

22 March 1980

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NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

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ONE FOR ALL YOU DORIS DAY FANS.

**Weller just
blew in from
the Windy
City . . .**



**THE JAM JET INTO
CHICAGO AND DETROIT.
NME GOES UNDERGROUND
PAGES 32-3/6.**

"Number one on the Beeb chart and NME front cover all in the same week? Somebody's putting a few quid about back home . . ."

Paul Weller pic: Joe Stevens

Weller

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PUBLISH AND BE JAMMED!

NME CHARTS

Week ending March 22, 1980

UK SINGLES

This Last Week		Weeks in chart	Highest position
1 (2)	Together We Are Beautiful Fern Kinney (WEA)	4	1
2 (1)	Atomic Blondie (Chrysalis)	5	1
3 (4)	Games Without Frontiers Peter Gabriel (Charisma)	4	3
4 (3)	Take That Look Off Your Face Mari Webb (Polydor)	5	3
5 (19)	Do That To Me One More Time Captain & Tennille (Casablanca)	4	5
6 (6)	So Lonely Police (A&M)	5	6
7 (12)	Turning Japanese Vapors (United Artists)	3	7
8 (10)	Hands On She's Mine The Beat (Fast)	4	8
9 (9)	AW Night Long Rainbow (Polydor)	3	9
10 (18)	Dance Yourself Dizzy Liquid Gold (Polo)	2	10
11 (17)	Cuba Gibson Brothers (Island)	4	11
12 (8)	And The Beat Goes On Whispers (Solar)	7	5
13 (23)	Stomp Brothers Johnson (A&M)	4	13
13 (22)	Working My Way Back To You Detroit Spinners (Atlantic)	2	13
15 (29)	Echo Beach... Marthe & The Muffins (DinDisc)	2	15
16 (7)	Cerrie Cliff Richard (EMI)	6	3
17 (—)	Gone Underground Jam (Polydor)	1	17
18 (5)	I Can't Stand Up For Falling Down Elvis Costello (F Beat)	5	2
19 (14)	Rock With You Michael Jackson (Epic)	6	6
20 (—)	Spirit Of Radio Rush (Mercury)	1	20
21 (—)	Holdin' On Tony Rallo (Calibre)	1	21
22 (—)	Poison Ivy Lambertas (Rocket)	1	22
23 (—)	Another Nail In The Heart Squeeze (A & M)	1	23
24 (11)	Coward Of The County Kenny Rogers (United Artists)	8	1
25 (18)	So Good To Be Back Home Again Tourists (Logo)	6	10
26 (26)	Tonight I'm Alright Nerada Michael Walden (Atlantic)	2	25
27 (—)	Don't Push It Don't Force It Leo Haywood (20th Century)	1	27
28 (—)	Turn It On Again Genesis (Charisma)	1	28
29 (15)	Ghost Riders In The Sky Shadows (EMI)	6	9
30 (—)	Hello I Am Your Heart... Bette Bright (Korova)	1	30

UP AND COMING:

Happy House — Siouxsie & The Banshees (Polydor).
Let's Do Rock Steady — Body Snatchers (2 Tone).
Love Injection — Trussel (Asylum).
King/Food For Thought — UB40 (Graduate).
Just A Touch Of Love — Slave (Atlantic).
Ooh Boy — Rose Royce (Whitfield).

UK ALBUMS

This Last Week		Weeks in chart	Highest position
1 (29)	Tears And Laughter... Johnny Mathis (CBS)	2	1
2 (1)	String Of Hits... Shadows (EMI)	19	1
3 (7)	Tell Me On A Sunday... Mari Webb (Polydor)	4	3
4 (3)	Last Dance... Various (EMI)	7	1
5 (9)	Greatest Hits... Rose Royce (Whitfield)	2	5
6 (2)	Regatta De Blanc... Police (A&M)	22	1
7 (8)	Get Happy... Elvis Costello (F Beat)	5	2
8 (5)	Set To The Beat... Blondie (Chrysalis)	23	2
9 (—)	Nobody's Hero... Stiff Little Fingers (Chrysalis)	1	9
10 (10)	Golden Collection... Charley Pride (K-Tel)	6	10
11 (22)	Down To Earth... Rainbow (Polydor)	15	7
12 (—)	Heartbreakers... Matt Monro (EMI)	1	12
13 (19)	Off The Wall... Michael Jackson (Epic)	24	3
14 (4)	Pretenders... Pretenders (Real)	9	1
15 (—)	The Crystal Gayle Singles Album Crystal Gayle (UA)	1	15
16 (12)	One Step Beyond... Madness (Stiff)	18	2
17 (11)	Too Much Pressure... Selecter (Two Tone)	4	3
18 (17)	Light Up The Night... Brothers Johnson (A & M)	4	15
19 (15)	The Specials... (Two Tone)	19	7
20 (6)	Kenny... Kenny Rogers (United Artists)	6	4
21 (13)	Outlandos D'amour... Police (A & M)	23	7
22 (—)	The Whispers... (Solar)	1	22
23 (23)	Greatest Hits... K C & The Sunshine Band (TK)	2	23
24 (—)	Against The Wind... Bob Seger (Capitol)	1	24
25 (—)	Official Bootleg Album... Blues Band (Arista)	1	25
26 (16)	Reality Effect... Tourists (Logo)	2	16
27 (26)	Permanent Waves... Rush (Mercury)	8	8
28 (21)	Rock & Roll Juvenile... Cliff Richard (EMI)	13	1
29 (—)	Freedom At Point Zero Jefferson Starship (Grunst)	1	29
30 (—)	Metro Music, Marthe & The Muffins (DinDisc)	1	30

UP AND COMING:

12 Gold Bars — Status Quo (Vertigo).
Glass Houses — Billy Joel (CBS).
Make Your Move — Captain & Tennille (Casablanca).
The Bobby Vee Singles Album (United Artists).
Big Smash — Wreckless Eric (Stiff).
Club Ska '87 — Various (Island).

US SINGLES

This Last Week		Weeks in chart	Highest position
1 (3)	Another Brick In The Wall... Pink Floyd		
2 (2)	Crazy Little Thing Called Love... Queen		
3 (1)	Longer... Dan Fogelberg		
4 (15)	Working My Way Back To You... Detroit Spinners		
5 (4)	On The Radio... Donna Summer		
6 (6)	Desire... Andy Gibb		
7 (8)	Him... Rupert Holmes		
8 (9)	How Do I Make You... Linda Ronstadt		
9 (10)	Too Hot... Kool & The Gang		
10 (20)	Call Me... Blondie		
11 (12)	Second Time Around... Shalamar		
12 (14)	Refugee... Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers		
13 (7)	Yes I'm Ready... Tati DeSario/K.C.		
14 (18)	Special Lady... Ray Goodman & Brown		
15 (18)	Ride Like The Wind... Christopher Cross		
16 (11)	Rock With You... Michael Jackson		
17 (22)	Rock L.A... Bob Seger		
18 (25)	I Can't Tell You Why... Eagles		
19 (19)	Heartbreaker... Pat Benatar		
20 (21)	Give It All You Got... Chuck Mangione		
21 (26)	With You I'm Born Again... Billy Preston/Syreeta		
22 (24)	Three Times In Love... Tommy James		
23 (28)	Off The Wall... Michael Jackson		
24 (13)	An American Dream... The Doobie Band		
25 (17)	"99"... Toto		
26 (15)	September Morn... Neil Diamond		
27 (—)	And The Beat Goes On... Whispers		
28 (—)	Lost In Love... Air Supply		
29 (23)	Cruisin'... Smokey Robinson		
30 (30)	Baby Talks Dirty... The Knack		

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

US ALBUMS

This Last Week		Weeks in chart	Highest position
1 (1)	The Wall... Pink Floyd		
2 (2)	Damn The Torpedoes Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers		
3 (3)	Off The Wall... Michael Jackson		
4 (16)	Mad Love... Linda Ronstadt		
5 (4)	Phoenix... Dan Fogelberg		
6 (7)	Bebe Le Strange... Heart		
7 (16)	Against The Wind... Bob Seger		
8 (8)	The Whispers		
9 (10)	Fun And Games... Chuck Mangione		
10 (9)	The Long Run... The Eagles		
11 (—)	Glass Houses... Billy Joel		
12 (12)	But The Little Girls Understand... The Knack		
13 (16)	Permanent Waves... Rush		
14 (18)	Light Up The Night... Brothers Johnson		
15 (14)	On The Radio... Donna Summer		
16 (13)	Kenny... Kenny Rogers		
17 (17)	In The Heat Of The Night... Pat Benatar		
18 (—)	American Gigolo... Original Soundtrack		
19 (14)	Cornerstone... Styx		
20 (21)	Love Stinks... The J. Geils Band		
21 (23)	Ray, Goodman & Brown		
22 (20)	Ladies Night... Kool & The Gang		
23 (19)	Tusk... Fleetwood Mac		
24 (26)	Bad Luck Struck In Dancing School... Warren Zevon		
25 (26)	Big Fun... Shalamar		
26 (25)	September Morn... Neil Diamond		
27 (16)	The Rose... Original Soundtrack		
28 (30)	London Calling... The Clash		
29 (—)	Pretenders		
30 (—)	After Dark... Andy Gibb		

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

5 YEARS AGO

Week ending March 18, 1975

1	Bye Bye Baby	Bay City Rollers (Bell)
2	M... ..	Telly Savalas (MCA)
3	Only You Can	Fox (GTO)
4	There's A Whole Lot Of Loving...	Guys & Dolls (Magnet)
5	Make Me Smile	Steve Harley & Cockney Rebel (EMI)
6	Pick Up The Pieces	Average White Band (Atlantic)
7	The Secrets That You Keep	Mud (Rak)
8	Wandy	Berry Manilow (Arista)
9	What Am I Gonna Do With You	Berry White (20th Century)
10	Ghosts	Moments & Whispers (All Platinum)

10 YEARS AGO

Week ending March 18, 1970

1	Wandering Star	Lee Marvin (Paramount)
2	Bridge Over Troubled Water	Simon & Garfunkel (CBS)
3	Let It Be	Beatles (Apple)
4	I Want You Back	Jackson Five (Tami Motown)
5	That Same Old Feeling	Pickettywitch (Pye)
6	Let's Work Together	Connard Hart (Liberty)
7	Na Na Hey Kias Him Goodbye	Steam (Fontana)
8	Instant Karma	Plastic Ono Band (Apple)
9	Don't Cry Daddy	Elvis Presley (RCA)
10	Can't Help Fallin' In Love	Andy Williams (CBS)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending March 19, 1965

1	The Last Time	Rolling Stones (Decca)
2	It's Not Unusual	Tom Jones (Decca)
3	Silhouettes	Herman's Hermits (Columbia)
4	I'll Never Find Another You	Seekers (Columbia)
5	Come And Stay With Me	Marianne Faithfull (Decca)
6	I'll Stop At Nothing	Sandie Shaw (Pye)
7	Goodbye My Love	Searchers (Pye)
8	Games Of Love	Wayne Fontana & The Mindbenders (Fontana)
9	I Must Be Seeing Things	Gene Pitney (Stateside)
10	Yes I Will	Hollies (Parlophone)



Here we are again surrounded by symbols of bleak inner-city deprivation to celebrate the advent of another nondescript young punky combo. Will The Vapors be able to repeat the pristine teenage innocence of their single 'Turning Japanese', or will they fall prey to the evil rock-biz machine? Frankly, we couldn't care less. Notice that only one of their ranks is able to locate the camera. The others stare balefully towards the rising sun and wonder if they've already heard of The Undertones in Japan. (Pic: Chris Horley).

REGGAE

(1)	Baltimore	Tamla (Taxi)
(2)	Rockers Delight	Mickey Dread (DART)
(3)	Joe Grims	Madon (Giba)
(4)	Carve Me Long	Walter In (Enrol T)
(5)	I'll Be Around	Ola Gayle (I Studio)
(6)	Run Come Inna Dance	Papa Levi (Rockers Inter.)
(7)	Beautiful Dream	Horace Martin (Big Ben Records)
(8)	What's Cooking	Jah Thomas (Midnight Rock)
(9)	East Take It Easy	Dennis Brown (I Studio)
(10)	Left Outside	Dave Robinson (Dread At The Controls)

Chart supplied by Maroon's Tunes, 19 Greek Street, London W1. Tel. 01-437 4845.

DISCO

(1)	And The Beat Goes On	Whispers (Solar)
(2)	Stomp	Brothers Johnson (A&M)
(3)	Holdin' On	Tony Rallo (Calibre)
(4)	Tonight I'm Alright	Nerada Michael Walden (Atlantic)
(5)	Rhythm Talk	Jocko (Phil Int.)
(6)	You Know How To Love Me	Phyllis Hyman (Arista)
(7)	Rock With You	Michael Jackson (Epic)
(8)	Together We Are Beautiful	Fern Kinney (WEA)
(9)	Music Makes You Feel Like Dancing	Brava Construction (UA)
(10)	We Get The Funk	Positive Force (Sugarhill)

Chart supplied by Powerhouse Roadshow 01-368 9852

INDIES

1	Dead Souls/Atmosphere	Joy Division (Sordide)
2	T.K. Treson	Teardrop Explodes (200)
3	We Dance/Psychic	Killing Joke (Malicious Damage)
4	In The Beginning	Silva/Pop Group (RT)
5	Big Noise From The Jungle	Tiller Boys (New Horizons)
6	1980 The First 15 Minutes	Various (Neutron)
7	White Noise	Mo'Nette (Mode)
8	Flery Jack	F&K (Step Forward)
9	Victim Of The Middle	Toyah (Safari)
10	Extremes 1-4	Frust (Recommended)

Chart supplied by Bonaparte Records, 101 George Street, Croydon, Surrey. Tel. 681 1490.

NEWS

MADNESS
OUTBREAK
HITS UK

MADNESS return from their visits to America and Europe, and launch into a new British tour which concentrates on towns and venues often ignored by major acts — thus following in the footsteps of the current Elvis Costello tour. Promoters Straight Music have so far confirmed 20 dates, which are:

Llanelli Glen Ballroom (April 15), Cardiff Top Rank (16), Bath Pavilion (17), Torquay Town Hall (18), St. Austell New Cornish Riviera Lido (19), Margate Winter Gardens (21), Gt. Yarmouth Tiffany's (22), Peterborough Werrins Stadium (23), Coventry Tiffany's (24), Bridlington Royal Spa Pavilion (26), Bradford St. George's Hall (27), Chester Deeside Leisure Centre (28), Blackpool Tiffany's (29), Sunderland Mayfair (30), Carlisle Assembly Rooms (2), West Calder Regal Suite (3), Aberdeen Fusion (4), Irvine Magnum Leisure Centre (5), Belfast Whitley Hall (7) and Dublin Olympic Ballroom (8).

At all venues, tickets are all at the one price of £5 — they should be generally available tomorrow (Friday), but readers are advised to check with individual box-offices. The band will be promoting their new four-track single 'Work Rest And Play Madness' which, as reported last week, is issued by Stiff this weekend.

Madness were, at one time, pencilled in to play London Rainbow on April 1 as part of the theatre's 50th birthday week — but they pulled out because "they considered it a joke". Their next London show is now expected to be in the second week of May, after their two Irish dates.

Stranglers in
Rainbow No.2

THE STRANGLERS are to play a second night at London Rainbow Theatre during its 50th anniversary week early next month. It's on Good Friday (April 4), which was intended to be a blank day — but this extra gig now completes a full seven-day season for the birthday event. Tickets are on sale now, all at one price of £3.50. The band's first night on April 3 is now completely sold out.

The two shows will both run about six hours (5-11 pm), each featuring four or five guest bands. So far confirmed are Blood Donor (April 3) and The Soul Boys and UB40 (4) — but among other acts likely to appear on either night are The Psychadelic Furs, Orchestral Manoeuvres, Joy Division, The Monochrome Set — and possibly Hawkwind.

Prior to the Rainbow concerts, The Stranglers are planning a few low-key and unannounced club/pub gigs around the March 30 — April 2 period. NME understands that West Hampstead Moonlight Club and The Wellington, Archway, are among probable venues — and there's also talk of an all-nighter at a London cinema. After Easter, they are scheduled to start work on their sixth album.

All these plans and concerts are dependent upon the outcome of Hugh Cornwell's appeal against his six-month prison sentence, on drug charges — which is due to be heard in the Appeal Court tomorrow (Friday). There is reason to hope that his jail term may be quashed — but if not, of course, the above schedule goes completely out the window.



LIVERPOOL ERIC'S DOOMED

LIVERPOOL ERIC'S — the leading rock venue in that city, and arguably in the North of England — looks doomed to closure, despite the attempts of its 7,000 members to secure its future. It was initially threatened by police objections to its licence renewal, which led to its creditors pulling out — and this, in turn, has caused the venue to go into liquidation.

The members have now launched a massive campaign, with a view to getting Eric's turned over to them, so that they can keep it running and plough the profits back into the venue. Various other measures are also under consideration, but co-owner Roger Eagle said this week that Eric's appears to be doomed, despite many cash offers.

Eric's was launched in 1976 and has played host to many top acts — including The Sex Pistols, Elvis Costello, The Clash and Ian Dury. Siouxsie & The Banshees are due to be appearing there tonight (Thursday), though at press-time it

was touch and go. The venue is heavily booked, with some April gigs already sold out, but it looks as though the closing night will be this Saturday with local bands Orchestral Manoeuvres, Echo & The Bunnymen and Pink Military.

● See also page 11.

London's New Vic re-opening

NME UNDERSTANDS that the New Victoria Theatre, one of London's top rock venues until the then-leaseholders went into liquidation in 1978, is re-opening later this year. It has been standing "dark" for almost two years (a plan to convert it into a high-class disco failed to materialise), and now the owners — The Rank Organisation — want to restore its former reputation. It's believed the New Vic will re-open in the autumn with a Cliff Richard season, followed by various one-off concerts and a pre-Christmas season by a big-name act.

SECRET AFFAIR SPEARHEADING TOURS BONANZA

SECRET AFFAIR are going out on a major 15-date concert tour next month, culminating in a prestige London show at the Hammersmith Odeon on April 21. Other confirmed dates are Dunstable Queensway Hall (April 6), St. Austell New Cornish Riviera (7), Bournemouth State-side Centre (8), Brighton Top Rank (9), Manchester Free Trade Hall (11), Witherssea Grand Pavilion (12), Sheffield Top Rank (13), Hanley Victoria Hall (14), Cardiff Top Rank (15), Blackburn King George's Hall (16), Newcastle City Hall (17), Cromer West Runtun Pavilion (18), Birmingham Odeon (19) and Bristol Locarno (20). They'll be promoting their newly released Arista single 'My World'.

THE POLICE will definitely be playing one major open-air festival in Britain this summer, their spokesman said this week, and they'll be considering offers when they return from Europe on April 17. They'll also be playing a number of other UK concerts this year — though, for tax reasons, all are expected to be charity events.

SHAM 69 have added three more dates to their UK concert series, reported two weeks ago, tied in with the April 4 release of their new Polydor single 'Tell The Children'. They are Bradford St. George's Hall (April 16), Swindon Oasis (19) and Glasgow Tiffany's (22). And Blackburn King George's Hall moves forward from April 18 to 15, replacing

Bournemouth State-side which is now cancelled. The band have still had no joy in finding a London venue that's prepared to accept them — but they are continuing their efforts.

THE ONLY ONES will be headlining their most important UK tour to date in mid-spring, a month-long itinerary running from April 16 to May 16 inclusive — and their full dates are expected next week. The outing will tie in with the release of their new CBS album 'Baby's Got A Gun', and the support act is up-and-coming London band Wasted Youth.

THE CURE are set to open their previously-reported spring tour at Cromer West Runtun Pavilion on April 25, followed by Manchester

Polytechnic (26) and Bournemouth State-side Centre (28). Other dates are being finalised prior to the climax at London Rainbow on May 11. The Passions support throughout, but at the Rainbow there will also be three other bands. The Cure's new Fiction Records single 'A Forest' is issued on April 3, followed two weeks later by their LP '17 Seconds'.

MAGAZINE are at present finalising details of their spring tour, which is expected to open in Liverpool on April 23. It's understood their schedule, to be announced within the next two weeks, includes a number of unusual gigs and off-beat venues — plus at least one boat trip! Bauhaus are likely to be the main

support act, and each gig will also feature a local band.

THE REVILLOS complete their present run of dates at Swansea Institute of Higher Education (March 26) and Harlow Technical College (28), then return home to Scotland to record a new album. This is followed by a short Irish tour visiting Coleraine Ulster University (April 23), Belfast Queen's University (24), Dublin Trinity College (25) and Cork University College (26). They break for a couple of weeks, then play York University (May 9) and Manchester Polytechnic (10), prior to a European tour.

ATHLETICO SPIZZ 80 return from a European tour to play three nights at London Marquee Club, from April 9 to 11.



"Genuinely exciting, genuinely Heavy Metal not like all the usual ponces, committed, rude, sexist.. and greasier than a British breakfast" NME Jan 9

TYGERS OF PAN TANG

On tour with
MAGNUM

MARCH
21 WEST RUNTUN, Pavilion
22 DUDLEY, J.B.'s Club
23 ALDERMINSTER, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON,
Ettington Park Manor

25 NOTTINGHAM, Boat Club
26 WITHERNSSEA, Grand Pavilion
28 WOLVERHAMPTON, The Lafayette Club
29 BLACKPOOL, Norbreck Nite Spot
30 BIRMINGHAM, Top Rank

The special 3 track single

'Don't Touch Me There' c/w Burning Up/Bad Times

MCA 582

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MCA RECORDS
A Division of MCA Inc.



These are THE NUMBERS, a recently formed four-piece who've been working around the London area for some weeks. And now they're taking the plunge into the record business, and are currently cutting their first single 'Runaway' / 'Yeah Yeah Yeah', for April release on Modern Records. And they have the benefit of no less a personage than Hugh Cornwell of The Stranglers acting as their producer.

● Manchester band The Trend have been signed to a worldwide deal by MCA, and are currently preparing their first product for the label.
● The A-side of Judas Priest's new single has been changed to 'Living After Midnight', and CBS have brought forward release to this week and — the two tracks on the B-side are unchanged, 'Delivering The Goods' and 'Evil Fantasies'. The band's "ransomed" album has now been named as 'British Steel', and it's due out on March 28.
● The Undertones' first single for six months is 'My Perfect Cousin', issued by Sire Records on March 28. There are two tracks on the B-side, 'Don't Wanna See You Again' and 'Hard Luck (Again)'. The A-side is taken from the band's upcoming new album, and they'll be touring Britain to coincide with its release.
● DJM Records have signed Hot Gossip, and their first naughty bit to be released is their debut single 'Space Invaders', due out on April 4.

Definitive Boney M

WEA release what they call 'the definitive Boney M album' on April 4. It's a 20-track compilation, playing over 50 minutes, and including all the group's UK Top Ten hits. As a bonus, their new single 'My Friend Jack' is also included. The LP is titled 'The Magic Of Boney M'.

● 'Staring At The Rude Boys' / 'Love In Vain' is the latest single from The Ruts issued by Virgin on March 28. The sleeve is in the form of a crossword puzzle, and the first completed correctly and returned to Virgin wins a night out on the town with the band!

● The new single by Interview is 'Hide And Seek', released by Virgin on March 28. And it's followed on April 18 by their second album 'Snakes And Lovers'.

● The Members' second album is called '1980, The Choice Is Yours', scheduled for April 11 release by Virgin. As reported, the band's new single 'Romance' is out this week.

● Do It Records have had to scrap plans to release a 12-inch 'Ani-music' EP by Adam & The Ants, and the original version of the song. Publishers Carlin Music, acting on behalf of the writers, said they regarded the track as "an unauthorised parody" and demanded its withdrawal. Cristina's self-titled LP still comes out this week, but minus the offending track!

