost Riders' is the most covered song in musical history (for verification of this contentious fact check with the curator at Ripley's Believe It Or Not Museum, Albuquerque, New Mex.)

OFFS: Everyone's A Bigot (415). Offs are on America's most successful independent label. This is their very own nutty sound and one of the most accomplished examples of skat-reggae by Angloid proxy you'll ever hear from the new world. The lyric, working on an extension of the Randy Newman principle, uses plain language to expose universal prejudice, and the sax playing wouldn't disgrace The Specials. Offs also find a home for Bob Steeler, the last estranged member of Hot Tuna, who seem to have been born again in various baffling guises. An import worth hearing.

THE HEAT: High School Sweeter (Rap). Multi-racial Noo Yoikers who needed an English label to notice them. Heat are playing in London this week but it's hard to imagine their Free-influenced metal bop making any impression on us locals. This kind of record was out of date ten years ago I'm afraid. Head bangers only.

THE EAGLES: I Can't Tell You Why (Asylum). Something for the hooter, p'raps? Eagles drone along to yet another dreary Poco out-take with their customary drive and eye for the relevant sentiment. What a truly great band they are (is the cheque in the mail yet, Irv?)

SLAUGHTER: East Side Of Town (DJM). Various ex-Mott folk produce and play keyboards on this Dog-less drama about the, er, east side of town. Impossible to even hold an opinion on a record as boring as this.

B.A. ROBERTSON: Kool In The Kaftan (Asylum). Fans of the Parkinson show and the forces of reaction find Robertson highly amusing. This one will kill 'em but I don't trust the man's intentions, and his sense of

humour is pathetic. It's impossible to tell whether Robertson is lampooning an imminent hippy revival or getting ready for the stage after that. Whatever, his historical grip is completely skew-whiff because there were much funnier piss takes of psychedelia in 1966 (witness the appropriate 'Pebbles' compilation) and doesn't he know that T.Rex were one of the most appallingly dippy combos ever to shelter under glam rock's tarnished brolly? When Robertson makes some kind of personal contribution to the annals of rock and roll he'll be entitled to his stupid exploitations. Right now he's just a one man Barron Knights. Probably an old hippy too — looks like one.

TRUSSEL: Love Injection (Elektra). A late release for Trussel's (?) discotheque smasharoo that features Fred Wesley on production credits and a soulful confusion of harmonies that are almost infectious enough to take you mind off the chest flexing and poncey lyrics.

THE FRESHIES: My Tape's Gone (Razz). Ignore the circular jokey A-side because it's labouring to a predictable climax. 'Moonmid Summer' on the flip is worth a twirl, if only for the absurdist lyric which might be about a bloke who gives up religious education to open a chandlers store. Nice recipe for chicken casserole on the cover. Adolescent Orientated Rock.

Bet Lynch's Legs — another NME exclusive!

NEXT WEEK IN THE WORLD'S BEST SELLING ROCK WEEKLY!

(Also featuring Richard Hell, John Foxx and The Chords)

Second-hand R&B For Sale

Dahn London's Old Kent Road rhythm 'n' blues means as much as pie 'n' mash now they've discovered Nine Below Zero. Mark Ellen serves up the liquor. Pix Santo Basone.

THE OLD Kent Road looks in places like the bombing has never stopped.

Between shells of empty houses, it plays weathered host to junk shops full of rusting gas cookers, street stalls selling pailfuls of prawns, pubs like The Goose And Firkin where the homebrew tastes "worse than old socks", and scores of second-hand thread stores full of musty tonic suits.

Lift the curtains any average day on an Eel, Pie & Mash parlour, SE 15, and you'll find Nine Below Zero getting stuck into a spot of lunch. 72p buys a couple of dodgy meat pies, a mountain of mash and an ocean of garish green liquor.

"It's like something out of *Quatermass*, innit?" observes bassist Pete Clark with apparent relish, sticking a forkful of pastry down his laughing tackle.

"Stop smiling and start acting like yobs!" chimes the band manager Mickie Modern for the benefit of the *NME* candid camera.

The old dames behind the counter have never seen anything like it, love. I *mean* . . . these boys have been coming down here ever since they was Stan's Blues Band — they're all local lads, see — but the moment they change their name to Nine Below Zero, love . . . well! . . . you get blokes coming down here and taking pictures of 'em while they're havin' their dinner!

But then, in the light of the band's somewhat chequered career, today is no average day. It's the day they get playlisted by Paul Burnett; it's the day they first hear their EP on the radio; it's the day the test of them packs in his job and "goes pro"; the day they get a greetings telegram from A&M Records (who sign them two days later); the day Mickie Modern buys a tub of huge cigars and chain-smokes with the air of a man hell-bent on celebration if it kills him.

It's finally sunk home to one and all that they're simply *the* hottest young blues band to emerge in the UK since God knows when.

It's also the first time they've ever talked to a music paper. They talk fast and excitedly and mostly all at once, and they're not in the habit of transforming their thoughts into carefully weighed and convincing quotes.

"An R&B boom?" Pete Clark looks disparaging. "No, I don't think there'll be one. John Peel said on the radio the other day: 'They're all talking about an R&B revival, but it's never really gone away'. It's *always* been there."

Guitarist Dennis Greaves takes up the lead: "I think what we want to do is give it a little bit of extra light, give it a change. We're just trying to play blues with a bit of energy and really give it some stick and that's the way we're going to write our own."

Their story is long and exasperating, a three-year gradual grind up the slope that started in May '77 at the very peak of the punk boom when it was hard enough actually getting gigs let alone playing to bondaged hordes interested solely in primal politico ranting with chain-saw scenery.

Greaves winces at the memory of their first gigs: they could empty a pub as soon as tune up; they were the laughing stock of audiences and promoters alike. Inevitably, the same pubs that wouldn't give them the time of day back then are now throwing wide the portals in a fit of behind-you-all-the-way-lads hospitality.

As Greaves relates, with a lack of animosity typical of the whole band: "Since then we've been really lucky. We've managed to appeal to just about everyone. The usual phrase they come up with is 'I don't like the blues, but I like what you're playing'. That's just 'cos we give it some bollocks."

WITH that amount of pressure on them in the early days, it would have been easy to conform. After all, they were as well-qualified as any other band around; working-class, no money, little skill, frustrated.

"We just wanted to play blues, simple as that," Greaves shrugs as if he'd never even considered an alternative. "It all started when I bought some white blues albums — John Mayall, Savoy Brown. Then I thought they must have got it from somewhere, so I started buying all the black stuff — Freddie King, BB King. Me and Pete and Kenny (Bradley, drummer) formed Stan's Blues Band and then we got *really* deep into it . . . Muddy Waters, Junior Wells, Albert Collins, Otis Rush . . . Then we met Mark (Feltham, mouth-harp) and he'd done it the right way round."

Mark continues: "I'd actually started with black Chicago blues before I'd listened to any English blues, which I still don't fully know now. I started with acoustic blues . . . Charlie McCoy, Sonny Terry, Brownie McGee . . . moved right into the Charlie McCoy style of harmonica playing, and then Barefoot Jerry and all the Nashville session men. Then I went to see Johnny Mars one day. He was the first person I'd really heard playing definitive Chicago blues in London. From there I moved on to Little Walter and Junior Wells and the Chicago scene and I've based my style around that ever since."

It can't be too easy either to formulate an original sound and approach or to write even vaguely original material within the blues idiom.

Pete agrees: "It's incredibly hard trying to be original. Four bands could take up all the blues material that there is, so someone's got to come out with something new."

Greaves adds: "It's difficult as we can't really relate to the whole experience behind black blues, so writing lyrics is right dodgy. We've served our apprenticeship, we've tried to copy them to an extent but we've given the songs our own feel. Even when you do write different lyrics, someone's bound to say that sounds like so-and-so 'cos of the music. Wilko Johnson's about the best at combining new and old styles."

Better than the Americans?

Pete: "Well, yeah, they do it better. The Fabulous Thunderbirds album? — it's brilliant, absolutely brilliant. The voices, the feel, everything. It's just that Americans have got the whole background behind them."

"Sometimes when I listen to myself and I'm singing like a Yank, I can't stand it!" adds Greaves, laughing at his attempts to span the gap between the Windy City and The Old Kent Road. "I can't sing blues like a Cockney, can I? I've got to do something down the middle.

"Unless you're Paul Jones and The Blues Band and you've got X amount of contacts, it's not easy to get accepted. *(Oh yeah? Check out page 29 then mate — Ed).* We're not really R&B, we're more Blues With Rhythm, Blues With Bollocks," he adds with a certain amount of pride.

Mark seems the most suspicious of the so-called R&B revival. "This band isn't something we've done on the spur of the moment. We were playing before it, we're gonna play through it now, and we'll still be playing when it's gone."

Well don't just stand there — APPLAUD!

JIMMY

AVAILABLE NOW THE NEW SINGLE FROM

purple hearts

TAKEN FROM THE FORTHCOMING ALBUM "BEAT THAT!"

The Human Factor

Directed by Otto Preminger
Starring Richard Attenborough, Derek Jacobi, Robert Morley and Nicol Williamson
(Rank)

ON PAPER, it *ought* to work. On screen, almost all the original novel arrives intact. All, that is, bar its vital ingredient — the 'human factor'.

The novel, Graham Greene's most recent, explores a suffocating knot of conventionally uninteresting people working in the British Secret Service, and the gradual erosion of the various bonds of loyalty between them by the pressure and paranoia of such an isolated and permanently dangerous existence.

Such a rough sketch makes it sound pretty lacklustre, and it's entirely due to Greene's meticulous sense of detail in his distantly sympathetic portrait of our hero, Castle — who's "dull, but good with files" — that it turns out the very opposite.

Tom Stoppard wrote the screenplay, condensing its characters into over-compact — and hence awkward — stereotypes, and turning his back on much of Greene's subtle re-assessment of values in favour of more immediate screen gambits, such as overplayed thematic links and much-needed broad locations.

Veteran Preminger directs, and it's clear as daylight within minutes that the 'real-life' dramas that shrouded the making of the film are actually a deal more absorbing than the end result. It's no secret that his drastic lack of greenbacks resulted in various legal wrangles to ensure the cast got paid, and that, on one occasion, a member of the crew went as far as holding a finished film reel 'hostage' until his wages showed up.

Attempts to conceal this cripplingly low budget are transparently thin. The sets are so cheap you can almost read the print on the *papier mache*, and the locations are sparse, drab and uncomfortably synthetic.

Coupled with this, Preminger makes the bad mistake of hiring a model — Iman, of no fixed acting ability — to play Castle's (Nicol Williamson) African wife, and as the very nerve-centre of the plot is the complexity of their relationship — the repercussions of apartheid, the moral dilemmas of both the SS and being a double agent — it's hardly a bonus that she's all deadpan and dewy-eyed from start to finish.

Of the remainder, Richard Attenborough plays an ageing SS screwball, Robert Morley waddles through another of his immeasurably tedious roles, this time as a bigoted, ruthless medic hired for the 'removal' of suspected leaks; one such being Derek Jacobi, who's convincing as a helplessly sad, pseudo-decadent bachelor, for whom the SS mirrors his pathetic inadequacies while using him as their corporate doormat.

Despite its few sparks of life, the film flows much like a stack of bricks, which effectively wrecks any accurate scrutiny of the SS network on an emotional level.

Graham Greene deserves more for his money, and so, for that matter, do you.

Mark Ellen

"Another gin fizzy, chaps?" The unacceptable face of bureaucracy in The Human Factor

Spies — time to close the file?

"Would you believe 002½?"

Cuba

Directed by Richard Lester
Starring Sean Connery and Brooke Adams
(United Artists)

IN WHICH we observe Batista's Cuba crumble before the onslaught of Castro's revolution. Robert Dapes (Sean Connery) and Alexandra Pulido (Brooke Adams) are old if unlikely flames, he a visiting British mercenary with the occasional but now obligatory stab of "I only fight clean wars" conscience, she the daughter of a wealthy Cuban patrician.

Despite Lester's diverting but superficial evocation of Havana, the interest of the film's premise (torrid love in a torrid zone) soon becomes residual. Characterisation is mostly cut-out, straight off the cereal packet, with only Denholm Elliott's Skinner, another page from the actor's sketch book of colonial gentle persons, approaching animation.

Cuba is a potentially good deal gone very far down. It's wet and woolly melo-romance. It was made entirely on location in Spain. I could have lived without it.

Angus MacKinnon

RANDOM HOLD

n Tour With Peter Gabriel... On Tour With Peter Gabriel... On Tour With Peter Gabriel...

Silver Screen

Meatballs

Directed by Ivan Reitman
Starring Bill Murray, Harvey Atkin and Kate Lynch *(CIC)*

IT'S a great shame that none of *National Lampoon's* celluloid ventures have delivered the promise of their vinyl forebears. John Belushi and *Animal House* hinted at what might have been if the boys in the backroom had been blessed with the right script and carte blanche to go ahead and offend as many people as possible, but even that fraternal romp eventually subsided into tedious American slapstick and gross sentimentality.

Ivan Reitman's *Meatballs*, set in an American summer camp, is no exception.

It stars Bill Murray (aka Mel Brewer, the unspeakably laid-black DJ from *Lampoon's* 'Radio Dinner' and Mr Heymon, the irate father who sticks his fist onto Mr Roberts' nose during 'That's Not Funny, That's sick'). Now Murray is an intensely hilarious person, and as long as he acts himself (with a little help from writer Harold Ramis) *Meatballs* is not half as indigestible as one might expect. A much funnier human being than Belushi, he strides over this carefree romp like a beneficent if slightly naughty uncle whose real natural bent is towards full-scale anarchy.

Trouble is, the phenomenon of the summer camp is too peculiarly American to hold much appeal for English audiences — and anyway, it's really only used as the setting for a series of trite, predictable set-pieces.

Unless you have a sense of perverse duty or a young family, you're advised to avoid *Meatballs*. Meanwhile savour the prospects of Murray let loose on the up-coming movie version of *Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas* — with Bill cast in the role of narrator Hunter Thompson.

Max Bell

A squid eating dough in a celluloid bag wouldn't get a part in Meatballs.

The Divine Ms Divine and co-actpersons

Best of bad taste

Female Trouble

Directed by John Waters
Starring Divine
(Mainline)

MONDO pervo film-maker John Waters has the dubious distinction of neither knowing nor caring where to draw the line.

Once upon a time, the cry used to be: *Epater le bourgeoisie!* Shock the fat, sanctimonious bastards! Shake their patronising, hypocritical morality! Why stop there, argues Waters? Why riot-storm a few liberal bastions too? Let *them* see what it feels like to have to cling to their equally smug values.

The result hasn't helped make him a prominent world citizen, but it has made him the darling of the misanthropic set. Devo, for instance, freely admit to having been inspired by the savage, lurid nihilism of Waters' films.

Female Trouble, made after *Pink Flamingoes* and before *Desperate Living*, is marginally less depraved than either of those films, but it's still no Ivy League picnic. Starring, as usual, Divine in the role of a young delinquent, it traces (his? its?) sordid decline at the hands of a pair of vicarious thrill-seekers who have Divine to do the dirty work while they get off on photographing it.

Simple, yes. Farcical, yes. Stupid, inevitably. Satirical, definitely. A sort of 16mm neon Canterbury Tale. But *Female Trouble* is more explicit satire than was the classic *Pink Flamingoes*, and thus less savagely effective. As if the Pistols had said all along that they were just taking the piss. Ha ha. *Phew!*

Waters, who was kicked out of film school and has since lived and worked in Baltimore, would have been the ideal person to make the ill-fated Sex Pistols movie. Never mind middle-aged meat-beaters like Russ Meyer, Waters could have been every bit as obscene, anarchic and dangerous as the Pistols themselves. There wouldn't have been a dead horse *left* to flog.

Female Trouble is garage film-making at its most extreme. Funnier than the average copy of the *News Of The World* and almost as sick. Treat your parents.

Paul Rambali

Offspinning another damp squib

Rising Damp — The Movie

Directed by Joe McGrath
Starring Leonard Rossiter and
Frances De La Tour *(ITC)*

WHERE the TV sit-com goes, can the big screen spin-off be far behind?

With the exception of last year's *Porridge*, these moneyrakers are churned out in the secure knowledge that as most people vaguely enamoured of the series will drop by the box-office, they don't have to break sweat to break even. They're notoriously cheap and tedious. *Rising Damp* is even more so than most.

Without labouring the point, it brings a whole new meaning to the phrase "disaster movie": a 98-minute extended format script that's so staggeringly limp and choc-full of rusty suburban racist jokes that I'd be positively embarrassed to offer it to the *Carry On* team.

Frances De La Tour just about keeps her head above water, but it's sink or swim time for Rossiter, who must by now be heartily sick of wingeing around the place in a cloth cap and cravat like the thinking man's Norman Wisdom when he probably makes more money advertising vermouth.

Bad? It's worse.

Mark Ellen

"Come back, Joanie."

On The Box

Your NME guide to movies on TV

Saturday February 23
EACH DAWN I DIE: Jimmy Cagney's the set-up reporter who receives unlikely aid from gangster George Raft in William Keighley's well over the top, cliche-ridden 1939 thriller. Worth watching though for another incisive performance from Maxie Rosenbloom. *Maxie Rosenbloom!?!* **(BBC 2)**

BEACH RED: One of those extremely violent anti-war pictures popular at the time, Cornel Wilde's '67 effort — set in the South Pacific as gutsy Yank confronts wily Jap — was at least a laudable *attempt* at some kind of pacifist statement but ultimately let down by uneven acting (Rip Torn taut, Burr DeBenning embarrassing and Wilde himself simply stolid), gushing sentimentality and some absurd fantasy sequences. **(BBC 2)**

Sunday February 24
A CRY FROM THE STREETS: Perfect snoozy Sunday fare (as you'd expect from Lewis Gilbert, the maker of that other matinee favourite *Albert RN*) as a youthful Max Bygraves, circa 1958, helps to rehabilitate homeless London children. Diffuse, episodic but engaging, it even survives a score by Larry Adler. **(ITV London)**

MAROONED: Dull John 'Turgid' Sturges soap opera from 1970 with Richard Crenna, Gene Hackman, David Janssen and James Franciscus the astronauts suffering in space as Gregory Peck tries to control their wives' hysterics on earth. For two and a quarter hours yet. **(BBC 2)**

Monday February 25
TWO MULES FOR SISTER SARA: The Don Siegel-Clint Eastwood team came a cropper in 1970 by striving too hard for comic and violent effect in an unconvincing tale featuring The Laconic Drifter (Clint, of course) and The Beautiful Nun (Shirley MacLaine, too cute by half even when cussing) in piecemeal Mexican adventures. Still, *Dirty Harry* was just round the corner. **(ITV London)**

THE SPIRAL STAIRCASE: The lame and infirm are bumped off at an alarming rate in Peter Collinson's inept 1975 remake of the superior '46 Robert Siodmak melodrama. Suitably strident emoting from Jacqueline Bisset, Christopher Plummer, Sam Wanamaker, Elaine Stritch and other unfortunates. **(BBC 1)**

Thursday February 28
ASK A POLICEMAN: The monumental team of Will Hay, Graham Moffatt and Moore Marriott are the incompetent guardians of the law who accidentally expose a smuggling ring in the sleepy coastal village of Turnbotham Round. Marcel Varnel directed the comedy classic in 1939. **(BBC 2)**

Monty Smith

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THE LEGENDS OF SPECTOR No.673: The Deer Hunter

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LEONARD COHEN gives a wry grin.

"Well," he says, "how would you feel if someone holding a loaded 45 in his right hand, and a half-finished bottle of wine in his left hand, stumbled over towards you at four in the morning, put the arm with the bottle around your shoulder, shoved the muzzle of the 45 into your neck, and cocked it?"

Not happy, I mutter. How did you deal with it?

"I don't know, to tell you the truth . . . because I don't like that kind of carelessness. I find it a violation of all kinds of notions I have about . . . er . . . honour, manhood and responsibility. I don't like firearms being tossed around casually.

"But I happened to like Phil. And for some odd reason, I trusted that he wasn't going to pull the trigger. And he did say, as he shoved the muzzle of the 45 into my neck, he did say 'Leonard, I love you'."

Cohen chuckles softly.

"I'm very fond of Phil Spector. I think he's one of the great, magnificent figures on the landscape. It's just that I don't have much of an appetite for magnificence."

THE SCENE is a plush hotel near London's Marble Arch, on a grey, rainy December morning. Leonard Cohen sits in the foyer talking to a journalist, the third or fourth of the morning. The low table is filled with dirty coffee cups, a small island of mess in the midst of thick, smooth carpets and luxurious armchairs.

Cohen is small, wiry, almost fragile. His skull could be that of a large bird; his eyes are distinctly beady. He looks drably dishevelled in brown leather jacket and black cords; his curly hair flecked with grey; his face lined and unshaven. He hunches forward on the edge of the chair, hands cradling a cup or a knee, and ponders each question before delivering a precise and careful reply.

Every answer is an effort. Cohen had no sleep the previous night and now feels tired, dirty and pretty much incapable of thought.

As it's his first visit here for several years, there's plenty to question him about. Particularly 'Death Of A Ladies Men', the album co-written with, and produced by, Phil Spector; and notorious in rock folklore for the manner of its making and Cohen's subsequent disowning of the finished product. This is his version of the affair.

"The actual writing of the songs was swift. Phil had come to a concert I'd given in Los Angeles — it was one of the few concerts he didn't disrupt, which was apparently a great musical commendation — and we liked each other. I've loved what he's done over the years, it has great *heart*.

"Anyway, I went over to his house one night. He locked the door — he always locks the door so you can't leave, he's very lonely. I couldn't get out of the house, so I said 'Phil, as I'm here and you're not gonna let me out, let's do something'. Maybe that was his intention from the beginning.

"There was a piano and a guitar around, so we started playing, talking . . . and we wrote some songs. And within the next ten days, we'd written eight or nine songs. That part of it was swift and efficient and pleasant. But in the studio, Phil's . . . mmm . . . megalomaniac side began to manifest and there were always guns and bodyguards and all kinds . . . well, all the conditions of a bigoted mediaeval princedom."

Gradually Spector took over the album and Cohen had virtually no say in the arranging and recording of his songs.

"No say at all. I lost control of the record completely. For one thing, my personal life was in a shambles. My mother was dying, I had to fly to Montreal from Los Angeles often two or three times a week. Then Phil confiscated the tapes every night under armed guard . . ."

When 'Death Of A Ladies Men' finally appeared, Cohen barely recognised his work and emphatically stated his displeasure at Spector's treatment of it. It's an opinion he's since reconsidered.

"Now, when I hear a cut in somebody's house or in a restaurant occasionally, that album's really got a lot of life in it. I really didn't like it at the time — because I thought the voice was lost, and because of the trying conditions . . .

"There is a certain enchantment about Phil Spector, a violent enchantment, and I am a great admirer of his genius. He may even have produced a masterpiece with 'Death Of A Ladies Man'. It does have a certain *armoured* quality that may carry it into the future. Like a Panzer division."

He gives another gentle chuckle.

COHEN has never repeated his initial success of the late '60s, when the singer-songwriter genre was just coming into vogue, although his records have acquired an increasing degree of musical sophistication and lyrical bite. Yet it's those early songs which are still his most popular items, and which tend to define his image in popular consciousness. Despite the bizarre cabaret funk of 'New Skin For The Old Ceremony' and Spector's neo-Wagnerian pop splendours on 'Death Of A Ladies Man', it's the acoustic guitar and gravelly sonorous voice intoning some poetic dirge on the vagaries of the human heart and wretchedness of the human condition which constitutes 'Leonard Cohen' for most people.

I remark that Cohen's dry sense of humour often seems to pass unnoticed and unappreciated. He smiles.

"Well, I love talking about the various ways in which I'm unappreciated. I guess that's one of them."

You have this reputation of being a very gloomy, 'down' person. How much truth is there in that?

"It probably is true. I do feel . . . anxious a lot of the time. I don't know whether my anxiety is more intense than anybody else's. I suspect that it isn't. But there's also a confusion between depression and seriousness. I happen to like the *mode* of seriousness, it's peaceful and relaxing to me to be serious."

What kind of things are you anxious about?

"Oh, you know, I didn't get my laundry done this morning. Did I leave my harmonica on stage? That's just the *crust*." He laughs. "I can get deeper and deeper. Is California gonna fall into the sea? Are these the final days? Is God angry? And so on."

How autobiographical are your songs?

"Thoroughly. Thoroughly autobiographical."

From the songs, it seems that the basic anxiety is about yourself, not California falling into the sea, etc.

"Oh, it's *all* about myself. Like I say, starting at the crust of the anxiety and working right to the final chilliology — is the creator anxious about his handiwork? I say this frivolously, but sometimes I have a feeling of dread in my soul about the condition of my spiritual health."

It sounds as if you see yourself as a religious person.

"I'd find it hard to say that. I don't think I am. I mean, I'm religious in the sense that I know the difference between grace and guilt."

You had a very conservative Jewish upbringing. Do you feel that may still be affecting you?

"I think it probably does. I don't know, I find this hard to talk about. I think there is a judgement . . . I'm just speaking as honestly and as swiftly as I can . . . I think there is a faculty of judgement that is operating. I think it is a moral universe. I think we are punished for our . . . sins. I think we are granted grace for . . . less serious violations. I think there is only one reality."

So the punishment happens in this life?

"Oh, it's immediate."

What do you think of as 'sin'?

"I don't know. I hardly dare speak about these things. The closer I get to the feeling as we're uncovering it in our conversation, the less I want to talk about the mechanics of the thing but the more deeply I feel it. I don't like to talk about it because one is getting close to . . . some other kind of violation, which I don't feel like being punished for. The morning is too raw for such conversations."

A question about Cohen's attitude to Zionism — he played to Israeli troops during the last Middle East war — elicits only a heartfelt groan.

"Oh, I can't talk about these things. They're too complex, too serious to speak of over coffee." He looks up wearily and sighs. "Look, why don't you just ask me what my favourite colour is? It's yellow." Pause. "Well, and blue."

COHEN'S latest album 'Recent Songs' runs the expected gamut of pain, loss and failure, but is considerably leavened by the full-blown romanticism of both imagery and music. The latter is distinguished by a delicate orchestration and the superb contributions of John Bilezikjian's oud and Raffi Hakopian's gipsy violin.

The imagery, though richly ornate and sensuous, is — typically — a little opaque. His work, I put to him, is not always easy to understand.