● As the follow-up to his underground hit 'Back To Nature', Fad Gadget has his second single issued by Mute Records this week. Titles are 'Ricky's Hand' and 'Handshake'.

● Five-piece Leeds band The Expats, who have supported Public Image Ltd and The Clash, have been signed by Rockburgh Records. Their debut single for the label 'Sympathy (Don't Be Taken In)' is out this weekend.

● Manchester band The Drones have been signed by Fabulous Records, and have their single 'Can't See' issued on March 28. It was produced by Steve Lillywhite of XTC and Peter Gabriel fame.

● Spartan have finalised a deal to distribute London-based label Venture Records. First product affected is 'This Is Lovers Rock' by Eergasm, which was originally released earlier this year and has already appeared in the reggae charts.

● Cherry Red Records have signed two new bands. Stroud-based five-piece Emotion Pictures are about to record their first single 'They Say Space Is Cold'. And Malvern six-piece Primal Screamer, whose line-up includes two girl singers, have a four-track EP scheduled for spring release.

● Scottish label Postcard Records have signed Australian band The Go-Betweens, and this week release their first single 'I Need Two Heads'.

● Among singles being distributed by Rough Trade are 'I Remember' by The Cult Figures and 'Atmosphere' by Paris & The Atmosphere.

● The single 'Is That All There Is' by Cristina, recently highly praised by NME, has been withdrawn by Island following complaints from composers Leiber and Stoller — who wrote the original version of the song. Publishers Carlin Music, acting on behalf of the writers, said they regarded the track as "an unauthorised parody" and demanded its withdrawal. Cristina's self-titled LP still comes out this week, but minus the offending track!

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OFF THE RECORD



Townshend solo single, LP due

PETE TOWNSHEND has a solo single 'Rough Boys' / 'And I Moved' released tomorrow (Friday), and it marks the re-launch of the Alco label (distributed by WEA). It was produced by Chris Thomas, and it's a teaser from his upcoming solo album 'Empty Glass', due out in April.
● John Riddle, formerly of Medicine Head and British Lions, has signed a solo deal with EMI. His first single 'Look Don't Touch' is issued this weekend on the Harvest label.

More Motown memories

● Motown continue their spate of 20th anniversary releases with two more compilation albums, drawn from their early catalogue and issued on their mid-price label on April 11 — they are 'Recorded Live! The 12 Year Old Genius' by Stevie Wonder and 'Greatest Hits' by The Supremes featuring Mary Wilson. More Motown news: The Temptations — who joined the company in 1981 soon after its launch, and left in 1976 — have now re-signed with the label and are currently working on a new album.

● Next week sees the release by Rockburgh Records of a 16-track compilation LP titled 'Hits From The Sticks', featuring "the best new bands from the North of England". They are Aikens, Explosives, Clock DVA, Music For Pleasure, Nightmares In Wax, Ada Wilson & Keeping Dark, Modern Era, Medium Medium, Radio 5, They Must Be Russians, Section 25, Art Failure, I'm So Hollow, Wash Heat, Stranger Than Fiction and The Distributors. Some tracks are newly recorded, others previously issued on small local labels.

● A new Fischer 2 album 'Going Deaf For A Living' — from which one of the tracks 'So Long' has just been issued as a single — is released by United Artists on April 18. And the band will be touring around UK for much of April and May to promote it.

● The Initial Recording Company has acquired distribution rights to 'Continental Drift', the first solo album by San Francisco singer-writer Irvine Monro, who was the subject of an ATV documentary called 'Buster' three years ago.

● 'Ray, Goodman & Brown', the first album from the trio formerly known as The Moments and already a hit in the States, is issued here by Phonogram this month. From the same company comes Ray Jackson's debut solo LP 'In The Night', plus a single titled 'Little Town First'.

● A new single by The X-Dreams is issued by Polydor tomorrow (Friday), titled 'I Don't Wanna Go'. Out on the same day and label is 'Imaginary Lover' by A.R.S. (which is what the Atlanta Rhythm Section now call themselves).

YOUR ENTIRE RECORD COLLECTION IS WARPED.

Sorry, but there it is.

The way they manufacture records nowadays, there's no such thing as a perfectly flat LP.

Even your prized Supercut discs are chock full of visible warps, invisible warps, micro-bubbles and other vinyl imperfections. So what looks flat to you is like a roller coaster run to your cartridge.

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The trouble is, ordinary cartridges cannot ride these imperfections without moving in relation to the stylus.

At worst this causes mis-tracking and serious record damage.

At best the movement is interpreted by the cartridge as an ultra-low frequency of around 4-5 Hz. This signal isn't audible, but it distorts those that are.

The whole process is called intermodulation distortion, and it's quite as nasty as it sounds.

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LM stands for Low Mass. Which means that this is one cartridge capable of handling warps and imperfections with absolutely minimal stylus deflection.

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ANOTHER TOUR CANCELLATION Rose Royce blow it

ROSE ROYCE have cancelled their projected 13-date UK tour, due to open in Southampton tomorrow (Friday), and including two nights at London Hammersmith Odeon (April 2-3).

It appears there's been some internal trouble within the group, centred around lead singer Gwen Dickie — reports suggest she wanted future billing either as Gwen Dickie's

Rose Royce or Gwen Dickie & Rose Royce, and neither the other members nor producer Norman Whitfield were willing to comply.

It now seems likely that she will leave to pursue a solo career — and may, in fact, already have done so. Either way, the British public suffers yet again, with ticket holders having to apply for refunds from points of purchase.

DEF LEPPARD MOVING INTO CONCERT HALLS



DEF LEPPARD, who recently completed a lengthy one-nighter series around Britain, have now been lined up for their first headlining tour of major theatre venues. They'll be topping a heavy metal package tour, featuring Magnum as special guests, and the opening act in each area will be a local band. Leppard are promoting their debut album 'On Through The Night' (released this week by Phonogram) and current single 'Hello America'.

Dates are St. Albans City Hall (April 5), Wolverhampton Civic Hall (6), Liverpool Empire (7), Manchester Apollo (8), Sheffield City Hall (10), Harley Victoria Hall (11), St. Austell New Cornish Riviera Lido (12), London Strand Lyceum (13), Bristol Colston Hall (14), Birmingham Odeon (15), Blackburn King George's Hall (20), Leicester De Montfort Hall (27) and Derby Assembly Rooms (29). Tickets are on sale now; at St. Albans, Wolverhampton, London, Blackburn and Bradford they are all at the one price of £3; elsewhere prices are £3, £2.50 and £2.

Paxton doing the rounds

TOM PAXTON is headlining another extensive UK concert series, starting at the end of this month. Dates confirmed by promoter John Martin are Sheffield Crucible (March 28), Redcar Coatham Bowl (29), Blackburn King George's Hall (30), Poole Arts Centre (April 3), London Lewisham Centre Hall (6), Hatfield Forum (6), Hayes Alfred Beck Centre (8), Eastbourne Congress (10), Chatham Central Hall (11), Cambridge Kelsey Kerridge Hall (12), Slough Fulmer Centre (13), Bury St. Edmunds Theatre Royal (16), Belfast Grosvenor Hall (16), Cork Savoy (19), Dublin Olympia (20), London Royal Festival Hall (21), Reading Hexagon (24), Norwich East Angles University (25), Colchester Essex University (26), Birmingham Hippodrome (27) and Cheltenham Everyman Theatre (28).

SKA SHOWCASE FOR LONDON

ORIGINAL SKA comes to London's Electric Ballroom in Camden Town on March 28, in a show featuring Duke Vin, one of Jamaica's first sound-system men and a ska pioneer in Britain in the sixties, Jah Shaka, one of the best contemporary sound-system men, and Birmingham ska band The Wide Boys. It's presented by Island Records (tied in with their current ska campaign) in conjunction with Straight Music.

"BUT CAN you trust it?" Bono, the insurgent, irrepressible singer for Dublin quartet U2, finishes making a hard point using a typically animated gesture. I let silence be my reply and wait for him to continue. He will.

We're sat either side of a small old table, just big enough to take a tray of tea, set simply alongside other tables and chairs in the cheaply luxurious lounge of the Country Club hotel in Cork, Ireland. We've just finished a breakfast that makes you realise Cleese must have really researched *Fawlty Towers*. And we're talking about music; passionately enough to be waving our arms about; for our voices to crack in both joy and despair; for a stranger to be bemused.

Bono is Irish. Real name Paul Houston. Bono is derived from some gang name he acquired during a recent delinquent youth. His voice has a racy fluency blended with the intuitive lift of generations. It's a little like Ireland's current leading anti-hero Geldof, but not as panicky, not as pacy.

Now that The Boomtown Rats have disclaimed the tiny nation and been disclaimed, Bono's group U2 are indisputably Ireland's finest; recent winners of a host of *Hot Press* awards; recent chartoppers with 'Out Of Control'. They're at the rare-in-Eire-point where they're recognised in the streets, hounded for autographs at Gaelic football matches, and TV and radio regulars. Most pertinently they're at the point where the dubious advantages of being sucked into

politically and musically aggressive rock group, but they don't ignore morals or values. They are limitlessly radical. They are not yet great, but they could be — if they were allowed.

U2 don't want to be cultish. They don't want to be massive. This is the testing time. And Bono and myself are getting worked up talking about it.

"We're up in the air at the moment," Bono concludes a fine of conversation where we're wondering about the direction and attitude of new music (But can you trust it?) especially those current waggon hoppers such as Killing Joke (J'accuse!).

"We're still discovering, growing... One of the reasons we chose the name U2 was to have that ambiguity which I think is necessary, so that it's not so easy for people to make premature assumptions or wrong associations. But it's not a name that will directly confuse people. The name in a way is obvious; there's nothing to it really. It's not blasphemous, it's not going to upset people. It's just really simple and straightforward. BUT it's not like The U2 or The U2s, which is already happening and ruins it."

Bono understands and relishes the positive subversive possibilities of pop, and realises the piercing edge it should have over the advertising poster, the average sitcom. He wants to ride in on pop so we can't ignore him. It's 11 o'clock in the morning, but we're still

main job.

"I sound optimistic."

Bono wakes up from sort of indulgent (but more realistic that you realise) reverie. "I don't always feel this way. The first task that we have is to present ourselves and that way we can get into the papers and onto the TV and smash those trends that are destroying things, sucking up people's blood. Skat R&B!"

I join in, of course. Rockabilly. HMI! I nearly fall off my chair.

"It's very clearcut. Very well defined. 'Bono stiffens in his chair and spits out the list. 'Tiel Haircut! Smile! Beat! Enjoyment! Dance!'

"I don't believe in masturbation. I don't want to be masturbated in that way. I don't just want people to get their rocks off. I don't mind that, but you can't just have that. That's like a function. It's like a machine. You press the button and it dries your hands. You're a rock group so people get their rocks off. I don't want to be just that little fulfillment."

"Like Ian Page will go on about being a mod is being an individual. Then I'm a mod! If punk means expressing yourselves vehemently, strongly, pink hair, expression, then I'm a punk! If heavy metal means banging my head against the wall, then I'm that. I'm not being

stay here. But we'll go... and we have to come back."

A DRY four hour Sunday drive from Cork to Tullermy, a small village 70 miles from Dublin, sees Bono apologising for the lack of splendour in the unceasing and somehow delectable country scene. This stretch apparently isn't a good example of Ireland's legendary finery; it's too yellow and normal. It still seems to be over-green, rolling, bendy, miniaturised, unwordly.

On the car radio, U2's old single 'Out Of Control' appears, mixing uneasily with laminated noises of Britchart and Eurosong contest type jollity. Hearing U2 interrupt the relentless flow of smoothly shaped pop bullets and the marble-in-throat inanity of the big hearted DJ, the true extent of their indigenous task becomes clearer. Even if U2 shook the world, their own country and more especially the dismal youth outside Cork or Dublin, would hardly be moved.

Trip backwards and sideways through time, visit Ireland, the peculiar mix of quaint lost tradition, British influence, agricultural aggression and continental modernism, you can begin to understand how come Geldof is so paranoid, persecuted, wretched. The country's musical artificiality and stagnant stupidity drably undermines the development

U2 can make it in the rock business



London systematically develop in front of their half-repulsed eyes.

That's what we're talking about, our voices raised, London's box of tricks. The value of its communicative procedures and potentiality; the resounding negativity of the expectations, prejudices, cynicism; the comfort of those cuddled inside. The spoilt people.

Bono is deeply concerned about trust, deception, corruption, problems of honesty — you know the values. He has the freshness of hope of someone who has yet to fully experience the closed shop of London's damagingly influential network, and with the cynicism of one who is ready and waiting to be disillusioned, who knows that to make any impact isn't going to be easy.

Bono and the group are warily preparing to leap from Irish success — a literally poor type of success; sales of 20,000 merits a gold disc in Ireland, and entertainers like The Pope win those — into British obscurity, and wondering how to grab attention, scythe through the settling collection of old values, scatter the cosy tribal narrow mindedness...

"Even over here," laments Bono, "we get people coming up to us and saying, 'Well, I like you... but I don't really like you because I'm a mod and you're not!'" Even in Ireland.

U2, LIKE many others, are uncertain just where and how their transcendently eclectic, refreshingly realistic, naively passionate and elusive pop music is going to hit. Whether there's room, whether anyone's willing or allowed to be willing, to be receptive to a music that is not as seriously, purgatively 'innovative' as the post-punk noise that veers towards the Rough Trade arena, not quite as vulnerably half-original as the music of this year's Gig Of The Century bill (Ratio, Teardrop, Echo, M.Noise). Yet that's not as meticulously commercial as the Rats or Squeeze, that doesn't cut huge corners to seduce and entertain. The music that doesn't 'belong'.

U2 are not a pop group like The Undertones, although their music is driven and energised by exactly the same instinctive romantic desire — wish fulfilment. U2 are not a



Bono in action while The Edge peers over the ledge (far right).



Already big in Ireland but frustrated by the apathy on its rural ballroom circuit, U2 have to decide whether to jump from stardom in their homeland to obscurity in Britain.

Report PAUL MORLEY

getting excited. I bet we're speaking too quickly.

"I respect the fact that The Jam can touch people and what they're doing is an attempt to be 'real' — no myth or far-fetched fantasy — and it's for real people, not people who follow trends. We play to lots of kids who like The Jam and I think that they hear something like 'English Rose' and I believe that they go in and look for something deeper. That's a position that I envy."

The potential of pop is uncanny, and something not to be abused or underestimated.

"It's truly incredible. This is an incredible area to be getting involved in. Popular music. Phew!"

Bono can hardly contain himself. Neither can I.

"It's brilliant! And we've got other cookies in the basket that we're not even aware of yet! The attitude is important. It's an honour to be involved in it... to beat it. And we have the drive involved to beat it at its own game. I think the danger for U2 is not just achieving, but holding back the achievement. Like The Jam have done that really well. And that's the

one of them at any given time, because that is so stupid. I can't handle that.

"All this happens in London mostly and spreads from there. London is supposed to be permissive. London is supposed to be freedom! London is traps. London is boxes. London is chained in bondage, in fact. And if a band coming from thick paddy land — and that is not true — comes along and tells these people what's up they might not be awfully pleased."

A number of times during my weekend visit to Ireland, Bono hints that a move to London is all but inevitable. The type of move they (reluctantly) want to make is somewhere between the decision of The Undertones to leave Derry to tour constantly but always return, and The Boomtown Rats who have now disowned the fatherland.

"Everyone from the Rats has left the country really bitter," explains Bono. "I won't leave this country bitter at all. The plan is that if we have to leave, and we're not sure, it will only be for a while. It's basically that we feel the group has to be thrown into different circumstances if it's going to be stimulated, if it's going to change. It would be very easy to

of its youth.

U2 and close spirits are not simply fighting against lack of rock groups, or regressive traditional rock activity, but against the stiff tradition of Irish showbands, the giddy lack of pop choice or opportunity.

The Boomtown Rats have exploded out of the country, but there is little lingering after effect.

New groups are continually emerging — DC, Nein, Atrix, Virgin Prunes, Berlin — but the state of the rock fabric is depressing, the apathy pervasive, the submission unbearable.

"This country is blocked," says Bono. "These people are actually just waking up out of a sleep."

On the same day that The Boomtown Rats play Leixlip Castle in Dublin to 14,000 people, that Bob Geldof sweeps out on stage screaming "Who's won?" referring to the battle with Dublin aldermen for the right to play; the same day that 30 people are hurt and Geldof refers to Ireland as a "banana republic" and a "despicable nation", U2 appear at the Garden Of Eden club in Tullermy.

As an experiment U2 are to play the unfortunately titled but surprisingly attractive

Pictures DAVID CORIO

dance-club with (shudder) A Showband — Tony Stevens and his awesomely wonderful band.

Let me explain: showbands are slick, soulless, plastic. Showaddywaddy have based their whole act on them, but have more life. The showbands are failed rock musicians; their faces shine with aftershave, their hair is permanently immobile, their grins reveal too much teeth, their eyes are black holes. They're impossibly fit and tanned, their technique is improbably over-competent. Some of them play in their sleep when they're on stage. Stevens and his merry band are severely uniformed in white blazers, violently creased red flares and clean fingernails.

These bands are Ireland's heroes. Some have hits in Ireland. Mostly they cover UK chart hits. Bono tells me that before Ireland received YOTP, fans flocking to the dance halls thought that the showbands actually were Slade. Sweet. Mud...

U2 are smashing up against this tradition as much as daft rock developments elsewhere, determined to introduce original music and manner to backward Irish youth. A sense of rebellion, a gesture towards the exit. How futile is it? Bono and U2 sometimes wonder, but don't give up the fight.

If with the people of Irish city centres there's an undercurrent feel of inferiority — apparent and actual through outside enforcement — the youth of Tullermany aren't even aware that they're missing out on anything.

Before U2 appear the atmosphere is of a cold bald youth club. Sunday best pale and awkward teenagers, unsure and toughly giggly, sit around the central dance floor waiting for the first two or three to start dancing so that the rush can begin. Three bold, badly made-up and tartily dressed girls make a move to the dance floor, swing their



knees gamely, swish their hair like Legs and Co. to a Lene Lovich tape — but it could be anything. Within five minutes the dance floor is filled.

Once the kids and those slightly older have made it, they all do their best steps and twists, unselfconsciously, monotonously, strangely introverted. They rarely smile and there is a far away look in their eyes. Round the side on hard backed chairs the non-dancers sit and wait, probably just for the end of the evening. There is no bar, no alcohol; no obvious reason why they're here at all...

Except this is the week's big night out, the escape from one routine into another. It is more sad and dispiriting than I could ever begin to explain and you would ever believe. "You cannot exaggerate that sight," Bono will later say.

U2 COME alive on a carpeted, brightly lit stage four minutes late, 11.04. Tony Stevens will follow. The U2 opening blast is exhilarating. There is minimal response from the audience. A few lost souls wander aimlessly down to the front and stare up at Bono's frantic, manic animation, briefly bemused. Some gently sway. Sal along the front of the stage bored looking girls can't even be bothered to turn around and see what all the commotion is about. The audience peers at U2 like they're looking at animals in the zoo. They're not used to this intimidating energy, the volume, Bono's mobile passion. Momentarily curious, some wander away. Those that do dance could be dancing to anything.

The stupid thing is that U2 are not just a good new rock-pop group, boy isn't it great that they can emerge out of the unhelpful Irish environment. They don't even play a blinding Boomtown blend of post happy pop styles, excusable because of its patchily irresistible presence and selfish impact.

U2 are a four piece rock group stretching the possibilities of that line up to new accessible levels. It's not possible to say that U2 sound like blah, which is great. But let's toss a few images about to gauge the potential extent of U2's mesmerising all round appeal.



U2: Adam, The Edge, Bono and Larry.

Drummer Larry, bassman Adam and guitarist The Edge have been together with Bono since schooldays. Together, developing carefully but quickly, they've established their own language, their own ways of structuring and responding. The balance of their music is not as idiosyncratically staggering as Joy Division, but can be as refreshing. They can also manage the dense drive of The Jam, but are more flexible. The intricate but not alienating, chiming and charging structures of their songs are reminiscent of Penetration, a desperately underrated group Bono was very fond of.

U2 also come from all sides, appear louder and bigger than three musicians should be, as powerfully spread out as the Rats. Above all this they're fronted by a stocky, breathless, extrovert fully tuned-in to the possibilities of body language and eye contact. They're as unique as it is possible to be without splinting at the seams. And when their ideas are fully formed (and by the time I get Martin Zero to produce them) they will be... *unbeatable*.

In Tullermany it's a noise meaning little. It's hard to sway with. That lead singer can be quite funny, but mostly he's just like a maddie.

Why is he staring at me, why is he shouting at me? Why is he so worked up? Why? The question flicking through eyes are rhetorical. They're not really bothered. They're disinterested, but surely they don't deserve to be?

The performance hardly captures the depth of U2, the potential massive yet subtle assault. Bono has nothing to bounce off, just a blandness; he gets frustrated, slows down, misses cues, annoys the group. Larry shouts at him later for his indulgence, and Bono admits he lacked the discipline to sell himself, the ability to attack positively the disinterested.

But then only Showaddywaddy or perhaps Blondie or especially Tony Stevens and his band with their crazy covers of recent chartbusters could convert this isolated Irish apathy into something slightly lively.

After the performance the Garden of Eden manager runs through the motions. "Very good, very good," he chimes. "Much different from Horslips." That's the only rock group to have previously played the place.

"I felt ashamed because we didn't work," Bono tells me later. "I actually saw it as a great

challenge. I actually felt when we walked out on that stage that we might be able to meet that challenge. That's why I wasn't pissing about when I rushed on shouting GOOD EVENING EVERYONE! like exaggerated... I was trying to pretend that there were lots of people loving us there. For maybe 30, 35 minutes I tried that and then I just felt it slowing. It became like slow, motion. We blew the challenge, and that's bad.

"Tonight we could have shown what rock'n'roll can do, but we failed."

But if you don't try no one else will.

"If we move to London, become bigger, when we come back we would want to play this place but there's the danger that the manager is not going to pay us more than a hundred quid because we only draw a certain crowd... So we can't get there because it becomes impractical and those people get lost. They're gone! They might never see another amplifier again. EVER! Wow!"

The sad thing is they'd never notice.

Continues over 8

U PART 2

From previous page

ON THE Saturday night U2 played in Cork, Ireland's second city and a place naturally if infrequently served with mainland rock acts. Queues form early, the dance hall fills. Most of these people know an amp from a tea-bag. And because they've been given a tantalising series of glimpses of a fuller life, they're aware and starving.

Inside the hall I'm quickly surrounded by friendly eager lads in makeshift punk clothes covered in punky badges who hungrily batter me with curious searching questions. All these groups I keep writing about — what are they really like onstage? What do you think of U2? Cockney Rejects? Throbbing Gristle? Certain Ratio? The Worst!!!?

Ah, rock and roll...

The Cork U2 set shows how the group will be received in Britain when they begin to be accepted: excitedly, stupidly. It's like an Electric Ballroom gig: rowdy, bawdy, hands outstretched, fingers touching, bodies crushing. An obscene extreme to the Tullermy gig. It reveals how close U2 can come to being a straightforward rock group — one of those — and simultaneously how far they can move away from that.

Bono is adored. He dangerously treads the fine line between being adulated rock star and parodying that role. He controls fights and calms down a stage invasion. He's never sure whether to patronise the audience for their stupidity, understand and gee them on, cool them down or join in. In the end he does it all and more. Acting, hurting, fighting. His performance is unruly but riveting.

"I'm not yet fully in control of my own performance," he will tell me. "I'm not sure which way it's going to go when I hit that stage. It could go anyway. There have been times when I have been really frightened and could hardly sing. I hardly looked up. Like when I can't get anything out of the hall, the audience, I turn into myself, close my eyes and try to find something there."

What is he frightened of?

"I'm scared of the responsibility of standing in that space. Sometimes I don't want to be on that stage. Sometimes I can be really happy. Other times I am mean and nasty, and there are other times when I haven't got complete control of myself but I do want some sort of discipline. I haven't got that yet. I would like to take any situation and get something out of it. You can't always do that. You can try though. You must try."



Through lively, lashing, conscientiously structured songs like "Cartoon World", "Boy Girl", "Out Of Control", "Terror", "Twilight", "The Dream Is Over", "Another Day", "Shadows In Tall Trees", potentially splicing the wiggly world and the real world, U2 desperately point out the absurdity and danger of the happiness we're continually told we

enjoy/envy/suffer/can't do without. Attack it with irony — "Everybody's Happy Nowadays" — with anger, coyness, doubt. They define the contradiction of escape and escapism.

But for all the attempted value and variety of their pop it can sound obvious and predictable, just like Gang Of Four sometimes do. U2 need and know the need to rise above this. And they prefer to make it easier than harder. They know the small corners they cut.

"We don't want to go for the sort of innovation so called that can alienate an audience," he explains when we talk about the sometimes delicate dynamics of their music.

"We have to penetrate... we use those structures to penetrate into the audience."

"But I'm willing to play the game. I am, but in doing that I must retain my own effort, my own irony. I wouldn't falsify what I feel. On stage I look exuberant because I feel exuberant. I don't pretend. U2 never pretend. It's not that we've planned a compromise, it's what has come naturally within the group. U2 is like learning, it's like a child learning. We've been given Lego, and we're learning to put things together in new ways. This is a stage that we've got to that I'm not ashamed of, but I believe we will get much stronger."

U2 WILL soon be signed by a big British label and their naive, brave attempt to balance the points of view of such as Bob Geldof and Mark Smith will get its toughest test. A group like U2 should be chart material, playing new pop that doesn't falsify or perpetuate or enhance the bright fantasy. Radical entertainment.

If groups like U2 don't get the opportunity, through prejudice, complacency, cultishness, to move into view, the vibrancy and challenge of recent pop will steadily deteriorate. The problem could be felt within months. Tourists and Vapors in the charts. U2 and The Distractions not in the charts. No fun.

U2 don't deny fun, but neither do they deny reality. U2 are about colourposters, serious words and warnings, staying awake, laughing at uncertainty. You can smile at them, and with them.

U2 keep me happy! Furious! Unspoilt! Dissatisfied! Awake! Hungry! U2 should be for everyone.

And you too?



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...



Looking high, looking low.
Pic: Chris Gabrin

Thrills!

Top Liverpool Club Closes

ERIC'S: Gone But Not Forgotten

Townshend/Lowe Cock-Up Life's Work In The Dumper

PETE TOWNSHEND, enigmatic leader of mod revival group The Who, had toiled for three long years, sweating blood over his magnum opus. And at last it was complete. A wad of closely-typed pages the margins full of hand-written notes, the frontpiece bearing the single word *Lifthouse*.

Nicholas Roeg, famed director of *Performance*, *Don't Look Now* and *The Man Who Fell To Earth* had been enlisted to turn *Lifthouse* into a film as Townshend put the only copy of his master-work into a large envelope and instructed his management office to send it to Roeg post-haste.

A few days later the large envelope arrived at a recently furnished studio in Shepherd's Bush along with sundry other mail addressed to the studio's owner and operator, a hard-boiled top selling record producer called, co-incidentally, Nicholas Lowe.

Lowe's wits were not fully collected at that early hour of the day. He ploughed half-heartedly through his correspondence. Final demands for the electricity bill, fan mail from small American townships, hopeful demo tapes, the usual — all of it given fuzzy appraisal and then summarily

consigned to the waste-paper basket.

"What's this?" Mused the bemused producer as he removed the wad of A4 from its wrapper.

"*Lifthouse*? A film script! What am I supposed to do with a bleeding film script?"

"What indeed?"

"In the dumper..."

And so in the dumper it went. Perhaps Lowe had failed to notice the name of Peter Townshend inscribed for copyright at the bottom of each page. Perhaps he hadn't...

Some days later the frantic voices of Townshend and Roeg began yelling back and forth down the telephone line. Have you got it yet? I didn't know you'd sent it. But I sent it days ago. So where is it?

A couple of desperate hours passed before Townshend uncovered the awful truth.

He was round to Lowe's place in a flash. And not a moment too soon, for with the dustmen's arrival imminent he found his work covered with days of Lowe's accumulated debris.

Which leaves the question — was the whole thing worth saving? We shall see.

NICK ROGUE



Saturday's demo leaves Mathew St. home of Eric's. Pic: Derek Massey

Punters Protest as Police Pile On Pressure

ERIC'S club in Liverpool went into voluntary liquidation last week. It didn't go bust — the pressure just got too much.

For several weeks rumours had been going round that the police intended to get the club closed down, and these were confirmed when co-owners Roger Eagle and Pete Fulwell received a visit from a CID sergeant who said the club's licence would be opposed when it came up for renewal next September. This would be on the grounds of two minor signing offences — non-members who'd not been signed in had been caught in a couple of recent police raids.

The police clampdown on Eric's is part of a much broader action they're taking throughout Merseyside. At the last count there were 235 places where you could drink after hours in Liverpool, and in the view of police chief Ken Oxford that's a couple of hundred too many. Part of Thatcher's general toughening up on law and order, but it's also more personal with Mr. Oxford.

After a notorious gang land trial in the city in which there were allegations of people running down broken legs and various essential limbs chopped off, a judge was bold enough to comment that the police didn't seem to have enough control of the Liverpool clubland. Mr. Oxford wants to prove him wrong. He's already succeeded in getting several long-established clubs closed down, and Eric's was just one of many other targets.

And last Friday the club was raided. The police were getting all the blame for the imminent

shutdown anyway, so perhaps they decided to justify it. At the Psychedelic Furs gig the Drugs Squad heaved their way in. Three van loads of people were taken away and 11 arrested. It was the usual sort of thing. They picked on the black kids first then the ones who looked least like they were wearing uniform. Two members of the band were taken away, then they ripped the seating in the food bar with razors, emptied the contents of their handbags onto the floor.

If there's one club in Liverpool that was well run, and in which there was no gangland heaviness it was Eric's. And, of course, no interested parties on either side of the law ever got any protection money from Pete or Roger.

The real reason for the closure, though, had already arrived in the shape of Eric's creditors. Contrary to many people's belief the club didn't make a lot of money and Pete Fulwell had always said that they'd be sunk if everyone asked for their money at once. That's precisely what happened.

That fact coupled with the general disastrous economic climate proved too much for Eric's. If people are going out they want to be sure of what they're getting. They'd rather pay a lot every now and then and take in a big concert with a known band than risk going out to see new talent. In these circumstances, the more successful you are, the more successful you are. The medium sized venues and businesses of all kinds go down.

Eric's excellence lay in providing an out-of-London venue for up and

coming bands, and Roger's booking record was immaculate. Since the place opened in October 1976 you wouldn't have missed anyone worth seeing. The first four bands were The Runaways, The Count Bishops, The Sex Pistols and The Stranglers. It went from there.

Another reason the club didn't make a lot of money was that it didn't charge much. 50p membership to start with — it recently went up to £1.10. It should have been at least a liver. "There's no way we could ask the kids for that much," says Roger. "Our policy was to make the music available to as many people as possible."

A mention also has to be made of all the local bands who supported the club and played there. Deaf School, Elvis Costello, Big In Japan, Echo and Bunnymen, The Teardrop Explodes, Naughty Lumps, Yachts, Moondogs, Supercharge, 29th and Dearborn, Pink Military Stand Alone, Nightmares in Wax, Wah Heat, Original Mirrors, The Planets, Malchior, The Spitfire Boys, Dalek I, Orchestral Manoeuvres, the Moderates, Modern Eon, and all the rest.

Eric's record label will continue, and there are now offers of money flying about. There are other plans for a label to re-release treasured oldies, exclusive tee-shirts. Post modernist liquidation may be upon them, but it's not the last you'll hear of Eric's. After all, the very day after the raid, over one hundred people marched in protest and a petition can be signed at Probe Records.

Eric's may be gone, but it's not forgotten...

CHRISTINE RUTH

Blair Peach Revelations

THE PLOT THICKENS

THE INQUEST on the death of Hackney school teacher Blair Peach, killed during the Southall riots of April 23, 1979, will resume on April 28 in the midst of some startling new evidence.

A *Sunday Times* lead story (March 16), alleges that Scotland Yard's investigation bureau submitted factual evidence to the Director of Public Prosecutions claiming that the fatal blow was indeed struck by a member of one SPG team present during the rioting (all of London's 200 strong SPG were at Southall, divided into units). *Sunday Times* insight team lists evidence that indicates one man was responsible for the death blow; that certain officers could be charged with causing an affray; that certain questions were not answered, lies were told constituting obstruction to justice and that certain uniformed officers in the Metropolitan Police had tried to thwart the enquiry.

Despite the evidence the DPP, Sir Thomas Hetherington, failed to act, claiming that the information was

insufficient to warrant criminal proceedings, and that it did not satisfy his privately held quota of "51 per cent", or a better than even chance of conviction.

The new evidence also uncovers a measure of the rivalry between CID officers and the SPG. The *Sunday Times* quotes one unnamed officer as commenting "If it had been one of our men they would have put him in the dock by now". But the allegations reveal that uniformed officers at Barnes police station stymied investigating officers during a search on an SPG locker room where unauthorised weapons had been found. The investigators were mysteriously called away from the spot and on return the weapons had been removed.

A *Sunday Times* Market and Opinion Research poll conducted elsewhere in the newspaper reveals that 61 per cent of those questioned on professional people's honesty and ethical standing still felt the police were of a high quality.

After the investigations on April 28 the public may change its mind.

Counterfeit Records: A Special Inquiry

FAKES THAT COST A FORTUNE

THE BACKGROUND by Roy Carr

HOW MANY counterfeit records have you got in your collection? If you're into buying imports then you probably own at least one! But don't bother looking, you won't find it.

Millions of almost impossible-to-detect facsimiles of current best-sellers are now in circulation and things have reached such a crisis that the American recording industry is feverishly experimenting with special inks, papers, and infra-red techniques in an effort to combat those organised crime operations.

The problem is complex, though, for in many

instances counterfeits are actually being produced from record companies' very own manufacturing components by bribing the workforce to smuggle out the relevant materials. What's more, once the counterfeits have been shipped to sympathetic distributors and large retail chains these middle-men are able to return the albums to the record companies on a sale-or-return basis, and get legitimate albums back. It's a profitable and hard to detect racket and it's costing the American record industry literally millions of dollars a year.

THE BREAKTHROUGH by Mick Farren

THE SAM GOODY Corporation is one of the largest and oldest chains of record stores in the United States. It has an established reputation for solidity and discount prices. It turned out this week, however, that those competitive prices may not just be a result of good business management as the company's president and vice president were indicted on charges of knowingly dealing in counterfeit records and tapes.

The charges follow a series of investigations spanning several months and conducted by both police and federal agents. Up until now the majority of cases of this

kind were directed at single, isolated retailers and a few semi-pro bootleggers. The official excuse was that the various law enforcement agencies neither had the time nor the manpower to effectively combat the problem.

Now the picture has radically changed. With record company profits being seriously eroded, someone in the Justice department has decided that something must be done.

The majority of the tapes concerned (with a retail value of over \$1 million) were counterfeit copies of "Grease" and "Saturday Night Fever" and it would appear,

according to the charges, that Sam Goody were returning huge quantities of these fakes to ASD as unsold stock. Once the returns had been routinely accepted, Sam Goody would be given credit against purchase of legitimate records, thus duping the record companies into buying up counterfeit copies of their own best sellers.

Whatever the eventual outcome of the Sam Goody case, it won't be the last of its kind. Counterfeiting has the record industry running scared, and they'll pile on every kind of pressure to plug the leak that could, in some people's estimation, actually bleed the business to death.

Does Anyone Know This Man?



File: George Badnar

YES, it's that wooden guitarist again, who first graced the NME's pages just three weeks ago in our HM Special.

And after all that publicity it seems that our hero, who bears the unlikely handle of Rob Loonhouse no longer finds the Soundhouse a big enough stage for his talents. Here he is on stage and upstaging Iron Maiden at the Hammersmith Odeon.

By the way, Rob, we would point out in the interests of accuracy that a real flying V guitar doesn't actually have a tremolo arm.



From NME, March 1, 1980.

THE REWARD

THE FBI has been implicated in any number of curious activities over the years but "helping to preserve an environment in which creativity and the arts can flourish"?

It was with this unlikely epithet that the Bureau was presented with the Recording Industry Association of America's Cultural Award at a recent dinner bash attended by members of Congress and the Administration.

The RIAA, it seems, was anxious to express lasting gratitude to the Feds for their campaign to root out the pirates, counterfeiters and other plagiarisers of "intellectual property".

Lowry

THE GREAT DEBATE

LOOKS LIKE IT'S TIME TO BE QUIET AGAIN. ONE OF THESE PERIODS WHEN THE RATIO OF ARSEHOLES AND FOOLS IS SO GREAT THAT...



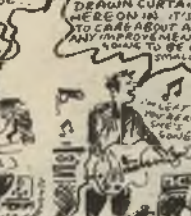
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PLUS YOU'VE NO RIGHT TO TELL OTHER PEOPLE HOW TO RUN THEIR LIVES IF YOUR OWN RELATIONSHIPS ARE A JOKE. LIKE THE GIRL SAID WE NEED HONOURABLE SENTIMENTAL EMOTIONS YOU CAN CHANGE...



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AND WE'RE GOING TO FEEL SUCH GOODAM ASSHOLES FOR GOING ALONG WITH IT ALL WHEN THE NEXT RECORD CLASST COME ALONG & POINT OUT HOW UTTERLY ROTTEN IT ALL IS FROM POLITICS THROUGH POP MUSIC TO THE PRESENT TREND IN MENSWEAR & ACCESSORIES!!!



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BIG BOY

DEBUT ALBUM

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Kate B-52 Pic: Godlis



No Nukes Music

THE weekend after next will see the first anniversary of the nuclear 'mishap' at Harrisburg and to celebrate the event there will be a march against nuclear power on Saturday March 29 from Hyde Park. The previous evening also sees a benefit gig at Central London Poly organised by No Nukes Music and featuring John Cooper-Clarke, Essential Logic and The Ivory Brothers.

Here's hoping we'll all be around for the second anniversary.

Joy Division

To Be
canonised
— official

LICHT und Blindheit' is the conceptual title of a French released Joy Division single on Sordide Sentimentale. The record features two previously unrecorded tracks, 'Atmosphere' and 'Dead Souls', incorporated in a lavish folder that includes some dense text written by one Jean-Pierre Tournel and a cover fold-out painting of the Reaper(?) straddling a mountainous divide, or something, by Jean-François Jambou.

Tournel and Jambou's first venture into what they term 'Gesamtkunstwerk' (Total Art) involved Throbbing Gristle. The aesthetic success of that project persuaded Joy Division and their pleasantly taciturn managerial person Rob Gretton to try their hand with the dedicated Frenchmen. "We had a pleading letter from



The world's flashest ever single sleeve

Jean-Pierre what's it," remarked Gretton dourly. "And we agreed 'cos it's interesting to see how different people handle different aspects. There are no restrictions from Factory on this sort of thing." Joy Division presented Jean and Jean with the material, recorded last autumn with Martin Hannett in Cargo Studios, and left them to devise the package. What did Gretton think of the text, a eulogy to Romantic spectacle which attempts to place Joy Division within a framework that includes references to St Teresa's Ecstasy, Marcel Brion and Heinrich Von Kleist?

"I thought it was a bit over the top," Rob deadpanned. "I dunno if we'll release the songs here but I think 'Atmosphere' will be the B-side of an American 12" single ('She's Lost Control')."

Meanwhile Tournel has fixed a limited edition of 1578 (historically significant, of course) on the single and Joy Division are in a secret London studio (no callers please) recording their second album.

LORD BYRON

Thrills!

B-52's Album — Pronto!

WORD crept through that surrealist dance band The B-52s were about to start recording phase two of the bouffant bop in funky Nassau. The Thrills desk placed a call for verification.

"Hi! Yeah we've been here for a few days, and we've got a title for the album." Kate Pierson pre-empted the question. "It's going to be called 'Urgentissimo'. What's it mean? Fred ... what's it mean? Fred says it means pronto."

Oh.
"But we might change it if we think of something better."

The B-52s have been taking it easy

since they returned from playing Japan and moved into a house in upstate New York just after Christmas.

"We've been ice-skating, throwing snowballs, practising and writing songs for our new album. Let's see there's 'Strobe Light', 'Devil in My Car', 'Dirty Back Roads', 'Private Idaho', 'Quiche Lorraine' ..."

Quiche Lorraine?

"Yeah, it's a French dish."

Of course.

Kate thought Japan was fantastic. The band played in a club in the ancient capitol of Kyoto. Japanese popstars went wild.

"We were told they'd be real subdued, because they have very polite customs there, but they weren't. All the girls wore wigs. They like to imitate, and they're strong on anything visual. But they do it so well."

The B-52s have certainly come a long way since the days when their biggest ambition was to tour the world in a boat.

"That's right. Now our ambition is to tour the world in a caboose."

Click.

Whiiiiirrrrrr ...

PAL LAVA

The Lone Groover

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ON CAPITOL RECORDS

Thrills!**Dinosaur's Corner**

Cozy Corner

Pic: Fin Costello



"NME . . . brilliant."
claims HM Hero

SINCE most 'rock' critics would rather admit to liking The Nolans than praise out-and-out heavy metal, gents of the latter persuasion tend to be hypersensitive where the music press is concerned. Thus, Rainbow's Ritchie Blackmore is deeply antagonistic towards this organ, a view he's unlikely to have altered as a result of Glenn Gibson's recent live review. Cozy Powell, however, thought it was a bit of a scream.

"NME can be brilliant sometimes and it can also write a lot of drivel. I don't give a shit if people slag me off: it's part of their job, it's show business. I'm beyond all that, I don't care."

"Funny enough, last week's review of Rainbow was actually really funny. I thought it was great. Then there was a drum solo. Then the buses came to take everybody away — I cracked up. Great. I think the others take it a bit more personally."

Like painting the Forth Road Bridge or working on an oil rig, playing with Rainbow is not exactly a soft option. Since the drummer joined in late '76, the tempestuous Mr. Blackmore has hired and fired at a bewildering rate. Why are you still there, Cozy?

"Cos I'm the only person that stands up to him. Everybody else goes 'Yes Ritchie, no Ritchie, three bags full Ritchie'. I think he respects the fact that (a) I'll at least have a go at him and (b) he knows that I'll always be there and I'll always give 100%."

Of artists to emerge in the post-Pistols age, Cozy predictably admires Joe Jackson and The Police, who must be heartily sick of being every conservative's fave ravs. The Straws' "Part Of The Union" was the most up-to-date item in the warm-up music before Rainbow's Wembley show. We even got "All You Need Is Love", in sharp contrast to the unbelievably loutish "All Night Long". ("I don't know about your brain, but you look alright" etc.)

"We've had a lot of flak about the lyrics, understandably so. That's something you should put to Roger (Glover). I'm sure he'd have a good answer for you."

"We had a lot of demons and wizards before, now we've got a lot of love and kisses."

HARRY GEORGE

Thrills!**USA Floyd Fever**

PRE-MODERNIST rock sedative The Pink Floyd have triggered an intermedia promotions war between three Philadelphia radio stations all competing for the same Adult-Oriented dial-spinner. The stakes are high, say trade rag *Billboard*. Listener figures determine where advertisers put their money, and the new Arbitron ratings loom.

Station WMMR kicked off with a 'Think Pink' competition. The winning pair would be taken to a Floyd concert in Los Angeles, while 50 runners-up would be taken to a Floyd concert in New York. (You figure it out). Several hundred other participants received a copy of 'The Wall'.

Ten days later station WYSP announced prizes of 94 tickets for the concert in New York, and six for the concert in Los Angeles — but contestants had to pick up entry forms at certain record stores and then phone the station if their names were announced.

Leaping into the fray, station WFLI gave away four tickets for Los Angeles to people who called the station and then listened for their names over the air.

WMMR, the station that started all this, then upped its offer of Los Angeles tickets to



Dave Gilmour gets solo pic instead of Roger Waters shock!

four and added a 'Think Pink' weekend for radio listeners — at the same time as WYSP had its 'Pink Floyd Weekend'.

It's a wonder those Adult-Oriented listeners can stand the pace. The first person to send in their ticket for Floyd's British appearance wins a free brick.

SYD BARRAT

Thrills!

We can't call our new single 'Romance' they'll think it's by Andy Williams.



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Charmel

Julien Temple: the art of cheap publicity. Pic: Mike Lays



TEMPLE'S BALL

Pistols' Film Wows LA

THE Citizen Kane of rock 'n' roll pictures... the most imaginative use of a rock 'n' roll group in films since The Beatles debuted in A Hard Day's Night. So says Variety magazine, the film biz oracle about — would you believe — The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle. Director, Julien Temple took the film to Los Angeles two weeks ago where critical appreciation was so great that, on the strength of it, the film has been sold to an undisclosed American distributor. And in this country it's now definite that Virgin Records will be making their distribution debut with the film "In the next two months, either directly or through a major."

Temple who co-wrote the screenplay with McLaren, but who was later accused of "treason" by the latter, had this to say.

"I think it's funny. He thinks it's a sell-out but it's certainly not from my point of view. The review in Variety will probably do Malcolm's box even more. It's a real shame because the idea is much more important than personal politics. It happened with Rotten and Malcolm and with other people as well as myself and Malcolm and that's a total waste of time... It's the idea you have to have loyalty to. I've retained that loyalty to the idea completely throughout."

"The thing about the showing in Filmex, up until then it had been seen by more lawyers than anyone else and

I'd only seen it with lawyers sitting in each others' laps so it was really good just to see it on a big screen. The audience were great, they clapped — you could tell who was the most popular by the number of claps they got. Vicious got lots of claps. I think they were thrown by the dialogue, they expected a more heroic depiction of the group. I thought that all the Hollywood punks would like it because they're so stranded over there, but in fact, they didn't — which is good, because all they wanted to do was hero worship Sid Vicious. They argued a lot, which is good because that's what they're supposed to do."

In the meantime, Temple has not been unaware of the similarities between his opus and The Clash flick "Rude Boy", which shadowed "Swindle" all the way to the Berlin Film Festival last month.

"The Clash were always pale imitations of the Sex Pistols... they've even gone to the extent of getting a litigation. The Sex Pistols were the masters of the form, you know, and The Clash are still struggling and striving to see if they're heavy metal or FM or whether they're ska... they should have broken up at the same time... they'll all have to kill their girlfriends next..."

DAVID BRITAIN

Thrills!

Political Baez

This Year's Sermon

"NO FLIES on me" was the fundamental message delivered by Joan Baez last week to a hastily-convened press audience.

The scribes had been assembled in the Chelsea parlour of Iranian folk songstress Shusha, (see story below) ostensibly to note details of Ms Baez' one-woman benefit in aid of Cambodian refugees (at the Rainbow Wednesday March 19). What they got instead was an inoffensively smug sermon on the penis of war and the Baez Method of organised pacifism.

Were these brandy-glass philosophers going to stand for such impudence? No Chance. Most declared themselves thoroughly ticked off by her presumed omniscience; her declarations of political near-infallibility and remarks to the effect that she, virtually alone among her 60's peacenik chums, has maintained a stable and consistent world's-eye view.