"No. Well, it may not always be easy to understand, but it *is* easy to embrace. It's simple." He quotes from a Recent Song, 'The Guests'. *"'All at once the torches flare/The inner door flies open/One by one they enter there/In every style of passion'.* Every style of passion is a way in. Every style of passion is in my work."

But it's not simple, I grumble, rather confused. Cohen quotes some simple lines. I quote some obscure ones back. We get nowhere.

"It's best just to think of these as little songs, not terribly complicated, not any more complicated than anybody's experience. How could they be?

"It is the work of my *heart*."

TIME'S UP. I'm irritated by Cohen's elusiveness but I guess he feels it a necessary spiritual precaution.

The work remains, for me, enigmatic: immersed in romanticism, in the poetic; expressed in a special, condensed language that sometimes illuminates, sometimes tantalises, sometimes merely mystifies. Cohen is fixed in a tradition, a particular artistic myth — the soul-searcher, the sufferer in love — which he exploits to the full but remains, perhaps, trapped within.

A friend of mine once remarked that, after listening to Leonard Cohen, her chief response was "thank God Sylvia Plath never tried to sing". Cohen himself, in his latest book, writes *"When it comes to lamentations/I prefer Aretha Franklin/to, let's say, Leonard Cohen/Needless to add, he hears a different drum".*

Earnestly lost, I agree with them both.

Why Leonard Cohen decided to see it Phil's way. By Graham Lock

Pictures: Pennie Smith

THE SELECTER

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FEB. 21
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FEB. 23
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University
FEB. 24
BLACKBURN,
Kings George's Hall
FEB. 25
MANCHESTER,
Apollo
FEB. 26
SHEFFIELD,
Top Rank
FEB. 27
LEICESTER,
De Montfort Hall
FEB. 28
HEMEL HEMPSTED,
Pavilion
MAR. 3
GT YARMOUTH,
Tiffany's
MAR. 4
GUILDFORD,
Civic Hall
MAR. 5
BOURNEMOUTH,
Stateside Centre
MAR. 6
PORTSMOUTH,
Guild Hall
MAR. 7
BRIGHTON,
Top Rank
MAR. 8
PLYMOUTH,
Polytechnic
MAR. 9
BRISTOL,
Locarno
MAR. 11
EXETER,
University
MAR. 12
CARDIFF,
Top Rank
MAR. 17
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MARCH
1 LEICESTER UNIVERSITY
2 BRISTOL LOCARNO
4 LOUGHBOROUGH TOWN HALL
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The Post-Stardom Blues

"THE INITIAL idea was four gigs — end of story," relates bassist Gary Fletcher, the only Blues Band member not yet 30. That was in May of last year. In January 1980, having scarcely played outside central London, Arista want them for the world.

Who are these guys, anyway?

Paul Jones (Oxford graduate Paul Pond) was Brian Jones' choice to front the embryo Rolling Stones, but sang for Manfred Mann instead, leaving in 1966 for a rather aimless career as a singer/actor. Tom McGuinness was with the Manfreds till the end, formed McGuinness Flint with ex-Mayall drummer Hughie Flint and had a couple of hits in the early '70's. Dave Kelly fronted The John Dummer Blues Band, three of whom came up in Darts.

"We didn't foresee any difficulty in getting a deal," Jones recalls. "It seemed to us that it would be sensible for a record company to take a thing like this because R&B bands are filling pubs all over the shop and because it's very cheap product."

On paper The Blues Band could be dismissed as a bunch of senior citizens playing 12-bars for beer money. Still studio time was confidently booked for the first half of November.

"As the time got nearer and we hadn't got any serious interest from any record company, we just said 'Listen, what the hell — we've got a bit of money, let's do it ourselves,' thinking we were just gonna make the tapes ourselves and then lease them. And then weeks went by and we said 'Well, look, if we can afford to make the tapes we can probably afford to make them into records.' "

Gary: "We knew what the record companies didn't — that people were pestering the life out of us for albums. The thing about fans of a particular type of music is their dedication. I played in a country band and it was nothing short of fanaticism; they wanted a copy of what they'd seen live."

'Official Blues Band Bootleg Album' is a fine record in its own right. The drums swing unfailingly, Kelly's gnarled tones complement Jones' lighter voice to sublime effect and the playing is uncannily imaginative. With Mike Read and Kid Jensen's support allied to word-of-mouth, the 3,000 copies

were spoken for within days, many by postal requests. A further 1,000 are being pressed to fulfil demand until Arista release it 'properly'.

Though Dave and Hughie have long been steeped in the genre, the other three's aptitude is slightly surprising. Manfred Mann's first album featured the likes of 'Got My Mojo Working', but subsequent releases left this well-mined seam alone. Then Paul was famously booed at the Reading Festival and the singer's visible interest stopped until last year, though his knowledge of the music and admiration for such as The J. Geils Band had continued to grow.

Although relying on band members Gallagher and Lyle for their hits, McGuinness Flint made an album with Arthur 'Big Boy' Crudup and — in a roundabout way — owed their success to the blues.

"When I'm Dead And Gone' is actually about Robert Johnson," Tom informs me. "We were listening to a Robert Johnson album and it had his life story on the sleeve notes. Graham (Lyle) was reading it and came back about two days later and said 'I've written this song about it'."

The Blues Band. Left to right: Paul Jones, Dave Kelly, Gary Fletcher, Tom McGuinness and Hughie Flint.

Harry George discovers how five ageing ex-stars become cult heroes singing the blues

Young Fletcher admits to relative ignorance: "We do this song called 'Blues Band' — *'They think it all began with Clapton and Beck'* — and that is me. The first blues record I heard was Eddie Boyd backed by Fleetwood Mac."

Fact is, Gary can hack it as well as any of The Blues Band — which is fairly well. It is simply stating the

facts to report that their first major gig at the Venue obliterated all memory of The Inmates' mediocre set there the previous week and eclipsed the stylized rigidity of latter-day live Feelgoods.

Beginning in mauve bomber jacket and red jeans, the still boyish Jones played superb harp, contributing some gorgeous fills on his and McGuinness' 'Come On In'. The latter suggested he could have been a guitar hero, only nobody asked, while Kelly's precision slide work wreaked sweet devastation. A crackle of power and commitment frequently transcended the material, so that the blazing middle section of 'Smokestack Lightning' paralleled the demented Creedence of 'Keep On Chooglin'.

Joined by Stax revivalists The Dance Band for the second batch of encores, a raging, triumphant medley of Manfred Mann hits put the cherry on the top. Their contemporary credentials established beyond doubt, The Blues Band could well afford the indulgence.

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LOOPING THE LOOPS

UNWINDING

A FRAGMENTED succession of words, pauses, erasures.

"The thing about — where wrong moves start to be made by the most well intentioned people . . . you'll present the bare bones of what you're doing, and it doesn't make sense to them at all. It's such a blockhead way of thinking, it doesn't take into account any kind of changes forced upon what you're doing by the circumstances in which you're doing it.

"You might say: 'I'm going to use tapes for my live gigs and I'm not going to pretend that I'm not using tapes.' So you stick the tape recorder right up at the front, and it signifies . . . and empty space. The tape recorder is on a chair and it's still pretending to be a human being. Tapes should be used in a more imaginative way than as just the monolithic presence of a tape recorder.

"The simple problem of whether you should hide your tape's chorus of opera singers in the PA mixing desk or whether you should be 'honest' and present the tape recorder on stage, neither of them come to grips with the actual possibilities or problems of using tape."

REWINDING

EVENTS steeped in publicity. A. More, the author of a recent album, 'Flying Doesn't Help' on Quango Records, is presented by Anthony Moore, whose familiarity stems from his involvement with 1970's cultural event Slapp Happy.

First comments first. Anthony Moore expresses displeasure at the way in which A. More's album has been tied down in the field (of writing) I myself am (fed up) writing in.

The first public review of 'Flying Doesn't Help' was by Richard Williams — the *Melody Maker* chap, likes a good laff — who threw up a particularly muddy thesis, which has subsequently been reiterated all over the field: that 'Flying' is an adept reinscription of traces from a specific, easily known rock and roll mythology — the old Velvet Underground *weltanschauung*.

Talk about rehearsing old lines on the mirror!

Tail & donkey criticism: showing works back to the statute of 'origins', to some conveniently rounded author or Other. All messiness is avoided, and the Critic — that public custodian of a work's sovereign meaning — purports to clean history's dusty windows; but they're always left smeared with intricate patterns of failure, desire, foamy subjectivity.

We're not that easily covered by orderly language.

FIRST years of the last decade: messing about with tape loops. Anthony Moore in a process of experimental desire, his formal ideology producing 'unusual' effects for recorded sound.

"Because I was, I dunno, a young genius with tapes, I managed to become nearly an *'avant-garde'* composer, or something as embarressing as that."

Soundtracks for independent film makers. Three albums for Polydor in Hamburg: a monically parabola-ized choir, string quartet equations and various random droppings, an album of which "started Slapp Happy because it was so unlistenable."

Formal unease within accepted modes of composition and form: all those nagging totalities minced through an extremist manifesto, a structural machine of annihilation.

"For instance, if you're going to do an 'honourable' piece of work, then somehow you have to know what's going to happen at the end when they begin it."

Steep inclinations which keep so many chained up in a Formalist poorhouse: the unnegotiable metre from post-Cage-Stockhausen to less geometric public appetites, what Robert Wyatt called "that leap to sexy time keeping".

"The tape machine is still sitting on a chair pretending to be a person."

ANTHONY MOORE talks to IAN PENMAN

Pix: SANTO BASONE

"Well it started with Slapp Happy . . . . . then there was Henry Cow . . . . . now there's just me."

Anthony Moore used a lot of his experimental stuff "in fairly subtle ways, rather as overleys, added elements than actual foundation elements" on 'Flying Doesn't Help'.

"So that on 'Time Less Strange' for instance, this very bowed sounding instrument is a tape I did in Hamburg six to eight years ago.

"This is why the album is important to me, in terms of bringing possibilities together rather than keeping them apart, and being neurotic about it. Before it was a problem for me to include the various disparate elements of music and sound I'm involved in. I think I was for the first time trying to bring these things together."

'Flying Doesn't Help' — nine songs and one instrumental — was started in mid-1977, and finished by June of last year, recorded entirely on 'dead' studio time through the auspices of a management company, Blackhill. It features mostly A. More, with varied additions on bass and drums.

"It did involve a lot of tapes, about seven or eight years of work, so I'm sensitive to the idea that things 'might have been stuck on'because they 'happened to sound right', rather than they have a meaning together.

"I tried to deal with that problem, maybe I haven't succeeded entirely, and I'd be a bit wobbly if someone started to point it out."

The Royal Art College of Cohesive Dub? Not quite, but although a proportion of the indices aren't sufficient unto the risk of historical familiarity — odd prohibitive stylistic device here, there, unaware — the combined ring of permitting potentialities does win out over any opposition from unevenly dispersed archetypes: a win on pointilliams.

SLAPP Happy consisted of my possibilities for writing music, Peter Blegvad's lyrics and Dagmar's wonderful voice: those were the ingredients. There was a bit of a breakdown on whether to do live work or not. In those days it didn't seem to make that much sense to get involved

"We were a strange band. Two writers and one performer, no bass player, no drummer."

Brief engagements in radioplay with Robert Wyatt were followed by a more committed marriage: Henry Cow. A steering committee with all the appropriate tools, their backline praxis contributed to the Slapp Happy centred 'Desperate Straits' — less coquettishly obtuse than the first Virgin LP — and the trio proved they were sports by turning out for H.C.H.Q.'s 'In Praise Of Learning'.

What of the Cow's reputedly stern socialism? No doubting the "ideological validity of their political stance" (Vitality, then?) But as to more practical considerations . . .

"I could never see the point in oblivion. Well, I can in an intelligent sort of way — and I do it too much, get totally out of my brains — but in the end . . .

"If you talk directly about a subject — this is a very sweet paradox — in the very act of so defining it, literally, it becomes representational, propaganda. So you have to commit yourself to making a leap in the dark, which then gets back to 'oblivion' . . .

"Which is why I say that, although in the end I'm not totally sold on it, you have to make that one intermediary leap in the dark in order to inject the end result with a sense of fantasy, real emotional things . . ."

Was the exit of the elder citizens — such as Slapp Happy and Henry Cow — from Virgin around about 1976's Upheaval a mere coincidence?

"One of the consequences of The Upheaval was to polarize the elements involved in the business, so that people who were truly philanthropic saw the exploitation of The Upheaval was so distasteful that they absolutely had to leave, those who were hovering had to make their minds up, and those who were cashing in became better business men.

"It seriously undermined and de-emphasized some values which were very ripe for de-emphasis and devalution."

A distintegrating marriage and Henry Cow's 'In Praise Of Learning" guerrilla rehersal schedule were compounded by Moore's hedonistic over-compensation. Not in the best of leftist frames of mind, he left "daymares" behind and went to New York.

How then had The Upheaval affected A. More? 'Flying Doesn't Help' is possibly more conventionally rocky than one might have expected, given the author's eclectic history.

"There are basically only two kinds of musical parameter which you can break down: the parameters of the 'known' and the parameters of the 'unknown'. The parameters of the 'known' tend to be broken down in very mechanical ways: e.g. you do a 7/4 with no cymbals and synthesiser and mix the drums out suddenly in the middle bar and . . . it's your 'robot music'. A lot of people's limit — 'robot parameters'.

"With the parameters of the 'unknown' you hardly ever know when you've broken them down. When you have it's more likely to do with live work, singing, dealing with very traditional musical forms."

Who, amidst the sprawling consequences of The Upheaval *had* impressed him? Any common ideologies?

"I think one of the more interesting people, because he's being fired on from all sides, is Geoff (Travis) at Rough Trade. I don't know him very well, but somehow he manages to combine the, say, possibilities of going to New York to do his wheeling & dealing *and* still running an event that makes sense for people just walking in off the street — in a way that Virgin *never* did. Virgin was built on that ideal, but it was never, never true."

PRESSING FORWARD

LONG shadows, an enormous old root, yesteryear rocks and . . . We're not simply dealing with textural machines of substitution — 'false' sounds for 'real' — but with a challenge to old notions of the relation between music and the realities it may inhabit — where it is both recorded and re-played.

The sign of "tape" turns over familiarity to signs of difference, where identity is lost in the elision of rewind and forward, pause and stop, recorded and erased . . .

Bearing in mind, of course, that a *quango* is "a committee set up to vet what's wrong with committees — and therefore has all the faults in itself that it's trying to analyse."

Script
GAVIN MARTIN

Pictures
KEVIN CUMMINS

WIDE BOYS IN A STRAITJACKET

North London's nuttiest shrug off the dirty stories for good. Suggsy & Co. take Madness to Manchester and lunacy to Liverpool . . .

BEFORE WE GO any further, let's deal with something that has hung over Madness for much too long: the vexed question of the politics of some of their supporters.

It *is* important to know and understand the performer's attitude to ruthless elements in his or her audience, but in the case of Madness, the subject of racism has been blown out of all proportion. Are they really the only group in London who get adjuts at their gigs?

Let's get this straight: if the members of Madness I spoke to are racists then I'm Eartha Kitt.

Maybe it's because you've got another kind of Madness sweeping the country (the one instigated from Whitehall and Westminster after the last election), or maybe there's another group called Madness who *enjoy* getting National Front and British Movement supporters at their gigs, or maybe somebody's been telling *lies* . . .

AFTER HOURS in the Manchester Post House Hotel: Chas Smash and Graham 'Suggs' Macpherson are seated around a table with about 10 or 11 fans, easy-going, friendly guys like the 'Totts and Whets' grouping who appear on the inside cover of 'One Step Beyond'.

As drinks are ordered idle chat is exchanged, autographs signed and the tape switched on. A voice protests that a drink, though paid for, has failed to arrive. Noticing that it's already there on the table, Chas hoarsely proclaims: "We all see but we do not all observe, in the words of Wilde — or was it Arthur Conan Doyle?"

Hold it! File that quote. It's going to bear extra relevance later, no matter who wrote it.

CHAS WAS born in Ireland of English parents and lived for most of the time in the north; an environment I live in still. [illegible] problems caused by racial tension in London, I ask what it's like living there. Is racism prominent where you live?

"[illegible] probably think. It's more of a problem for us now because we're expected to answer [illegible] It's become a pain more than a problem."

How do you deal with racial elements in the audience? I ask. [illegible] imagine asking one of your friends, somebody who commands your respect, to prove themselves!

"What we do is — I have to say this really carefully because I've said it before but it was taken the wrong way — what we do is talk to them individually and get friendly with them, try to change them that way. Nowadays it isn't so much of a problem, but there's still some people who don't understand."

Maybe I should tell you how "*his voice cracks into bitter exasperation as he spits out the last few words from behind gritted teeth*". But is it necessary to quantify human commitment? Or maybe I should tell you that Denton, one of the fans at the bar, is black. ("Yes, look he's black, BLACK. Black as the ace of spades," laughs Chas, acting out something of a farce — madly slobbering kisses on big Den's outstretched arm) and that Pete is also black ("Ah yes, this is Pete, my other black friend," he says, sighing sarcastically).

He's taking the piss out of the pride-and-passion-on-the-sleeve syndrome, "I-bet-you-I-care-more-than-you-care" concern wasted on tiresome sloganeering, stances and appearance instead of intrinsic integrity. It happens to rock stars all the time, with disastrous results.

"When I was living in Northern Ireland I got the shit kicked out of me all the time for having an English accent. I'm a Catholic — my mum and dad live in England but I have a green passport. When we left for Europe the [illegible] 'Yes, happily' and he says, 'I don't think you should be that happy'."

I tell him of a similarly insulting incident that I'd experienced at airport security in Manchester when I was arriving for the interview.

"See what I mean? You can be anything you like but people will put whatever label they like on to you. We get it in different ways."

So does he think the press have damaged the understanding he has tried to encourage privately?

"They've just blown it all up. It's damaged it in a way because you get people harping on it. What we said all along is we just aren't interested. We just don't want to get involved."

NEVERTHELESS problems can be caused by the strong local following the band have [illegible] country to see Madness. Once a fan called Harry presented them with a taxi fare for £16; it was duly paid. At the hotel there's a whole cavalcade of followers booked in with the band, in the morning Chas pays their bills.

Keyboard player Mike Barson, seeing this, becomes quite angry. Does he see parallels with Sham 69?

"Personally that sort of thing makes me a bit sick. Sometimes I look at them all and think who the fuck are these prats, you know? It really makes me angry and I'll say to Chas, [illegible] bringing them here for?' You can say that, and then again if you're chatting to them they're all right. They're mates, y'know. I mean they're not particularly mates of mine, they're more mates of Chas. Well, they're all sort of mates of ours," he decides, adjusting the [illegible]

With increasing popularity it'll become more of a problem?

"Yeah, that's the way I see it, it will become a problem. It's OK for a few but you can't keep saying to everyone, come back to the hotel."

But you'll be sorry to lose that contact?

"Obviously. We don't want to lock the room because there's punters down there. It's like Secret Affair and the Glory Boys, they used to come to all their gigs. When they started in the Bridge House it was OK. But we talked to some of them at Aylesbury and they were saying 'Secret Affair are a right bunch of prats, they don't want to know us anymore'. But what are you meant to do, pay for 20 people to stay in a [illegible] more than a lot of other bands. What I can't stand is when they start smashing things up, like somebody letting off the hosepipe tonight. I don't mind mates coming along, but when [illegible]"

BACK IN THE bar with Suggs, I [illegible] might actually take time to listen to the group's opinions. He must be conscious that he's in an influential position.

"Yeah, yeah I am. Y'see it's just kids like this (he points at the assembled company) that vote NF and stuff. But because they do we're supposed to tell them to fuck off. Whereas I'd rather have it like this, sitting talking about it, the way everyone else I know does.

"I think the worst thing about racism is that it's a really touchy subject. Nobody will talk about it without being on one side or the other, really going mad or over the top about it. It's like a dirty word."

Lenny Bruce once said that President Kennedy would have more success in easing racial tension in the States if he'd gone on TV [illegible] the word "coloured". Words only gain their power by being mysteriously separated. Almost twenty years later in Britain, institutional mystification continues.

"Yeah, I mean with all the coloured kids I know, the way we talk to one another sounds offensive. So they'd shout 'honky bastards', but for some people that's just too touchy. I don't know . . ." He shrugs.

Chas: "It seems that whatever we do, somebody will always have something to say about it. We set up that under-18 gig in [illegible] Sometimes it can be really hurtful, like when [illegible] the group. What are we meant to do, have an operation or something? We can't help what we are, we're doing all we can."

And I have faith in them. Their attitude is sound, the method considered and the approach sensibly circumspect.

Their outlook is instinctively socialistic, without any arrogant dogma. Conditions of social deprivation do not excuse bigotry, but they are conducive to its growth, while not condoning it, Madness understand that.

Kids have been used and abused by paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland for too long, because they have no choice. In a different context, in England a similar environment produces the irrational fear and dogma that leads a kid to espouse Nazi theories. To approach them from an equally dogmatic opposite standpoint is worthless, the end result just as repressive. We need re-education, not retribution; try a little tenderness.

Chas and Suggs are all too aware of the problem — the idiocy of labelling people by something as random as birth — but they're dealing with it as they see fit.

"WHAT GROUP are you with, sir?" [illegible] set in an expression of formal [illegible] Inevitably, the name strikes a chord of recognition, breaking the barrier of formality. Her head begins to bob slowly up and down and she's unable to suppress a massive grin.

The prominent public face of Madness! It's drawn from Mr Smash's bellowed declaration which sent 'One Step Beyond' hurtling like a freshly popped champagne cork out of the goggle box and into the nation's parlour rooms, three mighty minutes of boom and swagger turning the drabness of *TOTP* into a party in your own front room. The same seven beaming boatraces are immediately [illegible] 'The Prince' and the mellow reflectiveness of 'My Girl'; leering madly into the camera or lurching into a crazy cakewalk. Button up the bustling, warm-hearted musical appeal with that magnificent moniker and it spells excitement, a magnetic forcefield of fun.

Sure it's the sounds that matter most, but image, style and presentation help make the connection with heartbeats, teardrops and [illegible]

Watch this! Three hit singles, a number one which has the touch of genius, a three-month run in the LP charts, a first-day sell-out British [illegible] Madness in particular. It's especially refreshing after the narcissistic preening and vacuous bleating of certain 'punk' and 'mod' groups.

"[illegible] have a good time and we don't bullshit, we tell the truth. We're not out and out for money. We've been offered some gigs for a lot of cash but refused them because we know the sound isn't good in that place," says Chas, his voice alternating between a growl and a whisper. He's spent most of the last six weeks touring and he's been unable to get treatment for a throat complaint: the symptoms are getting worse.

THE MANCHESTER Apollo bulges to breaking point with 3,000 odd kids and it's one of [illegible] of young people I've ever seen. There's no sign of trouble or dubious insignia. The interest is on dancing and clothes, an inventive mixture of fashions from [illegible]

As the group surge forth with a free and easy choreography, Chas, a major focal point, demonstrates a new dance for a rabid new craze. It's a neat, heady antidote to the [illegible] with the inane 'Chipmunks' and 'Madness' or revive 'One Step Beyond' and 'Night Boat To Cairo' [illegible] at the back-pedalling, the fan in me can't help dancing.

Looking like a cross between Porky Pig and Greg Outcast, Suggs's expression is one of thoughtful perplexity.

"I'm really worried about it getting a bit teeny bopperish because it'll really be like a fad then. You'll have ska hats, this that and the other, and then all the kids will be back again onto something else. It definitely goes in circles; what you say, what you do, credibility and all that crap. Like teenybop is definitely going to come back in — it has to. Young kids are getting more and more into music."

You seem to be taking them with you.

"Exactly. But I want to keep the older kids as well, without them all getting pissed off. I enjoyed it, I thought it was a really good gig, but I start to feel patronising when I see all those kids. I feel obliged not to look menacing or something."

He's worried, I sense, that the band's largely uncredited ability to compose deft, unassuming songs with loads of superb twists and canny insights will continue to go unnoticed. Superficially Madness appear as a rowdy and optimistic Saturday night band — loud, flash and transient. But really they're worthy of much more appreciation.

Look closer. There's a massive cross-cultural talent at work. They successfully blend a host of idioms and patterns. They grab at Motown, early British blues boom, Leiber/Stoller, The Glitter Band and a whole lot more besides, preserving their qualities and exploiting their possibilities to the full, arranging all the elements with great care. There's a method to the Madness!

The great tunes are complemented by clever, imaginative lyrics.

"[illegible] *years ago/I didn't really mind, he used to come in all the time/ Of course he had to be fed, I had to give him a bed/ He used to kip on the sofa, they used to call him a loafer.*" That's 'Bed And Breakfast Man': charming modernday pop poetry, and the shoulder-shrugging Suggsian delivery is casually acquiescent, reluctantly admiring the character's audacious cheek. It's about the sort of amiable parasite who stumbles into everyone's life now and then, but you don't realise what's happened until the nifty operator has been and gone.

"I get affected more by people than I do by social problems. I'm more interested in people, interesting people. That's what the songs are all about, there's not one of the

■ *One step over page . . .*

■ From previous page

songs written off the top of anyone's head. They're all about people we've known or met."

Is he not worried that the group's love for Cockney life and the way they so strongly evoke its characters could simply be reinforcing popular preconceptions?

"Like Alf Garnett or something? The thing is I can't understand people like Dury, he's become so romantically English. The way I live now I hardly get a chance to see London, but looking back I used to fucken hate it. I mean, it drove me right up the wall. But whenever we go there now, unless we're playing, I feel brilliant because we're there for a break.

"It's psychological in a way. You're walking down the street and everyone's speaking Cockney and everything seems great . . . Yes, I suppose it could get a bit like that. I think we're always going to have that problem because of our voices and stuff. But I never went to start writing songs like 'We're going down the pub', know what I mean?"

"That song he wrote 'In The Middle Of The Night' could have been written anywhere," says Mike Barson, the group's broad, broody, bleary-eyed, soft-spoken pianist, founder member and musical coach. "He's never been done for stealing underwear . . ."

"Nice man George, agent's on the corner/Not very rich but never any poorer/Dotty old George, a happy 63, not very tall but healthier than me? He whistles time-less tunes as he saunters down the street / Springs in his legs and elastic in his feet / But in the middle of the night he steals through your garden / Gives your hoisery a fright and doesn't say 'pardon'. . . ."

Chrissie Boy Foreman strums a fresh jangling which has the sparkle of Lovin' Spoonful. Impish-faced bassist Mark Bedford puts the beat into place with sustained winding notes. Mike waves off a shiver of tingling keyboards. Commandered by Woody's steady skin-thumping, they lock into a chunky rhythm which pants and chugs after our hedge-hopping hero on his night-time raids and traces his snappy daytime demeanour with crisp, delicate guitar and keyboard fills and timely blurbs from the saxophone of self-styled 'mystery man' Lee 'Kix' Thompson. The character is viewed from a standpoint of sympathy, the only viewpoint possible for someone with an ear for such precise detail.

The audience are still cheering when the band lead into 'Bed And Breakfast Man'.

DON'T UNDERRATE the depth of talent on offer here. Lee forsakes his sax to take lead vocals on his own tense, bluesy 'Razor Blade Alley' which prowls through dark backstreets and shady bedsits, roaming across sexually and sensually disturbing metaphors.

"I didn't talk too much, in fact not at all, except to ask her the price/I was to be no fool, money's no time to waste or to shoot up the wall/ . . . She led the way from the alley back to her house — must not be seen coming in, must not be seen coming out/ . . . It was my first time, I hope my last date . . . Now I wait. She is nowhere/But the razor cuts deeper everywhere." A song which is just as brave, just as distressing as, say PiL's 'Poptones'.

Madness write *useful* songs: songs that bring some small measure of assistance to existence, articulating emotions in a manner which would not be possible elsewhere. If you want proof of its effectiveness listen to 'Bed And Breakfast Man, 'Believe Me', 'My Girl'.

In Liverpool the following evening they play to another packed house but things run slipshod for the first half of the set. They're hampered by a host of sound and security problems. Met by a few friends at the hotel, Suggs nervously recollects: "Jesus, the last time we played Liverpool was at Eric's."

There's more than a slight difference between then and now, though the security arrangements are ludicrous — lots of unnecessary St John's Ambulance men, police outside with truncheons about 2½ feet long and restricted dancing spaces. But once again there's no need to fuss — everyone's here to enjoy themselves and the group come back for three encores.

"I tell you ever since I've known them they've been trying to get a band together," says Denton. "You'd come round and hear them blaring down the mike and say 'On your bike lads, you're not getting anywhere with that racket'. Then one day out of the blue it just seemed to click."

Never seen before: Madness onstage and not a hat in sight. Pic: George Bodner.

MADNESS STARTED out as a bunch of weird 'space age' skins in the Crouch End area of North London who were into sartorial outrage and all-round craziness before the days of punk. With the coming of the storm, Madness had began to take its present form, starting life as Morris And The Minors and The Invaders.

Locked away in a room rehearsing for three nights per week, Madness remained largely unaffected by punk. Organised by writer, manager, singer and sometime drummer Rockin' Billy Whizz and coached by the classically trained Mike Barson, Madness was gradually coaxed into being; Mark Bedford (bass) and Dan Woodgate (drums) joining up with Chris, Lee, Mike and Suggs.

Chas Smash, whose audience rousing tactics became a regular feature at Madness gigs, was made the group's compere/nutty dancer. A curious, unique role, but its importance should not be underestimated. Coming from a family of Irish dancers, his father opened one of England's first schools of Irish dancing and his kid sister is a leading exponent of the art. Chas sets the pattern for racy new dance stances; look around at any Madness gig and see the punters interpreting his moves. Before the group left for America his post was made fulltime; it's envisaged he'll develop as a second lead vocalist.

Madness met Coventry's Special A.K.A. when they played the Hope and Anchor. Surprised to find a similar furrow being ploughed in the Midlands, Suggs exchanged addresses with Jerry Dammers. When 2-Tone was started, Mike compiled a makeshift press release, sent it to the label, and shortly afterwards 'The Prince' was released . . .

It's only six months later, but already there must be some degree of rivalry between the groups, especially as they both prepare to tackle the American market.

"Yeah, there definitely is, but we're still friendly. But like it can be sickening. I mean we broke off from the 2-Tone tour to go to America before they did, to get some interest going. Fucken Sire wouldn't release our album because it was too near Christmas. There was no publicity. We've already been there but hardly anyone knows. The Specials have been there a week and they've had a big press conference and their album's in the Top 100. I'm just sick of being anyone's younger brother, no matter who they are. We're just us, we aren't anybody else, even if the music is similar and all that."

Nonetheless he admires the label.

"The reason 2-Tone is so successful is that everyone in it is so young, like Jerry controls it and he's only 24. The old record companies have no insight, the only reason half of them go after a band is because someone else is going after them. If one's interested in you they're all interested in you. Island didn't even know we had 'The Prince' out when it was at 73. They'd just heard that everyone was interested in us."

So how have Stiff treated you?

"At first there was a problem. Y'see the label is sort of like Dave Robinson's brainchild and he's made everything in it. But when we joined 'The Prince' was already in the charts and we were on our own two feet. But Dave likes you to be his boys, which is really good — but we don't want to be anybody's boys, we want to be ourselves. There was friction with him a while ago over artwork and the records we wanted to put out. But it's all right now, as soon as you hit the Top Ten he seems to calm down a bit."

SUGGS VIEWS the future with interesting optimism.

"We keep really friendly with The Specials. It's so easy to fall into needless bickering and it's just not fucken worth it. We're both after the same things, we've both got the same problems and probably the same lifespan. We're all really young, so when it's all over we'll be able to do things together. Their contract ends after four years and so does ours. Hopefully we should have enough bread by then to get a really good, proper label together. That's what I'd really like to do."

I heard an old record once by Sam The Sham And The Pharoahs *(Tsk, Tsk! Actually it was Napoleon XIV — Ed Who Remembers The Summer Of '66).* Anyway from what I recollect it consisted of little more than a constant repeat of *"They're coming to take me away ha ha, They're coming to take me away,"* with all the insane relish of Vincent Price in a Hammer Horror.

It seems like half the kids in the country feel the same way about Madness. I see no reason for not sharing in the pleasure.

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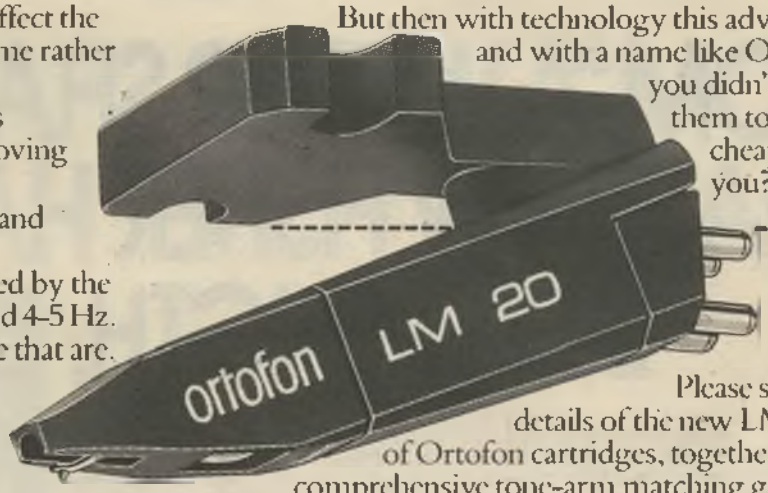

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Matthew Fisher's talent is easy to recognise, just as his keyboard contribution to "A Whiter Shade of Pale" is easy to remember. Matthew's connection with Procol Harum goes beyond his participation in their world-wide success, he also produced "A Salty Dog," which is generally considered to be the group's finest album. Since then Matthew has produced three albums by fellow ex-Procol member Robin Trower and pursued his own solo career. On his first Mercury album he's joined by some of England's most respected musicians, among them Tim Renwick, Dave Mattacks and Mick Grabham. Matthew Fisher arrived a long time ago, this album proves he's here to stay.

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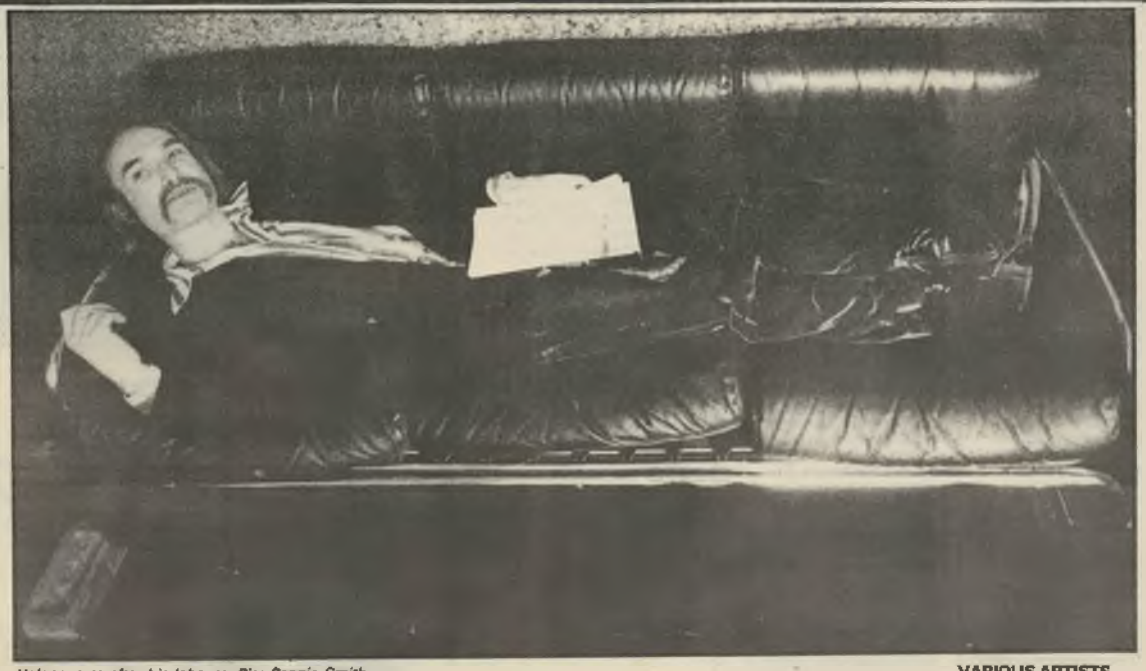


Holger rests after his labours. Pic: Pennie Smith.

OK kids, you've finally caught up with Can — now follow this

HOLGER CZUKAY
Movies *(EMI)*

IT SEEMS peculiarly appropriate that Holger Czukay, who played bass in Can for almost ten years, should release an album of his own now, when the air is belatedly but nonetheless gratifyingly alive with the sound of bands whose debts to Can's early recordings are as obvious as they're immense: PiL, Joy Division, Pere Ubu, Buzzcocks and more.

An utterly unorthodox and extremely unlikely collection of musicians with widespread experience of other contemporary musics (avant-garde, classical, jazz, etc), Can could only be termed a 'rock' band by default. One of their most vital functions was to offer up for public perusal ideas and approaches that had been drawn from anywhere but the mainstream — and any supposedly 'popular' culture (like what we loosely call rock, for example) needs constant injections and filtrations of such outside influences to reinvigorate itself.

What was true of Can is equally true of Czukay himself. Almost inevitably, 'Movies' bears no resemblance at all to anything produced to date by the likes of PiL, but instead suggests and proceeds to explore a vast range of new directions: a standard for future generations of aspiring young musical empiricists to teeth themselves on.

'Movies' is Czukay's second album (his first, made in the very early '70s, was never widely available) and represents some 18 months work. Although obviously a studio-orientated creation, depending for its often overwhelming impact on all sorts of brinkmanship with tapes and vari-speeding and splicing of same, 'Movies' seems remarkably seamless and, above all, natural. The finished articles give little inkling of the elaborate planning that went into them.

In addition Czukay, who's credited as composer, mixer and producer, has successfully transferred his own idiosyncrasies onto record intact. The four tracks on 'Movies' are by turns — and sometimes all at once — charming, amusing, bemusing and downright unsettling, very much the work of someone who's no stranger to lateral thinking, musical or otherwise.

'Cool In The Pool' opens, the full version of the recent single and Czukay's wayward idea of what dancing folk who are *"so cool and so normal"* should fret their feet to. "Events" culled at random from short-wave radio — clips of French horn, violin, opera and a multitude of noises, various — are tossed liberally into the song, itself a rhythmic trampoline bounced on by Czukay (basses and guitars, lot of them) and Jaki Liebezeit (drums and extraordinary precision). The results sound a) delightful, b) as accidental as they're in fact intentional, and c) much funkier than you'd think.

The genesis of 'Oh Lord Give Us More Money' neatly encapsulates Czukay's tendency to rely on applied chance and circumstance. To wit — Can were recording rhythm tracks for 'Landed' when Czukay burst into the studio and set about explaining the antics of a black American preacher who prayed for money whenever he needed it and whom Czukay had just seen on TV, singing a frantic refrain of *"Oh Lord, give us more money . . ."*. Although Czukay didn't know as much at the time, his spontaneous outburst was recorded, and duly surfaces here amidst a flurry of lyrics about alchemy.

'Oh Lord' is prime Can time. In fact it consists of 'Hunters And Collectors' and 'Vernal Equinox' from 'Landed' almost unrecognisably overhauled. Liebezeit's urent drums, Irmin Schmidt's abrupt piano and Michael Karoli's delicately fractured guitar nag listlessly, compulsively at extreme musical shapes and sizes. Czukey's own multi-tracked basses, guitars and keyboards map additional mazes whilst further short-wave intrusions — disembodied voices, garbled dialogue, even cats, dogs and traffic — erupt into audibility before just as suddenly disappearing.

But as if all this wasn't enough, the track closes with an object lesson in rhythm 'n' dub editing, final proof that what you leave out is if anything more important than what you leave in. The song's pulsebeat continues to resonate, even though at times all you're actually hearing are snatches of silence.

'Persian Love' begins the second side and is perhaps the album's most extraordinary moment. For it Czukey caught two Persian singers broadcast on short-wave, then constructed a complete melody around what theirs only implied. East meets West, and the convergence is as ingenuous as it's ingenious. The radio voices, remarkable enough in themselves, phase in and out of focus, a total contrast to the precision of Czukay's scintillating guitar figures yet somehow emotionally and intuitively index-linked to them: music magic.

Completing the album's symmetry, 'Hollywood Symphony' (its original title) is another long piece, symphonic in structure but as far removed from conventional rock neo-classicism as could be imagined.

The song's lyrical narrative (about a UFO sighting, among other things) and its associated short-wave voices are deliberately disorganised, an approach that can paradoxically clarify rather than confuse, and does so here (the assumption being that most things have an innate capacity to organise themselves).

Nevertheless 'Symphony' is fraught with strangeness. So much more atmospheric than conventional synthesised sound, short-wave tunings ghost through the mix, creating an almost three-dimensional ambience. You begin to think you're somehow listening to more of what's acoustically available around and about you at any one time than you're entitled to hear, and the ensuing reaction is disorientating to say the least; partly actual, partly illusory, but no less palpable for all that.

Bass and guitars, drums and congas begin sedately, accelerate violently into a mid-song vortex, then relax again. And Czukay's bass playing is superbly poised, every chord a square root of its surroundings, almost improbably concentrated, and his overall sense of musical organisation as apparently organic as it's actively considered.

But all these sketches of 'Movies' are, at best, conditional and tentative. I can't point to any useful precedents because the album has none, except very distant echoes in mid-'70s Can music.

I've constantly played 'Movies' in some form or another for a year now and it fascinates me still.

Angus MacKinnon

VARIOUS ARTISTS
The London R&B Sessions
(Albion)

THERE'S a black hole under the ground in Islington, and it's called the Hope & Anchor. Near the end of last year, a lot of people went down there and made a lot of noise. It got recorded and here it is.

'The London R&B Sessions' is a compilation of the best live performances by a variety of bands and so the finished product is inevitably uneven, and, like most Various Artists jobs, just a bit too erratic to be satisfying. Even so, this album is a fine testament to the vitality of modern R&B, and all you malingerers who've so far failed to make that scene's acquaintance should lay down the requisite four pounds and get on the case.

Amongst the wonders which will then be yours are two pieces apiece from the reliable Lew Lewis Reformer and the worthy if stolid Bogey Boys, and two more from the very excellent Red Beans And Rice, whose 'Finger In My Eye' is the work of a genuine soul band that makes their more modish competitors sound distinctly sick. There's a humdrum early Stonesy thingy by Mike Spenser's Cannibals, and a nifty Muddy Waters number from The Untouchables, featuring the nimble-lipped harpist Skid Marx. The Hope & Anchor House Band, including B. J. Cole and Deke Leonard, donates one undistinguished track, while those cocky Little Roosters weigh in with a wobbly but entertaining version of their theme song 'Roostering With Intent'.

Undoubtedly, the album's climactic contribution comes courtesy of Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders, with the shattering mind-in-neutral ultra-violence of 'The Whammy', a chillingly demented vengeance blues. But just as good is the other highlight 'Why Do Everything Happen To Me' by special guests The American Blues Legends (being Nolan Struck on vocals and bass, Chico Chism on drums and orgeous guitar by Eddie C. Campbell). Just hear it, is all I ask.

Which leaves four more: two raucous slabs of brash rock'n'roll by The Pirates, a very grim traditionally-treated blues from Paul Jones' outfit The Blues Band, and a rough and ready 'Taste And Try' by The Bishops.

A grand total of 16, and a mixed bunch to be sure, though lovable overall. Bring it on home.

Paul Du Noyer

TOYAH
Sheep Farming In Barnet *(Safari)*

TOYAH, head and shoulders, in sunglasses, against an expanse of blue sky and a sliver of bleak landscape; on the horizon what look like three giant ping-pong balls, or eggs. And the album title, 'Sheep Farming In Barnet' — it all seems a bit obscure at first.

But read the back sleeve, covered with extracts from Nostradamus (the visionary who accurately predicted, amongst other things, World War II and Mussolini's rise to power), and things become clearer.

The giant ping-pong balls must be nuclear power stations and the title presumably implies that in the future, with the change of environment, anything could happen — even sheep farming in Barnet.

Listen to the content and suddenly everything's quite straightforward — too straightforward in fact. The sound and lyrical imagery centre round the future and the possible/likely effects of 'progress', the mysteries of life and death, Earth and outer space — you know the sort of thing, it's all been done before.

The music is obviously meant to be thought-provoking, with its crashing chaos created by keyboards and guitar, backed up with a heavy, ominously foreboding backline that tries to slow the race down and warn against impending doom. But none of the numbers are direct enough to have any impact.

Lene and the Banshees

The Method School of Punk

Much of the material incorporates Banshee-like swirls, rising and falling, abruptly and venomously echoing and rebounding — to which Toyah add nothing.

The same riffs and special effects, even similar lyrics, are recycled throughout the album; Toyah sings, for instance, about a strange lover from outer space (The Man Who Fell To Earth?) with obligatory spacey sound effects of course, in both 'Elusive Stranger' on side one and 'Danced' on side two.

Toyah is an actress, and as such is used to performing material which others have written. She is also used to imitating characters that others have created. And this is reflected in Toyah as a singer.

She strives for wild decadence, mystery, aloofness, thoughtfulness, even subtle (or not so subtle onstage) sexuality — traits which she has evidently decided are best illustrated in Lene Lovich and Siouxsie And The Banshees. So she has amalgamated the two in her 'musical persona', but instead of creating a strong, individual, she has merely come up with a watered-down Lene and Siouxsie.

'Sheep Farming In Barnet' is the direct opposite of what I think it is meant to be. It is old-fashioned where it should be futuristic, limited in style and arrangements where it should be expansive, imitative where it should be innovatory. A very unremarkable performance.

Deanne Pearson

Mad Alex's rock and roll nightmare

ALEX CHILTON
Like Flies On Sherbert
(Aura)

ANYONE who has followed the ups and downs of Alex Chilton's musical career can't fail to appreciate the irony of the man's most recent sorties into the plastic jungle. After all, his early '70s Big Star pop blueprint has finally come of universal fruition . Yet at a time when an album marked by Chilton's more familiar characteristics might well drag him kicking and cussing into the pop by proxy mainstream that is currently infesting American tastes, mad Alex withdraws further into his shell.

'Like Flies On Sherbert' continues on the perverse path where rock and roll roots are yanked out of the ground with the dirt sticking fast. His previous effort, the unfortunately misleading 'Big Star 3,' revealed a state of mind so mixed up and bitter it made John Lennon's classic solo works seem positively jaunty by comparison. At least Chilton has exorcised that ghost for 'Flies,' but the distortions of his rock nightmare continue to haunt him.

The cover depicts a ghastly collection of girl dolls in wedding weeds sitting squat on a Cadillac. The image and the title indicate that Chilton has hardly come to terms with the fair sex or his Catholic guilt. The noises on the record are as cracked as the artist responsible.

This is not quite so pointed on the cover of KC's 'Boogie Shoes' which opens the album. Chilton delivers the number in his now customary shambolic drawl, quite incapable of meeting the promise in the lyric. He's the drunk in the corner, the barfly waiting to swoop, incoherent and about to collapse in a heap. The background fits: a smokey fractured '50s photograph, developed by a slumming rhythm guitar, lethargic shuffle beat and the album's one conscious participant, Jim Dickinson, fleshing out the tint on clear-headed piano.

The sound of 'Flies' maintains this contrast — as much due to Dickinson's loony direction as the fact that Chilton re-mixed and re-mixed until he's unearthed only the faintest echo of his original muse and then promptly squashed it.

'My Rival,' 'Hey! Little Child' and 'Hook Or Crook' are Chiltonian back pages, details from a mental diary where sexual jealousy and harmless fantasy make for deliberately unlikely bedfellows. The connection between moral disorder and the almost cliched images of Elvis Presley and Lou Reed that Chilton keeps on his wall is a central motif, the confusion of a Southern boy hooked equally on decadence and innocence.

Although Jim Dickinson takes the vocal on a remake of Roy Orbison's 'I've Had It' to close the side, this impression still holds. Chilton revels in rock and roll's maudlin moments but his treatment of them is sardonic rather than hopeless.

Side two finds the man tapping glasses in Sam Phillips' studio conjuring up a selection of vintage nuggets from a faded past peopled by hep cats and Opryland crooners. 'Rock Hard' lurches into an outre series of sensual puns *a la* Lux Interior. Chilton wears the sneer through 'Girl After Girl,' a classic tale of woeful braggadoccio, and then drops it for an absurdly mannered reading of Ernest Tubbs' 'Waltz Across Texas.' This is the scratchy slumming side of romantic country and western that seems to appeal with good reason to depressed personalities (Skip Spence and Gram Parsons, setting the precedent).

Jimmy C. Newman's 'Alligator Man' completes a lonesome country trio with Chilton's crazy arrangement threatening to disintegrate and eventually disappear into its swamp.

Piece de resistance is the final title track where you can hear the take in all its bareness stuck out in some deranged middle distance between clarity and confusion.

'Like Flies On Sherbert' maintains and heightens Alex Chilton's appeal. Since his upsurge of outside activities with such seminal new iconoclasts as Chris Stamey and The Cramps he's found his closet bulging with the skeletons most of us keep quiet about.

Still, at least it keeps him off street corners in Memphis.

Max Bell

Alex Chilton: pop fugitive

Linda Ronstadt

Bland Linda's nightmarish 'rock'

Linda Ronstadt
Mad Love *(Asylum)*

IN WHICH Ms Ronstadt systematically butchers the compositions of several notables and wreaks her own insidiously mild mayhem on the songs of lesser luminaries.

Her voice is strikingly average, sometimes stunningly crass and occasionally almost inept. And I'm sure the musicians are all masters of their blend art. Which makes me more astonished that so much has presumably been spent on so many for so little: they sound like a world-weary cabaret combo plodding dutifully through a series of dreary, dragging arrangements, throwing in a few lacklustre solos for luck; perhaps they were simply stunned by boredom.

Elvis Costello's songs are strong enough to be virtually indestructible but by the time Linda has finished with them they crawl off dreadfully damaged. 'Girls Talk' starts with a snort of false laughter and some tittering whispers then trots away weakly, gravely wounded by offensive, tinsel keyboards; she turns 'Talking In The Dark' into a ponderously jolly romp and makes 'Party Girl' a pompous, mawkish, self-pitying whine that's so slow it almost stops.

Neil Young also suffers from her sugary attentions: 'Look Out For My Love' is scrubbed and thoroughly disinfected against the slight possibility of a germ of emotion. And I'm sure you could hear 'I Can't Let Go' covered more constructively on the northern club circuit.

This leaves three compositions by one Mark Goldenburg (all fairly facile sexual farces) including the forced drama of the title track, a laboured pun called 'How Do I Make You', and 'Hurt So Bad' whose start is relatively promising but which soon deteriorates to the point where we hear Ms Ronstadt shouting "No" in tones that suggest the cat is about to do something unspeakable behind the settee.

All the tracks have been written about women by men. Since Linda Ronstadt is far too staidly clean-cut for any intriguing ambiguity and is neither sensitive or subtle enough to add new insights into relationships by reversing the roles, any pretence of passion falls very flat. And several of the tracks are suspended in a vacuum that robs them of their meaning without substituting any other intent.

In fact 'Mad Love' is a huge misnomer for an album that hasn't even a hint of demented desire.

Lynn Hanna

BETTE MIDLER
The Rose *(Atlantic)*

SO THIS is what they call Adult Orientated Rock (AOR to the cognoscenti). That's something of a misnomer actually, as this album has virtually nothing to do with rock and everything to do with Hollywood.

Not that good things can't come out of Hollywood — Midler's colossal performance in this film is one of them — but as an album 'The Rose' is as infuriating as listening to football on the radio. You get the general drift but it's frustrating not to *see* what's going on. And Midler, more than most, just has to be *seen*.

Considering how few worthwhile live or soundtrack albums have ever been made, this combination of the two has the odds stacked against it from the start. You can't get a sense of real atmosphere from a live recording you know was only done for a film anyway, so all the cheering is just an irritating intrusion, a sham adding to the overall sense of empty bombast.

As an attempt to recreate late '60s rock, it's not altogether unsuccessful. Side one features four typical brassy, inflated rockers *a la* Big Brother and the Holding Company (no surprise there) played by super-competent sessionmen with less grit (unfortunately) and more sophistication (unfortunately).