One particularly gnarled hack was moved to ask: "Doesn't it ever get a bit wearying worrying about the world? Do you ever think of giving it up?"

"I don't think there's anything particularly virtuous about what I do", she riposted. "I really feel some people were born to play tennis. They get happy and adrenalinated and healthy and feel fantastic on court and nothing else quite compares with it."

"As for me, well I'm almost forty. I've been doing socially engaged things since I was 14 and clearly that's when I'm the most adrenalinated, the healthiest and happiest."

Most of her work this past year has been research and fund-raising activities for a pocket resistance organisation called Humanitas of which she is president.

Although concerned with abuse and despotism the world over, its present preoccupation is the plight of Cambodian refugees in Thailand. It is this activity and the implied criticism of the Maoist regime (love-object of the '60s American underground) that has raised the ire of her fellow U.S. agitators, a number of whom have accused her of being confused and/or a running dog lackey of CIA fascism. She and Jane Fonda, for instance, have already been involved in some public acrimony.

"I never had any illusions about Jane Fonda's non-violence", she opined "because I don't think she had any. I had some illusions about some of my pacifist friends and I'm very upset with them and I've written a very clear letter to a number of them in the States because it was insinuated in a very patronising way that Joan Baez wasn't quite sure where she wanted to be."

"So I wrote back saying I know exactly where I want to be. It's where I am and where the hell are you and why do you go on pretending everything's ok in Vietnam when it's human rights here and human rights there..."

To which your Thrillman asked, a trifle sarcastically: How come you've managed to maintain a stable point of view, Joan, when all your pacifist friends are so confused?

"The reason I say this with a certain air of... knowing, is that

"Support peace or I'll kill you". Pic: Andre Caillag.



we've spent a year doing research. We're not dummies. We've researched Czechoslovakia, Greece under the coup, Chile under the coup, Argentina, you name it...

The evening was shortly to degenerate into a pro/anti pacifism slanging match, centrepiece of which was the time-honoured conundrum: What then would you have done about Hitler, if not fight him?

Even Ms Baez' mother (a natural-born pacifist) was lured into this one but could offer little more than "there must be something better than violence but I'm not smart enough to know the answer".

Music fanciers may already have perceived that warbling was not to be the main item on the agenda.

"Music", said Joan, "follows a far second beat when I'm so wrapped up in politics". Although she did plan to make amends with voice lessons and a keener interest in her act.

How do you prepare for a concert?, she was asked.

"Half hour before, I get my guitar out of the closet and have to try to remember how to play it."

Prices for Wednesday's performance were £6, £5 and £4.

ANDREW TYLER

IRAN

Working For The Clampdown

HAVING purged themselves of a host of political misfits and hoodlums, the guardians of the Iranian revolution now turn to the thoroughly nondescript.

It was announced from Tehran last week that a performer called Gu Gush, described as the Gilla Black of the East, has been summoned before the Revolutionary Council. She will answer charges relating to her alleged corruption of Iranian youth and thereafter no doubt have a number of limbs removed.

Last reports had Ms Gush "somewhere in America performing her cabaret". It is thought unlikely that she will

attend as commanded.

Gu Gush was perhaps the most successful of a flourishing breed of pre-revolutionary entertainers specialising in a simple-minded Mediterranean pop, aimed largely at rich tourists and performed in more than 500 cabarets that suddenly mushroomed in the capital. These clubs closed down with the coming of the revolution but it is their lingering aftertaste that concerns the new leaders.

Ms Gush has been singled out, it's assumed, because she not only epitomised the wasted mediocrity of the movement but because she was often associated with

drug taking and wantonness.

Coincidental to the rise of Cabaret Pop was a resurgence of classical Persian music but even this phenomenon has not been well regarded by the new rulers. Shu Sha, an Iranian musician living in London, suspects, in fact, that as many as 20 classical musicians — most of them in exile — are also on the wanted list.

"A lot of people get victimised," she told Thrills, "because they are associated with an atmosphere of decadence that the puritanical leaders find repugnant. The emphasis is on obedience to Islamic orthodoxy. The only music now tolerated is of the

religious sort... mystic chanting and that type of thing."

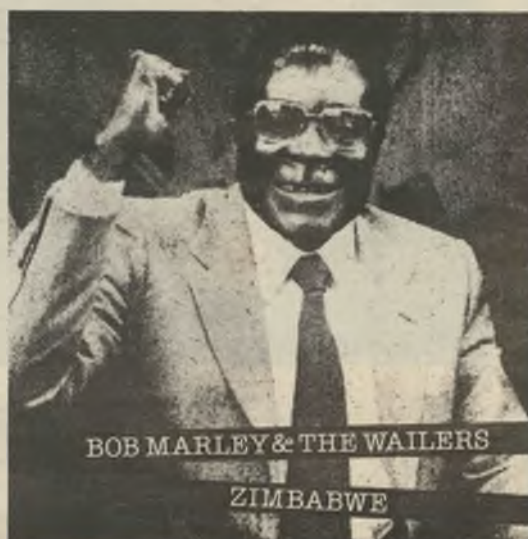
Shu Sha last visited Iran a year ago. Since moving to London as a student she has been performing and recording authentic Persian folk material, the last batch captured on the album "From East To West", produced by Paul Buckmaster.

(A call to the Iranian Embassy in London elicited. "Can't comment, I can give you no information about the pop music. Sorry. Goodbye.")

ANDREW TYLER

Thrills!

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THE KNACK

BY ROY CARR

The highly original thoughts of Chairman Fieger

LET'S GET this straight from the start. The Knack are nothing but a bunch of dirty old men suss enough to realise that in today's moral climate shabby raincoats and a bag of sweets are no substitute for Beatle threads and bubblegum.

For The Knack to masquerade as a rock'n'roll band is as ludicrous as producer Mike Chapman proclaiming them — in all seriousness — "the future of rock'n'roll".

Everything about The Knack, even their name, is as second-hand as their music, which is as cold-blooded and contrived as their dubious motives for performing it. Contrary to what they purport to be, The Knack are not a product of their so-called generation, but a pathetic reflection of the American music industry's inability to come realistically to terms with the events of the last four years.

IT'S QUITE apparent that The Knack are primarily a one-man masterplan, a means of gratifying singer and rhythm guitarist Doug Fieger's monstrous ego and Beatle-fuelled fantasies. Since none of the three puds who assist him onstage ever demand to be the centre of attention (Berton Averre, Prescott Niles and Bruce Gary, respectively on lead guitar, bass and drums, look like the layabout sons of Mafia restauranters), all three pairs of black Cuban-heel boots could presumably be filled instantly by new feet.

In conversation Fieger is utterly obsessed with his own self-importance, misinformed in his statements and petulant in his arguments. He should really restrict himself to answering questions about favourite colours.

But The Little Girls Understand may well be a clever, catchy title for The Knack's second album — it's also a phrase Fieger continually quotes like a well-trained parrot by way of redress whenever the going gets rough — but what the impressionable little girls don't understand is that they are being exploited by their elders.

Put under pressure, Fieger contradicts himself so often and his rhetoric becomes so offensive that in the end it's almost impossible to engage the man in anything resembling a sensible dialogue. When cornered, he resorts to rebuffs even more clichéd than the songs he writes.

Fieger's conceit knows no bounds. So absorbed is he in acting out his un-Fab Four charade that he obviously has as little contact with reality as those who tout The Knack as the acceptable face of New Wave (sic). Although he denies any possible Beatles' connections with the same guile as Nixon denied all knowledge of Watergate, Fieger is nevertheless quick to compare the meagre talents of both himself and The Knack with those of Lennon, McCartney, Harrison and Starr.

Don't get me wrong — there's nothing criminal in plagiarising established forms; many of rock's most inspired moments have been constructed on familiar foundations. However, The Knack possess neither the imagination nor the intelligence, let alone the humour, of, say, either Cheap Trick or Rockpile and are unable to personalise anything they touch. All they have to offer is blatantly inferior imitation and, if I didn't know any better, I'd assume The Knack were themselves

manufactured in Taiwan.

When I enquire of the man who fires pubescent emotions with ditties about little girls sitting on his face, talking dirty and fantasising about being deflowered if he would like to see the age of consent drastically lowered, he feigns the kind of coyness one simply doesn't expect from a man in his mid-20s, saying he doesn't even know what the age of consent is. I tell him that it averages out at around 16.

"I haven't run into any difficulty as yet," Fieger continues, "and I'll only worry about that when her daddy comes knockin' at my door. For the time being, let's just say, to quote Paul Simon, I'm just one step ahead of the country line... huh, just keeping the customers satisfied!"

So what kind of little girls are attracted to these fantastic 500 percenters? Are they just the kind that giggle at the smutty lyrics or are they a much bolder breed?

"Speaking for The Knack," Fieger rhapsodises lecherously, "the whole groupie thing has changed. Girls come to our shows because they want to go to bed with us without any fear that afterwards they're going to be thought of as sluts and whores. They're pure," he dribbles slowly, "clean... pretty beautiful... and," he sighs, "so very horny."

Such sentiments must of course make The Knack a huge hit with feminists, not to mention parents. Fieger couldn't give a monkey's one way or the other.

"I contend," he says climbing on his soap box, "that we just tell the truth about modern times. Things are just that much looser, but the difference between men and women is the same as it has always been and if you or anyone else wants to analyse what we do then you're full of shit!"

AS WE sit facing one another in his room at London's Intercontinental Hotel, tempers begin to fray whilst I insist The Knack are a '60s throwback and Fieger maintains they represent the '80s.

"Maybe," he sneers, "you're obsessed with the '60s!"

I tell him I'm not.

"Well, neither am I," is his smug reply.

The general impression Fieger gives is that he would dearly love to curtail our interview by reducing everything to the level of "Yes you are"/"No, I'm not" verbal ping-pong, especially when I point out the obvious Beatles' influences in his work.

"I don't believe in image," retorts the constantly image-conscious Fieger, "I just believe in music."

He then enquires if I saw The Knack's Dominion Theatre gig and, if so, what was my honest opinion. I inform Fieger that it was one of the most contrived spectacles I've ever witnessed — right down to the *A Hard Day's Night* stage set.

He becomes furious. "Tell me," he explodes, "how can you possibly dress three front guys and a drummer any differently than what we do or set up the equipment any other way?"

Simple, I say — by not wearing light little black Beatle suits, trying to reconstruct the most famous of all seminal Beatle sets and regurgitating their licks.

"Tell me Elvis Costello doesn't set up like the Dave Clark Five!"

Elvis Costello doesn't set up like the Dave Clark Five.

"BULLSHIT! BULLSHIT!"

But he really doesn't.

"He fuckin' well does!"

The man's a fool.

"DAMN IT!" he roars, "all great entertainment is contrived!"

The man did say "great" and "contrived," didn't he? Pray continue.



Doug Fieger pix: Kevin Cummins

"If," Fieger continues to blurt, "contrived means that we do it well... play in tune... on the beat and with precision... perform utilising all the showbiz aspects of entertainment, then yes, damn it, we are contrived!"

But isn't that what I've been saying all along? Surely rock music is supposed to be an alternative to traditional showbiz contrivance. And what about passion and spontaneity and...?

"Come on, come on, come on," he argues, "do you think that when The Beatles got on stage for 28 minutes at The Hollywood Bowl they weren't contrived? They were fuckin' brilliant, but they were also *FUCKIN' CONTRIVED!*"

MR FIEGER is now screaming I fear for his sanity, but continue my line of questioning and suggest that The Knack have carefully analysed what gave The Beatles their success and are intent on recreating this whilst throwing in remnants of The Who, Kinks and Zeppelin for good measure. He maintains this is not so, but systematically blows the whistle on himself.

"What have the little kids got nowadays?" asks the man who insists cars and sex are his fans' only interests, "all they've got is Kiss, which isn't much. Today's music is being made for and by old people — and by old people I mean anyone over 28 years old."

So who the hell are The Jam, The Clash, Elvis Costello, The Specials, Selector and The Ramones singing

about and to whom? Fieger can't answer me, so he reiterates his contempt for the press.

Again I state that The Knack are just re-selling a poor replica of The Beatles' myth to those too young to know what they're buying.

"But," he replies as if he's letting me in on some big secret, "they haven't seen it before. They don't know. So are you going to deny them the right, the privilege of seeing rock'n'roll?"

Certainly not, although I'd much rather The Knack had something original to offer; Fieger immediately falls for the bait when I liken 'My Sharona' to some obscure Kinks' riff.

"Bullshit!" he rants, "it's just a re-write of Smokee Robinson And The Miracles 'Going To A Go Go' and proceeds to drum out the rhythm on his knees, then stops, realising he's been caught with his hand in the cookie jar. An '80s band indeed!"

"The Beatles and The Who weren't original when they first started recording," he then claims.

I rebuke such stupidity. "BULLSHIT! FUCKIN' BULLSHIT!" The Beatles had six cover versions on their first album and The Who were just doing James Brown covers!"

Fieger seems to ignore such things as breadth of vision and the simple fact that it's not what you do, but the way that you do it.

"Give us a chance, damn it," he pleads, "how long did it take for The Beatles to do 'Sgt. Pepper'?"

6 I know all about ska and bluebeat. My mother was a big fan of Harry Belafonte! 9

6 The Doors? That was just Jim Morrison setting Arthur Rimbaud to music! 9

6 Elvis Costello? His band sets up just like The Dave Clark Five! 9

6 'My Sharona'? It was just a rewrite of an old Miracles song! 9 (Ooops...)

Continued page 63

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Saturday 19th: St Austell, New Cornish Riviera
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Tuesday 22nd: Great Yarmouth Tiffanys
Wednesday 23rd: Peterborough Writings Stadium
Thursday 24th: Coventry Tiffanys
Saturday 26th: Bridlington Royal Spa Pavilion
Sunday 27th: Bradford St Georges Hall
Monday 28th: Deeside Leisure Centre
Tuesday 29th: Blackpool Tiffanys
Wednesday 30th: Sunderland Mayfair

MAY

Friday 2nd: Carlisle Assembly Rooms
Saturday 3rd: West Calder Regal Suite
Sunday 4th: Aberdeen Fusion Ballroom
Monday 5th: Irvine Magnum Centre
Wednesday 7th: Belfast White Hall
Thursday 8th: Dublin Olympic Ballroom



SINGLES

Reviewed
this week by
ANDY GILL

ADAM & THE ANTS:

Cartrouble (Do It). Interesting blend of the lumpy and the sprightly on this, the first single from the new Ants, but spoilt by a certain hesitance. Things don't really get off the leash until near the end, by which time it's too late to be effective. And never having run a mobile pollution unit, I find it hard to sympathise with Adam on this one.

THE SELECTER:

Missing Words (2-Tone). Another 2-Tone record, not unlike all the other 2-Tone records. As such, you'll already know whether you're going to buy it, no matter what I say. 'Missing Words' lacks the easy grace that characterises the best of the genre, and generally sounds just a little too pompous for its own good. To be brutally frank, it bores the balls off me.

JOHN FOX: No-One Driving

(Metal Beat). Two follow-ups in one, all housed in a grainy grey getofold sleeve. A bargain, I suppose, though personally I find Fox's approach too dependent on preconceptions of 'austerity' to be palatable. Besides 'No-One Driving' (one of the better tracks from 'Metamatic'), there's another urban lament, 'This City', and two pleasantly innocuous instrumental pieces in the Cluster vein, 'Glimmer' and 'Mr No'. Nary a smile cracks the vinyl — everything's too clear-cut to be of any interest, too black/white, urban/rural, etc. No middle ground. A hit, of course, but a complete dead-end. And couldn't it all have gone on one EP?

THE MEMBERS: Romance (Virgin). Until 'Armageddon Time' came along, 'Offshore Banking Business' was easily the best (straight) white reggae around. With 'Romance', The Members step sideways into 2-Tone territory, attacking women's magazine fiction with their characteristic brash bonhomie. The results are somewhat less than auspicious, though this may be partly due to the hole being punched off centre. Check before you buy.

LANDSCAPE: European Man (RCA).

VIVABEAT: Man From China (Charisma 12). Landscape's 'European Man' recycles all the tired old clichés about men-as-automata, and sounds all the sillier for singing them in deft treated vocals. A pity, because otherwise it's a good chunk of electro-funk, driven along by some snappy synths and the rudest bass of the week. Vivabeat's 'Man From China', though ultimately too long and predictable, is an annoyingly catchy electronic bubble seasoned with the occasional pinch of whistling (for that sorely-needed soupçon of humanity). Could be a hit, if it gets the airplay.

SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS

ARE CANADIANS: Feeling Sheepish (Buge). More drummerless electronic chaff, low-key poppy stuff which goes no further than a statement of intent. Weedy female vocals, of the kind that used to be called 'pristine' or 'angelic' ten years ago. From Hertfordshire, it seems.



A 2-tonic guide to posing: David Sylvian of Japan and Pauline Black of The Selecter. Pix: Anton Corbijn

SINGLE OF THE WEEK (NO CONTEST)

TUXEDOMOON: What Use? (Ralph).

Tuxedomoon's third 45 shows a clean pair of heels to the rest of the field in the electronic pop stakes, and casts a long and questioning shadow over the rest of the week's singles.

How is it that they can make a song about boredom and despair sound that much more interesting and enjoyable — and that much more human, dammit. — than 99% of the pseudo-energetic, gut-busting crap released this and every other week? And do it with synthesizers, yet? Could it have something to do with integrity, perhaps — a refusal to comply with the showbiz tic-tac system which lays down little rules

like "synthesizers lack feeling" and "dancing music must deal with happy things", so that the folks 'out there' won't get too worried trying to match their response to whatever worn old stimulus they're served up? In an industry which thrives on artifice and all-round phoniness, 'What Use?' comes like the proverbial breath of fresh air.

Constructed from a series of slyly interlocking rhythms — shuffling synth, skipping drum machine, stuttering sax (I think), and swooping bass — 'What Use?' glides effortlessly through a stream of strangely logical surprises, somehow managing to combine subtlety and directness in the one dance tune. A rare and marvellous achievement. And the only truly honest record of the week.

COVERS OF THE WEEK

JAPAN: I Second That Emotion (Ariola). **SNAKEFINGER:** The Model (Ralph). **Q TIPS:** B.Y.S.L.J.F.M. (The Letter Song) (Shotgun). Beneath all the prattish glam-rock revivalist veneer, there appears to be a decent band struggling to get out of Japan. Their version of the old Emokey Robinson number treats it with the respect and sympathy it deserves; the result is just as sad and genuine as the original, but refreshingly different. Snakefinger, meanwhile, takes a jaunty, oblique

little shuffle through Kraftwerk's tongue-in-cheek ode to cover-girls, and comes up with a piece of restrained lunacy that's as accessible as it's amusing.

Danceable, too, but not quite as much as The Q Tips' explosive treatment of the Joe Tex classic. The Gono-asque 'B.Y.S.L.J.F.M.' puts all the current revival-faddism in perspective, and makes Dexy's Midnight Runners seem like Barbie's Daytime Downers. A storming chunk of historical realism, and a hit, undoubtedly.



THE COVERS OF THE COVERS OF THE WEEK

STYX: Boat On The River (A&M). Proof, if proof were needed, that a surfeit of money can screw your head up just as badly as a shortage of it. This is a hilarious piece of ultra-wimpy, replete with massed bouzoukis, accordion and the like: the aural equivalent of Americans 'doing' Europe in ten days. Truly embarrassing. Expect to see lots of blank apes on denim jackets where once were lavishly-embroidered adverts.

JONA LEWIE: You'll Always Find Me In The Kitchen At Parties (Stiff). **WRECKLESS ERIC:** Broken Doll (Stiff).

A couple of Stiffs desperately fighting off rigor mortis. In Jona's case, the battle may yet be successful: 'You'll Always...' is a gentle electronic bounce, with Lewie bemoaning his social inadequacy like a polite B.A. Robertson: file under Squeeze. Eric's a different matter, almost a lost cause,

and 'Broken Doll' will, I fear, prove just as unlovable as 'A Pop Song'. He should accustom his idiosyncrasies, not paper over them with anonymous rock like this.

GERRY RAFFERTY: Bring It All Home (UA). A 'classy' record — which simply means that it'll get played on Radio 1 and Radio 2. Even so, it might not be a hit, as it's quite a dreary little bit of musical valium, bearable only if you close your eyes and make believe

it's Allen Toussaint singing. And yes, Cynthia, there is a saxophone on it. How'd you guess?

BRUCE WOOLLEY: Trouble Is... (CBS). Bruce Woolley is/was something to do with Buggles, and is consequently being pushed in no uncertain manner by CBS. 'Trouble Is...' sounds a lot like 10cc — far too clever for its own good. Trouble is, that's not clever at all. What a smug little fellow he must be.

NEW YORK GONG: Much Too Old (Charly). 'I've paid my Arabs/And I've paid my dues' chirps the new-look Daevid Allen on this Rock Against Ageism single, a 45 which sees him, like Wayne County, singing the praises of "punk rock city" and listening a few of its musical delicacies: Teenage Jesus, Ubu, Eno, James Chance, James Brown. 'Much Too Old' itself isn't particularly awe-inspiring, but it's nice to see the pixie back in the thick of things. And how can you dislike someone who rhymes 'Chick Corea' with 'diarrhoea'?

PHIL DAVIS: Blown h/GARY SHAIL: Blown It (Rocket). Two members of the Quadrophonia cast with different versions of the same tragicomic slice of self-pity. Shail uses piano and violin to achieve an almost touching social-realist effect, whilst Davis opts for a toytown ska backdrop (courtesy Steve Harley) and substitutes 'Well, I had had a few, I'll admit' for Shail's more direct 'pissed'. To achieve more airplay. An '80s approach to the Tommy Steele Syndrome, I think.

STEVIE WONDER: Outside My Window (Motown). **PHILIP LYNOTT:** Dear Miss Lonely Hearts (Vertigo). Soft-centred rubbish, the pair of 'em. We've come to expect this kind of sentimental garbage from Stevie Wonder, but there's no excuse for Lynott's everyday story of broken-hearted folk. So that's what marriage does for you, is it?

LITTLE EVA: The Loco-Motion (London). Only a matter of time, I suppose. Stupid song, stupid dance, great record. Whether the Turkey Trot? Incidentally, this came complete with a list of Decca's entire catalogue of steam-train recordings. Really. Now that's the kind of on-the-ball marketing that's made Decca the thriving organisation it is today.

SURPLUS STOCK: Spiv (Outatune). Surplus Stock are an Anglo-German quartet based round one Robert Giddens, producer of Deutsch-Amerikanische-Freundschaft's recent 'Kebabtraume' single. 'Spiv', a cutting broadside against the "desperate men with dayglo eyes" who run the music industry, was recorded the first time the band played together, and it's rather good, an engaging electronic plod punctuated by sly jabs of guitar and sparse (but heavy) drums, over which Giddens rattles out lines like "Like vultures round a sacred cow/They know what's why, when, where and how." The flip, 'Vips', is 'Spiv' backwards. (And why not?)

JUDIE TZUKE: Understanding (Rocket).

DOROTHY MOORE: Talk To Me/Every Beat Of My Heart (Epic).

VIOA WILLS: If You Could Read My Eyes (Ariola). Three records that set feminism back at least a minute or two. Judie Tazuke's song has all the psychological depth of a Mills & Boon romance — which is, of course, exactly the market it's aimed at. Dorothy Moore's is as slow and heartfelt as an Income Tax refund ('soul'

Continues over



SINGLES

■ From previous page

music, I believe), whilst Viola Wills' disco version of the old Gordon Lightfoot song is a disco version of a Gordon Lightfoot song. That's all.

EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS: At Night (EMI). Lamentable attempt by once-nifty band to regain some of their former attack. Anonymous fourth division power-punk. Truly awful.

DAVID ESSEX: Silver Dream Machine (Mercury). Title-song from Che's new movie about a big motorbike, though you'd never guess it from this slab of widescreen romanticism. Reminiscent of Bowie's

'Heroes', both in tune and heartstring-pulling intent.

GRADUATE: Elvis Should Play Ska (Precision). Energetic little beast of comedic intent, with a nice line in machine-gun burst guitar jabs. Difficult to tell which Elvis they mean; the old one should be fairly two-tone by now, anyway. (A sick joke, and a bad one at that).

EARGASM: This Is Lovers Rock (Venture). 'Lovers Rock' is that soft, mushy kind of reggae made specifically for the grinding of groins; this medley sounds as though it was made specifically for the fusing of consciousness. God only knows what the original 12" was like. That was 18 minutes long...

BOBBY THURSTON: Check Out The Groove (Epic). The kind of dance record which has to keep telling you you should be dancing. Faint-hearted, and justifiably so.

THE DANCE BAND: Stacks Of Tracks (Cool King). Dull, leaden paean to Stax Records, couched in a pale imitation of the label's slow, 'soulful' style. This may be the sincerest form of flattery, but it could put newcomers off Stax for life. The flip's an insipid ska version of 'Do You Wanna Dances'. How gripingly relevant.

MOFUNGO: Elementary Particles EP (Living Legends). **PYLON:** Cool/Dub (Caution). A couple of left-field American



bands, both more interesting than enjoyable. Mofungo's Chris Stamey-produced EP contains four instrumentals of bizarre simplicity which sound like nothing so much as a rather constipated Pere Ubu. Pylon use the same studio, engineer and producer that fellow Athenians The 852s used for 'Rock Lobster', and come up with a frantic, invigorating concoction which bears scant relation to anything, save perhaps the first progVEC EP. Both are worthy of investigation, especially Pylon.

PLAYER (1): Space Invaders (WEA). More electronic disco-drive, just as much a waste of time as the object of Player (1)'s affections.



HEARTBEATS: Talk To Me (Red). **REAL TO REAL:** White Man Reggae (Red). The first couple of releases from a new label, both lacking in interest. Heartbeats play inauspicious power pop/pub rock with nasal vocals; Real To Real handle a gruff, clumsy variant of white reggae. Neither has anything going for it.

THE ANDROIDS: Robot Riot (Android). NoL as you might think, another synthesiser band, but a Scottish quintet of no great distinction save that their bassist's called Ken Dalglish. 'Robot Riot' and the flip, 'Andwell's Dream', are too fussy and formless to have any firm identity. Both sound like the product of the late '60s, funnily enough.

ITCH: Romance (IPP). **THE HEARTBEAT:** Cigarettes And Booze (Don Quixote). Two more offerings from the burgeoning Dutch scene, both occupying a space somewhere to the left of power-pop. Of the two, Itch's is the more accomplished, a simple pop song based on remarkably clear acoustic rhythm guitar and full-bodied lead lines.

SIMON ANHOLT: (Another) Love-Song (Mallard). Simon's obviously one helluva sensitive guy, and much given to romantic balladry in the Nick Drake vein. (On Mallard — geddit?) Would that he were given to writing love-letters instead. They're that much quieter.

CAROLYN MAS: Still Same (Mercury). Low-rent Springsteenism, especially in its use of sax, but completely lacking in any sense of dynamics. (Nothing happens).

MX-80 SOUND: Someday You'll Be King (Ralph). **KROKUS:** Bedside Radio (Ariola). Two varieties of turgid riffing. MX-80 come across like messy HM punk, whilst Krokus favour the more tried-and-tested castrato vocal approach. Avoid.

THE GOOD: Walk Around The World (Buffalo College Of Musical Knowledge). Empty American garage-pop which parades its ineptitude as if it were a virtue. The week's most vacuous release.

JUSTIN HINES & THE DOMINOES: Rub Up, Push Up (Island). Reissue of a ska original (or is it bluebeat, or rock steady?) from 1965, complete with the original surface noises. A case of the Emperor's Old Cast-Offs, I think.

MR MODERATION: They Call Me Mister Moderation EP (Amelkated). How can you dislike an American who bills himself as 'The World's Greatest Recording Artist' and writes songs like 'You Make Me Horny'? Quite easily, actually.

FENDER BENDERS: Big Green Thing (Sticky Label). Spry, snappy number, rather like J. J. Cale on speed: neat picking, fast shuffle-drumming, but let down by clumsy bridge.

STEVE FORBERT: Say Goodbye To Little Jo (Epic). Miserable weepie from last year's Dylan. In the dumper.

THE BAD ACTORS: Are They Hostile (Plastic Speech). What The Stranglers might be like after exposure to vinyl kryptonite.

THE TEXTONES: I Can't Fight It (Chiswick). Despite being 50% female and hailing from California, The Textones don't appear to have anything to do with Kim Fowley. Judging by this Tom Petty number, though, he's branching out into psychic control.

PORTRAITS: Hazards In The Home (Ariola). **THE TUNES:** She's My Girl (RSO).

More pointless power-pop. Portraits are 'jolly' and anonymous; The Tunes are just jolly anonymous. In future, I'd like to see carefully argued statements from record companies, justifying the existence of records like these. (This is not an invitation to start clogging my letter-box with your infernal buff envelopes again, Ariola. They never get opened, anyway).

DANSETTE DAMAGE: 2001 Approximately (Pinnacle). This sounds like a National Lampoon pastiche of a 'meaningful' record. A thoroughly miserable, pointless dirge. Thank you, Dansette Damage. Now go away.



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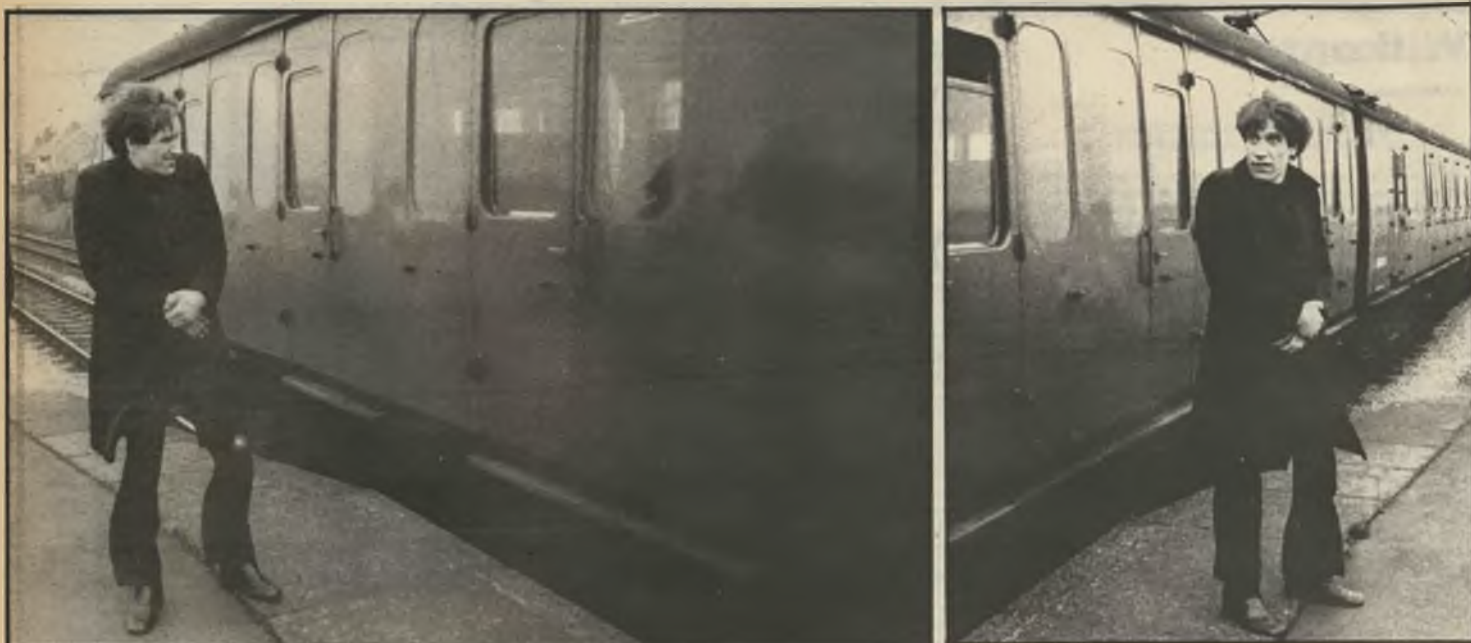
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WILKO JOHNSON: Convey train ride, six electric units long.

Last train to Wilko Junction

Riding the R&B rails with the originator of the non-sexist haircut.

Legend: Chris Salewicz

Woodcuts: Pennie Smith

THIS is a sort of bank holiday with hints of carnival and shops shut," reads an early entry from *The Journal* in which Wilko Johnson and The Solid Senders record their activities. "Trams are ubiquitous. Anti-Fascist graffiti. Portugal is on BST like us."

The Wilko Johnson entourage had flown in to Portugal early for their Saturday night show due to an air traffic controllers' strike. I arrive on the Friday morning, and immediately I find myself being directed towards Wilko's room by Irene, the guitarist's wife.

I feel a little apprehensive. The Wilko wobblers have attained near-mythological status amongst a certain section of the music scene. Wilko Johnson is often spoken of as though he is so unstable and unpredictable that he is likely to flip out at any moment without provocation. Although previous, brief encounters have always been pleasant and genial enough it is likely that were I not to be ushered straight to his room, I would've wandered around him in mental circles for possibly the whole of the weekend.

As it is I sit down on a chair at the foot of the bed in which Wilko is still stretched out, reading from a copy of *Ulysses*, and we talk for a while before descending to the cafe where bassist Russell Strutter and drummer Alex Bines soon turn up, along with John Denton, the occasional Solid Senders' pianist.

CONSIDERING the current R'n'B boom spearheaded by the likes of The Inmates, Nine Below Zero, the Fabulous Thunderbirds and the release of the *Hope And Anchor* LP it seems an apt time to check out the thoughts of the archetype of the modern R'n'B guitarist.

Wilko is delighted by the music's current popularity. Apart from his passion for Bob Dylan ("The man who did more for rock'n'roll than any other single person," he believes) and for the blues, the only music that wholly grips Wilko's soul is rhythm'n'blues.

Actually, he tells me, his head flipping nervously from side to side showing the probable origins of some of his onstage movements, he'd expected such a boom to follow Dr Feelgood's first flush of success in the mid-'70s. "There was no real sense of community then," he explains, slightly sadly, before warming to the present situation. "It's all to the good at the moment, though. I always hated that museum-keeper snobbishness that surrounds certain kinds of old music. Rhythm'n'blues is useful music, because it's spontaneous and direct and you can use it now. You don't have to rely on how it was originally done twenty years ago in another country, although what they call rhythm'n'blues in this country is very different from how it was originally conceived."

Like most early '60s youth, Wilko Johnson received his first flavour of R'n'B from the early Rolling Stones. He'd already started playing the guitar. "I took the day off school to score the first album and listen to it. I don't think it had as great an influence anywhere else as it did in Southend. There were all these rhythm'n'blues groups just starting there, and somehow all that scene just added up when

the Stones album came out. And once you got into the idea of rhythm'n'blues then you just had to seek it out more and more. You knew about Chuck Berry, but you didn't understand how someone like, for example, The Coasters — who you were always hearing on old jukeboxes — fitted into the whole thing."

The Southend R'n'B heavies of the day were The Paramounts and Mickey Jupp's band The Orioles: "The Orioles had this fantastic guitar-player who I used to study a lot. He and Jupp made a devastating pair. Loads of people who're around today, like Will Birch, were always down there checking them out."

"I was always very conscious of the difference between the old bluesers and the R'n'B generation. The blues permeates the whole of popular music — all the tricks that were on blues records have just been used again and again."

"I used to listen a lot to Howlin' Wolf's guitarist, Hubert Sumlin, who I still think is quite inimitable. Mick Green, though, was the only guitarist whom I ever wanted to actually out and out copy. I think The Pirates are really great, even today."

DR FEELGOOD first got together in 1972, whilst Wilko was teaching and Lee Brilleaux was a solicitor's clerk.

The band came into existence as what now seems like an almost pre-destined antidote to the dire dominance of the late '60s school of guitar hero: "That was certainly something I really objected to — all that self-indulgence. I like hearing rock'n'roll, not solos. It has no right to take over the whole show."

"The technique I was using ain't something you can pick up overnight. It ain't flashy. The whole object is to play real good guitar that functions as just part of rock'n'roll, an integral part of the whole thing. I think keeping all of

those histrionics out of it is much harder to do."

"The Feelgoods were certainly very different even from all those other bands on the pub-rock circuit. I couldn't see how any of them could fit into a bigger concept. They seemed to delight in looking as square as possible," shrugs the man who in the early '70s was already parading the prototype of the non-sexist haircut. "Rock'n'roll ain't just about music. It's just as much to do with images: images in lyrics, images in visuals."

"When I started playing the pubs it was considered very weird to have short hair and a black suit, because even in the smallest local bend the guitarist still thought that he had to have long hair and things around his neck."

"I'd been in the habit of letting my hair grow really long and then cutting it short about once a year. It was due for a cut a few weeks after I started with Dr Feelgood, and I suddenly realised that I could play without it getting in my mouth and all caught up with my guitar strings."

Though this was always self-consciously denied by the early punk interviewees, the Feelgoods' sense of style and of spontaneous immediacy was a direct and major influence on the vast changes wrought on rock music in 1976 and 1977: "Punk all seemed a very natural thing. It seemed very logical also that 'Stupidity' went to number one at just about the time it was all beginning to happen. It all seemed to be about the same things we were about — commitment and energy, although, of course, the guitar anti-hero thing got a bit out of hand for a while, too," he grins.

INITALLY I was uncertain about Wilko Johnson's post Dr Feelgood career. The only show I'd seen was a highly erratic Marquee gig in mid-'78 and the Solid Senders'

Virgin album had been disappointing.

My weak heart, though, had warmed with joyous approbation to a stunning Finnish show I chanced to witness last summer before that particular line-up was disbanded, and in August of last year I experienced the new three-piece line-up for the first time at the Marquee, when the group played a three-night run.

For some time I'd wanted to write a piece about The Wilko, and had intended to buy a day return to his Canvey Island home, close to Southend, when the effervescent Glum, Wilko's manager and partner, called me and suggested I join them on this Portuguese bash.

I accepted, with gratitude tempered with guilt that the deal-less Wilko was presumably having to fork out for my plane fare from his own pocket. I didn't realise that he'd acquired a loose contract with the small, though efficient and purposeful, Rockburgh Records, who this week issue 'Down By The Waterside', the first Solid Senders record for some twenty months. Whether my trip was paid for from the promotional budget or directly from the band's account, I still don't know. Not that it really matters: Wilko's eight years in the music business have been long enough for him to understand that, as he points out, whoever ostensibly lays out the roadies it is always the band who pays in the end.

With his belief in musicians allying themselves against the oppressive, uncreative, corporate nature of the music business, Wilko Johnson ensured that The Solid Senders were a legal partnership. It must have been more than disheartening to realise that democratically-intended act was a direct cause of the downfall of that first line-up. "I couldn't really envisage it operating in any other way," Wilko shakes his head in amused exasperation, "but instead of it giving everyone greater freedom and a greater sense of involvement it seemed to have a strange effect on everyone's egos. It got to the point where if a review appeared everyone would be ringing up Glum wanting to know why they weren't getting as much written about them individually as I was."

"Now it's got to the point where we can't even release the album we did last summer because everyone'd be onto their lawyers like a shot."

Continues over

Solid Senders l. to r. Russell Strutter, Alex Bines, Wilko Johnson.



Wilkontd

From previous page

"The LP wasn't a complete waste of time, though," says Wilko. "A lot of that material will be recorded again in improved versions."

Of course, the reason Wilko's own money was being invested in the aborted album was because by mutual agreement The Solid Senders' deal with Virgin was terminated after their first album — of which the less said the better. Wilko claims to have compromised to Virgin's demands right down the line, to the extent of letting the album be produced by David Batchelor, a Virgin protegee, when the band would've far preferred to produce the record between them. "Actually, I'm about the only person who doesn't blame David Batchelor for what went wrong with that record. When you've got everyone coming in and telling him how to make the record — and none of them had been in a studio before — then what do they expect? One of them's totally into 32-track sound and someone else thinks it should all be done in mono, and Batchelor's having to cope with all this."

THE Saturday morning after the Wilko entourage and myself have paid a visit to the 2001 Club, the largest discotheque in Lisbon, Wilko, John Denton, Gium and I are squeezed up on the edge of the hotel's terrace in the only place that catches the sun at that time of day. Wilko's eight-year-old son Matthew can be seen through the windows of the bar, eating out the part of a waiter.

"You know," considers Wilko, "I'm sure I wasn't as extrovert as him when I was his age. I was really shy, still am I suppose."

"Did that make it difficult for you when you started playing onstage?" I ask.

"No, not really. Probably because going up onstage was getting all of that out of me. Maybe I became myself when I was performing... it's not as simple as that. Of course," he corrects himself, "there's really such a complexity of emotions and things going on when playing onstage."

"A lot of it is all compensation. I remember Pete Townshend saying how he became a musician because he had to get over his hang-up about having a big nose. If you don't like going out and aren't very good at mixing with people, then you can stay in bed and really learn your instrument."

Gium mentions that when Dr Feelgood had played in Lisbon last year Lee Brilleaux had also had a night out at the club we'd visited. During the course of his enjoyment, so the promoter had told Wilko's manager, he'd drunk thirty-five bottles of beer in an hour and a half.

Wilko shakes his head in amused disbelief and grins his Howard The Duck grin: "I used to drink when I was at university in Newcastle. I used to get pissed every Saturday night. Then one day I had a fight — I had more fights whilst I was at university than at any other time in my life — with this guy I was sharing a flat with. It was really serious — I knew afterwards that

I could've killed him, and I also knew that it was the drink making me do it. "So I vowed to give it up, but didn't of course, though I cut down. But then when I went to India I got hepatitis, and that really knocked it on the head."

"Every eighteen months or so the situation will occur where I get blind drunk on champagne. But I know what's happening with booze. First of all there's that immense promise of something wonderful about to happen, but then it just tails off, and it's all downhill. I'd much rather have a speed comedown than a booze one."

ON Saturday morning, prior to our lunchtime sojourn on the terrace, I'd gone along with Wilko and Gium to something rather like a radio equivalent of TrisWas, broadcast in a cinema before an audience of Portuguese kids who seem quite willing to gouge out each other's eyes and pull off their neighbour's arms and legs in the rush to grab one of the three Senders t-shirts thrown into the audience by the presenter.

An appealing chaos carries on around us. "I do hope," Wilko laughs lightly, "they don't expect me to walk about onstage as though I've got my guitar."

"They did that to me once in England. It was on Nationwide in Manchester when Dr Feelgood were just taking off. They were supposed to have had this film of us, but something went wrong, so I went instead. There was Dick Emery on as well, and a lion cub. They were really disappointed I hadn't brought my guitar. They said, 'We thought you could walk about the studio and show the viewers how you move'."

"Alki could think of was how this lion cub was getting really uncomfortable and hot."

Naturally, the first question that Wilko is asked by the presenter is: "Why did you leave Dr Feelgood?"

A forthright question requires a forthright answer: "Because they asked me to. They sacked me."

The presenter and the audience appear startled. Perhaps in Portugal people still leave bands "because of musical differences." Whatever, they seem amazed. Most of the people at that Feelgoods show, the promoter told me, had thought Wilko was still in the group. Even so, it should be said that the Feelgoods went down very well indeed.

Before that night's show, Wilko gives another radio interview, this time at the studios of Radio Portugal, on a more orthodox rock show.

Once again, though, we find ourselves with time to spare before the broadcast, and once again we find ourselves in the bar.

Wilko's being virtually testotal, he tells me, meant that right from the offset there was a rift between the guitarist and the rest of the Feelgoods: "It meant that they'd go out together a lot, and I'd hardly ever go out. It didn't lead to a very sociable situation with me sitting on my own in a corner."

Lemmy sussed what I was into straightaway. I suppose that's how we became such great friends. Mind you, that became a bit of a problem sometimes. The others were always wary of me if they knew I'd been out with Lemmy, so I used to pretend I'd stayed in all night and got eight hours sleep.



"I always used to feel guilty and unprofessional on those occasions, though, so I got a bit pissed off when sometimes other band-members wouldn't be able to play properly because they'd had too much to drink."

"Definitely, though, in many ways drink played a major part in my getting kicked out of the group."

"I was very obnoxious for quite a long time when I was in Dr Feelgood. But, then, a lot of it was just self-protection. It gets very weird when you start to sell a lot of records and are suddenly incredibly popular. It can be very handy if you can just throw a wobbler and get always surrounded by all these people ready to cater to your least whim."

"It is so convenient. I realized all of this subsequently, of course. I suppose I shouldn't have let it happen. You are half out of your head a lot of the time, of course, which doesn't help."

A speed bust at about the time The Solid Senders album came out proved ultimately beneficial, believes Wilko. He was picked up in Notting Hill with a bag of gear, believes Wilko. He was booked, and let go. Parenthetically ducking down the side streets off Ladbroke Grove he eventually sought refuge at the home of Mick Farren: "Whilst I was there, someone came in and said, 'Well, don't you think it's maybe a sign that it's been going on for too long?' And I decided, 'Well, yeah. I guess it's time to sort myself out.'"

IN the promoter's Renault 5 on the way to the soundcheck Wilko tells of the one Dr Feelgood gig he managed to psyche himself up to go.

"We were playing in the same town as them, in Bradford," he relates, "and we weren't going to be on until after about eleven."

"I finally went along halfway through the evening. I couldn't get much perspective on it really. It seemed strange doing my songs for a start."

"But when you're playing in a band it's very hard to judge exactly what the audience is getting off on. However, I always knew exactly what it was people liked in Dr Feelgood. It's obvious. But it seems as if they weren't developing from that at all — just becoming a parody of it. Like the drink thing again getting really emphasised on the cover of their last album. I mean, people pick up on what you're into, without having to ram it down their throats."

So you see how vital it is to Wilko for the Solid Senders' gig tonight to at least equal the Lisbon audience's memory of the Feelgoods. The group have a long sound-check. They haven't played together for about a week and Wilko wants to slot in a couple of early Feelgoods numbers — "Stupidity" was a big album in Portugal.

THEY COME off-stage with a mild depression hanging about them. The acoustics in the sports hall are disgusting. The drapes hanging from the ceiling can do nothing to dampen the echo-loops that orbit about the building, whilst the PA has been assembled from what seems like every available rig in the country.

There's an air of tension in the dressing-room. Wilko sits in a corner, silent and so withdrawn into himself that he's almost visibly shuddering. Alex Russell and John Denton stick to orange juice.

With the benefit of hindsight it seems almost predictable that as soon as Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders hit the stage and pull out their first number, the Dylan-like "Everybody's Carrying A Gun", that this is going to be a superlative show. The pulsating warmth of the 5,000 strong, rock-starved audience carries you along on its uplift and almost literally absorbs all of the sound problems. Except for the extreme rear of the hall, the sound is close to perfect. Virtually every syllable Wilko sings being clearly audible. ("I'm always very careful about my enunciation," he tells me afterwards. "I think that comes from my teaching days.")

The huge, fresh crowd bulges with pleasure. Portuguese youth is generally pretty sharp. There's a contingent of rockabilly-styled spivs, and even a few dreads.