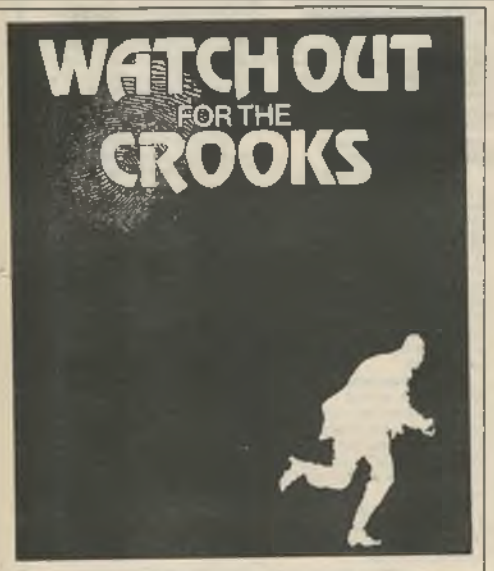
The intended 'showpiece' of the side though is 'When A Man Loves A Woman'. The half-a-dozen or so people who haven't heard the Percy Sledge original may well be knocked out; the rest of the planet will be at best unmoved and at worst embarrassed.

Side two starts with a twelve-bar, 'Love Me With A Feeling' — the kind of flash trash that suits our Bette to a tee — but then it's downhill all the way. The instrumental 'Camellia', designed as some kind of triumphal entry for the star, has all the empty 'grandeur' of 'Land Of Hope And Glory', whilst the pathetic monologue which follows is meaningless outside the film.

Ah, but here comes the album's second 'blockbuster' and I'm afraid it's 'Stay With Me'. How many hapless, ill-advised stars now have attempted the futile task of improving on or even coming close to Lorraine Ellison's peerless original? Add the name B Midler to the casualty list.

Bette Midler has a great voice and an even greater 'personality', but she deserves better material than this. Her breathtaking performance in the film enables her to triumph over duff music and dodgy script, but take away the visuals and the odds against her are just too great.

Stuart Johnston



MY WORLD
SECRET AFFAIR
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I-SPY RECORDS

Lost in the odour zone

THE BLUES BAND
The Official Blues Band Bootleg Album *(Arista)*

THE BLUES BAND are Paul Jones, Tom McGuinness, Hughie Flint, Dave Kelly and Gary Fletcher; five slightly weather-worn hard-grafters who were paying dues in the mid-'60s Blues Movement and have now decided to revive themselves just for the hell of it. If they entertain any grander notions, they're keeping pretty quiet about them. In the face of widescale record company apathy, they recorded, pressed and released this album themselves and, due mainly to Paul Jones' natural bent for stirring up Press interest, they shifted all 3000 copies almost overnight.

Arista, who signed them at this point, pressed up another 1000 copies and are currently shunting the band around a UK tour, make no secret of their masterplan as, they this idea, I haven't a clue. Blues being solely the stepping stone between black American acoustic and white British R'n'B rock, and having none of the relevant social modes, threads, rebel spirit and easily posterised heroes to make it even faintly viable revival material.

If one album's going to prove me wrong, it certainly isn't this one. Part-studio, part-live (with authentic '60s Klook Kleek stodgy sound mix), the first side's good but conventional and the second's barely concealed padding and so, mostly disposable. The Blues Band have neither the technical flash to redefine this stack of old standards nor the innate group feel to distinguish them from any other mid-'60s band.

'Talk To Me Baby' sounds like vintage Bluesbreakers (Jones' vocal sounding uncannily like Clapton), their best cut, 'Two Bones And A Pick', sounds like 'Undead'-era Ten Years After, and 'Someday Baby' (which must be Muddy Waters' 'Trouble No More') comes across like very early Fleetwood Mac complete with Green-styled guitar overlays.

As Muddy Waters once said: "You can't be the best, you can just be a good 'un." So what price a very average white band?

Mark Ellen

J. GEILS BAND
Love Stinks *(United Artists)*

IT'S HARD to say whether recent developments have finally caught up with J. Geils, or the other way round. Whatever, it's evident that the, up till now, trend-free Detroit outfit have got themselves caught waist deep in the Great Direction Re-Think — that favourite sport of American bands in this year of our Lord.

Once upon a time they could play tough without strutting dumb, but on this set their confidence sounds shaky. Styles change track by track, going only so far in any one direction before the fear of committing themselves pulls the song back. They dump their precious R&B in favour of conformity to current trends, and find themselves increasingly lost in a territory where they have no apparent reference marks.

Take the opener 'Just Can't Wait'. Back *then*, the band would've winged such borderline material simply on their weight of sound, a cutting hard edge that fair ridiculed a land that sees The Blues Brothers as keepers of the flame. In this mood, JGB sprawl across a floppy Stones riff, dragging Dylan vocals and, to cap it all, an Elvis Costello arrangement. Naturally this opening 'blast' sounds disastrous, but things get worse.

Track two, 'Come Back', is even more directionless, even more unfamiliar, even less of a song but even longer. Here the group duck behind the mixing desk and keep fingers crossed that producer Seth Justman can iron something out, which he does, but Jesus this isn't ELO and gimmicks ring just that much more pathetic. Even later, on what should be firm ground — a retread of The Strangeloves' 'Night Time' — it all sounds so weedy that you finally have to face it: this band haven't a clue what to do next.

They're obviously trying to break new ground, but in the end are just too scared to totally let go of their instincts and wind up sounding like muddled old musicians.

Indeed, this LP might have been deemed adventurous for lesser US bands, but here they sit as easy as Steely Dan going rockabilly. It's sad.

'Love Stinks' has an overall feel of scrappy desperation — there's even a Zappa-style 'comedy' cut that isn't even interesting first time round — and shows a good rock group struggling and a long way from home base. Maybe their future really does only lay in covering half-rememebred favourites. If J. Geils have anything left they'll get wise, get American and get Detroit.

Danny Baker

J. Geils Band: Peter Wolf's down a point. Pic: Chris Harler

Mewling Muffins

MARTHA AND THE MUFFINS
Metro music *(DinDisc)*

THE EMERGENCE of Martha And The Muffins suggests criteria have changed in the world of transatlantic pop.

You no longer have to pilfer the early '60s melody stockpile (The Invaders, The Romantics), nor whittle down arrangements like an XTC or Devo (The Human Switchboard, jj 180) nor simply concoct catchy, cluttered but ultimately treacly sounds for the airwaves (Jane Aire And The Belvederes).

In other words, the Muffins have heard of The B-52s.

However, I doubt The B-52s have heard of the Muffins — and likely as not they never will unless they follow this sadly mediocre debut with something possessed of at least a modicum of wit, clarity or underived invention. 'Metro Music' is a pleasant background sound, as unrealised in potential as it's undemanding and lacklustre in a lilting, listenable sort of way.

The music's kept structurally simple, at times even simplistic, which ties in well with the soft, romantic nature of their lyrics, which come wrapped inextricably round a cloudy confused idealism and very art-school sense of detail. *"I don't know if you'll find / A girl to be your piece of art / So sad to say it won't be me / Cause I haven't got a paint by number heart,"* intones Martha Johnson in suitably fragile and plaintive manner ('Paint By Number Heart'). Get the picture?

The gorgeously distant, elusive air of the single 'Echo Beach' is fast diffused, only to return at odd twists and turns on the rest of the album. 'Indecision', 'Terminal Twilight' and 'Hide And Seek' are all B-52's geared dance fare — a similarly deft guitar part, eerie organ and occasional clashing two-girl harmonies — but where The B-52s build an intensity through their economic synthesis of textures, the Muffins just busk around four chords in search of a melody with a sax churning out the basic riffs and the splashes of discordant keyboards sounding like the kind of concessionary 'modernism' they feel is expected of them rather than an integral part of the sentiment or design.

'Metro Music' is an attempt to dress 'underground' (their joke?) as commercial. It's too busy being both to be either.

Mark Ellen

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Old soldiers never die . . .

Pic: David Corio

Al Green checks the first draft of Danny Baker's review.

WAR
The Music Band 2 (*MCA*)
PARLIAMENT
Gloryhallastoopid (*Casablanca*)
AL GREEN
The Cream Of Al Green (*Cream*)

BEING a member of War must be a pretty distressing nine to fiver these days. Never a band to string two successive strong ones together, they seem to be under the impression that they can meander through albums like 'The Music Band 2' on the assumption that they do it better than the rest simply because they're older. Not so at all.

The album is tired, flat and worthlessly mellow. In the past War have been able to produce nuggets like 'Galaxy' and the timeless 'Low Rider', but here the best we can hope is that they'll reach the energy level of Carole King. The obligatory oasis comes in the shape of an instrumental re-working of 'World Is A Ghetto' — the current single — and though mindless, it's tailored smooth enough to pass.

War have made their reputation, and they'll probably never take another gamble in their lives.

Parliament are another bunch of reputation riders, but at least they still appear to have notions of genius, however unfounded. Like George Clinton would have us believe he's incredibly daring and incredibly funny. He isn't, of course, he's just incredibly dull.

'Gloryhallastoopid' is more of the same studio noodling we've all come to know and ignore this last fifty years of Clinton shennenigans. Not since 'Dr Funkenstein' has this particular branch of the mothership come anywhere near walking upright. No wonder he's having trouble getting takers for his Jam label — he must have trouble addressing his begging letters without embroidering all over the point.

No, all this misplaced reverence has to stop for this mob. This LP doesn't have a single tune, a halfway decent bass, or a strong sound and it carries all the punch of Tom O'Connor performing in front of the Queen Mother. This Parliament should have been dissolved ages ago.

And so, by way of a sweetener, to the priceless new anthology of Al Green. Despite a wishywashy title it's not the quick package job you'd think, 'Cream' being a bona-fide US label who've apparently snapped up all the Hi label produce.

This collection disperses memories of Decca's similar 'Best Of' just as soon as 'Love and Happiness' shows up. 'Love and Happiness' is my number - one - all - time - no - doubt - about - it favourite soul record, combining as it does warmth, sex and guts, driving soul and a vocal delivery only matched by the perfection of the horn section.

The later material naturally suffers up against stuff like 'Here I Am', 'Call Me', 'I'm Still In Love With You', though it's to their credit that they can make a living on the same disc as the older cuts.

It's impossible to become too familiar with these recordings — if it's down to me it's also impossible to over-praise them — so swing with it. And of the three albums in this review it's the only one that can wear the '1980' copyright logo with pride.

Danny Baker

ROBERT GORDON
Bad Boy (*RCA*)

ROCKABILLY, schmockabilly, it doesn't make sense if you can't cut the groove. Robert Gordon, another man who would have been king but ended up auditioning for court jester, has faced the blight of his own ambitions in the past four years since Tuff Darts failed to materialise into anything substantial, although there are odd moments of inspiration dotted around his efforts.

'Bad Boy' is no crooner's blue streak either, although when it is good it convinces you long enough to wonder why the remainder is so dull.

It isn't as if the band can't make the right tracks. Chris Spedding, Rob Stoner, Howie Wyeth and the redoubtable slap bass man Tony Garner lend proceedings their customary panache, while there are added embellishments like ex-Cody sidemen Bobby Black and Andy Stein to curve out the swing.

Producer Richard Gottehrer achieves the right levels for Gordon's vocal, but Robert simply tries too hard to be *really* greasy.

The version of Marty Wilde's 'Bad Boy' itself is uh, real gone, and a coupling of this and Roy Orbison's 'A Picture Of You' (about some lovelorn case who goes around snapping girls without their permission) would make for a decent single. But J. D. Loudermilk's 'Torture' is no 'Ebony Eyes', and Gordon is plain misguided to attempt Bill Haley's 'Crazy Man Crazy' (they tore up cinemas for this?).

Gordon's problem is that he's never lived down his New York cocktail club image, the mirror pose, and even his chic patrons have deserted him. Short of acquiring a time capsule and a one-way ticket to Memphis, it's impossible to imagine him sticking down a full quota of content over style. A real present cat.

Max Bell

STUDENTS

SEE PAGES 58 & 59

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(Artists House)
JAMES BLOOD ULMER
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(Artists House)
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Old And New *Dreams*
(ECM)

James Blood Ulmer

RECENT years have been thin times for Ornette Coleman watchers. The giant of modern jazz alto has maintained a Lennonesque seclusion but on the evidence of the 'Soapsuds' duets with Charlie Haden (dating from 1977-78) Coleman's powers are undiminished.

Here employing his seldom-used tenor sax and trumpet, Ornette has pared his playing down to fundamentals. The man's position as the supreme melodist in jazz is reaffirmed by the timeless feel of this music.

Similarly Haden — the first modern bassist — has surely taken the acoustic bass to its limits. His concept of simultaneous independence and support is here raised to an unapproachable level, tapping an endless vein of counter-melodies and harmonies.

Guitarist James Blood Ulmer's album is, if you want labels, jazz-rock more stingingly potent than you'll ever hear. Eight boiling doses of malformed funk, none over five minutes but each played until the spirit is spent. Ornette junior is on drums, pinioning the ensemble with militaristic figures, a looser-limbed approach to Magic Band-ish structures. Coleman senior seems content to play a cameo role, magisterial wails insinuating into the sound from the rear. But if Ornette wants to pursue this setting — and recent activities suggest that he does — a re-think is called for. There are some uneasy contrasts here, though Ulmer is superb.

Despite his absence, Coleman's shadow looms large over 'Old And New Dreams'. Tenorman Redman — an old friend and sideman — replaces him in the quartet which made some of the classic Atlantic albums, and two Coleman themes are included. The serene beauty of 'Lonely Woman' is fetchingly redrawn, while 'Open Or Close' runs on boppish rails. Cherry continues his renaissance, his trumpet skittish and smouldering by turns, yet it's Haden who again impresses most. The ruminative solos on 'Open' and 'Lonely Woman' are the work of a man utterly involved. And his own composition 'Song For The Whales' eclipses the rest of the set; the bassist's mournful evocations of the whale's call, aligned with Cherry's broken, crying lines, hold an acutely tragic power.

All three records are, for different reasons, essential. But the central issue — how Ornette will proceed from here — remains tantalisingly open.

Richard Cook

The soul of discretion

IAN MATTHEWS
Discreet Repeat *(Rockburgh)*

DISCREET is the word. Ian Matthews' voice virtually defines easy listening, without the emotional flabbiness usually associated with the term — so much so that by 1978 he seemed to have understated himself out of an audience. Then, reunited with producer Sandy Roberton, his 'Stealin' Home' album (on Roberton's Rockburgh label) spawned Stateside and European hits in 'Shake It' and 'Gimme An Inch Girl'.

Compiled by Matthews and Roberton, 'Discreet Repeat' is a celebratory double album of 27 songs, mostly licensed from five of Ian's previous labels. Since MCA were even more unhelpful than some of the others — the process took ten months — the contents stretch from his second, post-Southern Comfort solo album ('If You Saw Thro' My Eyes') in 1971 through to 'Stealin' Home'.

Finding the Matthews tones fairly irresistible whatever the context, I feared this review might be short on critical comment. It's therefore a relief to report that 'Let There Be Blues' and 'For The Second Time' are indulgent and soft-centred, 'I'll Be Gone' chuggingly average and his version of 'I Don't Want To Talk About It' merely competent. There's also a somewhat pointless acappella 'Da Doo Ron Ron', but the rest is at least respectable and usually stimulating.

There are twelve originals, while names like Tom Waits, John Martyn, Tim Nardin and Jesse Winchester give the flavour of the rest — though Matthews' own songs are rarely overshadowed. Ian's brilliant version of Richard Farina's 'Morgan The Pirate' was probably too long to use, but the same writer's 'Reno Nevada' is another stylish put-down, boosted by snarling, edgy guitars.

Imagination is allied to the famed tastefulness, as when the stunningly evocative intro to 'Darkness Darkness' is fully matched by the rest of the arrangement. The second acappella shot — Rodgers and Hammerstein's 'Carefully Taught', a shrewd dissection of bigotry — makes every word count and the slightly eerie, Mike Nesmith-produced voices on 'Seven Bridges Road' make me want to seek out 'Valley Hi', the album concerned.

I could go on. Most encouraging for Ian Matthews and all who sail with him is that his recent stuff is probably his punchiest.

The only quibble is the presentation: no credits or even any indication of each track's album of origin.

Ian Matthews — onetime Bradford Park Avenue footballer, all-round suave customer and occasional pop star — This Is Your Life.

Harry George

Ian Matthews. Pic: Denis O'Regan.

ROGER McGUINN AND CHRIS HILLMAN
City *(Capitol)*

ROGER McGUINN and Chris Hillman may resemble door to door salesmen for the Mormons on the sleeve of 'City' (also featuring Gene Clark in a two-bit part) but they aren't selling personal salvation inside.

This umpteenth re-run of a flagging partnership seldom suggests a return to the ancient form of Byrd-like natural harmony.

Hillman is still adept at passing muster for Eagles auditions with his parochial West Coast cliches, but the good money was always on McGuinn — and his contributions are hardly convincing proof of a year well spent.

The songs languish in the past tense — not that middling moral conundrums about life on the street were ever Roger's forte anyway. His best strokes are the title track and the novelty Byrd flashback of 'Skate Date', isolated pearls of jangling instrumental clarity that I'd happily own on a single.

Gene Clark is sensible enough to confine himself to a flying visit. The mystic qualities that informed 'No Other' are absent, zen fans.

The point made by Nick Kent in his review of their last reunion still holds, namely that with Byrds imitators at a premium these days, McGuinn would be well advised to bid Hillman adieu, hitch up with a bunch of smart L.A. brats and snaffle the nearest free Tom Petty songs.

Max Bell

RUPERT HOLMES
Partners In Crime *(MCA)*

AND SO here we have the re-issued album of the numbing Pina Colada song in which our hero battles to find someone else with "half a brain". Obviously he hopes to slide the semi-organ next to his own half and hope they jell and then, who knows, Rupert and "his lady" may be able to share adult experiences forever.

Anyone who saw this artist on *TOTP* and sat fascinated as, between verses, he played an imaginary guitar — coupled with a facial expression that I can only term surgical — will know that we're dealing with a man who by baring whimsical anecdotes from his sage-like soul seeks to let us shed a little light on life's shell-pocked path of boy-girl relationships. From the lyric sheet it appears Rupert — we're dealing with a man called Rupert — thinks that we're all to inhibited — at least three tracks urge us to get out of ourselves — and elsewhere he dithers over various mundane subjects; food, being near-sighted.

The music is nickel Manilow impressions often so meek I don't know why it doesn't go right ahead and inherit the earth. Still he gets hits. Why, however, is still a case for his uncle Sherlock ...

Danny Baker

DAN HARTMAN
Relight My Fire *(Blue Sky)*

DAN HARTMAN doesn't have to *sing* about living by numbers, he just does. Here we see the modern young music executive at work, the solo album fitted into a busy schedule of playing bass on the new David Johansen LP, leasing out his private studios to Johansen, Muddy Waters, Rick Derringer and sundry other Steve Paul directed artistes, writing songs for Derringer, Sergio Mendes and Tavares ...

Naturally, Hartman wrote, sang, produced, engineered and played virtually the entire album himself, apart from the odd solo chucked in by celebrity guests like Edgar Winter and Stevie Wonder.

If you know 'Instant Replay' — and you do, whether you think so or not — you know 'Relight My Fire': glossy disco product whose sole aim is to persuade you you're having a real good time. In which aim it is not entirely unsuccessful.

Best track is 'Hands Down', a dead ringer for 'Replay' with the added bonus of an expensively assembled Winter / Wonder alto sax / harmonica 'jam'. The two great men give it their best shot, but one is left wondering if all the logistical manoeuvres were quite worthwhile when Hartman fades them out as soon as they get lift-off.

G. E. Smith, the former Scratch Band guitarist currently upstaging Hall & Oates on tour, weighs in with some loud guitar on the metal / disco crossover 'Love Strong'.

Hartman's very first hit record, The Edgar Winter Group's 'Free Ride', gets a clever reworking — and in some ways the deodorised, force-fed energy improves on the funkier original. Shame he drags it out so long ...

The rest — 'Just For Fun', 'I Love Makin' Music' and 'Relight My Fire' — well, the titles speak for themselves. Fun, fun, fun and *"let's all get together have a real good time"*.

I've got a better idea. Let's not.

Phil McNeill

IMPORTS

MAIN PROBLEM with **The Good Rats'** 'Live At Last' (Rat City) is that Long Island's most potent rodents try just that bit too hard. I guess that when a band's been clubbing it since the '60s and then gets a belated opportunity to cut a real, honest-to-goodness live double, a lets-show-'em mentality is bound to prevail. The result is that where rock nut-crackers are concerned the Brothers Marchello, who have headed the five-piece since way back when, never employ anything less than the proverbial sledgehammer.

It's a pity, as The Good Rats have shown on occasion that they really can pace themselves, splicing their own vehement brand of hard-headed rock with sprightly jazz flashes and even classy ballads. But on this gig, recorded with considerable warmth and accuracy at My Father's Place, Roslyn, New York, they settle for impact every time.

The Bill Blue Band's 'Sing Like Thunder' (Adelphi) contains one classic slice of pure palm-sweat rock in 'On The Road For Big Boy', an anthem in praise of Arthur 'Big Boy' Crudup, originator of 'That's All Right, Mama', with whom Blue and Co. once played a Franktown, Virginia gig. The remainder of the album has its moments, but I won't kid you that it's an essential buy.

Meanwhile back in Texas **The Nashville All-Stars** have cut 'Live From Austin City Limits' (Flying Fish), on which Barefoot Jerry's Russ Hicks jams with Charlie McCoy, Johnny Gimble, Pig Robbins and other upper-class Music City mafia. Some age-old war-horses are trotted out for the umpteenth time — was there ever a country jam that didn't include 'Wabash Cannonball' and 'Orange Blossom Special'? — but they are performed in fine style, while some more unusual items are paraded, notably a version of Benny Golson's 'Killer Joe', which comes jazz-packed by ace-steelie Buddy Emmons and Nashville guitarist Phil Baugh.

FRED DELLAR

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NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

Compiled by Derek Johnson

Gabriel goes flat out

PETER GABRIEL has almost as large a following as Genesis — which isn't surprising when you remember his past association with that band. He opens his latest tour this weekend, and there's been a very heavy demand for tickets — so if you haven't booked already, you don't stand much chance. First concerts are at Birmingham (Saturday), Leicester (Sunday) and Sheffield (Monday).

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Aberdeen Fusion Ballroom: **The Tourists / The Solos**
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Bath Moles: **Sphere**
Birmingham Golden Eagle: **Sammy Lee**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **The Clinic**
Birmingham Railway Inn: **Orphan**
Birmingham University Cellar Bar: **Vision Collision / The Detectives**
Bleasby (Hareford Ferry) Star & Garter: **Radium**
Brighton Creative Enterprises Rooms: **Slaves Of Janet**
Brighton Dome: **Spyro Gyra / Electrotunes**
Bristol Crockers: **Stoney**
Bristol Portishead Centre: **The Shattered Dolls**
Bristol The Stonehouse: **Essential Bop**
Burntwood Troubadour: **The Amazing Dark Horse**
Cambridge Great Northern Hotel: **General R & The Meanies**
Canterbury Odeon: **The Pretenders / UB 40**
Chatham Central Hall: **Fiddler's Dram**
Chippenham Neeld Hall: **Cross / Poison Girls**
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Derby Blue Note: **Killing Joke**
Derby Kings Hall: **The Clash / Joe Ely Band**
Dublin Stadium: **Wishbone Ash / The Dukes**
Edinburgh Astoria: **The Headboys / Everett The Hard Way**
Fife St Andrew's University: **Aswad**
Flint Raven Hotel: **The Moondogs**
Glasgow Countdown: **First Priority**
Glasgow Star Club: **Saffron Summerfield**
Glasgow Tiffany's: **The Selecter / Holly & The Italians**
Grimsby Central Hall: **Def Leppard / Witchfynde**
Guildford Civic Hall: **The Beat**
Guildford Wooden Bridge: **UBx**
Henley The Place: **Natural High (for three days)**
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Hull Wellington Club: **Athletico Spizz 80**
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London Shepherds Bush Trafalgar: **Speedball**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Andre Beeson Quintet**
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London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **The O.K. Band**
London Strand Kings College: **Swinging Cats**
London Victoria The Venue: **Ellen Foley**
London Waterloo Royal Victoria: **Freddy's Footwarmers**
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London W.1 Maunkberry's: **Paul Goodman**
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Norwich Cromwells: **Sugarhill Gang**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Drug Squad**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gaffa**
Penzance Demelza's: **Dexy's Midnight Runners / The Nips**
Plymouth Tops Club: **Metro Glider**
Portsmouth Cumberland Tavern: **Rev Counts & The Speedore**
Poynton Folk Centre: **Erik Ilott**
Preston Warehouse: **The Reducers**
Ramsgate Continental Hotel: **Alex Campbell**
Reading Fox & Hounds: **The Strypes**
Reading Target Club: **The Step**
Salisbury College of Art & Technology: **The Piranhas / Program**
Sheffield Broadfield Hotel: **Blood Sculpture**
Sheffield University: **Long Larkin**
Southampton Eastleigh Crown Inn: **Star Prest / Lip Moves**
Sunderland Fino's: **The 45's**
York University: **The Passions**