Initially, I'm confused by the addition of John Denton. The last couple of times I've seen the band, it's been operating as just the very basic three-piece, as angular and anguished as it can get, with the gentle Russell Strutter complementing Wilko's alternating rhythm and lead work with the almost rhythmic guitar-attitude he opts for on the bass, and with Alex Bine's drumming as clear-lighted and uncluttered as his attitude to life.

Also, I'm aware that Wilko has now long ago overcome the initial reticence he displayed as a frontman and (un)disciplined himself into becoming one of the finest rock'n'roll frontmen.

Continues page 65

"black comedy
...devastatingly
funny."

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David Cronenberg: only here for the fear

FOR a man who specialises in shocking audiences with graphic horror movies of a uniquely perverse nature, he appears to be signally normal. With easy-going manner, smiling eyes behind stylish specs, neatly groomed hair and conservative casuals, he resembles a vacating dentist rather than — as he was described on British TV last week — 'the guru of the mentally disturbed'.

And when you talk to David Cronenberg, an affable Canadian in his early thirties, you realise that far from being the intense and sinister film-maker certain critics in this country would have you believe, he's merely a self-taught young man who finds it very exciting to write and direct his own brand of horror picture.

A native Torontonian, he made two independent SF-orientated features — *Stereo and Crimes Of The Future* — with friends on graduation from university.

But it was the enervating roller-coaster tension engendered by *Shivers* and *Rabid* — two mid-'70s shockers linking aberrant sex with the most appalling violence — that gained him a widespread following; both films are still regularly reissued over here.

His latest, *The Brood*, is vastly different — less obviously imbued with black humour, unfolding at a more measured pace — but that hasn't stopped the British critics roundly condemning it as, variously: cruel, sadistic, distasteful, disgusting and, in the influential trade paper *Screen International*, 'a guided tour around Mr Cronenberg's vomitorium'.

"They used to say that about (Ingmar) Bergman, you know," says Cronenberg evenly. "If someone doesn't understand horror films and if someone doesn't understand *The Brood*, then all they're going to see is goo."

"It's not a question of not being offensive to your audience. A horror film is supposed to take you some place you don't normally go when you're walking about

during the day. It's supposed to take you into nightmares and the unconscious mind.

"And there's no such thing as good taste there. If it offends, then too bad.

"I think what I'm doing is being more consciously in touch with some of my unconscious fears than are most of my audience. And then I'm making them more conscious of their version of those fears by showing them what I've discovered — and that's my relationship with the audience.

"For me, a horror film is not an escape, it's a form of confrontation. It's a film where you confront things you'd rather not most of the time — like ageing, death, madness, disease...

whatever. That's why I don't set my films in the Gothic past — that's betraying what is powerful about horror films.

"Also, there's an aspect of *The Brood* which is semi-autobiographical. In a way, it's my version of *Kramer vs Kramer*."

He laughs, but continues quickly. "I'm not being facetious. It's the nightmare version of what was



David Cronenberg

happening to me at the time I wrote the film — a very disturbing break-up of a marriage involving a very strange custody case over a child."

In this country we're seeing the American version of *The Brood*, which has about eight frames clipped from Samantha Egger's climactic psychoplasmic birth sequence, cuts reluctantly approved by Cronenberg:

"Otherwise it would've been an 'X' and that's an enormous financial burden unless you're a porno film."

Yet in his home province the movie was trimmed by a further 60 seconds after numerous hassles with oppressive Ontario Board of Censors. "It's really quite shocking what I went through. They won't talk to you, they won't discuss it. You ask why and they say that would mean

Monty Smith
talks to the man
whose films turn
as many
stomachs as they
do heads.
Photographs by
Tom Sheehan

having to talk to any producer or director. They present that as the most abysmal thing that could happen.

"They also made cuts beyond things they objected to because they felt it made a better cut. Suddenly they were editors exercising aesthetic judgements and that's establishing an incredibly scary precedent. They've made the ending completely nonsensical."

Had he run into trouble with *Shivers* or *Rabid*?

"No, because although a lot more people are killed in those films, they have a sort of cartoon quality which distances the audience a bit. Most of the people knocked off in *Shivers* and *Rabid* you've only got to know about 40 seconds earlier; as a result you're not really concerned with them. Whereas in *The Brood* I wanted the audience to care about the people. I

• continues over page



NORTH DALLAS FORTY_x

They pay you and they
pay you well.
On one condition.
You play the game their
way, even if you're
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CHEERS DAVID

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think it's much more psychologically complex — you don't know until the end why specific people are being killed or why they're acting in a particular way — and for me that's more satisfying."

When pressed, he cites Nicolas Roeg's *Don't Look Now*, Ken Russell's *The Devils* and George Romero's *Night Of The Living Dead* as horror films he particularly likes, but seems disinterested in naming any earlier influences.

"I'm not a student of film in the academic sense, I'm a movie-goer. That's why you will not find in my films arcane references to other films and film-makers — that's a very dry game."

"I don't subscribe to the school of direct influence. I'm not trying to remake a Howard Hawks film or a Val Lewton film. I'm assimilating all that but the object is to come out with something that's specific to me."

"Of course, any moment of suspense owes something, at least in an abstract way, to Hitchcock. And the best possible homage to Hitchcock I could come up with is when the audience jumps, or when the audience is tense — that's really as far as I want to go."

Sir Alfred, bless him, has been paid due homage — in spades

Monty Smith

The Brood

Directed by David Cronenberg
Starring Oliver Reed and Samantha Eggar
(Alpha)

IN WHICH we're quite literally confronted with something nasty in the woodshed of a secluded private clinic.

The Brood is David Cronenberg's third feature film and sees him muting his previously unbridled fascination with deviant sexual symbolism and correspondingly excessive displays of physical violence. In *Shivers*, originally entitled *Orgy Of The Blood Parasites*, slug-like 'things' invaded human bodies through every available opening. In *Rabid*, which featured 'sex star' Marilyn Chambers before she became impresario Paul Raymond's creature, penile protrusions slithered from labial orifices in human amputees. In *The Brood* we spend most of our time wandering down considerably less prurient paths.

Although he's often, but wrongly, ripped into the same holdall as American directors George Romero and John Carpenter, Cronenberg shares with them an ability to make compact, concise and brutally overwhelming horror films. *The Brood* seems to be an attempt to broaden bases, to maintain intensity but to draw much finer psychological lines: the three central characters of the film — an emotionally brow-beaten husband (Art Hindle), his disturbed wife (Samantha Eggar) and her scheming psychoanalyst (Oliver Reed) — are all explored in some detail.

Hindle manages his part convincingly enough, but neither Reed nor Eggar bring much credibility to theirs.



Oliver Reed comes over all protective in *The Brood*

Not brooding but brewing

Reed's gauche "mad genius" hamming is merely ludicrous. Eggar's forced attempts to convey severe derangement are simply risible. A pity — because *The Brood*'s portrait of a broken marriage is highly believable and the film is ingeniously structured. Cronenberg runs recurrent murder mysteries parallel to a labyrinth of psychological information, much of which can only be retroactively absorbed: a superior narrative method that at times results in scenes as spectacular as parts of Roeg's *Don't Look Now*.

In addition Cronenberg's

speculative theme here is one of his best. Psychoplasms, he postulates, is a form of therapy during which strongly negative human emotions are somehow forced to manifest themselves physically — in, for example, the shape of grotesque rashes and growths on the body. *The Brood* takes this alarming possibility to its funnial conclusion, and once again Cronenberg demonstrates his uncanny — and curiously cathartic — ability to give a tangible form to deep-seated human neuroses.

Cronenberg's talent is as

forceful as it's unusual, but *The Brood* is ultimately disappointing. The film even flirts with utter orthodoxy (cf its ending).

And finally, Cronenberg's decision to present his material within a more conventional (ie psychological) framework may well, I feel, have blunted the impact of the delicate — but often explosively revelatory — brinkmanship he plays in the uncharted cerebral corridors that connect compulsive fascination with appalled repulsion.

Angus MacKinnon

On The Box

Friday March 20
THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM: Superior 1961 schlock from Roger Corman — the second of his eccentric Edgar Allan Poe adaptations — with another fruity performance from Vincent Price as the Spanish Inquisition's chief foony. Getting cut up about it are Barbara Steele, John Kerr and Luana Anders. (BBC1)

Saturday March 21
10 MILLINGTON PLACE: A dispassionate, disturbing reconstruction of the John Christie multiple murders which faithfully evokes the drabness of Notting Hill in the '50s. Richard Attenborough is outstanding as the seemingly kindly old man, John Hurt suitably pathetic as the ineffectual braggart Timothy Evans. Richard Flanagan directed this, his best film, in 1970. (TV London)

Sunday March 23
FUNERAL IN BERLIN: Michael Caine's the heroic Harry Palmer in an appropriately dour adaptation of Len Deighton's spy thriller. Guy Hamilton, turning his back on Bond, directed in 1966 and there's a memorable contribution by Oscar Homolka as the sly Soviet big knob. (BBC2)

Monday March 24
THERE'S A GIRL IN MY SOUP: Feeble 1970 Roy Boulton comedy with a dispiriting performance from Peter Sellers as a 40ish TV gourmet galloping after lost youth and groping for Goldie Hawn. At least he leaves Dana Dorn alone — and who wouldn't? (ITV London)

Wednesday March 26
THE FOUR MUSKETEERS: Subtitled *The Revenge Of Milady*, Dick Lester's successful follow-on from *The Three Musketeers* was shot simultaneously in 1973 for release two years later. It's less numismatic but equally impressive, with F. Dunaway and C. Lee as the despotic heavies versus Musketereers O. Reed, F. Finlay, R. Chamberlain, M. York and a spunky Raquel Welch. (ITV off regions)

Monty Smith

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GREY EVENING. Somewhere under a London that was cold and glum, the cattle-truck tube's twin doors slid slowly shut, shoving, pushing in the cramped and damp commuter mob; homeward bound but sullen, truculent and colourless. Bored and suffocated faces looked sourly over the night's bad news, or fingers flipped irritably through library books; minds in neutral, waiting for the right stop to get off at, forget it all, come back tomorrow and do it again. Poor, poor London.

Nobody looked happy, not even a little bit. And of course nobody spoke, because that's another one of those things that's just not done.

Tucked, or more crushed than tucked, into one of the carriage's corners I took a peep over the top of my paper: that funny way it feels when the silence of a crowd actually changes — just as quiet as before but, somehow, differently quiet. Something was strangely up, some small sense of compressed melodrama hung suspended in the cigarette smoke and stuffiness. Trivially intriguing, it didn't take long to spot what the something was.

A bright streak of the most vividly crimson hair, that was it; this insurrectionary gash of insolent colour, violently alive, had invaded us. And such make-up! And, well, those clothes! ...

Snug amongst the dulled, muffled mazes of rush-hour conformity, that staunchest fortress of cultural normality, it was a brazen intrusion indeed; a wilful act of aesthetic trespass, and nothing less.

Stone-faced travellers permitted themselves the most discreet of smirks, and looked sidily as a result. Couples nudged surreptitiously, made measured nods towards the disturbance. The whole wordless pantomime was being played out around her. Confidence mounting, strangers exchanged complacent "Not like us" smiles, and were all reassured. Equilibrium was restored. The girl, for her part, had ignored the whole thing quite magnificently.

Still smiling, I slipped back behind my paper.

THE BUSINESS of being Bette Bright — singer, starlet and stylist — in a drab and workaday world must be a strange and occasionally difficult one, I'd imagine?

"Um, it's all a bit of a caricature, I suppose. It depends on how you look at it.

"Like, a lot of people keep going on to me about this 'sex symbol' thing, which I suppose superficially it might seem like that, but there's a lot more fun involved in it — and more humour — but some people don't see it. ... As for clothes, they're just something you wear. And they can be interesting to look at."

Still, any reputation must be better than no reputation.

"Well it kinda gets on my nerves. Most blokes are pretty sexual on stage and they don't get sort of attacked for it. But if you're a woman then it becomes the obvious thing for people to say about you."

A pause, a shrug, then a smile and a frown at the same time. "Oh, I don't know. It's just. ... I think it's really difficult to talk about yourself, isn't it? I'm terrible at being interviewed."

Um, known better, known a lot worse. Okay, I'll look after this bit ...

Each of the years since the demise of Liverpool's late and a-bit-lamented Deaf School (comedy combo unwieldy bear group kind of thing) has been marked by the very nicest kind of reminder — one excellent single every 12 months from the erstwhile female vocalist in that band, Miss Bette Bright. Third and latest in the series is the best — "Hello I Am Your Heart", a chart-bound sound and recipient of the ultimate accolade, an *NME* single of the week.

Irrepressible pop, stamped with Bette's inimitably excitable vocal style, the record's made that extra bit special by the presence of guest musicians The Cimarons (it was originally to have been The Judge Dread Band) who invest it with infectious reggaeisms, especially the cymbal-splashes in all the unexpected places. Lovely.

Last year it was a cute repetition of Reparaté And The Delrons' '68 smash 'Captain Of Your Ship' and, before that, a tastefully camped-up version of 'My Boyfriend's Back', formerly a hit for New York girlie group The Angels in 1963. Three covers, but all exquisite choices, executed with loving precision and irresistible freshness. Some day soon, Bette will be starting on the first album of her solo career, and won't that be something to look forward to?

It certainly will.

THE STORY so far. A native of Whitstable, in Kent, Bette Bright (nee Ann Martin) made her way to Liverpool Art College some six or seven years ago, in which venerable institution she helped form that eclectic aggregate of talents known to the world as Deaf School. She takes up the story.



"We started a band that was supposed to be interesting, just kinda different. Originally there were a lot more people in the band — early on it was a bit ridiculous — but it gradually got more serious.

Eventually the numbers kind of whittled down to about eight and we got a deal with Warner Brothers, made three albums — ha! — and then broke up."

How does all that look to you in retrospect?

"I think we were a really good band ... who happened at a really bad time. Because then all the sort of punk thing came along and because we were so different to all of that — although all the time we were changing — we kind of got lumped with this 'art college' thing which is really unpopular anyway and, er, we

entered that *Melody Maker* competition for a joke and won that. And that's another kiss of death!"

"I mean, we were a really great live band and did some really good stuff, y'know? But with all that punk thing ... the fact that you were 'Deaf School', you couldn't do anything right. It was terrible. And that used to really piss me off."

Would that be why you were suddenly being quoted, a while back, as having 'gone punk'?

"I never said that! I mean, I don't know where that came from, that was ridiculous! I never said that. I thought it was a joke when I read it. I was going to write in and say, Look ... But then I thought, well, what's the point? It's really not worth it."

Not that the more musically-minded alumni of the School are doing too badly these days, anyway.

Steve Allen (then Enrico Cadillac) now has his promising Original Mirrors, whilst bassist Steve Lindsey (aka Frank Average) has been enjoying some success as mastermind behind The Planets. The old group's secret weapon, guitarist/writer Clive Langer leads his own group too (support on the Costello tour) and crops up in production credits everywhere, most notably with Madness but also on all past and projected product from Bette as well.

THE WAY we went about things I don't think we'd ever commercially have been successful. When we started out it was the pub bands like the Kibbuns that we really liked and we only set our sights at about that level. And a lot of the time the record company wanted us to compromise, like to change the name 'cos the BBC wouldn't play us and everything. And it got to the stage where there was a lot of talent in that band which couldn't be used. It was better just to split up and let people continue along their own paths. So we decided that was that.

"Then I got a deal with Radar and did a tour (her band for the series of dates consisting of Langer plus Rich Kids Glen Matlock and Rusty Egan). But it was really difficult because they were limited with finances — I ended up paying for most of that tour myself. I think they spent most of their budget on Nick and Elvis; their whole policy was sticking out loads of records and maybe one would take off. They didn't follow through with things and it was really difficult existing under that kind of set-up."

"And then they bit the dust in the end. And so then I fancied having a bit of a break from it all. I got involved with fashion because I fancied doing something a bit different. I did odd sessions, backing vocals for various people, and then I got this deal with Korova" (a Sire / WEA offshoot).

Plans for the immediate future include a further bout of touring — the exact band hasn't been finalised, but Langer is once again almost certain to figure — and, as mentioned, the album.

"I don't want to give too much away, but there'll be a few people on it that you might expect and a few that you won't — a few surprises. And it'll be good fun. A bit R&Bish, a few Motowny kind of things. But, y'know, enjoyable."

She ponders for a moment, then looks up.

"I suppose I'd really like to be the Lulu of the '80s."

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By Paul Du Noyer

Pic: Jill Furmanovsky

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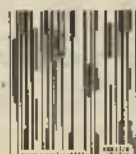
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“Everyone says the British new wave acts which have broken in America have paved the way for us, but they’re talking about Joe Jackson, which has nothing to do with us. I don’t know how long it will take. It may never happen.” — Paul Weller

I WALK into the dimly-lit lounge of a Detroit Holiday Inn, and move up to the bar for a drink. Next to me, Bruce Foxton is having an intent conversation with a member of The Jam’s lighting crew. They seem to be talking about the frustrations of touring in America.

“You never see a bloody result,” Foxton is saying, pounding his fist on the bar for emphasis. His tone of voice is exasperated, almost bitter.

“You never physically see a result. That’s why it’s so hard.” It is the only time in two days of travelling with The Jam that I am to see any of them really vent their emotions in public.

THE JAM are currently in the middle of their fourth visit to America. Twenty-odd gigs stretched over five weeks.

It may surprise you, because you know how fine this group is, but this tour will not make them big stars in America.

It will take them to some out-of-the-way places, like Rochester, New York, where not many bands go, and the kids will be grateful for any evening’s entertainment. It will also take them to the big mid-Western cities like Detroit and Chicago, where they see plenty of rock bands come and go. This is the industrial heart of America, traditionally self-centred and insular.

This is where I want to see how The Jam would fare.

AMERICA — the land is such a big ocean. Its cultural currents never flow in any one direction. Generalisations about what is happening are inevitably misleading.

The country’s ‘hip’ urban / media centres gave early welcome to new wave music.

The stirrings of the great mid-’70s musical shake-up were, in fact, first felt in New York. But the pioneers of the movement were prophets unheeded in their homeland. And outside of those urban centres, the rock taste of the record-buying masses has remained, for the most part, conventional and conservative. Look at the charts.

Yeah, but look at the charts. This week, The Clash and The Pretenders have both broken into the Top Forty. Something is stirring.

Radio is the most easily identifiable villain in this unfolding drama. In a country with no national music press to speak of, radio is and always has been, the main source of information about new music, the most relied-upon guide for consumers sorting through the bins of new releases. And of all the segments of the American music industry, radio has been the most resistant to change. It is a highly commercial and competitive field, in which station managers vie with each other for limited advertising dollars. Eyes on the ratings have meant eyes off new musical trends, whose introduction might scare off established audiences.

What breakthroughs the new wave have made have so far come mostly from its representatives who have softened their attack and made their bows in the directions of melodic nicety, lyrical non-abrasiveness and ‘professional’ production values demanded by radio programmers: Blondie, The Police, Joe Jackson...



As to the future, the signs are contradictory.

On the one hand, The Clash, The Pretenders and The Specials are all starting to have great success here. This may signal a turning point. It would seem to be a time of great opportunity for The Jam and many others.

On the other hand, the one radio station in New York that consistently played new wave music, is just about banned from the city’s airwaves.

And that’s New York. In Detroit, I asked a fan at a Jam concert whether he ever heard the likes of The Jam or The Clash on his local radio station. He just rolled his eyes toward heaven and let forth an exasperated sigh.

SO THAT’S how we go, step forward and a step back. And The Jam are here, trying to get their earnest, intense depictions of life in a less than idyllic modern world over to the slumbering, but maybe just waking up, American youth. And not having an easy time of it.

When Jerry Dammers showed up at New York’s Palladium to see The Jam, it seemed like a relay-race passing the baton. The Jam, though, have been slow starters in this race, and not for lack of trying. Their first visit here, in 1977, was a two-stop jaunt hitting CBGB and LA’s

Whiskey. The next trip was a bit longer, and the third was a proper tour a year ago in support of ‘All Mod Cons’. Despite their efforts, that album died in the marketplace, and the group has so far only built up a sizeable cult following.

Even now, when ‘London Calling’ can occasionally be heard on the radio, there’s not a chance of hearing ‘Eton Rifles’, and ‘Setting Sons’ is settling quietly down into the lower reaches of the charts.

Paul Weller thinks the notion of a second ‘British Invasion’ is ridiculous. “Everyone you talk to asks, ‘Don’t you think all the British new wave acts which have broken in America have paved the way for you?’ and they’re talking about Joe Jackson, which has nothing to do with us. So I don’t know how long it’s going to take. It may never happen.”

Why should this be? This is the same group that swept the *NME* Readers’ Poll this year. But many Americans seem to find The Jam too brittle, too lacking in melodic appeal, too British. Especially too British — an explanation I’ve heard glibly dropped from the lips of Polydor promo people and several DJs.

“Well, I suppose that’s the most logical reason why we’re not played on the radio,” Weller says when I tell him how often this is mentioned. “The sentiments of the songs are universal. But the references and the way they’re put together is maybe too British. But there’s no way we’re going to change that. I mean what’s the point? Even our few fans here would regard that as a cop-out.”

But it must be frustrating, I offer, to write a song like ‘Eton Rifles’, a

brilliant allegory of social confrontation, and then be told it doesn’t translate.

“Yeah, but there’s nothing you can do about it. Like I hear something by Springsteen or something about driving down Sunset Boulevard, and it means nothing to me, but that’s not to say it’s not a good song. It’s just that lyrically it doesn’t mean fuck-all. But take France — they don’t understand any of the lyrics, it’s just the act and the presentation behind it that they can relate to. Even with the language barrier, what you’re saying is still coming across in some way. So why not here?”

THE GIG in Detroit was at the Motor City Skating Rink. It started earlier than we thought, the plane left late, and the taxi from the airport took forever. By the time we arrived, the band has gone offstage, the lights are up and the equipment is being taken down.

It’s a strange place for a rock show. The roller rink looks like a big concrete barn. In the middle is an oval-shaped wooden floor, with a makeshift stage set up at one end.

In the dressing room, a procession of fans pays homage to their faves. Paul Weller is seated on a couch at the side of the room like a king holding court, while fans approach and crouch down in front of him to talk. They are a sheepish looking bunch, these Detroit Jam fans, well

“So tell me, boys, just where do you want to get to in this wonderful country of ours?”

Sons’. “There’s no concept,” he says. “It’s just about people dealing with things, realities. But there’s no deliberate concept.”

The young people in this dressing room are serious followers of music. Some of them might look to someone like Paul Weller for answers, which of course Weller would deny he could supply. They might also be expected to influence their friends towards their musical tastes. But each one I ask tells me their friends think they’re crazy for liking the music they do.

After a while, we’re off to the hotel for another regular part of the Jam schedule, a long, beery apres-gig session in the Holiday Inn boozier. The drinking goes on until closing time, when Ken, The Jam’s road manager, bundles everyone off to bed.

THE NEXT morning, a short flight to Chicago. In their everyday clothes, The Jam blend inconspicuously into the airport crowd. Buckler has his portable backgammon set, Foxton his portable combination cassette player and TV set, the TV part of which doesn’t function for American television. Weller has Jill on his arm, and is very quiet. Flying, he says, makes him nervous.

The Jam on tour are a model of organisation. While the roadies move the equipment by truck from

gone off, and a Spiderman cartoon has come one. “Is he tough?” Buckler exclaims. “He’s got radioactive blood!”

Foxton casts an eye out on the gray, overcast Chicago skyline, a bleak-looking marvel of urban sprawl. “It doesn’t look like anybody could really live out there,” he sighs. “It all starts to blend in. Last night someone asked me where we’d been the day before, and I couldn’t remember. Makes you feel really thick.”

After the soundcheck, the next event on the schedule is an “in-store appearance” at Wax Trax, Chicago’s premier new wave record shop. It is a great store, large and better stocked than any I’ve seen in New York or London.

At first, a few fans cautiously approach Weller, one at a time. The first is an earnest young man with a petition of protest. The club where they are playing, because it serves liquor, cannot admit anyone under twenty-one. He has gathered over two hundred signatures protesting this. He is followed by some more conventional autograph seekers, and soon Weller is mobbed by fans sticking records and pieces of paper in his face.

The kids in the store are younger than the ones we saw in the dressing room the previous night. Some of them are so young they may not be allowed to go to gigs, or are too young to get in. Foxton and Buckler are at first almost ignored, but after a

NME’s New York bureau — writer Richard Grabel and photographer Joe Stevens — fly to Chicago for an American’s eye view on The Jam’s efforts to join the British Invasion.

turned out in jackets, ties and badges, their girlfriends in dresses and *Quadrophenia* target T-shirts. But flung out of the rink downstairs I had seen many more kids in the ordinary drab blue-jane uniform of American rock seducers.

This scene, a mob of fans lining up to speak to The Jam, is an every-night occurrence on this tour, and was quite unknown last time around. What is hard to say is whether it merely indicates a growing cult or the first tremors of a really expensive audience.

The Jam seem glad to see us. I’d met them on their last trip here, and Joe Stevens had been to Germany with them. We feel, if not like old friends, at least like old acquaintances.

The show, I’m told by the fans, was good but not great. The rink was only three quarters full (about seven hundred people) and most of the audience just stood and watched. The most common complaint is the lack of any pre-‘All Mod Cons’ material in the set.

Weller, meanwhile, is being queried on the concept of ‘Setting

city to city, the core group — the band, Jill, band manager John Weller and road manager Ken Wheeler — go by plane. In each city they pick up a rented station wagon, just big enough to cram in the six of them plus luggage. This core group is compact, tightly-knit and highly mobile.

There are no superstar trips or prime donna spots going on among this group. Nobody sleeps in or holds up the group, nobody seems to even get cranky about the busy schedule. At night, after the gigs, there is time to relax with a few drinks. But during the day The Jam are strictly business, and they run on time.

The Chicago Holiday Inn is a more posh, more urban affair than its Detroit counterpart. After we check in, I wander up to the room drummer Rick Buckler and bassist Bruce Foxton share, to see what’s up and kill some time.

Buckler is a general connoisseur of pop-trash culture, and he’s excited to hear that I’ve just been watching a Japanese sci-fi B-movie on television. We look for it, but it’s

while they too are surrounded. After an hour of autograph signing and small-talking, the band eases itself out of the door.

THE GIG is at Park West, a former disco, now converted to a club presenting live bands. Remnants of its disco days remain: the club has a glittery, silver and black colour scheme (“Not our kind of place,” says Foxton) but this is obscured with the lights down and hundreds of bodies crammed into the place. The club seems full well beyond its official seven-hundred capacity, but doesn’t seem crowded, thanks to an unusually intelligent lay-out. There’s a dance floor in front of the stage, after which rows of seats and tables are set out on raised tiers, with lots of aisles which allow people to roam about the place freely.

The set is basically the same on The Jam played on their last British tour. They have become more tightly-drilled than ever before, the songs being delivered with an



almost military precision. The sound is determined, muscular, relentless. The floor in front of the stage is filled with dancing bodies.

Farther back, at the tables, an older and more reserved crowd soaks it up, appreciating the show but not demonstrating much physically. But The Jam thrive on being able to see the kids dancing in front of them, and tonight the show has an intensity and warmth that was absent in New York.

On 'Saturday Kids', when Weller sings "Hate the system! What's the system?", you can hear the questioning in his voice. He isn't telling, he's asking. 'Going Underground' sounds like a natural single, catchy and powerful. The set reaches its high point with a series of strong songs: 'To Be Someone', 'Eton Rifles', 'Strange Town'.

On the latter Weller's vocal is brilliant as for one moment he allows his passion to overcome his control, to deliver straight from the heart. But after that peak of excitement on 'Strange Town' brings him to an emotional edge. Weller draws back a bit, returning to a level of mere skill and proficiency. Still, it's a great gig, and the audience is still clapping for a third encore when the house lights go up.

The show over, The Jam take a minimal amount of time to dry off and change before coming out to talk to the fans who've gathered outside the dressing room. This has become second nature to them, an ordinary part of the doing-the-gig ritual.

"Sorry, boys, you should have stuck with those cutesy suits" ... Paul Weller, Bruce Foxton and Rick Buckler flunk the audition for 'The Warriors II'.

Among the fans here I notice several very young faces, too young to have normally been allowed into the club. One is a small girl with braces, couldn't be older than 13, who has been following the band around since the soundcheck. Another is the guy with the petition. The Jam brought them into the club on their own guest list.

At the same time that they show such great solicitude towards their fans, The Jam feel a kind of resentment of the demands of showmanship. Back at the hotel, Weller asks me what I'd thought of the show. "Great," I blurt out, thinking mostly of the quality of the band's performance and the good time I'd had.

"But didn't you think the audience were a bunch of tossers?" Weller wants to know. I tell him that at least the kids dancing up front were well into it.

"But they want to be patronised," Weller says. "They're looking for bands that are gonna feed them lines about burning down the political system, so they can feel revolutionary, and then also feed them all the usual showbiz bullshit." And shaking his head, he disappears into the lift as the doors close.

NEXT MORNING, The Jam assemble, nine a.m. sharp, at television station WLS where

■ Continues page 36



Left and below: The door bursts open and NME's intrepid photographer snaps indisputable proof of drug taking amongst the pop fraternity. Here we see Bruce Foxton smoking 'a joint' and (left) Paul Weller getting 'a buzz'. (Are you sure about this one, man? — Ed.)



Above: Jam on Chicago TV. Bob Cleancut: Hi there and good morning to AM Chicago... and this morning we fearlessly expose those punk rockers. Myrtle is here to interview the latest British rave imports — The Jam. Myrtle?

Myrtle: "Thank Barb and I'd like to ask you, Paul, the first question. Tell me Paul, does it always rain in London?"

Paul: "No."

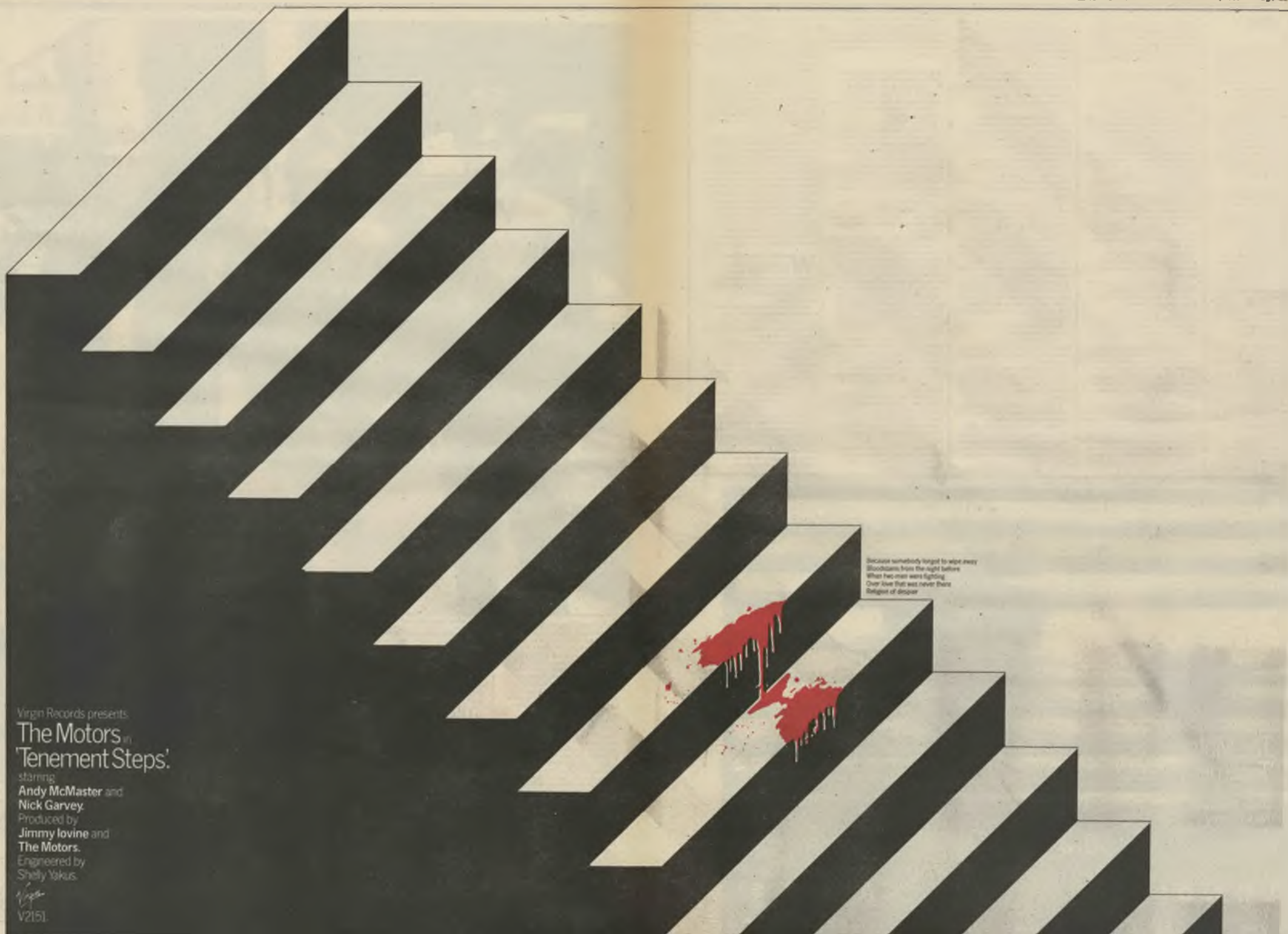
Myrtle: "Bruce. Don't you think the Queen Mother is marvelous?"

Bruce: "Sure."

Myrtle: "Ricky. Did you get to see The Beatles?"

Ricky: "Yes. They're backstage waiting to come on after us."

Myrtle: "Thanks boys for coming in and clearing up a few worries us Yankers have about punk rock. After the break, Barb will be asking: After a fish meal, what napkin would impress that special guest?"



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V2151

JAM USA

From page 33

they are to be interviewed live on *AM Chicago*, a local talk show. The other guests this morning include an investment consultant who's to talk about money market funds, a lady weight-lifter, and two members of a Shakespearean acting troupe. Standing around the corridor of the TV studio, the group looks remarkably bright and chipper, considering the hour. The show's producer comes by and thanks the band for coming. "We haven't had many rock bands on the show."

The studio is set up to look like someone's living room. The Jam sit on a couch. The show's hosts, a man and woman team of two dapper personalities in their late 30s, sit opposite.

The interview is a perfunctory affair. Attempting to break the ice, one host says: "I'm surprised you guys are up so early."

Foxton: "We're surprised too."

Host: "What is new wave music?"

Weller: "I've no idea."

There's some talk about influences. Weller offers that "Audiences are a little slow over here. They're into having big light shows and things like that." He mumbles most of his responses. At one point the host turns to Rick Buckler and says, "Well Rick, you haven't said anything yet." "It's too early," Buckler replies, his one line of the show. On the way out, we all agree that it doesn't matter: no potential Jam fans could be watching the show anyway.

A FEW hours later, The Jam are in my hotel room to be interviewed once again. It's a job they take to much more cheerfully than this morning's vain promotional exercise.

At first it's just Foxton, Buckler and myself. The talk is more a conversation than a grilling session. I ask them what they see as their ultimate goals, what they hope to get out of the rock and roll game. Is it cars, girls, money?

Foxton: "No, just a reaction worldwide like we get in England. It's not those superficial things. It's the feeling of actually communicating with an audience."

Buckler: "Well we don't want to bullshit. Everybody's into money and the rest of those sort of things, but I don't think they hold highest in our aims. I'm sure we'd be a lot different than we are now if that was our top aim."

Foxton: "We'd be singing in pseudo-American voices and stuff like that."

Weller comes in. I ask him to clarify his comments of the night before regarding the audience.

"Yeah, well, that was a bit... but it was true. I just get the feeling that people here want to be led by the hand to the promised land, whatever that is. No one wants to do it themselves, they want to be coaxed and stroked, and we're not going to do that. Let them go see The Blue Oyster Cult or The Clash or something like that if that's what they want."

Perhaps, I say, the main problem is that so far in America new wave music has attracted an older audience than in England.

"Yeah, I think that's probably quite true. It's only on this tour that we've started to notice really young kids, 15 or 16."

Foxton: "It doesn't help the growth of it when you've got all these clubs that the young kids can't get into."

I noticed that you got some of the under-age fans in last night.

Weller: "Some of them were a little reserved anyway."

Foxton: "They want to be patronised. If we had gone out there and said 'You're a great audience, Chicago, we love you' and all that..."

So what makes a good audience?

Weller: "It's the communication. If you feel you're communicating it inspires you to play better. It's a cycle. It all stems from that initial sort of communication, which we haven't really encountered here so far."

A lot of the fans complain about you not playing any of the old songs.

"A few people said that in England as well. But we don't want to become another greatest hits band." But you could be accused of falling into the usual industry syndrome of promoting the new album, play a few from the previous album and that's it.

"I suppose you could look at it that way. But it's really like going to see The Who and they're still playing 'My Generation' after 15 years. It becomes pointless. Those old songs, like 'In The City', have sentiments we still stand by. And they're still being said anyway in the new songs, as far as I'm concerned. But we want to keep the whole set contemporary."

How important is it to you personally to be accepted in America?

"It's as important as being accepted anywhere in the world. I don't know if 'accepted' is the right word. We want to be successful everywhere. But we also want to do it on our own terms."

Meaning you won't do what? "Well, starting with smoothing our sound out or whatever, production-wise, or making the band sound like pointing towards America."

Just how much of an impact would you like your music to make on America? Do you see the day when everybody will be walking around humming Jam tunes?

"Well, we want to be more than just a hummable tune. The way you put it there doesn't seem much. I don't relish the thought of some housewife doing her Hoovering and whistling 'A-Bomb In Wardour Street'. Can't really see the point in that. But if she listens to 'Private Hell' and packs away her Hoover and says 'I ain't gonna fucking do any more Hoovering' then that's a good impact if you ask me."

You would like to have an effect on the way people live?

"Yeah. Without getting on a crusade bit, 'cause that's equally as pretentious as just being a straight pop band."

There are, of course, volumes of conventional wisdom written about how to break a band in America. The Jam don't like the way that game is played.

Buckler: "It's such a commercial country over here. Everything has to be advertised and sold."

Weller: "I don't know why they don't just leave that stuff out when it comes to us. The radio ads and the trade paper ads are just ridiculous. It's not what we want anyway. It's really difficult when you're in another country. It's hard to watch

what they're up to. In England we're there all the time and we're constantly putting pressure on them to do things. Plus the fact that we've been successful, so we get our say a lot easier."

POLYDOR was originally going to release 'Eton Rifles' as a single here, then decided against it. Now 'Heat Wave' has been chosen as the American single.

Weller: "It was either that or nothing, basically."

Foxton: "When we found out 'Heat Wave' was going to be the single, we phoned up and gave them our choice. We were thinking of 'Thick As Thieves' or 'Private Hell' or something like that. And they phoned back and said well we don't mind not putting out 'Heat Wave' but it's either that or nothing. Which would mean the album's finished, right?"

Do they have hopes for 'Setting Sons' doing well here?

Buckler: "I think it will break down some barriers. It should get easier with time."

Weller: "I can't really see it. I'd like to, but I can't really. We don't want to do constant touring. We don't want to sacrifice Britain just to do it over here. We've talked about just coming over here for two weeks, two or three times a year, just split it up. That way we could play some of the places we've never played, as well as keep in contact with Britain. We should do a lot more gigs in Britain, really, instead of doing two major tours every year, so we want to put that right as well."

It's up to the new American bands as well. They could be making inroads themselves, if they thought about it, instead of playing all this retreat crap. Play something different, or at least get some decent lyrics, sing about something important."

On tour The Jam don't seem to go out much, spending most of their post-gig nights drinking in the same dismal Holiday Inn bars. I ask whether they don't desire to get out more, go where the "real people" go.

Buckler: "When we get a couple of days off, we like to go out and do something. But we don't know the places, where to go."

Foxton: "I don't know who the real people are anyway."

Buckler: "You always just come in contact with the record company people and people who are involved in the business and it gets up your nose a little bit sometimes."

Weller: "There was this guy last night, he was saying, 'Well, I don't know if I should stay around here for the show or if I should go back and get this album moving'. Get this album moving, like he was fucking John Wayne or something! What's he going to do at nine o'clock at night?"

"On the last tour I tried to speak to a lot of the real people. Like outside one airport there was a bloke carrying a placard, and I tried to ask him what it was all about, and he didn't even know. So the real people don't have suss either. Some of the people are slight. Some of the fans we meet do have things suss out."

How long do you think you can keep doing this rock and roll life?

Weller: "I don't know, I don't think about it like that. I don't think any of us do. Just take it as it comes."

Foxton: "I think we'll know when one of us doesn't turn up onstage."

WHETHER The Jam? Weller is at once a romantic and a pessimist. He wants his music to have a profound effect on people, for his songs to challenge his listeners' values and assumptions.

At the same time he's doubtful as to what ability pop music has to accomplish such objectives. He's also very wary of being cast in a role of preacher or teacher.

I think that wariness will be his salvation: it will keep his feet out of many pitfalls when American success finally comes his way.

And it will come. Weller doesn't know, he thinks Americans are too set on music as escapist entertainment. But there are a lot of stages in this country, and a lot of old bands who will fade or be pushed out of the way. Somebody will have to fill those stages.

The Jam have longevity. There is no reason why they shouldn't be one of the bands to do the job. But contrary to their status in the U.K., that's all they're ever likely to be here: just one of the bands.

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THE MOST talented people are always the nicest," says Carl Palmer, former drummer with Emerson, Lake and Palmer. "Or at least," he adds "that's always been my experience."

Mr Palmer is here to tell us why ELP broke up, to explain why he's found a new "good-time rock'n'roll band", and to give us his thoughts about the way people are. Particularly the most talented and nicest people.

"If a guy is really rich or really talented," he continues, "then he doesn't go round telling people. He doesn't need to. It's the guy who goes round telling you what he's done or what he's got — he's the guy that hasn't quite made it."

"You can usually tell."

The implication is that Carl Palmer doesn't boast himself, because he doesn't need to. It's a very refined piece of hypocrisy, the sort of talk you'd hear among the *nouveaux riches* down at your local Conservative Club. That's assuming, of course, they'd let people like you in.

Not only is Mr Palmer telling us he's rich and talented, he's also letting us know he's modest with it. Of course, if he was really, he wouldn't need to tell us about it. Ah well...

W E MEET Mr Palmer and I, in the lobby of an expensive hotel in London's West End. He's not actually staying there and neither am I, but it's the sort of place where an international jet-setting rock star feels at ease. Carlsberg a quid a bottle. That kind of thing.

When Carl Palmer arrives, he's wearing an expensive looking coat with a fur collar and carrying a briefcase. He looks the way you've always imagined an LA music-biz exec would look.

With him is a lanky Texan with a neat moustache, neat hair, and neat spectacles. He could be a Texan bank clerk, but he is in fact the lead singer in Palmer's new band, which is called PM. The Texan's name is John Nitzinger.

Mr Nitzinger has a careful deference towards Mr Palmer, like a bank clerk dealing with a bank manager.

At one point, Carl is explaining why he wanted to start another band after nearly ten years as a bombastic techno-flasher with ELP. "I'm not the kind of guy that wants to sit at home and show you his paintings," he says. "Know what I mean? I think it's the same for every member of the band. I want to be wanted. I really do. If you can be wanted — that to me is the greatest. If other people want what you supply, it's tremendous. It really is."

"If it takes money that I've got to reinvest then I'll do that. That's what music is all about."

"A lot of people who don't know me very well will say: 'Yeah, but he's a conning bastard', but that's not really where I'm at, at all."

I decide to ask Mr Nitzinger if this is true, and Mr Nitzinger seems a little taken back by the question. Maybe his thoughts were elsewhere, but he stumbles a little over the reply.

"This, er, is, um, true," he answers. "This is, er, true. A while ago he accused me of being modest. I'd have to say the same is true of him."

I tell Mr Nitzinger that I'm a little disappointed with his answer. I was hoping he would call Mr Palmer a lying bastard. We all laugh at this amusing little thought, Mr Palmer a little less than Mr Nitzinger.

Just in case Mr Palmer may have got the wrong impression, Mr Nitzinger decides to set the record straight.

"I really couldn't call him that," he says, when we've stopped laughing. "I really couldn't do that in all honesty because I have to admire this, because I mean I've had my albums, but I've never had one make the charts, which was for different reasons."

And what were they?

"Because I didn't care. I just cared about my music as a writer and artist. That was my forte. A writer first. An entertainer second."

Now, however, Mr Nitzinger has a

chance to make the charts because Mr Palmer is investing, and good luck to him. He used to run his own band in Dallas, Texas and Carl Palmer sought him out and brought him from obscurity. Mr Nitzinger's band was called Nitzinger, which sounds like a cross between Nixon and Kissinger and is not the most exciting name you've ever heard for a band. So here we are with a man who looks like a Texan bank clerk leading a band called Nitzinger, but Carl Palmer thought he had potential. It's revealing to hear how he went about setting up his new group.

"John was one of the first people I went to see. I had maybe 400 cassettes that I listened to. I went through them all. Pictures of people were sent and when the pictures were good as well, I then would fly to wherever the guy was. One of the first places being Dallas, Texas. Went down to see John and it went from there. There was a lot of investigating and a lot of work."

"To put a band together these days is not what it was. The bass player lived round the corner, the organist lived in an apartment over there. It's not like that any more. It's like on an international level."

Carl is not impressed by the new wave philosophy that anyone can be in a band, and that bands (or groups as we call them nowadays) work best when there's a long-standing empathy between the members. In other words, that it's better that the bass-player lives round the corner and the organist in the same tower block.

Carl put all the members of his new group together by hiring individual musicians from different groups. His primary concern was that "the people had spent time developing their craft". The thought doesn't seem to have occurred to him that people who've spent time apparently developing their craft, may actually have spent time losing the spontaneity and enthusiasm that brought them into music.

Clearly, though, he has very high standards.

"We were looking for a keyboard player. No luck at all. Then I did pick up somebody who I thought was going to be right. Everything was right. Went down to see the guy. Perfect. But his attitude after a period of time. Very, very weird. And I sensed something with his personality."

"His general attitude was a bit erratic. A very, very erratic person. I thought: hang on. Cos I played with a lot of musicians and I'm quite good at personalities. I thought I'll steer away from this one."

Now as it happens, this Palmer monologue about this weird, erratic keyboard player strikes me as more than a bit ironic. Carl Palmer talks like a man who is rarely contradicted, and this is no doubt because he is rarely contradicted. For the past 11 years, since he was 19, he's been treated like a star. His first band was The Crazy World Of Arthur Brown and they had a number one single "Fire" and a number one album in the States at the first attempt. Carl Palmer then went on to join a so-called supergroup with Messrs Emerson and Lake, and their excessively spectacular shows seemed to many to be no more than giant ego trips for the musicians themselves.

Chances are, in fact, that Carl Palmer has spoken only to employees, lackeys, sycophants, and fans over the last ten years, and that's given him no chance to measure the real effect of his words. He goes on to talk about Eric Scott, the bass player he eventually hired.

"The office I had in LA went through about forty people. One day, this tall guy turned up and we didn't think much of him, so we had him come back three times, just so we could be totally convinced, cos everybody was hand-picked. So, anyway, we got him to join the band."