Friday

Aberdeen University: **The Cockney Rejects/Kidz Next Door**
Aviemore Osprey Ballroom: **The Vikings/Juniper Green**
Barkingside Old Maypole: **The Rhythm Hawks**
Birmingham Aston University: **UB40**
Basildon 66 Club: **The Trendies**
Basingstoke Magnums: **The Martian Schoolgirls**
Bath Moles: **'A' Block**
Bath Pavilion: **The Beat**
Bath University: **Dexy's Midnight Runners / The Nips**
Belfast Ulster Hall: **Wishbone Ash/The Dukes**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Grace**
Birmingham Elizabethan Days: **The Traitors**
Birmingham Golden Eagle: **Beggar**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **No Faith**
Birmingham University: **Matchbox**
Blackburn Peapers Disco: **Oxym**
Blackpool Norbreck Castle: **The Mo-dettes**
Bournemouth Winter Gardens: **Fiddler's Dram**
Brighton Alhambra: **The Guv'nors**
Brighton Buccaneer: **Athena B's/The Vendells**
Brighton The King Alfred: **Slaves Of Janet**
Brighton The Northern: **The Tinsels**
Bristol Crockers: **Stoney**
Bristol University Rag Ball: **The Inmates/The Members/Charlie Dore's Back Pocket/The G-Tips**
Chiddingly Six Bells: **Airport**
Coventry General Wolfe: **Double Yellow Lines**
Coventry Ryton Bridge: **Streetlife**
Croydon The Cartoon: **Deadringer**
Edinburgh Ingleston Royal Highland Exhibition Hall: **Rainbow**
Edinburgh Odeon: **The Tourists/The Solos**
Ellesmere Port Bulls Head: **The Reducers**
Eton The Christopher: **Motley Crew**
Falmouth Art College: **The Shattered Dolls**
Grimsby Community Hall: **The Posers**
Guildford Surrey University: **The Charlie Parkes with C P Lee/The Smirks**
Harlow Technical College: **Richard Strange**
Hastings Ocean Bar: **The Agents/The Face/The Comix**
Hatfield Polytechnic: **Hi-Tension**
Huddersfield Polytechnic: **The Vapors**
Hull City Hall: **Squeeze/Wreckless Eric**
Ipswich Henly Cross-Keys: **General R & The Meanies**
Lampeter St David's University: **Supercharge**
Liverpool Eric's: **The Vibrators**
Liverpool University: **Ronnie Lane Band/The Accelerators**
London Acton Space: **Rudi & The Moondogs**
London Acton Kings Head: **Paz**
London Balham Liberty Cinema: **The Clash/Joe Ely Band**
London Camden Dingwalls: **The Bogey Boys/The Method**
London Camden Electric Ballroom: **The Ramones / The Boys / Tempole Tudor**
London Camden Music Machine: **The Blues Band/The Little Roosters**
London Camden Southampton Arms: **Jellyroll Blues Band**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Jackie Lynton's H-D Band/Spider**
London Central Polytechnic: **Misty/The Passions**
London Clapham 101 Club: **The Flys**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Danny Adler**
London Dalston Cubes: **Cygnus**
London Elephant & Castle Southbank Polytechnic: **The V.I.P.'s/The Jump**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **The Pumphouse Gang**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Scotyard/The Set**
London Fulham The Cock: **Jazz Shots**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Spyro Gyra/Electrotunes**
London Herne Hill Half Moon: **The Works**
London Holborn Princess Louise: **The Scoop**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Soft Boys**
London Kennington The Cricketers: **Manyana**
London Kensington Imperial College: **Berlin/The Time Flies**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Bobby Henry's Risk/Mobster**
London Marquee Club: **Martha & The Muffins**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **Brett Marvin & The Thunderbolts**
London Oxford St. 100 Club: **Tradition/Sunshine Steel Band**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Isaac Guillery**
London Putney White Lion: **Southside**
London School of Economics: **The Chefs / The Objeks**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Danny Moss Quartet**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **Sugarhill Gang**
London Tottenham Court Rd. YMCA: **Simple Minds**
London University College: **Protex**
London University Union (RAR): **John Martyn/Amba/Spartacus**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Headline**
London Victoria The Venue: **Ellen Foley**
London Wembley Hopbine: **Zip Code**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Directions/The Crooks**
London Woolwich Odeon: **Dizzy Gillespie Quartet/Ronnie Scott Quartet**
London W.1 Birkbeck College: **Tour De Force**
London W.C.1 New Merlin's Cave: **The O.K. Band**
London W.C.1 School of Oriental and African Studies: **The Piranhas**
Manchester Belle Vue: **The Slits/Night Doctor**
Manchester Free Trade Hall: **The Chieftains**
Matlock Pavilion: **After The Fire**
Melksham Assembly Rooms: **The Scoop**
Melton Mowbray Painted Lady: **Jimmy James & The Vagabonds**
Nelson Railway Workers Institute: **The Howdy Boys**
Newark Palace Theatre: **Kashmir/Rendezvous**
Newcastle Mayfair Ballroom: **Saxon**
Newcastle Northumberland College: **Kicks**
Newcastle University: **The 45's**
Norwich East Anglia University: **The Pretenders/UB40**
Norwich Manor House: **The Auditions**
Oldham Grange Arts Centre: **Fast Cars/Performance/Gods Gift**
Ormskirk Edgehill College: **Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark**
Pontardawe Dynevor Arms: **Graham Larkbey**
Reading Cherry's Bar: **The Jones Boys**
Reading University: **The Strawbs**
Salford College of Technology: **Private Sector**
Sheffield Limit Club: **After The Fire**
Sheffield Polytechnic: **George Melly & The Footwarmers**
Slough Fulcrum Theatre: **Shakin' Stevens**
Southend The Elms: **Johnny Storm & Memphis**
Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic: **Red Beans & Rice**
Stroud Subscription Rooms: **The Teenbeats**
Sunderland Arts Centre: **Monocomics**
Truro William IV: **Metro Glider**
Wallasey Dale Inn: **The Zoetic Twins**
Walsall T.P. Riley School: **The Au Pairs**
Wigan Mr M's: **J G Spoils Rock Band**
Withernsea Grand Pavilion: **Def Leppard/Witchfynde**
Wolverhampton Lafayette: **The Movies**
Worcester Golden Lion: **The Rackets**

Saturday

Aberdeen University: **Saffron Summerfield**
Aviemore Osprey Ballroom: **Blaze**
Baldock The Victoria: **Decoy**
Bath Moles: **Axe**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Dawnbreaker**
Birmingham Digbeth Civic Hall: **The Au Pairs**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Strider**
Birmingham Odeon: **Peter Gabriel**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **School Sports**
Birmingham University: **The Members**
Blackpool Norbreck Castle: **The Mo-dettes**
Bracknell Bridge House: **El Seven**
Bradford Royal Standard: **Cardiac Arrest/Dangerous Girls**
Brighton The Northern: **Airport**
Canterbury Kent University: **Tennis Shoes**
Carshalton St. Helier's Arms: **Yakety Yak**
Chichester Levant Hall: **Forward Edge: The Gargoyles**
Colchester Essex University: **The Pretenders/UB40**
Coventry Dog & Trumpet: **The Rackets**
Coventry Lanchester Polytechnic: **Red Beans & Rice**
Coventry Warwick University: **The Vapors**
Cromer West Runton Pavilion: **Johnny Storm & Memphis**
Crowborough The New Cross: **The Lutys**
Croydon The Cartoon: **Seven Year Itch**
Croydon The Star: **Shader**
Derby Alanta Club: **The Slits/Night Doctor**
Dudley J.B.'s Club: **Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark**
Dunstable Queensway Hall: **The Beat**
Edinburgh Usher Hall: **The Chieftains**
Gainsborough United Services Club: **Strange Days**
Glasgow Strathclyde University: **Squeeze/Wreckless Eric**
Glasgow University: **Aswad**
Gosport John Peel: **The Martian Schoolgirls**
Gravesend Red Lion: **The Boyce Band**
Halifax Good Mood Club: **The Mo-dettes**
Haxey Park Drain Hotel: **Olde English Pub Band**
High Wycombe Nags Head: **TV Surf Boys/Alexis**
Hornchurch The Bull: **Spider**
Isle of Sheppey Island Hotel: **Sugarhill Gang**
Lancaster University: **The Selecter/Holly & The Italians**
Leeds Staging Post: **Spyder Blues Band**
Leicester Main Arena: **Ronnie Lane Band**
Leicester University: **Saxon**
Liverpool Eric's: **Killing Joke / Dr Mix & The Remix**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Sam Apple Pie/The Rent Boys**
London Camden Electric Ballroom: **The Ramones/The Boys/Tenpole Tudor**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **The Buzzards**
London Chiswick John Bull: **Fool**
London Clapham 101 Club: **The Act/The Set**
London Covent Rock Garden: **The Dance Band**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Paris**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Roll-Ups/The Flatbackers**
London Fulham The Cock: **Dangerous Rhythms**
London Hammersmith Lyric Theatre (lunchtime, free): **Bob Kerr's Jazz Friends**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **Rubber Johnny**
London Herne Hill Half Moon: **The Piranhas**
London Islington Hope and Anchor: **Danny Adler & The Gusha Bros**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Martha & The Muffins**
London Mile End Liberty Cinema: **The Clash/Joe Ely Band**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Sam Mitchell Band**

CONTINUES OVER...

Dave Crosby, Ellen Foley at London's Venue

CROSBY: next Tuesday and Wednesday

FOLEY: this Thursday and Friday

GIG GUIDE continued

London Regents Park Cecil Sharp House: **Ray Fisher**
London School of Economics: **Jaboula**
London Shepherds Bush Trafalgar: **Bloodthirsty / The Fads**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Be-Bop Preservation Society**
London Southall Hamoro' Tavern: **Purnz/Beano**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Big Chief**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Headline**
London Victoria The Venue: **The Movies**
London Wst Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Raincoats/Young Marble Giants**
London W.1. Portman Hotel: **Ron Russel Band**
Wellingborough University: **The Q-Tips**
Manchester Polytechnic: **Dexy's Midnight Runners/The Nips**
Melton Mowbray Painted Lady: **Marmalade**
Minehead Regal Theatre: **Vox Populi/Horizon**
Newcastle City Hall: **The Tourists / The Solos**
Newcastle Madison: **The Gangsters**
Nottingham Boat Club: **Def Leppard-/Witchfynde**
Oxford Board Hotel: **Never Never Band**
Pontardawe Dynevor Arms: **Andy Pandemonium**
Reading Hexagon Bar (lunchtime): **Whittaker's Patent Remedy**
Reading Hexagon Theatre: **The Vibrators**
Retford Porterhouse: **After The Fire**
Sheffield Broadfield Hotel: **Disco Students**
Sheffield University: **Charlie Dore's Back Pocket**
Snodland The Bull: **Blitz**
Southampton Guildhall: **Matchbox**
Southampton The Griffin: **Thieves Like Us**
Stafford New Bingley Hall: **Rainbow**
St. Albans Horn of Plenty: **The Step**
St. Austell Polgooth Inn: **Metro Glider**
Stockton The Teesside: **Carl Green & The Scene**
Stratford-on-Avon Green Dragon: **Burn**
Torquay The Pelican: **The Shattered Dolls**
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime): **The Pests**
Worthing Assembley Hall: **The Piranhas-/Slaves of Janet/Jobey & The Hooligans**
York College of Ripon and York: **Bore Throat**

Sunday

Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Prime Donna**
Birmingham Shirley Red Lion: **The Crack**
Birmingham Top Rank: **The Pretenders / UB 40**
Birmingham Wheaton Aston Folk Club: **Alex Campbell**
Birmingham (Yardley) The Swan: **Video**
Blackburn King George's Hall: **Selecter / Holly & The Italians**
Bradford College Vaults Bar: **Rhino**
Bradford Royal Standard Hotel: **The Cockney Rejects / Kidz Next Door**
Bristol Colston Hall: **The Clash / Joe Ely Band**
Bristol Locarno: **The Vibrators**
Bristol The Mayors Arms: **The Shattered Dolls**
Bromley The Northover (lunchtime): **Bill Scott & Ian Ellis**
Burnley Bankhall Club (lunchtime): **Attempted Moustache**
Chesterfield Bolsover Miners Welfare: **Strange Days**
Coventry General Wolfe: **Sinner**
Coventry Warwick University: **Red Beans & Rice**
Croydon Fairfield Hall: **The Doobys / The Houghton Weavers**
Croydon Greyhound: **The Rhythm Hawks**
Croydon The Cartoon: **Rockola / Fumble Review**
Croydon Warehouse Theatre: **Anerley Park**
Derby (Sunnyhill) William Caxton: **Firefly**
Edinburgh Harvey's: **Rosetta / The Whips**
Fife St. Andrew's University: **Squeeze / Wreckless Eric**
Glasgow Apollo Centre: **The Tourists / The Solos**
Great Yarmouth Hippodrome: **Shakin' Stevens**
Hastings Art College: **Slaves Of Janet**
Langley Community Hall: **Years / The Cliches**
Leeds Fan Club: **Throbbing Gristle / Monte Cazazza / Clock DVA.**
Leeds Pforde Green Hotel: **Def Leppard / Witchfynde**
Leeds Haddon Hall: **The Vye**
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: **Windows**
Leicester De Montford Hall: **Peter Gabriel**
Liverpool The Masonic: **Headquarters**
London Battersea Nags Head: **Jugular Vein**
London Brixton The George Canning: **Southside**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Chicken Shack**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **The Q-Tips**
London Charing Cross Duke of Buckingham: **The Invisibles (for four days)**
London Clapham 101 Club: **Paul Shuttleworth's Latest Craze**
London Covent Garden Rock Gardan: **Tennis Shoes**
London Finchley Torrington: **9 Blow Zero**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **The Blues Band**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Big Chief**
London Fulham The Cock: **Aura**
London Harne Hill Half Moon: **The Joys**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Another Pretty Face**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Danny Adler & The Gusha Bros / Sammy Mitchell**
London Marquee Club: **The Teenbeats**
London Oxford St. 100 Club: **J. B. Hutto**
London Putney Half Moon: **John Kirkpatrick and Sue Harris**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Bill La Sage**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **Black Echoes Annual British Reggae Awards**
London Strand Lyceum Ballroom: **The Only Ones / Simple Minds / Martha & The Muffins**

JOE JACKSON celebrates his current chart success with 'It's Different For Girls' by playing a handful of concerts next week — starting at Coventry (Monday), London Hammersmith (Tuesday) and Colchester (Wednesday). His next full tour won't be until he's recorded and released a new album.

London Woolwich Tramshed: **Terry Lightfoot Band**
London W.1 Portman Hotel (lunchtime): **Hefty Jazz**
Maidstone Royal Albion (lunchtime): **Spitzbrook**
Manchester Cyprus Tavern: **Bathroom Renovations / Gods Gift**
Newquay Central Hotel: **The Winners**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Medium Medium**
Nottingham Palais: **Sugarhill Gang**
Oxford New Theatre: **Spyro Gyra / Electrotunes**
Paisley Bungalow Bar: **The 45's**
Paisley Silver Thread Hotel: **Saffron Summerfield**
Poynton Folk Centre: **Battlefield / Elaine Vogel**
Reading's Cherry's Bar: **The Dumb Blondes**
Redcar Coatham Bowl: **The Chieftains**
Walsall Dirty Duck (lunchtime): **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Monday

Bath Rockspot: **Toulouse**
Birmingham Romeo & Juliet: **Tyrant / Overdrive**
Blackpool Janks Bar: **Craze**
Boston Folk Club: **Alex Campbell**
Bournemouth Stateside Centre: **The Vibrators**
Bradford College Vaults Bar: **Oral Sex**
Brighton Curtain Club: **Slaves Of Janet / Paul & The Freckers / The Executives**
Bristol Colston Hall: **The Clash / Joe Ely Band**
Cannock Price St Social Club: **The Rockin' Shades**
Coventry Theatre: **Joe Jackson**
Croydon The Cartoon: **Woofer**
Doncaster Romeo & Juliet: **Billy Karloff Band**
Edinburgh Tiffany's: **Squeeze /Wreckless Eric**
Glanfarg Hotel Folk Club: **Saffron Summerfield**
Hatfield Red Lion: **Sweet Substitute**
Ilford Cauliflower Hotel: **Original East Side Stompers**
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: **The Accelerators**
Leicester De Montfort Hall: **The Tourists / The Solos**
Liverpool Everyman Theatre: **The Shakes / The Final Programme / The Costars**
London Camden Dingwalls: **The Step / Side Effects / The Players**
London Camden Music Machine: **English Subtitles / The Cravats / Plain Characters**
London Clapham 101 Club: **Wasted Youth / Blood Shot**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Act / The Upset**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Bob Kerr's Whoopee Band**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Valentines / Japanese Toy**
London Harrow Rd Windsor Castle: **Embryo**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Lee Kosmin**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Fashion**
London Marquee Club: **Saxon**
London N4 The Stapleton: **The OK Band**
London Putney Half Moon: **The Blues Band**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Penny Royal**
London Victoria The Venue: **Charlie Dore's Back Pocket**
London W1 Maunkberry's: **Majority**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Selecter/ Holly & The Italians**
Manchester Band On The Wall: **The Reducers**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Party**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gwalhir**
Nuneaton 77 Club: **The Cockney Rejects / Kidz Next Door**
Oldham Queen Elizabeth Hall: **Dexy's Midnight Runners**
Oxford Cape of Good Hope: **Ken Wood & The Mixers**
Plymouth Clones: **Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark**
Reading University White Knights Hall: **The Inmates**
Redditch Tracey's: **Verdis**
Rickmansworth Watermeet: **Def Leppard / Witchfynde**
Sheffield City Hall: **Peter Gabriel**
Southend Focus: **Steve Hooker Band**
St Helens Hareefinch Rock: **Asylum**
Stoke Jollees: **Mary Wilson (for a week)**
Swansea Circles: **The Vapors**
Swindon Brunel Rooms: **Sugarhill Gang**
Watford Bailey's: **The Fantastics (for a week)**
Worthing Assembly Hall: **Linda Lewis**

Tuesday

Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Bruje**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Killer**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Speed Limit**
Bournemouth Town Hall: **Def Leppard / Witchfynde**
Bradford College Vaults Bar: **Dirty But Nice**
Brighton Top Rank: **The Pretenders / UB40**
Bristol Colston Hall: **The Tourists / The Solos**
Bristol Portishead Youth Club: **The Review**
Bristol The Stonehouse: **The Balcashes**
Bury The Derby Hall: **Victor Drago / Two-Tone Pinks**
Cardiff Top Rank: **Saxon**
Cleethorpes Winter Gardens: **The Blues Band / The Dance Band**
Croydon Crawdaddy: **The Boyce Band**
Croydon The Cartoon: **The Big Apple**
Exeter Routes: **Orchestral Manoeuvres in The Dark**
Fleet Fox & Hounds: **Richard Cox-Smith**
Ipswich Tracey's: **Zorro**
Kingston The Wellington: **Slaves Of Janet**
Leeds Fan Club: **The 45's**
Leicester University: **Dexy's Midnight Runners**
London Camden Dingwalls: **The Q-Tips**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Paul Shuttleworth & The Latest Craze**
London Clapham 101 Club: **Rent Boys / Action**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Bobby Henry & The Risk**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Cheeks**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Jags / The Rave**
London Fulham The Cock: **Big Chief**
London Hammersmith Palais: **Joe Jackson / Sore Throat**
London Hornsey Kings Head: **Main Avenue Jazzband**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Clerks**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Straight 8**
London Marquee Club: **Scissor Fits / The Books**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Digby Fairweather Quartet**
London Strand Kings College: **John Spires**
London University Union: **The Time Flies**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **The Flatbackers**
London Victoria The Venue: **David Crosby**
London W.1 (Dean Street) Billy's Club: **The Nips**
London W.1 Maunkberry's: **Rauf Addu's W.D.P. (for three days)**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Rainbow**
Manchester Polytechnic: **King Sounds & The Israelites / Capital Letters**
Milton Old House at Home: **John Kirkpatrick and Sue Harris**
Newcastle Casablanca: **Killermeters**
Newcastle University Canteen: **The DC-10's / New Shoes**
Northampton Fanciers Club: **Johnny Storm & Memphis**
Norwich Cromwells: **Mistress**
Nottingham Trent Polytechnic: **Charlie Dore's Back Pocket**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **Motley Crew**
Plymouth Fiesta Suite: **The Inmates**
Plymouth Polytechnic: **The Ruts**
Sheffield Blitz (at George IV): **Veiled Threat**
Sheffield Top Rank: **The Selecter / Holly & The Italians**
Stirling Golden Lion Hotel: **Saffron Summerfield**
Swansea White Swan: **Tundra**
Swindon Brunel Rooms: **The Vapors**
Walsall Dirty Duck: **The Amazing Dark Horse**
York University: **The Strawbs**

Wednesday

Bath Moles: **Danny Shepphard Band**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Bruje**
Birmingham Bogarts: **After The Fire**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **M.S. Nightwork**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Rainmaker**
Birmingham Top Rank: **Dexy's Midnight Runners**
Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: **Roses**
Bradford University: **Squeeze / Wreckless Eric**
Carshalton St. Helier Arms: **Black Cat**
Chelmsford Chelmer Institute: **Derek Brimstone**
Cheltenham Plough Inn: **Roadsters**
Chester Deeside Leisure Centre: **Rainbow**
Colchester Essex University: **Joe Jackson**
Croydon The Cartoon: **The Polaroid Swingers**
Derby The Old Bell: **The Mortals**
Exeter Routes: **The Vapors**
Gosport John Peel: **Athena B's**
Horsham Capitol Theatre: **Fiddler's Dram**
Kemsing Wheatsheaf: **John Kirkpatrick and Sue Harris**
Leicester De Montfort Hall: **The Selecter / Holly & The Italians**
Leicester University: **Charlie Dore's Back Pocket**
Liverpool University: **The Original Mirrors**
London Camden Dingwalls: **The Headboys**
London Camden Music Machine: **Def Leppard / Witchfynde**
London Clapham Two Brewers: **Sad Among Strangers**
London Clapham 101 Club: **The Q-Tips**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Splodgenessabounds**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Venus & Mars**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Spare Parts / The Time Flies**
London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: **The Albion Band**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Bogey Boys**
London Knightsbridge The Grove: **Free Beer**
London Marquee Club: **Wild Horses**
London Mile End Queen Mary College: **Linda Lewis**
London Oxford St. Studio 21: **Apaches**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Dave Simmonds & Greig's Folk and Blues Showcase**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Digby Fairweather Quartet**
London Victoria The Venue: **David Crosby**
London Wimbledon Nelson's Club: **Johnny Mars' 7th Sun**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Kraze**
London W.1 Gulliver's: **Red Beans & Rice**
Manchester UMIST: **The Strawbs**
Middlesbrough Teesside Polytechnic: **The Dead Certs**
Newcastle Polytechnic: **The Charlie Parkas with C. P. Lee / The Smirks**
Norwich Southwell Lodge: **Jane Bond & The Agents**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellows: **Gwalhir**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Same Chicken**
Sheffield Brincliffe Oaks Hotel: **Doncaster Youth Jazz Orchestra**
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: **The Tourists / The Solos**
South Woodford Railway Ball: **Original East Side Stompers**
Stourport Folk Club: **Alex Campbell**
Stratford-on-Avon The Tollhouse: **The Rockin' Shades**
Swinton Duke of Wellington: **The Trend**
Uxbridge Brunel University: **The Pretenders / UB 40**

Do you want your band's dates listed in the Gig Guide? Then simply send the details to Derek Johnson, New Musical Express, 5-7 Carnaby Street, London W1V 1PG, and we'll take care of the rest. They must reach us at least one week ahead of publication date (that's a Thursday deadline for the following Thursday's issue), and please remember it's post only — we can't take gigs over the phone.

Record News Extra

● **The Name**, recently signed by DinDisc, are at present recording their debut single 'You're Gonna Lose That Girl' with ex-Record Hum Gower producing. It's due out next month, and the band begin a promotion tour at Nunsaton 77 Club on March 24.

● **The Funboy Five** have their single 'Life After Death'/'Compulsive Eater' available now on Cool-Cat Daddy-O Records of 28 Mercury Walk, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. Price is £1.20 (including p&p).

● **Praying Mantis**, who've just finished touring with Iron Maiden, have their debut single out this weekend on their own Ripper Records label (distributed by EMI). Titled 'The Soundhouse Tapes (Part 2)', it features two tracks — 'Captured City' and 'Johny Cool' — with a third track called 'The Ripper' on the 12-inch version The band will soon be undertaking their own headlining UK tour.

● Gem Records this week release the soundtrack LP from the film *The Wanderers*, which goes on the circuit later this month. It features 19 original classics by such artists as **The Four Seasons, Smokey Robinson & The Miracles, The Isley Brothers and Dion.**

● **Portraits**, whose debut single 'Little Women' created considerable interest last year, have their follow-up 'Hazards In The Home' issued by Ariola on February 29. They are also being lined up for a series of London gigs.

● Norwich-based four-piece **The Running Dogs** have their debut single 'Present Tense'/'Click Click Propaganda' out this week. It's distributed by Rough Trade, Small Wonder and Graduate, and is also available by post priced £1 (including p&p) from Shooting Star Records, The Pantiles, Norwich Road, Lingwood, Norfolk

● Upcoming albums from Charly Records include 'Early, Rare And Rockin' Sides' by **Sleepy Labeef** (due this week), 'Rrrrecket Time' by **Ronnie Hawkins** (February 22), 'Out On Bail' by **Johnny & The Jailbirds** (February 29) and 'Live' by **J. B. Hutto** (March 7). On February 29, the same label issues a single called 'A Song For Europe' by Purley band **The Mics.**

● **The Lambrettas** have their new single 'Poison Ivy' issued this week by Rocket. The first 5,000 copies appear on the Two Stroke label, before reverting to the Rocket logo.

● **The Desperate Bicycles'** first album 'Remorse Code', originally intended for early January release but delayed by pressing problems, is now set for early March on their own Refill Records label.

● Two singles out this week on Alien Records (distributed by Pinnacle) are 'Until Tomorrow' by **Colour Vision** and '(Don't) Turn Me Away' by **Rony.** They may be purchased separately, or as a boxed set costing £1.49.

● The new **Rachel Sweet** album 'Protect The Innocent' is now confirmed for release by Stiff this week. As previously reported, the first 15,000 copies sell at £3.99, before it reverts to the regular price of £4.99.

● **Viva** have their first single 'Radio Saviour' out this week on Square Records, and a tour is currently being booked for them by the Pan Agency.

● **Exhibit A** have a four-track 33rpm EP called 'No Elephants This Side Of Watford Gap' out on Irrelevant Wombat Records, 7 D'Arcy Drive, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex, costing 80p (including p&p). Also available through Rough Trade.

● Following the success of the reissued 1969 **Symarip** single 'Skinhead Moonstomp', Trojan are re-releasing their LP 'Skinhead Moonstomp — The Album' on March 7. From the same label on March 14 comes the EP 'Skinhead Classics', containing tracks by **The Ethiopians, The Meyrals, The Upsetters and Roland Alphonso**, all dating from 1969-70.

● **Mark Turner**, ex-Essential Logic bassist releases a solo single this week on his own Base label. The A-side is 'Violent Death', and it's coupled with two tracks — 'One Way Girl' and 'Frenchman'. He's about to form his own band for gigging purposes.

● Out this week on Glasgow independent label Postcard Records is a three-track single by **Orange Juice**, comprising 'Falling And Laughing', 'Moscow Olympics' and 'Moscow'. The first thousand copies contain a free live version of 'Felicity' on flexi-disc.

● **Leeds band The Vye** have a single out next month on Dead Good Records titled 'Five Hours Till Tonight'. Upcoming on the same label is a single, still untitled, by **Mansfield outfit B-Movie.**

● **Great Yarmouth band Needles** are putting out their first three-track EP on their own label. Cost is 80p from E.E. Records, 25 West Avenue, Garleston-on-Sea, Gt Yarmouth.

● Optimistic Records of Plymouth have two February releases, both by local bands. 'My Toy'/'Dirty Money' is the first release from **The D.S.** and 'Subterfuge' is a four-track EP by **Sabotage**

HM Special — Listen With Muthas

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Metal For Muthas *(EMI)*

IF WE'RE to believe the sycophantic sleeve notes of one Neal Kay (fast-rising arbiter of the HM disco circus), this LP represents the cream of current British HM who together constitute something of a *new wave* in the metal industry. (Then again, there's also an imminent Stax, soul, R&B and rockabilly revival, so this information's no less reliable).

I'm no archivist of matters metallic, but it's transparently clear on this outing that EMI have simply dredged up any half-arsed dry-ice combo with the sensitivity of a steamhammer whose name alone should make your flesh crawl, your hair salute and melt your limbs to Miracle Whip. And anyway, if this *is* the new wave, then where is Def Leppard?

For years the only thing worthy of the HM name has been the sci-fi / medieval armour artwork pioneered by the likes of US fantasy mag *Heavy Metal*. The cover of this (again, imaginatively titled) compilation is a cheapoid airbrush number depicting what appears to be Darth Varder's sister riding a steel-plated nag and sets the trashy, utterly commercial tone that its contents so forcefully sustain.

Heads down, let's dodge through the tracklist. Samson are absolutely *all* that's on offer, 'Tomorrow Or Yesteryear' being the only number that sounds even remotely different from the league of early '70s warmongers the album purports to upstage; it's neatly crafted power-boogie with 'sensitive' piano and synths.

Iron Maiden conjure up images of marauding woad-plastered Vikings, little else; Praying Mantis are just a glutinous blend of Wishbone Ash and Free, all pout and no clout; Nutz are the poor man's UFO, and probably proud of it; Toad The Wet Sprocket (that's what it says here) play 'Blues In A' with as little flair as Ethel The Frog (ditto) apply to strings of soggy powerchords; and — lest we forget — there's Angelwitch *(excruciatingly weighty)* who inspire a feeling of suffocation that can only be recreated by lying under a wardrobe full of bricks.

This is *not* the HM new wave. It's — and I quote — "Heavy Metal Madness For Only £3.99". And cheap at half the price.

Mark Ellen

No—No More, Please Stop!

Anthony Moore.
Pic: Santo Basone

A. MORE
Flying Doesn't Help
(Quango)

THIS could be a collection of ten bored, boring adult pop songs that listlessly parodies the bored, boring and spoilt people who usually make them, or it could be a rotten record with no redeeming factors. Either way I can hardly bear to listen to it. For you, I've tried.

A. More is a slummer. He used to be Anthony Moore of Slapp Happy, who made satirical, sardonically optimistic muzak. The Slapp Happy / Henry Cow coupling made barbed indignant music that confirmed the final failure of language and rock to provide a secure refuge. More's work was violently critical. And all along, all was not what it seemed.

So 'Flying Doesn't Help' must be more surrealised parodies of the use of pop'n'rock as seen through More's lunatic eyes. Except unlike More's previous works the music sounds limp and limited, and if there is any parody or irony it's very deeply buried.

So maybe More's just out to make subtle attractive rock to add to the multi-dimensional post-punk pattern.

The ten songs, all with titles like 'Judy Get Down', 'Ready To Ready', 'Useless Moments', 'Girl It's Your Time', and 'Just Us', slip into and away from view, More's hallucinations drably rubbing up against the smoothness of the songs' structures.

'War' could be, finally, 'War (Energy Enslaved)' which the sleeve of Slapp Happy / Henry Cow's 'Desperate Straights' warned us about. It's not worth the wait.

'Flying Doesn't Help' could be More telling anyone who's looking that he's found no reason and so is elevating purposefulness into a reason. So what's new?

He's showing us anyone can make glossy sickly sophisticated pessimist rock. I can understand that, but I can't listen to the record.

Or it could be just that More has survived. The point of the record could be just that it exists, it's in the marketplace, and that sensible critics in glossy magazines use words like varied and interesting when describing *it*.

This record is diabolically sceptical. Don't buy it.

Paul Morley

999
The Biggest Prize In Sport
(Polydor)

YEAR 78, 999 capture whole essential energy of punk rock — first LP perfect synthesis of performance/public image etc — second LP fails ditto & bombs shock horror. Year 80, contract to fulfil, third LP, crucial point in group's career and hey . . .

. . . 999 have become a guitar band! Correction, they've become a guitar and a very loud one to boot. Examine the form: lead guitarist Guy Days is executing a one-man olympiad throughout, every track a non-stop decathlon of overwrought guitar mannerisms; John Watson on bass is keeping pace; two drummers, Pablo LaBritain and Ed Case, possibly handicapped with one arm each, are stumbling about in the traps; Nick Cash, erstwhile vocalist, seems chronically winded, and doesn't really feel like taking part at all.

Cash's unprepossessing whine is effectively inaudible apart from the repeated chorus calling of the song titles. 'Boys In The Gang', 'Trouble', 'So Long', 'Inside Out' are the exclusive lyrical content of these songs, although application on the part of the listener would reveal a proliferation of muttered maudlin banalities. The worst offenders (and I mean offenders) are the nauseously coy 'Stop! Stop!', a pitiful string of teen-angst cliches — Mr Cash can't be serious — in a Merseybeat mould; the whimpering misogynist 'Boiler', a sort of smudged carbon copy of Keith & Michael's 'Starfucker', in which the lady dresses punky and is presumably in a different tax-bracket; 'English Wipeout' — either anti-nuke protest song or a dissertation on regional tastes in toilet paper — in which Cash intones *"Hello Manchester, goodbye Birmingham, what about Scotland, hello Wales . . ."* and so on.

Ill-conceived and artlessly made, 'The Biggest Prize In Sport' sadly reflects the decline of a once vital band into a slough of despair. There's no evidence of inspiration, or ability to discriminate between the passable and the dreadful, only a jarring concurrence of frenzy and apathy. My only conclusion is that's how 999 intended it to be.

Rick Joseph

Live page

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LIVE!

The Selecter Holly And The Italians

Derby

HOLLY And The Italians are uncomfortably incongruous in front of an audience gripped by rabid ska-fever whose symptoms show in a multitude of 2-Tone trappings.

An attractively used-looking trio with Holly herself a small, tough, tatty girl, they play a formidably forceful post-punk pop. But attention wanders irresolutely from the unpaced, unremitting attack of the similar songs and it's a bit like being blasted by a succession of aggressive, almost-successful singles. Some of the numbers suggest that familiarity might breed a greater respect; at present each song sounds too long for its substance and the set itself seemed stretched past the point of a suitable support.

The first sign of The Selecter has the hall exploding with enthusiasm as small 2-Tone terrors swarm to the front and launch into demented dancing. And the stage itself is a polarized reflection of what's happening in the hall: a mad, moving mix of sharp clothes, skin, dreadlocks, limbs; a changing kaleidoscope that snaps in a briefly focused tableau before each part of the pattern rebounds off the sound and slides into perpetual, mercurial motion.

At first you imagine that the bright, sprightly sound is lighter, breezier and lacks the fierce strength of The Specials. But The Selecter have an identity that's just as stringently defined. And Pauline's sharp, fine-edged voice rises through exhilaration to real rage; despite the dancing, the set builds to a taut, raw tension that you can physically feel.

'Out On The Streets' and 'Danger' drive straight at the audience. The temperature soars steadily through "'Everyday' things get a little worse. And they will do if Maggie gets her way", reaches full fury with 'They Make Me Mad' and 'Street Feeling' ("It's about a guy who's shitting himself 'cos when he goes out he might get done over.") And the first section of the set culminates in 'Murder' and a superb 'Selecter' with a subterranean current of deep drums and dignified, sonorous bass beneath the shimmer of surface percussion and smoothly luminous guitar.

But with 'Missing Words' and 'Black And Blue' the flash attack slips into stark sadness that almost melts into melancholy. And although 'Carry Go Bring Home' and 'Three Minute Hero' have The Selecter conducting a campaign of audience participation and 'On My Radio' sees a berserk blitz of dancing, the impression sticks: the fairground whirl of music and movement conceals a tough, desperate, self-sufficient sorrow that's pressed against a fast, furious assault on the feet.

Certain sections of the audience seem faintly non-plussed; they've come for fun, fashionable entertainment and The Selecter are flinging a forceful realism full in their faces. The mock fight on stage during 'Too Much Pressure' isn't a safety valve; it tightens the relentless tension that's uncomfortably intense.

'Last Train To Skaville' is the perfect encore: sweet, pulsing reggae that's the calm after the storm and relaxes the atmosphere without letting it go. It's followed by the '60s spoof of 'James Bond' with Neil Davies looking suitably stern as he plays sinister guitar. And although Pauline looks as if she fully intends to continue all night, they finally finish with a smiling semi-nonsense of 'My Collie' dedicated, inevitably, "to a

Pauline Black reveals The Selecter sorrow. Pic Anton Corbijn.

The Clash

Electric Ballroom

THEY were going to build an indoor cattle market beside the tube station in Camden, but the residents complained so they settled for a rock venue. They called it the Electric Ballroom.

Past, post and present punky wavers are packed inside the confines like pilchards pickled in perspiration. The ventilation is atrocious, the air is neither 'sweaty' nor 'steamy' but downright uncomfortable, unbearably so.

Don't ask me — ask Joe Strummer.

"If anyone wants to they can go to the ticket office to get a refund now; the reason is it's too hot to even move properly up here," he tells the audience halfway through a performance all but ruined by the abysmal nature of the venue and, more pertinently, a complex series of inner and outer tensions.

Don't ask me — ask Joe Strummer.

"Forget it! Just forget it! It's not working!" he cries emotionally more than once during the set.

The Clash have hauled themselves up past conceited attitudes, legal wrangles and personal problems with great determination. Through the fiery, dated anger of their debut to the disappointing 'Give 'Em Enough Rope' and the attendant corruptions of image and style which surrounded that period, they seem to have emerged wiser and more mature, a realisation of their potential and limitations galling into the strength and pride of 'London Calling'.

Over the past four years I've loved and loathed them more than any outfit, the paradoxes and contradictions often proving indigestible. But now they are no longer the misguided CBS employed guerillas in H-Block T-shirts; there's no more specious and ablvalent political posturing and no more hopelessly naive attempts to grasp at a concrete definition of reality. I hope it stays that way!

A new optimism and warmth surrounds the band, resulting in the marvellously constructed and resourceful songs which celebrate, generate and feed off that essential feeling of brotherhood and depth. Was it expecting too much, is it too futile to suppose that such an atmosphere can still be encountered at a rock 'n' roll show?

I went looking for a scintillating display of resilient modern rock music inextricably entwined with a crucial sense of community. I got one, but it was bare compensation for the absence of the other; the negative and positive sides of the equation cancelling each other out. It's not a matter of wanting more than 'a bloody good rock band': any bloody good rock band must be able to function in an environment conducive to the live performance, it's an intrinsic element which should be part of the whole experience.

Tonight the music seemed to become mangled somewhere

XTC Human Switchboard

New York

MORE serious sounds from out of Ohio's Cleveland-Akron industrial axis.

Human Switchboard actually come from Kent, where the National Guard once shot and killed some students protesting about the Vietnam War. Kent may be a more suburban, academically-orientated place than its industrial neighbours, but it's still part of the flat bleakness of America's expansive middle area.

This is my first experience of the band, and it's a confusing one. There is an inherent contradiction in their music, involving a desire to appeal and an impulsive, almost petulant tendency to throw a monkey-wrench into what is appealing. Harmony and discord struggle for control of each number, and the battle swings back and forth inconclusively. But the action throws up textures that are sharp, cutting and rich.

To extend the metaphor of the name, Human Switchboard are about crossed signals and garbled messages.

The band have three singles out (which I've unfortunately yet to hear) and one set is too brief an exposure to comment much on specific songs. Some of them work, some don't.

The ones that do have a startling texture, a meshing of traditional rock instruments in an innovative, sometimes shocking style. The good ones are also grounded in compelling rhythms that don't quit, motion that allows Bob Pfeifer (guitar) and Myrna Mancarian (keyboards) the room to wander where they will. The ones that fail do so because they allow that rhythm to break down. But Human Switchboard aren't craftsmen, they're inventors, still tinkering. Watch them iron out the bugs in their system.

This year's model XTC is one thousand times improved on the one that ran briefly by us just as '78 was turning to '79. The old model seemed hesitant, nervous and a bit rickety. Its songs lurched forward and stalled. Keyboardist Barry Andrews used to play counterpoints to the melodies and discords that were often fascinating but just as often threatened to knock the band totally off its track.

With Andrews' departure and the addition of guitarist Dave Gregory, XTC have turned into a sure-footed, smooth-running machine that does not falter.

Listening to XTC used to be demanding and only intermittently rewarding. Now it's a pleasure, and the band's still oh-so-clever devices unfold with a new ease and grace. Extensive touring has seemed to invigorate rather than tire them; increased acclaim and confidence have worked positively for them.

If there's a potential hitch to the proceedings, it's in the difference of material from guitarist Andy Partridge and bassist Colin Moulding. Moulding is generally the pop purveyor, writing the more catchy, accessible songs, the ones that bury themselves most quickly in your brain. Partridge is more obtuse and provocative; his songs tickle the intellect rather than lounge in the heart.

But in practice there is no problem, and the band switch between modes with accomplished ease. For them, diversity is their strength. The alternating between Moulding and Partridge translates as different responses, but the stimuli are well meshed into each other.

The set emphasises the 'Drums And Wires' material. 'Life Begins At The Hop' is the strongest single moment, a flash of exuberance laced with wit. Live 'Ten Feet Tall' (slated to be the first American single) is made live into a more elaborate and challenging affair than it is on record. The band nails it down so it's less a floating bubble of a song and more a bouncing little rhythm, those are Moulding's moments.

Partridge's best is 'Helicopter', on which he

XTC's Dave Gregory and Andy Partridge seeing red in New York. Pic Akiyoshi Miyashita.

How The Clash Fell From Grace

between administration and reaction.

The Clash have always excited strong feeling, but I never expected a Clash performance to induce pathos. I'd seen them fall from grace musically; I'd seen them fall from grace ethically, but I was quite unprepared for a soul destroying spiritual fall from grace.

They arrive onstage without great fanfare, and it takes them some time to find their feet. 'Clash City Rockers' is blighted by a pale, forty guitar sound and 'Brand New Cadillac' sinks into a crud of murky textures and gaga vocals. They can only improve on their poor opening, and they do — blasting into a clipped resounding 'Jimmy Jazz' which has none of the album's awkward self-indulgence. 'Safe European Home' is solidly rousing and remorseless.

In the face of the gob and glasses aimed pointlessly at the stage, Strummer becomes confused and emotional, wanting to let go but at the same time determined not to desert the majority of faithful followers. However useless or inept, his attempts to understand this absurd phenomenon are commendable. His position appears at odds with Mick Jones who parades nothing so much as the complacent detachment of a guitar hero. He is unworried by and perhaps oblivious to the disparity between what the band are aiming for and what they are getting.

What is the target of these retards in the audience? They are degrading the band, their culture *and* themselves. How do you equate all this with the music? Such as the superlative 'White Man' that carols and carouses high into the night, as apt on this evening in Camden (1980) as it was for the one that inspired the song in Hammersmith (1977). In 'Guns Of Brixton' when Simonon sings *"How you gonna come? / With your hands on your head / Or on the trigger of a gun"* the answer seemed to be probably with our hands tied, squabbling amongst ourselves.

The focus is on Strummer — a cauldron of exasperation, exhaustion and despair — trying to come to terms with the problem. He deserved nothing but respect for trying and it hurt to see such honesty flung shamelessly back into his face. The band were being cruelly crushed by their fans, because and in spite of themselves.

They need a rest, the tour has fatigued them and sapped them of willpower and cohesion.

The climaxing brace of encores had their efforts finally rewarded by some kind of common ground ultimately established. But at what price? It was all too clear that too many people are still locked in the garage without a bullshit detector and the carbon monoxide threatens to overwhelm them.

The Clash left me standing all right. Only this time I wasn't reeling but dazed, drained and shattered.

Gavin Martin

Mick Jones parading the complacent detachment of guitar hero. Pic Pennie Smith.

poor old rock star called Paul McCartney".

Despite the fact that you've been dancing all evening to an irresistibly volatile beat, you leave reflecting on very serious subjects. The music of The Selecter is the sound of dissent, of hot, heartfelt protest against oppression, aggression, intolerance. It also expresses fears for the future when it's pointless to pretend that Government policies aren't going to make any faint chance of equality and true personal choice even further remote.

But The Selecter's natural use of a brilliant dance-beat makes the subject matter manageable: their instinctive blending of black and white styles imbues their music with an intrinsic, clear-eyed, cautious optimism.

"You're here to dance. And then to think," said Pauline at the start of the set.

It's not naive to hope that some of the heightened awareness in this hall spills out onto the streets.

Lynn Hanna

delivers a riveting performance, a core of playfulness enlightening the terse concentration of his manner.

From the first two albums, some of the best is rescued and revived. The guitar-bass-drums configuration doesn't simplify the material, it enlivens it, as if the musicians have finally figured out what these songs were about. 'Mecanik Dancing', 'Battery Brides' and 'The Rhythm' are among these — as of course is the indispensable 'This Is Pop' introduced by Partridge as a simple answer for the "music critics" who'd been demanding explanations of him that afternoon.

Human Switchboard showed us a band in the midst of making important mistakes, one with an excellent shot at finding a strong voice. XTC showed us a band that has gone from confusion to consolidation, and is in a great position to be building up from there.

Sometimes I believe these really are great times.

Richard Grabel

Madness
The Mo-dettes

Hammersmith Odeon
(Under 16s Matinee)

"HEY YOU! Don't watch *'Tis Was*, watch this."

Down to Hammersmith flocked the junior following for some Saturday Morning Madness, with the promise of such festivities as cartoons, raffles, prizes . . . oh yeah, and music, too. Not surprisingly it was a sell-out and, as Dolly Mixture were forced to drop out, The Mo-dettes were supporting.

The Mo-dettes are the only all-girl band really worth listening to. They're a very positive outfit, and together — Romana (vocals), Jane (bass), June (drums) and Kate (guitar) — they're overcoming the many pressures with which, inevitably, an all-female group has to contend. What's more, it certainly shows.

The last time I saw them back in August, they were more than a little nervous, but confidence has grown — and that's something you need in abundance when performing to a Madness crowd. They're now playing good music, which unfortunately is being ignored by the sexist reports which seem only to comment on their good looks.

The Mo-dettes are out to play their own music and what they have to offer is both original and varied — songs like 'Satisfy Yourself', with Romana's powerful vocals and cute dancing; the paroxysms of 'Masochistic Opposite'; and their single 'White Mice', perfectly delivered with June's ever-present sharp drumming, Jane tripping constantly back and forth on the left, Romana dancing somewhere off to the right, and Kate standing motionless, her guitar the backbone of the song.

'The Kray Twins', their song about East End gangsters, added another variation to a colourful set, this time Jane taking over vocals with Romana supplying back-ups. Then finally, the Madness train appeared, as the 'guys' emerged for a dance with the 'gals'.

The Mo-dettes are a happy group, but they take their music seriously. It's a pity that most of the youngsters didn't appreciate them. In my book, they're a very good band and they're gonna be big — so, come on, give 'em a break.

Madness, on the other hand, are a different proposition. After the magnificent seven took the stage and Chas informed all "Don't watch that, watch this," they set off on another fun-packed hour.

They produced the sort of set which everyone wanted and expected. If they lack anything, it's the ability to maintain the quality of their music on stage. It often lacked co-ordination and, at times, Chris Foreman's guitar couldn't be heard.

Madness are basically entertainers, and they tend to concentrate on performance rather than on music for music's sake — with Chas demonstrating the head-bashing in 'Swan Lake', a contrasting slower number 'In The Rain', then taking off again with 'Land Of Hope And Glory'.

The set contained virtually everything from the album — but, in the encore, they introduced their new single 'Bert Pete', about a young cop who tries to get himself promoted. They ended with 'Stepping Into Line' and a reprise of 'One Step'.

Madness are a good band to watch, putting on a polished and colourful show. The visuals are fine, but they could do with devoting a little attention to improving the acoustic side of their act. All things considered, though, an enjoyable matinee — and, from the teenagers' viewpoint, a Saturday morning experiment well worth repeating.

Sally James, eat your heart out.

David Johnson, 15

Toyah. Pic George Bodnar.

Osibisa. Pic J B Sohiez.

Orange Hair...

Toyah

Nottingham

"COULD those curtains be opened for any kid who can't get in? It's only fair," she says.

Those people inside pull back the curtains, wipe the condensation from the windows and reveal a wall of flattened faces glued to the glass. Toyah's attracting a small army of young post-punks and she's teasing them with the faintest taste of intoxicating outrageousness.

Squat, stiffly bouncing and sharp-featured with chipped-out cheekbones staring eyes and hair that flies around her head in a fearsome orange halo, she's such a desperate exhibitionist that sometimes it seems she's not waving but drowning. But at least she's now managed to curb the worst of her excesses.

"I am *not* going to get my knickers off," she replies firmly to that very suggestion.

She's still brash, brazen, dramatically extreme and so unremittingly intense that her whole performance is a riveting example of over-acting. She grasps the hands held out to her in a fine display of impassioned friendship, grabbing the shoulders of one bemused youth and directing him to dance; she moves slowly, dreamily, dazed and reduced by emotion during 'Last Goodbye': her voice drops to a crisply enunciated, ecstatic whisper as she softly spits *"Danced"* at the end of the song of the same name.

She projects her rich persona, warm tough exterior and fiercely individual image so professionally that it suggests she's going to be highly successful in her second career.

Mercifully the music isn't another heavy-metal, high-volume trashing of the mutated remains of punk. Instead it's a plagiarised pastiche of an awful lot of arty influences with echoes of chords that haven't been long lost; and for some reason I keep getting grim reminders of the Worst of Genesis.

Each song is a little opera with varied moods and pacing giving Toyah time to explore her roles. In another context and musical setting they wouldn't be far removed from those overwrought cabaret ballads that retch up emotion all over the audience.

The lyrics are often embarrassing, and it says something for Toyah that she manages to transcend such tacky material.

'Neon Womb' is appallingly pretentious. It begins with ponderous rumblings of self-importance, builds to a fast finale and since for the encore she goes back to the beginning you have to endure it twice in one evening. 'Danced' is easily the best song in a short set with innocently airy vocals and some pretty interplay of keyboards and guitar.

The band aren't bad; they do what's required of them. And Toyah's voice, although sometimes sub-Siouxsie with a bit of Bush, is high and quite graceful on its own account.

'Last Goodbye' is saved for the end and Toyah bounds through a strobe-light that explodes her image and scatters the jagged, stunning pieces over the stage. This is cruelly curtailed when the main hall lights are switched on half-way through. But like a trouper Toyah treats it as a triumph, approaching the audience and declaiming 'I love you" with a wet-eyed, half-stunned smile that suggest she's about to be showered with flowers.

She could become a cult: she appears to be stridently on her audience's side — "I got you all in!" she announces effusively when the faces at the window reappear at the front. She has enough small screen exposure to ensure she's familiar and she's clever enough to cultivate an intriguing, slightly naughty notoriety. It's just that her music is po-faced, sounds important and pontificates wildly without saying anything at all. It's an empty gesture, in fact.

Lynn Hanna

Gary Glitter

Manchester

"HELLO, hello, it's good to be back. It's good to be back"

The thing is, Gary Glitter's whole image was based on a series of revivals and returns; that song, if I'm not mistaken, was released after he'd come back from a foreign tour. This man - who - never - went - away must by now be used to the feeling of not being wanted, most of the time. So why do hundreds of people turn up to see him?

I think Gary Glitter looked as amazed as anyone by the reception he received, above and beyond the open-mouthed "I'm amazingly outrageous" expression he pulls as soon as he walks on stage. He and his band arrange the set in the manner they're used to nowadays, in other words they whip up the audience as if we're in a plush Working Men's Club. The build-up is excruciating, featuring the long instrumental overture of 'Rock'n'Roll'. The effect on the crowd is to push their enthusiasm to the limit.

Gary isn't used to an audience that isn't overfed and bored. At least he can sing 'Do You Wanna Touch Me' with a degree of meaning. And at this point in the proceedings his voice is still holding.

Combining the ostentation and kiss-blowing of Liberace with the coronary excess of James Brown, Gary goes back and forth, exiting and re-entering. A glance behind the black curtains reveals a mirror in which appears a reflection of Gary getting changed, tucking hairy flab into tight trousers and straightening risky quiff.

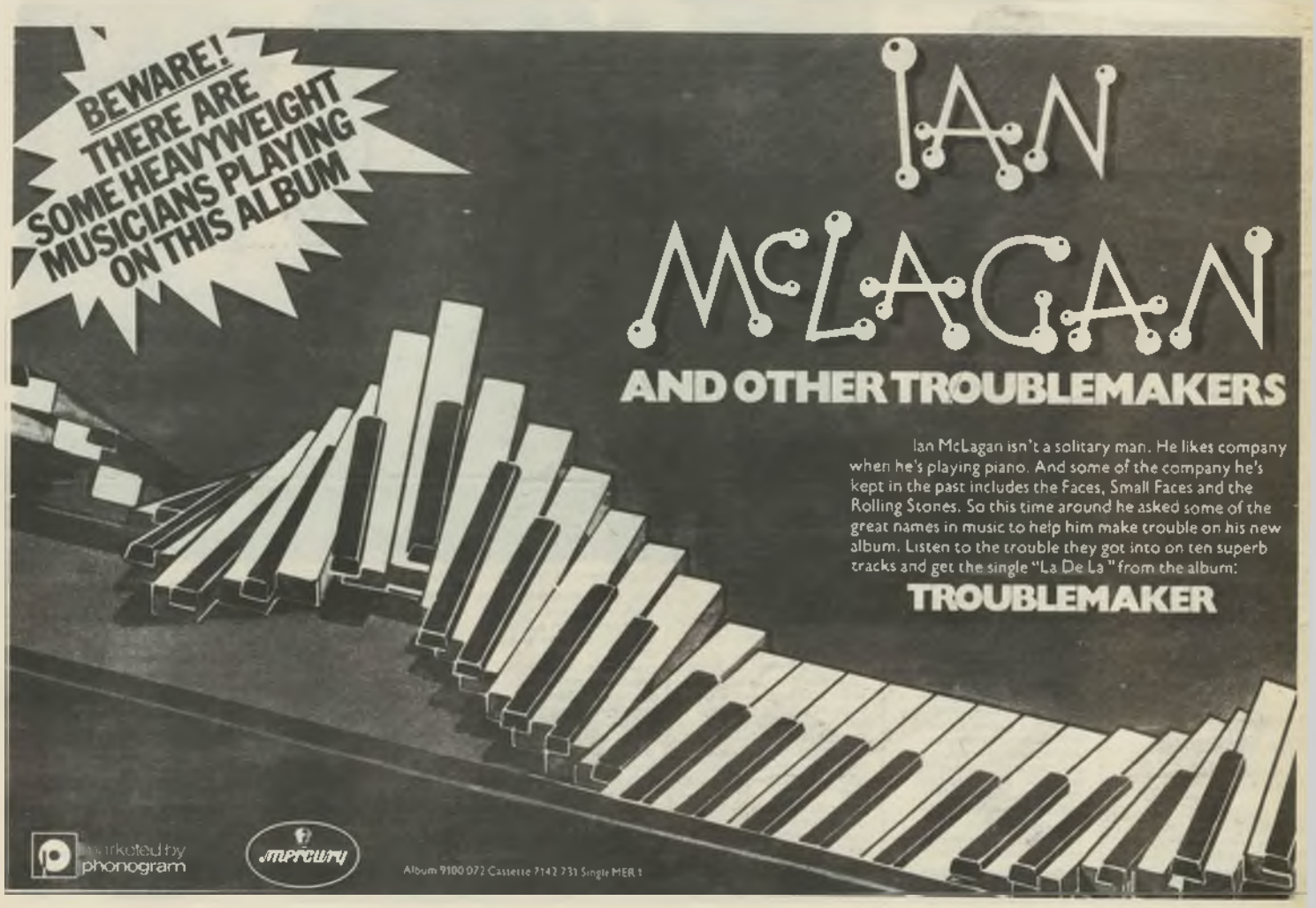
'Leader Of The Gang' turns out to be a brilliant piece of pop material, but increasingly there are fillers ('The Great Instigator') and Gary spends more time talking to the audience. "I just spent two of the most miserable years of my life," he says, "I'm gonna do some more records now! This is the way it was when it first started."

The question is: would we rush out and buy his records now? I suspect not. The heart-rending truth is that Gary Glitter is finally a personality from the past. *"You're beautiful,"* he sings, or, *"I belong to you and you belong to ME,"* but his control over us has waned. Towards the end of the show he's desperately struggling to keep up with with the way we're reacting, and the object of our adoration is really in our memories. Gary's singing is incredibly flat. He couldn't have spun out the encores more than he did — he would have become even more embarrassing.

He rips off his shirt, finally, and throws it, together with his sequinned cloak into the audience. If the beginning of the show was anything to go by, this was calculated on Gary's part. But something in his obvious gratitude makes me think he really wanted to overstep his limitations. Unfortunately, he's the audience's puppet now, and the real Gary Glitter is running around in circles trying to break the spell.

He withdraws behind the curtains, and is the last to leave after the band have gone.

Bob Dickinson



Michael Riley. Pic Justin Thomas.

Gary Glitter. Pic Kevin Cummins.

...Bald Head And Fat Paunch

Ain't rock'n'roll glamorous

Osibisa
Headline

Venue

OSIBISA fit neatly into that marketing category of Adult Orientated Rock and their audience at the Venue appears to be old enough to have been into the band since its inception eleven years ago. Late 20s on a late night.

There's no questioning the individual and collective musical abilities of the band, but the music — a mix of old and new material — meandered through different fusions of jazz, funk, High Life and traditional forms. The set was propelled along only by their energy and enthusiasm, exhibited to the full in the lively percussion breaks.

Four numbers into the set and after a celebratory rendition of Rahsaan Roland Kirk's 'Spirits Up Above' the set began to lift. The High Life 'Fatima' was followed by a succession of numbers which included their current single 'Patta Patta' and all of which had the punters singing along and waving their arms like a bunch of teeny boppers.

Though a large number of their songs are based on traditionals and the band were announced as number one in Africa, they seemed far removed from the realities of Africa today and steeped in get down and party Amerikanisms.

In contrast to Osibisa, the support band's image could be defined as a kinda 'bald head' reaction, but mixed with their jastering, bad-assed rudie image is some serious lyricism.

Grunting in unison, Headline skanked onstage to confront a bemused audience. One white guy and five black bald heads, a strange sight indeed, but their first number 'Bungin Bungin' was a good indication of what was coming. As the keyboards man built a riff on the synthesizer, they ripped into a frantic electronic boogie, complete with uptempo reggae rhythm guitar licks. Short and sharp they phased out of the number with the chant of *". . . DON'T . . . KNOCK . . . THE . . . BALD–HEAD!!"*

The Folkes Bros classic 'Carolina' was taken at break neck speed and this, combined with the poor sound quality, ensured the melody line, doo-wop harmonies and harmonica were lost amid the chaotic noise. The band were clearly frustrated at the sound and before their next number, Michael Riley, ex-Steel Pulse vocalist, announced that they'd been unable to sound check before the gig.

From the ever popular Judge Dread style scenario of the rougher than rough, tougher than tough rudie who instead of robbing school children or breaking his ex-girl friend's window gets picked on the Brixton Line for SUS and gets two years, we move onto the thorny subject of immigrants.

The dense music, with a piercing synthesizer acted as a backcloth for Riley's half spoken, half sung, compelling lyrics. A piece of confrontation, the song extends the message of Tabby Cat Kelly's 'Don't Call Us No Immigrants', as uncompromising as it is militant — *"We aren't monkeys or dogs . . . we came here to do the jobs you refused to do."*

'Rude Boy Beat' moved along with Kevin Munze providing a central guitar riff and as the momentum built so it sparked off a tidy, shuffling routine involving Riley and keyboards man, Richard. The tempo cooled for the more serious 'Who Wants A Fight' and whipped up again as they closed with 'Stomp'.

Headline's fusion of urban rock 'n' blues, snatches of funk and the rhythmic insistency of reggae and ska renders the tag of ska revivalists irrelevant. Neither do you get the feel that these guys are just band-waggon jumping, because their provocative 'Don't Knock The Bald Head' intro and outro more than implies a lack of empathy with Rasta and won't win them any friends amongst their black brethren in South London. The response to their music and image will be one of complete disdain, possibly violent.

But on the basis of this short outing I'd say it won't be long before they pick up a substantial following and hit the headline . . . Seen!

Paul Bradshaw

HANDS OFF SHE'S MINE

Double A side:

"Hands off... she's mine"

c/w

"Twist & Crawl"

FEET 1

On

GO FEET! RECORDS

Old Men New Trends

Matchbox
The Polecats

Music Machine

PONY-TAILS, donkey jackets, hep cats with ducks' arses; brothel creepers and pedal pushers, glad rags and flat-tops, rebel flags and 'Arrow accents — rockabilly's new young confederacy comes together again to celebrate itself and its adopted music.

The '70s subcultural jumble sale isn't over yet, as these modern London kids demonstrate — plundering anything they can grab and use from the styles, symbols and sounds of white working class America, circa 1953.

Stepping in off Camden High Street, 1980, visual dislocation lurks at every turn.

The Polecats take the stage first, and they're immaculately anachronistic. Singer Tim, in his pink pegged slacks, goes studiously crazy-legged from the word go, brandishing that acoustic with all the assurance and poise which only a thousand hours in front of the bedroom mirror can achieve. And his hair was perfect.

While the drummer drums, flag of the Southern states draped across his kit, electric guitarist Boz concentrates real hard and does his best to move just right — never quite matching the born-poser's fluidity of Tim, but not letting the side down either. Boz comes on all black-clad and brilliantined, presumably because he is a mean critter. And Phil on double-bass — well, Phil looks such a nerd that he's just gotta be hip.

Together, The Polecats are a fascinating brand of fun. With an average age of 16 the young band's awkwardness still stifles their exuberance. Diligently, they twitch and hiccup through their springy rockabilly repertoire, never quite finding the right mix of bravado and looseness to be fully convincing. But even now, The Polecats are irresistible in a way that many bands so much more competent and confident will never be.

Like Matchbox, for instance.

Matchbox. Pic David Corio.

For keeping the faith so many years, when there was no percentage in it at all, Matchbox maybe deserve the chart success they're now enjoying. But essentially they're a cabaret turn adapting to sudden and unexpected popularity. In comparison with The Polecats, they're skilful, professional and leaden; their act bears all the marks of long years spent being unable to be themselves.

Matchbox's set is stuck in rituals of homage to dead men. It doesn't live.

Their set is something of a teddy boys' pantomime — famous names of the past are invoked like saints, their songs and mannerisms copied down to the last detail, as if that's the only way Matchbox could prove their own legitimacy before the hard-core rock'n'roll audiences.

"We'd like to do a tribute to the late, great Buddy Holly," says singer Graham Fenton with routine reverence; or "We'd like to slow it down just a little now . . ." and goes into a dismal 'Somewhere Over The Rainbow', no doubt to establish their 'versatility' as entertainers.

In their neatly pressed cowboy outfits, the guitarists sway sedately, Shadows-style, while Fenton goes through his various costume changes — greasy rocker for the Gene Vincent bit, Confederate general for 'Rockabilly Rebel'. 'Buzz Buzz A Diddle It' gets played, as does Chuck Berry's 'Promised Land', Hank Williams' 'Setting The Woods On Fire', 'Blue Moon Of Kentucky' and a painstakingly exact recreation of Haley's 'Rock The Joint' — all fine versions of fine songs, but somehow played with more determination than excitement.

Matchbox might be a testament to rockabilly's survival; bands like The Polecats seem to signify its re-birth.

Paul Du Noyer

Local Operator

Dingwalls

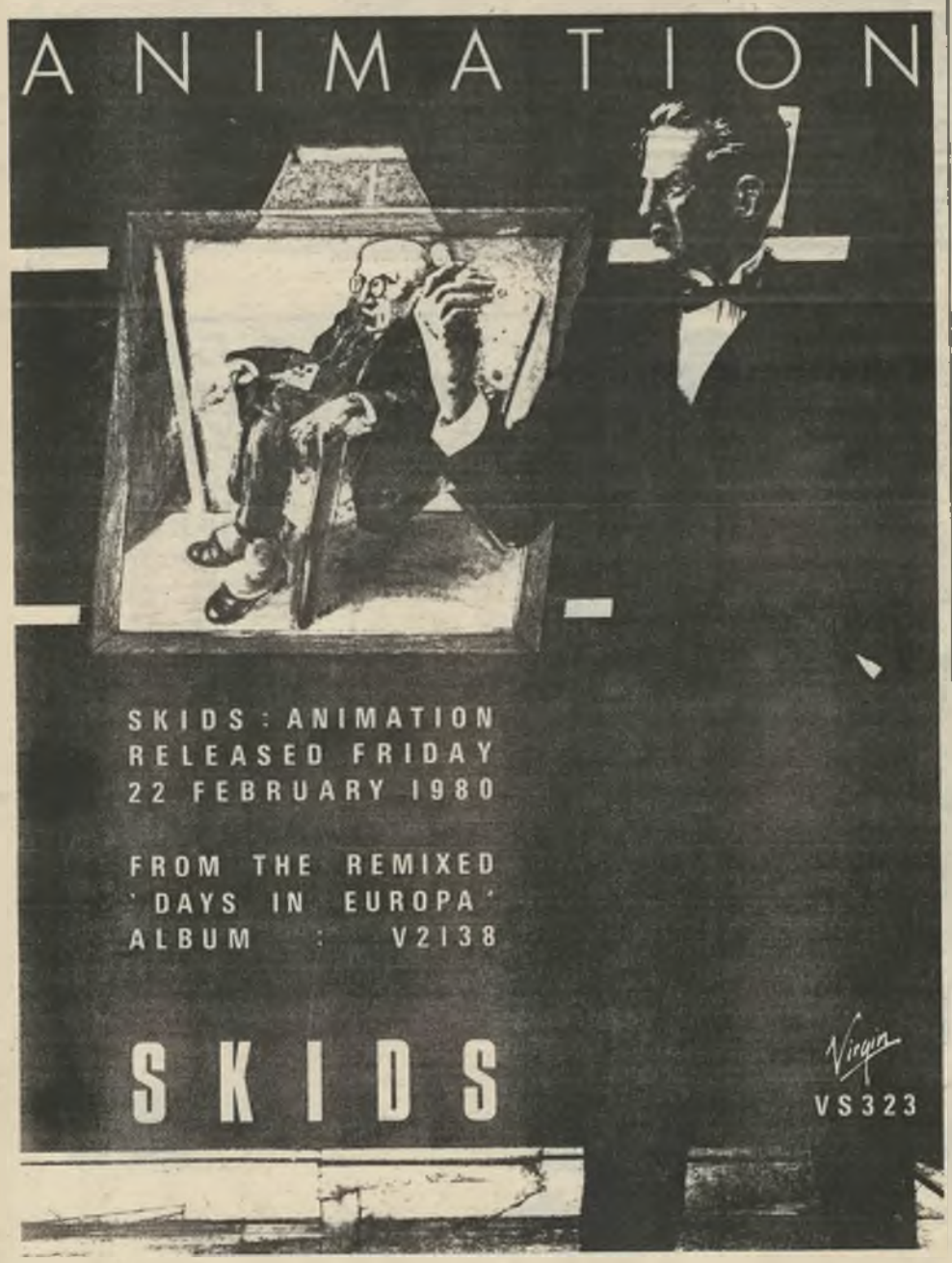
LIFE ain't been the pop of a cherry for Local Operator since they enrolled at Virgin's school of rock. They cut two passable singles, made the odd meet-the-people foray, attracting a lukewarm, though not unfavourable response from casual audiences. But they've never managed to foment any noticeable following. Like quite a few of their afterpunk labelmates with no particular place to go. Local Operator have overhauled their set with drastic reggaeification, and some considerable honing of instrumental finesse.

I was impressed above all by bassman Mick Shiner's fluent rocksteady finger yoga, and the meticulously constructed hooks oozing from Geoff Cooper's lead guitar. Impressed, but not moved.

Similarly, their material is quite solid, but hardly remarkable. They play subtly melodic slices of jump-rock, but tend to smother them with an urbanity bordering on The Steely Dans.

Onstage, Local Operator looked stylish — almost to the point of elegance, and they made music to match. Apart from Jo Broadbery's classic singer-in-a-bottle stance, this gig was long on gloom and short of vroom. When I first saw Local Operator a year ago, I forgot all about them. Tonight I remembered why I forgot.

Rick Joseph



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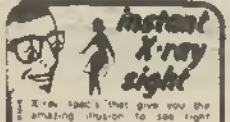

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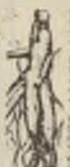

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Ginger Baker. Pic: Tony Maclean.

Ginger Dead?

Ginger Baker's Energy

Marquee

DEAD but he won't lie down, it's a phrase that I'd assumed would apply to Ginger Baker before seeing his new group, Energy in action. After all, most of the work he's done since the demise of Cream has been distinguished with the mark of the dinosaur. This time around he's fronting a solid, anonymous five-piece who compose most of the material on display.

The first thing that struck me was Baker's appearance. Sweat and arms flying, stiff ginger hair long and straggly atop a grizzled, cadaverous visage, hardly more than a bearded skull, he looked the same wreck as old. The skill and energy were still there too, although his voice indicated a certain intoxication.

'That's Alright, Mama' was given a heavy metal funk interpretation, larded with sub-Hendrix guitar, feedback and all, courtesy of John Mazeroni, and some subdued SF keyboard work from Dave Kennox.

One of those group showcase numbers, the most worthwhile solo was from bassman Henry Thomas, whose playing reverberated from speaker to speaker around the narrow confines of the Marquee. Following fast were the two final numbers 'The Blow Job' and 'No Magic Love', both of which had to struggle through a muddied mix and overloud volume with dubious success.

But the following night was better and it gave me the opportunity to hear more of their compositions under more favourable circumstances.

There was a tightness and insistency that had been missing the first night, almost as if it had been a dress-rehearsal — a luxury not every band can afford. The sound was cleaner, fresher and more direct, giving each number a clear identity.

'Don't Be So Serious', for example, was a slow, smoky blues, while 'Help Yourself' featured a combination of The Crusaders and heavy metal over a loping beat that managed to start and finish before the aural taste buds were damaged irreparably.

By this time Baker was grinning all over his face, head back, eyes closed, as he propelled the machine and the guitar notes cascaded over the audience.

Toying with jazz, dabbling in funk and wallowing in blues, Baker's talent has yet to find a satisfactory vehicle, though on this outing he's a little closer than he was a year or so ago. At the moment, however, the only way he can stretch his percussive muscle is by soloing and by its very nature the drum will never provide sustained interest for very long. Until he can find a few good songs structures to work within he'll continue to tread water in a land-locked lagoon.

Even so, the present day drummer refuses to die.

Neil Norman

The Vibrators

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THEY'RE back! Not the original crew of frantic reprobates spearheaded by Knox, but now a new bunch have stepped into the Vibrators' shoes — AND St. Paul's Choir they are not.

The Jubilee Generation, getting younger every year, are out in full force to greet them. The vogue for leg-binding and parrot wigs has all but died out, but this lot are actually pogoing like they've been stuck between floors in a lift for three years, and I'm in the middle, losing the use of my limbs.

The Vibrators rapidly hurl themselves into a stampede of a set which I can only recall by shifting into slow motion think-back. In the blur I count five of them — Eddy, the original V-drummer, flailing, as ever like a Catherine-Wheel; Ian Woodcock whose bass turns the PA into peasepud; Jimmy Vee on guiter demolition; and Birdman, razor-scalped, bare-torso, braces, hunched over a flower-power guitar, using his knuckles for a plectrum.

Out in front is Kip, new lead vocalist of the snarling, trampolining persuasion. The crowd have taken to him and convey their approbation with swarms of disgusting gob.

Kip *isn't* afraid of getting his charisma wet.

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INSIDE DOPE

■ From page 12

that the Herb be legalised in Jamaica so that it can be sold as a cash crop world wide to help his country's dire balance of payments.

They talk about a new kind of OPEC, a partnership between the producing countries, free from interference from multinational corporations. Dr Jackson confirms that the herb situation has changed in Jamaica of late due to the Coptic Church. He angrily told me that, because the Church had bought up so much of the crop for export, that there was a local drought and the people had to smoke bush for weeks.

And the afternoon soon became a continuum of such conversations. Everyone had an interesting story to tell. Take Robert L. Kundert of the American Cannabis Society.

Bob is in his f fties, and was an expert house contractor for twenty years until, one night, at a party, he was playing around with the official notice of the American Cancer Society which bears the legend: *Thank You For Not Smoking*. He changed to Not to Pot, the Cancer for Cannabis, their sword emblem to a marijuana leaf and a new movement was born.

Bob printed t-shirts for his buddies in Madison, Wisconsin and the idea caught on. The Cancer Society did not copyright their slogan so Bob copyrighted his and then went to visit their headquarters in New York. He marched into reception, displaying his t-shirt and said: "I want to see somebody about this." That's style. *(Ha, ha. So Funny: Ed).*

And then there was Zbigniew Thielle, a Polish psychiatrist. In Poland, it seems, marijuana is not used a great deal. However the country has 300,000 young opiate addicts who discovered that Polish farmers were growing opium poppies to use the seeds for poppy cakes. The addicts were soon at work slitting the pods, drying out the resin into a white powder, diluting it with water and injecting it intravenously. The only problem is that it's almost impossible to judge how strong the home grown opium is.

By his account Zbigniew is the only sympathetic doctor in Warsaw working with addicts. He says he hopes he will not suffer as a result of coming to the conference. Official permission was granted so he can just hope that nothing will happen in the future.

That night the conference ended in a ragged meeting with everyone grabbing the microphone to spout rhetoric. Next to me two Dutch dreads in immaculate full-length leather coats, one wearing a Ruts button, the other with ZOMBIE stencilled across his back, enthusiastically rolled joints and voted for every amendment. They seemed to have the right idea.

In retrospect it's hard to be sure it ever really happened. Certainly there is now an established international marijuana movement which is gaining strength and will make itself heard strongly in the months and years to come. The biggest high of the whole thing was just sitting in a room with so many people from so many nations, struggling, discussing, arguing, trying to work it out. It's difficult, so difficult but ultimately so worthwhile. It's the only way ahead.

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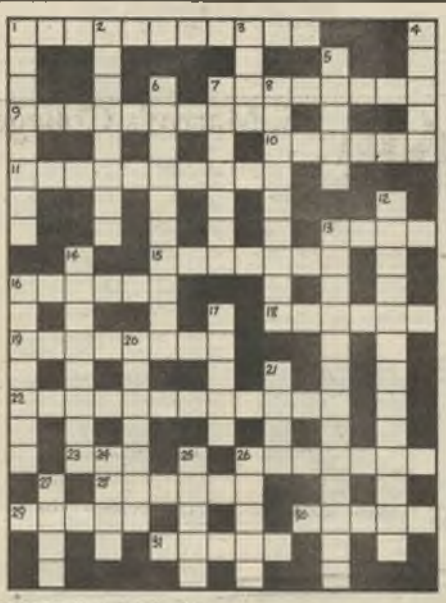
ACROSS
1 All-girl combo who supported Madness on their recent mini-tour (3,8).
7 Eugene and Fay's new band.
9 Roxy Music oldie; follow-up to 'Virginia Plain'.
10 See 29.
11 '60s Mod classic by Doble Gray; covered in '74 by Brown Furry (3,2,5).
13 Glad's mob.
15 Lizzy 45.
16 Veteran UK bluesman whose bands have featured E. Clapton, P. Green and M. Fleetwood among others.
18 Ms Nicks of LA.
19 Richard or Linda?
22 According to the '60s soul hit, this is Wilson Pickett time (6,4).
23 McCartney LP.
26 '60s Brummie pop group who gained early notoriety by libelling Prime Minister H. Wilson (3,4).
28 Ms King of NY City.
29 & 10 Men warn Andy (anag).
30 It's a fair cop! *(Bleeuch! — Ed).*
31 & 21 There's a reggae ster in the Treet shop!

DOWN
1 What's in an empty tot? (3,5)
2 A *publishing* group?!!!
3 Original recorders of 'Gloria'.
4 Dave, ex of Traffic.
5 See 12.
6 Veteran US R&B singer (3,7).
7 Kryptic City: Omar is partly sent back after leaving home!
8 Martha's girls (of old).
12 & 5 Gibb Bros LP (7,6,5).
13 Perm part of ten (anag. 2 words).
14 US guitarist / singer who's a bit hairy and almost cooler than the rest! (2,6).
16 UK reggae group who wrote theme for 'Empire Road'.
17 Ms Ward of belt invitations fame.
20 He was leader / singer of The Pretty Things (4,3).
21 See 31.
24 Complete the following sequence: YABA ZBCB ——.
25 See 27.
26 Le Continental synthesiser combo who 'ad le hit with 'Rock Around The Clock' voila!
27 & 25 Manfred Mann vocalist on the group's best known '60s hits.



LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS
ACROSS: 1 Toyah (Wilcox); 5 War; 7 Alvin Lee; 9 Amp; 10 'King Rocker'; 13 (Joan) Jett; 14 'Gimme Shelter'; 16 Robertson; 17 Joan (Jett); 18 Dickies; 20 (Joe) Cocker; 21 Yes; 22 Radio One; 23 Joe (Cocker); 24 Shea (Stadium); 25 'Telstar'; 27 Demo (Anag. of mode); 28 (Mick) Fleetwood.
DOWN: 1 Talking Heads; 2 'Young Americans'; 3 Harry Webb; 4 Mick (Fleetwood); 5 & 6 Weather Report; 8 (Jon) Lord; 11 'Short Stories'; 12 Plastic Ono Band; 13 Jean Jacques (Burnel); 15 'I Have A Dream'; 19 Ian Page; 23 Jeff; 26 'Low'.

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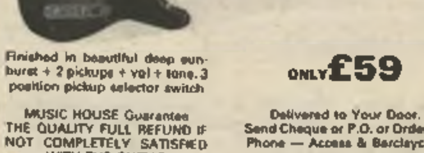

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Information CITY

EDITED BY FRED DELLAR

A FEW weeks ago in the imports column, mention was made of a series known as 'Rock And Roll Dance Party', featuring various Alan Freed shows. I have since written to eight record dealers who advertise in *NME* but to date have scored seven no replies and one sold out. Can you help me out?

DAVE VENDOR, Chester.

● Swift Record Distributors, of 3 Wilton Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex seem to be the main importers of this highly desirable series. They are wholesalers and don't generally sell direct to punters but you can ask your local record retailer to place an order for you. Expect the retail price to be somewhere in the region of £5.50.

PLEASE can you help me settle an office argument by supplying any info you have on Earl Bostic, who I believe was a sax or trumpet player during the '50s?

J VINCENT, Islington.

● A chore gladly performed for I rate Bostic among the greatest all-time R&B saxmen, a musician who could obtain such fierce, aggressive outpourings from his alto that he was able to out-blow even the toughest of tenors. He hailed from Tulsa, Oklahoma, and originally played mainly clarinet and tenor-sax with a number of New Orleans-based bands, though he was also adept on trumpet and guitar. During the late '30s he became a sideman with several leading big bands before opening with his own small group at Harlem's Mimo Club in '41. But it was as an altoist with Lionel Hampton's marvellously extrovert orchestra that he really found his niche, blowing the kind of hard-nosed sax that had the black (and sometimes white) audiences on their feet and screaming for more. After two years with Hamp, Earl formed his own band once more, recording first for Majestic and Gotham before moving on to sign for Cincinnati's King label, for whom he produced such hits as 'Sleep', 'Moonglow', 'Cherokee' and 'Flamingo', the last named being a million-selling hit in '51, some two years before Haley's 'Crazy, Man, Crazy' officially announced the birth of rock. Sneered at by the jazz buffs who thought of his music as tasteless and raucous and largely ignored by the rock fraternity who soon forgot their roots, Bostic was knocked out of the race in 1956 by a heart-attack that stopped him touring for over three years. He got back on the road sometime during '59 but suffered from ill-health for the remainder of his life and died in October, 1965, just a few hours after playing the opening gig of a residency at New York's Rochester Midtown Hotel. No Bostic album is currently available on a British pressing though a great 'Best Of' appeared on Contour a few years back and can still be found in various cut out sales. More recently, two Gusto-King imports by Bostic, '16 Sweet Tunes Of The Fantastic '50s' and '14 Greatest Hits', appeared in a recent edition of the Midland Record Company's catalogue.

I RECENTLY acquired a copy of 'King Rocker' by Generation X, which I think is rare, for the B-side contains 'King Rocker' again instead of being 'Gimme Some Truth'. I have already written to Chrysalis about this but the scabs/poseurs (delete to taste) haven't even bothered to reply. Which is why I've decided to go right to the top and ask you if the disc is really rare of just another vinyl oddity.

GARETH HUBBARD, Kirby-in-Ashfield.

● Chrysalis don't know how many of these faulties slipped through the net though they don't think there were too many. So the disc is basically rare though generally of less value than a proper pressing which has two different sides. I get scores of letters like this one every month, with readers claiming that they have 'rare' recordings when in actual fact, all they have is a faulty that ought to be returned to the record shop pretty damn quick. The record dealer in turn will then return it to the offending company who, if they have any guts about them, will put a stop to such a waste of valuable vinyl. It's doubtful though — the present flood of faulties seems to indicate that it's cheaper to let a few thousand duff records slip through rather than to employ decent quality control. It's a warped life, ain't it?

COULD you supply a track listing of the American version of Elvis Costello's 'Armed Forces'?

I BESWICK, Warrington.

I UNDERSTAND that the US version of Elvis Costello's 'This Year's Model' is different to the British one — but how different?

KEVIN STONE, Weymouth.

● Neither album has suffered much of a switch in crossing Laker's Lake. 'Sunday's Best' has been whipped off the US version of 'Armed Forces' to make room for 'What's So Funny About Peace, Love And Understanding', while 'Radio, Radio' replaces 'Night Rally' and 'I Don't Want To Go To Chelsea' on the stars and stripes edition of 'This Year's Model'. Incidentally, there's also a Swedish version of 'Model' around — one that has an additional track which sounds like a speeded-up version of 'Watching The Detectives'. The latter is not recommended!

Pic: Pennie Smith

AS A keen fan of The Jam, I have often wondered where they get their well cut, short black jackets and their black and white shoes. Can you supply the necessary info?

GARY EWINS, Ealing.

● Apparently Weller and Co. obtain most of their clobber either from the Carnaby Cavern, not a thousand miles removed from *NME* and Danny Baker's old socks, or from a tailor they've befriended in down-town Woking. As you may have seen in recent ads, those snazzy two-tone toetectors are readily available from Shelly's Shoes, 146 King's Road, Chelsea, London SW3 for £15.99 (plus £1 postage and packing), though we understand that Krugerrands are readily accepted!

JAM SHOES AND BAREFOOT BLUES

I WAS pleased to read Max Bell's sensible review of Barefoot Jerry's 'Watchin' TV' album. To date I've found the band's 'Barefootin'', 'Grocery', 'Watchin' TV' and 'Barefoot Jerry' releases in the shops — but what else have they done?

YANKEE DOLLAR, Nottingham.

● Personally, I hated reading Max's review — it only served to remind me that he nicks all the best country-rock albums that come this way, rotten little devil! But back on the info front, I note that your list omits Jerry's first album, 'Southern Delights' (Capitol EST 788 — 1971), though this album does now form part of 'Grocery'. The only other titles that seem to be missing are 'Keys To The Country' (U.S. Monument 7605) and 'You Can't Get Off With Your Shoes On' (Monument KZ 33384), though both Area Code 615 albums, 'Area Code 615' (Polydor 583 572) and 'Trip In The Country' (Polydor 2425 023) also available on a double-package numbered Polydor 2683 040 are essential buys for Jerry-atrics. Many Charlie McCoy albums are also worth checking out, for McCoy is a long-standing buddy of Wayne Moss' (together with drummer Kenny Buttrey they once formed part of a rock outfit known as Charlie McCoy And The Escorts), and Jerry often turn up on such releases as 'Charlie My Boy', 'Appalachian Fever' and 'Play It Again, Charlie'.

THE *NME* rock-movie listing is great — though I should have liked to have seen all the songs listed as well as the artists involved. Are any books on rock movies currently available?

J BAKER, Huyton.

● The only British book on rock movies is *Celluloid Rock* by Philip Jenkinson and Alan Warner, published by Lorrimer in 1974, though there's a brace of paperbacks out in France titled *Le Cinema Musical, Du Rock au Disco 1953-79* penned by one Jean-Jacques Jelot-Blanc, who is probably tearing his hair out at the number of printing errors on display, my favourite being 'Doctor Goldfoot And The Girl's Bumbs', which is much better than Stewie Wonder or Lightnin' 'Opkins (sic). Meanwhile, I'm correlating further details on 1,000 movies that have contained something of rock interest — listing not only artists but also songs — and hope to publish my findings in book form later in the year.

GASBAG

Define your whine to us at:
Gasbag, NME, 5–7 Carnaby St., London W1.

I KNOW it should be with the greatest reverence that I approach the letters column, which was the starting-point for the most successful hype in rock history — but sod reverence and sod you for that matter.

Why are you so pious and so pompous, so arrogant and so fawningly obsequious in turn? You set yourselves up as a lean stark totem of teen rebellion, when in truth you are complacent, paunchy and intellectually flabby. I would like to take a sharp hot knife to your collective belly. Yesterday's rebellious pose is today's fashion is tomorrow's advertising slogan. What's your idea of liberation — everyone making their own video films? The Government will buy everyone a guitar on their 16th birthday says Joe Strummer. Ha ha ha. Joke.

Not so funny though. I will pass over your trendy liberalism, your caring socialism, your outre communism. It's all hard-sell, kiddies, these guys are in the entertainment business like everyone else. Except entertainment means enforced boredom, the feeding of shit, the fostering of absurd tribalism and then squealing protests when things turn sour. What they did to Sid they'll do to you.

Revolution is a private business, *Gasbag*. No-one needs your plastic day-glo Christs — no-one needs this token Bag. People, beautiful people, let me ask you one question. Do you want total war? Let the answer be yes and let our anger be pure. And up yours, you hideous painted poseurs.
Paul.
Hey, slow down. In the heat of your tirade you forgot to set the date. — PR.

In his attack on the US Libertarian Party, Mick Farren highlights the difficulties that such paternalist liberals have in dealing with this new non-interfering liberal movement.

One moment its ideas are OK (even attractive in the light of the attitudes and opinions of today's British Left) by supporting total press freedom, children's rights, legalization of drugs, sex and prostitution, and nuclear disarmament (do you want Kennedy or Carter in control of nuclear missiles situated a few miles from London?). But when the principle of personal freedom and tolerance that lies behind these ideas is applied to the centralised, coercive welfare state their mistaken zeal to provide for people in society through this institution causes them to become blind to any arguments suggesting a more satisfying alternative.

Laissez-faire socialists simply believe that, through the benefits of government de-regulation of the economy and de-subsidisation of the welfare state, a largely unplanned and spontaneous movement by entrepreneurs and firms in the pursuit of profit, in free competition with each other to provide the cheapest and best health, insurance and education services, will lead to a more general and efficient cover than is provided at present.

It is a shame that in his hatred of capitalism, Mick Farren cannot separate out the liberating aspects of personal freedom and free competition from the totalitarian impulse to state interference that is as much a part of capitalism as it is of liberal statism.
James Alexander, Cartwright Gardens, London WC1.
You mean that, contrary to thousands of years of human experience, the big fish *don't* eat the little fish? This laissez-faire socialism is almost as specious as it sounds. Now, riddle me this . . . How many laissez-faire socialists does it take to put a light bulb in a socket? (None. Let the light bulb screw itself in.) — P.R.

Britain is such a varied collection of people that sub-groups naturally form in such areas as age, income, political etc.

In sub-groups formed around political beliefs any moderate talk quickly becomes boring, and as more and more radical beliefs are discussed the political foundation of the group shifts towards the extreme. Individual members can then stay, or disagree — leave the group and lose all their mates.

For those who stay in the group, they then think 'My ideas might be a little radical but my mates all agree so I must be right!'

As different sub-groups come into contact, it is the difference that each notices and any similarities are disregarded. Therefore, as 'Steve of London' said, it is not unreasonable for some people to resent multi-racism, and all his mates agree with him so he must be right. Right? The same goes for any group with extreme views.

In universities the effects of this are magnified by the thinking that goes: 'If I'm clever enough to be a student I must always be right!'

In groups totally isolated from 'the real world' such as our friends in blue and even more so in H.M. Forces, bigotism and extremism reaches peaks far beyond those of any BM or NF supporter, and in H.M. Forces camps this extremism is far more dangerous as it breeds unnoticed and can only increase.

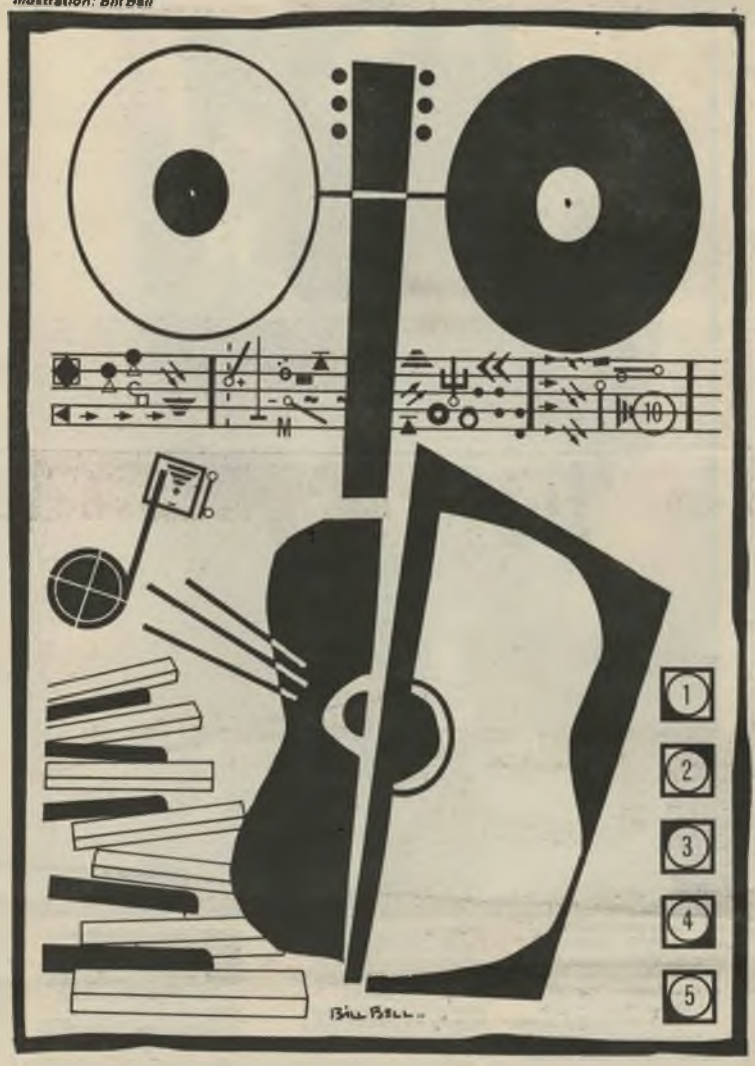
My qualifications for writing the above are: my father is in the RAF (I've lived on these isolated camps); I was an army cadet for four years, and as I'm a student I must be right!

Why can't more of us be wet liberals?
Anon.
Because it's out of fashion. — P.R.

As a British Citizen may I simply say — in relation to the present plight on the United Kingdom — that I've got nothing against anyone or anything and I think it's about time the people in this country got together and *lived!*
Timothy Bleary, peas'n'luv.
See what I mean? — P.R.

Dear controversial and ever-so socially-aware *Gasbag*, the letter last week from the Huddersfield mafia was outta limits, man. Brothers and sisters . . . who's fightin' and what for? Gigs in Huddy will probably be worse now, man, maybe even the total ban on poly gigs there were of yore. Your answer to the letter gives them fame and will also raise some ire. You're OK in Carnaby Street, in your capsule. We are on the street, man. (Ha, ha). We sleep on couches and have no jobs. Things are grim and gritty, violence is anathema to us. But it's society's fault (ha, ha). You print a letter like that, which is kinda scary man, and you're not prepared to stand the consequences. Go back to sleep. What's your moral code? Hello students.
From a fan of Mick D'Chaucer, Huddersfield, Yorkshire.
The consequences of printing that letter, and the reply it deserved, will be to wise-up a few citizens to the ignorance of others. Our answer could only make fools of the so-called Huddersfield mafia. Famous fools, perhaps, but fools nonetheless. — P.R.

Illustration: Bill Bell



#Gasbag goes beat#

Cool it sis, cool it dad, dig the new infrantic Bag.

Just because a page has four corners, doesn't make it square.

Dear Sir Charles Villiers, Am I the only person in the world who thinks John Peel is a hypocritical discharge? Each week Liverpool's answer to Sir Keef Jesus discovers a new musical phenomenon which he insists will redirect the thinking of this month's gullible generation (nb. whatever happened to Vic Rubb & The Vapors, John?). Time to put the other foot in the coffin Mr Peel.

But before you do, why the slagging of the new HM bands (Angelwitch, Iron Maiden etc.) These aren't bands like Zeppelin who've got as much time for British fans as PiL. These are bands to be admired, because despite constant criticism from the music press, they continue to play music they believe in. This is in stark contrast to Peel who would pretend to be into the Nolan Sisters if he could retain his credibility.

I think that's all I've got to say.
Cronk The Insatiable Gorilla, South Ockendon, Essex.
It's all we've got time for anyway. — P.R.

Dear Mont, As far as I can tell, the only thing the Scots, Irish and English have in common is that they will all be beaten, yet again, by Wales in this year's rugby internationals.
Billy Bell, Penarth.
Monty thought your joke was very funny. — P.R.

Laugh? I didn't. OK, Japan's image was once unfortunately confused with that of the N.Y. Dolls, but must you labour the point by mutating the name 'Sylvian' to 'Sylvain'? *Faux pas*, Mr Morley, one of many.

The review is littered with blatant contradictions, eg. "cross, inarticulate / talk a lot of sense with unexpected alertness." You're confusing us.

I suggest that you revise your opinion of Japan. The 'silly sex' and 'teen dissatisfaction' were aborted with the embryonic Japan, circa debut album. The adult Japan are instigators of something which denies categorization. It's alien . . . and Mr Morley shows the symptoms of chronic xenophobia.

Why not try actually listening to the albums before writing off Sylvian's lyrics as 'gentle and compassionate'? Sleazy prostitutes, fucked heads — oh yes, I see what you mean, they are very gentle.

Finally, you interpret Japan as a hopelessly contrived, ridiculously pretentious product — but hadn't you noticed that 'street' and 'honest' music is extremely demode?

Laugh? Japan will have the last one.
Julianne Regan, Coventry.
But, darling, just because anything 'street' and 'honest' is now passe it doesn't mean that hopelessly contrived and ridiculously pretentious twaddle is necessarily 'in'. — P.R.

Dear Matthew Piss, I do not take drugs (well, apart from caffeine and the occasional aspirin). Music dominates my life, so that inevitably I will tire of the same old standards and formulae and sniff around for something a bit more unusual. Does that make me elitist?

Maybe I'm an exception, but I don't regard myself as part of some exclusive clique; anyone can do it. I only wish more would, instead of hearing something once and then whining, "I don't like it — it's not proper rock'n'roll". Perhaps if they were a little more patient they might grow to love it. What's wrong with acquired taste? I've always been suspicious of love-at-first-sight.

Musicianship? Surely that's a pre-punk standard. If a band can play well, fine, but that shouldn't stop 'non-musicians' experimenting within their limitations. Surely the emphasis should be on content rather than ability and technique. Just because people are searching for other ways to create powerful music, rather than the obvious powerchord / shrieking-solo formula, does that make them pseuds? Experimentation, by its very nature, will often fail, but sometimes something really great will surface (Joy Division, PiL, etc.).

Many people know this. If they are a small minority that's not really their fault. As for Paul Morley's prose, it's a pleasure to read. (And what the hell's wrong with adjectives anyway?)

If PiL are a 'piss-take', they're not a very good one: people buy it, like it, are influenced by it. If they are dupes then they are happy ones.

And if you were 'truly classless and unaffected', you wouldn't be so damned prejudiced and narrow-minded.
The Squashed Raisin, Cardiff.
Nor as sarcastic. I thought last week's missive from Mr Piss made its point, as does yours. Does this make me a wet liberal? — CONFUSED

With reference to The Specials' presumed expert advice on contraception expressed in 'Too Much Too Young': the diaphragm or cap records a failure rate in practice of 17% (see Ryder, Norman B., 'Contraceptive Failure in The United States', Family Planning Perspectives 5: 133–142, 1973), and this, even when used in conjunction with a spermicide; this latter device The Specials fail to mention when advocating the use of the said cap, although I fully realise the difficulty in finding an apt rhyming word to 'spermicide'.

And in the final analysis, just who's left holding the baby?
From someone who's trying to have fun and avoid ending-up making current buns.
Fine. Keep it up. — P.R.

Illustration: Crunch

Your cool fool:

PAUL RAMBALI

T-ZERS GETS TEED OFF

IS NOTHING sacred? *T-Zers* fears not in a week when the London home of **John Lydon** is busted for the second time within a month (see report in *Thrills)* and those heathen vandals the Welsh are reduced to physical violence in their vain attempts to prevent the Triple Crown Topper from returning to the hallowed mantels of Twickers . . .

Aye, let's avaunt to more northern climes. Manchester to be precise where half the parish bands are currently engaged in running up and down stairs as extras in the nouveau **Warren Beatty, Jack Nicholson, Diane Keaton** movie, *The John Reed And Louise Bryant Story.* The other half are making a record . . .

As indeed are **The Clash.** Their next single, scheduled for early March, has **Mikey Dread** at the controls (and on the B-side, 'Rock Don't Stop'). The CC Rockers are just about getting their dollars for the forthcoming tour of Columbus' Promised Land. Last two dates of the tour are benefits for **Jackie Wilson** and support act throughout is the world's most wonderful soul singer, Mr **Lee Dorsey** . . .

Work, work, work. The anonymous **Ian Dury** is scribbling in his garret and preparing for a May tour of these Isles . . .

Looking on the bright side, it's half-term for the nation's whippersnappers (and most of the *NME* office by all accounts) who'll be anxiously tuning in to their goggle boxes hoping for a repeat of **James Pursey's** formidable appearance on *Jim'll Fix It* . . .

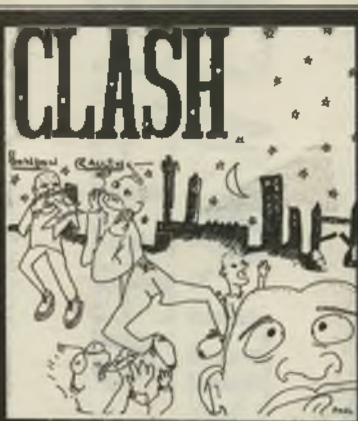
Not to be outdone, *Blue Peter* treated their viewers to a **Jerry Lee Lewis** guest slot. After a belting 'Great Balls Of Fire', presenter **Chris** ran up and told a bewildered Jerry Lee, "I say! What marvellous piano playing!" An even more bewildered **Goldie**, the *Blue Peter* mongrel, attempted to have sexual relations with co-presenter **Simon's** leg as Jerry played the programme out with 'Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On'. Next week **Little Richard** will be demonstrating the fettucine dish that made him a household name and *Blue Peter* launch their **Paul McCartney** appeal fund . . .

As it 'appens **Paul** needs all the help he can get. Rumour has it that the former **Mop Top** will have to pay up to half a million in compensation to his Japanese promoters for loss of takings . . .

Meanwhile, **Rockpile's Nick Lowe** has taken to giving the 'thumbs up' to audiences in the middle of the band's set . . .

Horrible but true: only a week after **Brian Robertson**, former **T'In Lizzy** guitarist, married the girl of well-known 5000 per-center **Rod Stewart's** dreams — lovely leggy **Dee Dee Harrington**, at least 30 — his old buddy **Phil O' Lynott** tied a knot with **Caroline Crowther** on Valentine's Day. 'Twas a full Catholic wedding to be sure, to be sure but the superstar Brazilian bass player ran to a stag night on Tuesday in Hammersmith's ultra-tacky Clarendon Hotel. The party included every faded rock and roll poseur in the book from **Billy Idol** (who?) and his friend **Tony James** to **Lemmy, Midge Ure** and all of **Dire Straits**. What a great deal of fun that must have been. Over at the church, worshippers included **Lord and Lady Geldof** and best man **Scott Gorham**. TV personality **Leslie Crowther** gave away the bride and even cracked a joke in his reception speech: "Phil asked me if he could have Caroline's hand. I said to him, 'Well you've had everything else, so'. . ." It's the way he tells 'em . . .

Pretender Chrissie Hynde (centre left) enjoys the company of a very Special Horace over an invigorating cuppa. Martin Chambers (right left) is also having a ripping time. Incidentally, rumour has it that Mrs Hynde used to be some sort of pop journalist — at least that's what she told Sally James between giggles on TisWas. Pic: Arthur Davis.



These fascinating illustrations come direct to you from the first and second editions of a glossy brochure called Armagideon Times. You could've obtained copies for yourself on The Clash tour at 40p a throw (a mere two bob more than the average footer programme), and if you want to find out more, or even contribute to the third edition, write to Blackhill, 32 Alexander St, London W2. The drawing, by the way, is one of Paul Simenon's own — good isn't he?

And so it came to pass that the behemoth Uriah Heep (most of whom can be seen right) celebrated their 10th anniversary as a vitally ongoing concern on this planet. Scientists have recently revealed that the popular combo's name is merely some sort of acronym for ursus horibitis, a particularly ungainly specie of grizzly bear. We were wondering where the nurd on the far right came from. Pic: Tony Maclean.

Quick, dial 999. Those errant **Darts** man, **Hammy Howell, George Curry** and **Thump Thomson** have had a warrant for their collective arrests issued after the trio reputedly did over a grand's worth of damage to a hotel chandelier in Stoke-On-Trent. *T-Zers* seriously wonders why these people don't grow up a bit . . .

Not that they'll heed the advice of a wise man., **Splodgenessabounds** didn't and ended up signed to Phillips where their first single will be released plus the inevitable stupid gimmick, a free light bulb (any colour you like) with every copy. So very funny . . .

But not half as funny as the fact that **John Wayne's** heirs are being sued for 500,000 dollars by ABC-TV because the old varmint went and died before the last eight months of his contract was up . . .

Bob Dylan may remarry his backing singer **Debbie Grigson** soon and the prophet of doom intends to appear at this year's Grammy Awards to collect the expected awards and kudos for his recent collection of train spotting numbers . . .

The much more vital **Captain Beefheart** will record in the states and not the Manor, but he is planning to do UK dates after April, the batty bugger . . .

Typical Americans: **Anita Pallenberg** is being sued by the father of **Scott Cantrell**, the 17-year-old loony who offed himself in her matrimonial bed last summer. Said **Pa Cantrell**: "She lured my boy to his death. She enticed him with sex and drugs. I am suing her for at least a million dollars for the loss of my son." What dignity. Anita, who was cleared of any involvement other than handling stolen property (the handgun used in Cantrell's death) is on probation and living with **Keith Richard** ('S' optional) . . .

The vastly more civilised and rich **Abba** have sold their royalties company to a bicycle firm for a cool £7 million . . .

Do **The Regulars** really know no better than to credit **Coxsone Dodd** as writer of their new single 'Rude Boy Gone To Jail' just 'cos he took credit back in the '60s when **T'Wailers** first cut it in Studio One? Is this what **Bunny Wailer** — the real author — means when he talks of a 'power struggle'? . . .

God forbid! **Art Garfunkle** apparently believes that there is "at least one good album left in us". Thusly do hideous rumours of a **Simon and Garf's Uncle** reunion foster a miserable nest in the softly lit corridors of music biz power . . .

As if the original wasn't bad enough **Dexy's Midnight Runners** are coupling their **Ram Jam** tribute 'Geno' with a reworking of **Johnny Johnson's** hoary 'Breaking Down The Walls Of Heartache'. . .

Yusef Islam (nee **Cat Stevens**) has taken his guitar and prayer mat into Sigma Sound Philadelphia, it says here . . .

Wizened crooners **The Searchers'** second 'comeback' album has been revamped to include material from **The Byrds, John Hiatt** and **Ducks DeLuxe** . . .

Squeeze have cancelled their Nottingham University gig (March 7) because the local social sec has infringed their £2.50 ticket prices by selling at £4 to non-students. Does **Robin Hood** know about this outrage? . . .

Here's something to cheer you up. After a year without UK distribution New York's *Trouser Press* mag will be reaching British shops via **Bert Muirhead's** Scots fanzine *Hot Wacks* . . .

Those of you who run to a radio may be aware that **Mike Reid's** Radio One evening show has a spot where listeners nominate the ten people they'd most like to invite to a dinner party. Nominees invariably include **Attila The Hun, John Lydon** and **God** but last Tuesday some enterprising host plumped for our very own **Nick Kent**. As it happens t'was a wise choice. Nick is a very well behaved guest and brightens up many an otherwise uneventful soiree. The enlightened host must know his dietary requirements are simple: his rider merely stipulates a loaf of bread, a carton of yoghourt (plain will do), one packet sweet digestives and two pounds of after dinner satsumas . . .

The show must go on. Trouper **Tourist Dave Stewart** has a collapsed lung but intends to go ahead and tour with the band regardless. A private doc will accompany him in case of a relapse. The said lung has collapsed thrice in the last couple years . . .

Debbie Harry and old man **Chris Stein** don't use any toothpaste that includes additives, eat no junk food and no red meat. They like to be in bed at 11.30 after a gig. Aren't these people boring . . .

Bette Midler got her hands on the coveted Golden Globe award in Hollywood and promptly told **Dustin Hoffman** to "eat shit" as she passed his table . . .

Guesting on **Kid Jensen's** *Round Table* last Friday **Elvis Costello** gave another display of that famous tact and diplomacy which has already endeared him to millions. After hearing **Linda Ronstadt's** interpretations of his 'Party Girl' and 'Talking In The Dark', 25 per center 'Kid' Fist opined "You must be flattered when other people cover your songs". "Not when they're duff covers", came the riposte. "That was sheer torture . . . a waste of vinyl." Adding a heartfelt plea to **Governor Brown's** companion that she refrain from paying him any more compliments (but not necessarily royalties) the bespectacled genius announced, through gritted teeth, that he's working on a special song for Lindy Poo — 'I Wanna Be First Lady'. Miaou. He later handed out a deserved verbal trashing to the hopeless (hapless?) Jags . . .

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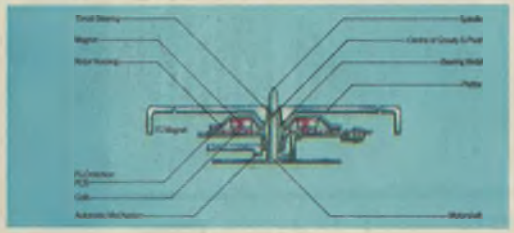

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