"You know, he's nothing dramatic, but he'd been chiselling away at various areas of the business and you know, he'd picked up various things. Everyone's got something to offer."

Palmer says all this with great confidence and no hesitation, and while he puts down erratic, weird keyboard players, I'm wondering whether he ever wonders a little about his own personality.

I don't ask him about his own personality because he's a black-belt karate expert and he's very close.

Continues over

Carl Palmer is not an egotistical person



Carl with an impressive grin from ear...

...to here

Just filthy rich, totally out of touch with modern rock music and as modest as hell. Or so he boasts. Bob Edmonds grins and bears it. Santo Basone snaps the shy smile.



What's their names have certainly aged, haven't they Carl?



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Palmed off

From previous page

INSTEAD, I ask him about his black-belt karate. Does he still do it?
"I sure do," he says. "I haven't trained seriously for about eight months, but I'm still involved."

I decide to risk telling him that I'm not completely impressed with PM's album. I tell him that I thought it fell between two stools. On the one hand they were coming on like a would-be heavy rock band; on the other, they were singing all these cute little choruses. (Later, it occurred to me they were attempting to sound like The Cars in some places and like Foreigner in others.)

Carl Palmer takes this criticism fairly well, particularly in view of his investment, described by Mr Nitzinger as "frightening".

I tell Palmer that I didn't think his band had quite resolved their identity.

"Maybe not, maybe not," he says. "It's hard to say whether we've resolved it or not. As a band, we feel that this is the path we've carved away for ourselves. A vocal-orientated band."

"All I can say is that the instinct — the feeling — that I have feels right, right now. It's not as heavy as a band like Led Zeppelin. It's not quite as tight as The Eagles. It's that very narrow path that we're treading. You've got to do it with the skill of a mountain goat or you can't do it at all."

IN TRUTH, it seems an odd time to launch a mountain-goat style band that's somewhere between The Eagles and Led Zeppelin, but after all those years cooped up in ELP, it's no surprise that Carl Palmer should have some odd ideas.

On the subject of why ELP split up, Carl has very little to say that's interesting, let alone indiscreet.

"Basically, we were set up well in life — I actually shouldn't say that because it sounds very flamboyant — and things were made a bit too easy for you, so people tend to get a bit lazy."

"If you ask me what was my biggest gripe, it was that we didn't work enough. It was basically a non-active band from a touring point of view."

"There's not really a lot more I can say to you about that. It ended in a very businesslike way."

Later in the conversation, Palmer says he thought ELP played "a little too much in the classical vein".

He goes on: "That was the making of the band, but I think we could have got a bit more rocky. Emerson is a powerhouse keyboard player as a rock'n'roll keyboard player. You

know, for me, he's just fantastic."

"And also Lakey, you know. No malice at all, no malice. No bad feeling."

To outsiders, ELP seemed to get into big trouble when they did an album called 'Works Volume One', which had them doing all kinds of technically clever stuff backed by an orchestra. They ran into heavy financial difficulties when they took the orchestra on the road with them.

Palmer says, though, that all this has been exaggerated.

"For three weeks we were in financial trouble. Let me just say this; we lost a lot of money."

Hundreds of thousands? Millions?

"A considerable amount of money. After that, the band then toured America for 12 weeks as a three-piece band and made *beaucoup* de money and nobody ever wrote about that."

But is it true that you over-reached yourselves?

"We asked the public to accept too much. We turned ourselves into educators and not entertainers."

"I joined a group, I didn't join an orchestra. On the other hand, I could give you all the opposite arguments, because it was all very valid."

And that is about as much as he's prepared to say on the subject of his discontents. He may be prepared to say that his new bass-player is "nothing dramatic", but on the subject of any shortcomings that Emerson and Lake may have had, his lips are apparently sealed.

Palmer acknowledges there's a backlash against extravagance and spectacle on stage, and accordingly, his new group will be scaled down. He'll still do a drum solo, though. Of course.

"I'll do all the tricks that people saw, but I'll play slightly different drums now, because I'll be playing to enhance the songs. I will do my drum solo and startle everyone like I always have done, but I'll do it at the right time, you know."

"With ELP, I showed off more in the numbers because the music was arranged where I did so many unison runs with Emerson and intricate little passages together, so it was obvious that I was a great player or a good player or whatever you want to say."

So modest, these rich and talented people.

NEVER did find out why Carl Palmer's new band is called PM (Post Mortem? Post Menstruation?). He did tell me, though, that he decided not to call it The Carl Palmer Band because he is "not an egotistical person".

Enough said, really. Right?

WILD HORSES

Face Down c/w Dealer



PRODUCED BY TREVOR RABIN

ALBUMS

THE POP GROUP

For How Much Longer (Do We Tolerate Mass Murder?)
(Y/Rough Trade)

REALITY is radically evil. There is no revolutionary paradise. Nothing escapes the dread equation: World = Power = State = Barbarism. Misery will last as long as the social bond does. Every man bears in himself the whole human condition.

These are the burdens we seg under. It doesn't need The Pop Group to shout in our faces about the monstrosities of the modern world, the cruelty inherent in mankind, the appalling inequality most of us yearn to disperse. We know! Where next? Meanwhile with astronomical conceit, extravagant linguistic ineptitude and an anti-sentimentality of a peculiarly self-deluding and unpleasant kind, with a record of constant earnestness, kitschy excess and fanatical stubbornness, The Pop Group shout. Hysterically. It's bleak comedy.

It's not possible to attack The Pop Group's concern, but the feckless and shallow way in which it is manifested must be ridiculed, not least because it is ultimately harmful. The group may strenuously condemn intolerable injustices and growl their grievances, but all they succeed in doing is to scrape together a scrappy, cramped and supposedly abstract funk-rock that never rises above the self-conscious as they strain for a quasi-philosophical dimension that achieves little more than the deadening air of contrivance. They bury themselves. They breathe with difficulty.

The Pop Group: some (underground) heroes! They could be the consequence of a failed revolution. (Punk).

It may seem unforgivably callous to talk about post-punk developments and The Pop Group's failure to actually progress (i.e. grow up) and involve themselves when there are millions of lost and hungry and persecuted everywhere and always, but it must be remembered that one's next breath often seems more important than anything else. To get so involved with the r'n'r pursuit may be simple escapism; more likely it's necessary preoccupation. The Pop Group's priggish, simplistic obsession with all the world's humanitarian problems and more is however a constrictive preoccupation, unhealthy narrow-minded and elitist. Their attitude is painful, naive to the point of being gormless.

UN-POP groups like The Pop Group give a bad-dab name to the attempts of such as Gang Of Four and Joy Division to establish and develop a responsible, accessible new rock form — one that does matter, and looks delusion as it should and can as long as we retain our innocence. It is obviously easy for those who cannot escape the safety net of rock's moribund traditions to dismiss the activities of those realistically attacking the frivolity and regressive reliance on rock's happy standard. To think all post-punk is as flimsily depraved, spuriously plagiaristic and pointlessly elitist as The Pop Group. This simply isn't so.

There are however many others who are also struggling against the return of the same old rock routine in a slightly different promo t-shirt, and who are doing so without introducing new and alienating falsifications, deceptions and pretensions, who are not purporting to possess special 'concern' and 'awareness'. Instead they are supplying basic needs. No one is denying 'reality'. All that is being acknowledged is that trying to relate one's position within the rock world with the crushingly colossal problems of The World is futile. Rock's own corruption and idiocy are worth fighting. Results can be achieved. This may or may not be important.

The Pop Group seem utterly un-important. If you are worried about the victims — or, more pertinently, are A True Victim (great or small) — this record is no use to you. If you want to know something else about love and death, life and hate, loneliness and fear, despair and helplessness, The Pop Group won't add to anything you've discovered. Some of what goes on here might confirm feelings of guilt and hopelessness. But if you want radical dance music, fresh attack, vitality, coherence or soul, The Pop Group are worthless.

Or maybe 'worthy': a tiny pointer to better things. The Pop Group have a great ideal in mind but charge towards it without considering the principles, contradictions and substance involved. They breathlessly gather material for their collage, then gleefully scatter it in all directions. It's so thin and bland; even the infamous bass is blank. Here, on nine embarrassingly grim songs they come nowhere near to even accidentally repeating the pretty patterns of 'Beyond Good And Evil', which had a lucky, bizarre irresistibility. It's all as wet and derivative as any death-defying, multi-limbed and visually dazzling combo on the scene, but it's draped in a hipper, 'weirder' mystique. Those momentarily attracted to the mobility, tumble and 'ethnic' primitivism of the group's gyrating neo-funk-rock with jazz bits falling off should look to the places it all came from: The Last Poets, Funkadelic, Don Cherry, Ornette Coleman, Miles Davis, Captain Beefheart, in all of whose music you can experience spite, insight, the bite of rebellion and all kinds of swing. The Pop Group though simply ghost smugly at their own supposedly supreme embodiment of black and white, skill and elegance, war and war. So modish. So foppish.

The Pop Group do not make the Kampuchea holocaust any more comprehensible or even any more sickening by chucking lame one-liners about the war crimes of Nixon and Kissinger into the midst of a hiccoughing hybrid of nonsensical 'free' jazz and tame funk; they in fact do more to trivialise the issue, turn it into some useless slogan, turn tragedy into unintentional 'pop' comedy.

Yet The Pop Group insist in their haze. They're convinced that all at once they're smashing down rock's rigid barriers, establishing some brave new rock music, avoiding compromise, and courageously pointing out the horrific inequality of society and the world, heaving the troubles onto their own heaving shoulders and dying on towards an ecstatically eternal damnation. But their polemic is puerile: 'How Much Longer Do We Tolerate Mass Murder?' is a sort of 'Oh What A Wicked Wicked Wicked World'. It's an appalling record, exquisitely useless.

This doesn't mean I oppose the group's values, just that I distrust their hysteria. The Pop Group's negative, all too clear-cut sloganeering and clumsy questioning doesn't help my confusion. For all their commitment, The Pop Group seem to fit all too easily into the great rock shambles-puzzle as gangling youths messing about with form and content they can barely control. They're frowningly extremes to The Angelic Upstarts. They're a bit squalid.

But my rejecting The Pop Group doesn't necessarily mean that I prefer escapism. What is escapism? The Pop Group or Liquid Gold — both are out of touch and void of ideas, and both make me feel that I'm wasting my time (living and writing this.)



"We were gonna play some new songs, but our copy of The Leveller ain't come through yet..."
Mark Stewart and Gareth Sager.
Pic: Bryn Jones.

The nine songs' titles are as inane and dust-dry as the LP's. Everything tatters on the edge of self-parody; the songs often threaten to bust open into epic flatulence. The whole package is like a Pythonesque exercise in pouring boiling scorn over the peripheral indulgence of Crass, over all such reactionary, anarchistic crusades as they slip around in the mud between liberty and authoritarianism. 'Force Of Oppression', 'Feed The Hungry', 'One Out Of Money', 'Blind Faith', 'For How Much Longer', 'Justice', 'Escapism Is Not Freedom', 'Communication', 'Rob A Bank' — ludicrously serious words and phrases jut out. Vocals strangle themselves against the lethargically mixed Group grind, only adding to the sad comedy: "exploitation", "lethal terrorism", "corruption", "enslavement", "political prisoners", "do you want to fight in Zimbabwe?"

All these songs from within all these war zones exude nothing more than bald sloganeering: a language that eventually becomes as meaningless and lost, as clichéd and dull as the signifiers "fun", "dance", "good time" and "love" are in the music of fulltime escapist artists.

Even within rock's trivial structure, The Pop Group don't take risks or pose new challenges. They confuse, disguise and indulge. They're always more laughable than they're evocative or disruptive. They forget that to point out the obvious is to point out very little. The Pop Group point at the nasty pictures, clutch their faces, writhe in pity.

But what do they contribute? What do they do? Make plans. Very little. So what am I doing in the fight against hell on Earth and mass brainwashing? Very little, but hopefully not making a fool of myself and others so profoundly.

The Pop Group have an enormous sense of their own importance and intensity, run rampant across a small-scale world stage of tragedy and tribulation and sin, presumably, for some large-scale conversion. Or perhaps 'Mass Murder' is another burst of masturbatory relief, perhaps the lads just have to force this angst out — but don't you vomit too much, just you groove to the funk music. Enjoy! Except that isn't too easy.

See how useless this all is.

The Pop Group are ghosts. The Pop Group live in a little hole. The Pop Group should not try so hard. The Pop Group should try talking to us. What is it they want to say? What is it I want to say?

Paul Morley

OK, we've
suffered
for our art.
Now it's
your turn...

THE MOTORS

Tenement Steps (Virgin)
It's been a long time — time enough to forget about The Motors altogether. Nearly two years have gone since the last album 'Approved' appeared, only to be followed by the band's apparent auto-destruction as a live entity. For the past 18 months or so The Motors has been no more than a vehicle for the studio-conceived dreams of Nick Garvey and Andy McMaster, finally unveiled. 'Tenement Steps' is an impressive achievement in its own way, if not an entirely lovable one, and asserts their return to action powerfully.

As The Motors' third album, 'Tenement Steps' confirms and develops that break which its predecessor made with the crypto-headbanging of the debut. It's more soaring, high-production pop music, plausibly crafted to commercial perfection. It's more melodies that sweep majestically across a booming rock'n'roll background, more songs so strong that once they've clamped around the brain there's no getting free of them. And choirs, orchestras as well — it's more of everything. It's as if you're being asked to stand back and admire.

Officially a two-man band nowadays after the departures of drummer Rick Slaughter and guitarist Bram Tolchinsky left McMaster and Garvey free to pursue this grand plan for conceptual pop on a mass scale and at their own pace. The Motors are temporarily augmented by bassist Martin Ace and (likewise ex-Man) Rockpile drummer Terry Williams, with Jimmy Iovine (associated notably with Petty and Springsteen) co-producing. It's a team which could be guaranteed to blend rock-solid traditionalism with self-assured sophistication, and that's what they've done.

'Love And Loneliness', the single which opens the album, is archetypal Motors: dull lyrics over a gorgeous tune. Words appear to constitute something of a problem throughout, everywhere they seem to be struggling to match the monumental stature of the music with something equally grand to say, and not generally succeeding. 'Metropolis' and 'Nightmare Zero' play about with modernistic discord and visions of apocalypses, while the title track and 'Slum People' come on all grim and urban, being soured reflections on McMaster's Glasgow past: but the awkwardness and cliché only dampen the songs' intended impacts. 'Modern Man' sets out as pointed satire, but ends up weak and confused: 'He's never sexist if he ever begins/He goes to the men's groups/And confesses his sins.'

Apart from the irritating anachronism of 'coincidence' to which Motors music is prone (I can't listen to 'That's What John Said', for example, without hearing Bowie's 'Five Years'), the sheer sound of the album is a triumph. For orthodox, easy-listening rock it couldn't be improved on, there isn't a composition that misuses. For all the luxurious arrangements and rich textures, its basic attack remains intact, perhaps largely thanks to the tenuous Williams' drumming.

Maybe too easily dismissed as lightweight (for which The Motors tend to over-compensate with melodrama), genuine powerpop like this should prove as durable as anything else around. It's immediate, and it lives in a vacuum. I can appreciate it, even applaud it; but somehow I can't feel involved with it. No doubt that'll prove to be my problem more than theirs.

Paul Du Noyer



"Just like this"



"No, just like that..."

Joel pic: Laurie Evans / Robertson pic: Andre Colling

The charts are alive (?) with the sound of mushzak

B. A. ROBERTSON
Initial Success (Asylum)
DON'T TELL ME, let me guess. B. A. Robertson's favourite colours are loud, his favourite food is eels and mash and his favourite Beatle was Ringo. Right?

Could be. They coyly titled 'Initial Success' sounds like the accumulated fruits of a richly odd-ball past life. In his time, we are told, B. A. Robertson has been a practical joker, a playgroup leader, a pub entertainer and a writer of commercial jingles. He could probably decorate your house at very attractive rates. A lack of all trades. Indeed, something of a card.

It's not often you get to hear records by Swedish pop groups with as many jokes as this — although in fact it's not Swedish at all and was recorded by a number of Englishmen of whom I've never heard before. But the jokes! Hardly a stanza whistles past without some awful, contorted attempt to squeeze a pun from the stone.

One's rib is persistently tickled in an effort to confirm that over the distance musical comedy albums are nearly always more irritating than funny, not least when concocted by a man who shapes up like Warner Brothers' answer to Jona Lewis.

Robertson's song are a seaside promenade pastiche of all sorts of deft aspects of life on these shores. He himself is cast in the venerable tradition of British professional idiots. He details a number of amorous absurdities, between which things like Shakespeare, Billy Whizz, Harold Wilson, tarts, coffee bars and Rover the Dog fall under the vaudeville gavel. It's a long way from Ian Dury's pierhead rock, though the vocabulary is similar, and nowhere near as gloriously eccentric as Viv Stanshall.

To paraphrase someone or other, listening to B. A. Robertson is like slipping into warm bathos. It's tepid and it's often ridiculous. Except for the slight trace of cynicism that lingers around something called 'England's Green And Pleasant Land', everything's perfectly hunky-dory. Just what the world needs: an immature Ray Davies.

Buy it for your children. They'll soon grow out of it.

Paul Rambali

BILLY JOEL
Glass Houses (CBS)

I DON'T believe in hitting a man when he's up. Take, for instance, Billy Joel. His 'The Stranger' proved to be the biggest-selling album CBS has ever bestowed upon the world, while '52nd Street', his follow-up, took him even further up the league, establishing Joel as the most potent punter puller in the whole history of the label. Add a bob or two for the royalties he's made on 'Just The Way You Are', a song more covered than Wimbledon during the monsoon season, and you've got some idea of Joel's vulnerability.

No one could be more ripe for a thorough knocking.

But, with my belief in fair play, also a record collection that includes everything from Joel's sides with The Hassles right through to his last solo job, am I going to knock him?

Those betting on an affirmative answer can collect here and now.

But why, you ask? Can it be that the kid from Hicksville has merely earned a buck too many? Not so. I couldn't care less if CBS gave him Fort Worth instead of his next batch of luncheon vouchers. But what does concern me is the number of dull, unimaginative songs with which he has filled this soon-to-be platinum album.

For this time around there are no engaging scenarios like 'Scenes From An Italian Restaurant', no passionate hometown passions to compete with 'New York State Of Mind', no

turns to croon such as 'My Life', no nifty intros such as that which bedevils 'Stiletto', no... but what's the use? Better that I tell you what you have got — which isn't all that much.

The opening 'You May Be Right', is a likeable enough rock'n'roll bum wiggle, but 'Sometimes A Fantasy', which follows, has Joel in heavy breathing mood, pounding his way along the same roller-coaster in what seems like a forced attempt to prove his rock virility. The reason may be found in yet another song called 'It's Still Rock And Roll To Me', in which he proclaims 'Everybody's talking about the new sound/But it's just rock and roll to me', adding 'Next phase, new wave, dance craze/It's still rock and roll to me.'

It's all a little too confident. Could be that he's getting worried about becoming passé in the not too distant future. After all, he's got nowhere else to go but down.

Elsewhere, on 'Close To The Borderline', he sings 'I survived, I'm still alive/But I'm getting close to the borderline' and 'I need a doctor for my pressure pills/I need a lawyer for my medical bills', which may or may not be further clues to tough-at-the-top pressures.

Joel may protest that the thoughts are those of fictitious characters and that when he sits at the keyboard he becomes a man of a thousand faces, each of them offering up a different story. But some of these faces just seem like masks for Joel to hide behind. 'Glass Houses' will undoubtedly help him keep the taxman at bay, but it may not be a good idea to peer too deeply into the crystal ball.

Fred DeRar

CRYSTAL GAYLE
Singles Album
(United Artists)

SOMETHING about this album makes me feel sick. Perhaps it's the picture of Crystal on the cover.

Or maybe it's the music. I'm no student of the style but I imagine that this is one of the most milky, soothing, insipid examples of commercial C&W you are likely to locate.

Fortunately I'm only familiar with the slushy schmattz of 'Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue' and the treacly, passive lament 'Talking In Your Sleep'. The rest of the songs came as quite a nasty surprise.

Miss Gayle is such a nice girl. And she will get mixed up with these horrid men who invariably leave her for the Other Woman. Yet Crystal never complains: she dreams about them, bags them to come back and if they do, she promises that she won't ask 'Why Have You Left The One You Left Me For' ever again. Or she suffers in silence because the tragedy is 'Too Deep For Tears'.

This is just a bland, acceptable assortment of the sort of stuff that sells well: the woman can't help being a wimp and I'm overreacting. After all, there's nothing to worry about. Is there?

Lynn Hanna

...but 'twas not always so

VARIOUS ARTISTS
This Is Soul (Atlantic)
BOOKER T. & THE MG's
Green Onions (Atlantic)

IN FEBRUARY 1980, 'This Is Soul' went on sale bearing a price tag of 12/8 (82/5p). That in itself was more than sufficient to start a stampede for this best of Atlantic and Stax compilation. By May it was entrenched at No. 1 on the album chart, where it remained for nine weeks until it was dethroned by The Small Faces' 'Dagmen's Nut Gone Flak'. In the final reckoning, 'This Is Soul' stayed on the best-sellers for 27 straight weeks to become the biggest-ever selling budget LP.

'This Is Soul' marked the peak of American soul power in this country. However, it also signified the beginning of the end. Otis Redding was dead. Stax was about to split from Atlantic and slip down the dumper. Isaac Hayes and David Porter were on the brink of dissolving one of the most successful songwriting partnerships of the decade. Sam and Dave were pulling knives on each other, whilst

the music itself was dissipating its original searing spontaneity in favour of sugary supper-club sophistication or, worse still, about to make disastrous inroads into acid rock.

With the exception of Aretha Franklin, all the artists featured on 'This Is Soul' had already fired their greatest shots, and their careers would soon drift aimlessly into limbo once they no longer had access to the kind of material which, just a couple of years earlier, had been thick on the studio floor.

Nevertheless, 'This Is Soul' stands as a splendid epitaph to an era and comes as close as any compilation to being 'definitive'.

With Booker T. & The MGs and The Markleys supplying the backing on almost every cut, not only are such soul anthems as 'Sweet Soul Music' (Arthur Conley), 'What Is Soul?' (Ben E. King), 'Knock On Wood' (Eddie Floyd), 'Mustang Sally' and 'Land Of A Thousand Dances' (Wilson Pickett) reactivated in all their former glory, but two songs ('When A Man Loves A Woman' and 'Warm And

Tender Love') appear which had Percy Sledge close to cutting even Otis as the sanctified southern soul belabourer. For added weight, compare Carla Thomas' original version of 'B-A-B-Y' to Rachel Sweet's cover and check out Sam & Dave in a more reflective mood on 'I Got Everything I Need'.

And then there's Solomon Burke's 'Keep Looking'. If ever an artist was in need of having his greatest recordings compiled and re-issued then it's the undisputed King Of Rock 'n' Soul. Burke is a man whose unique talents have touched everyone from the Stones right through to the Feelgoods.

In comparison with all other 'pop' music made during this period, these recordings haven't even remotely corroded with age. In fact, they've improved. Sadly, we will probably never again hear their likes again. Like the man said, come home from the pub with a six-pack and slip this on the turntable, and the people banging on the wall won't be demanding the volume to be turned down, but jacked right up.



As for the 'Green Onions' offering — in the early '60s, Booker T. & The MGs did for Hammond L100 organs what The Shadows had done a few years earlier for Leo Fender's Stratocaster guitars.

Outside of Detroit, these are the sides that gave '60s soul music its distinctive instrumental style. Simplicity was the keyword, the approach based on the economic juxtaposition of organ, guitar, bass and drums riffs.

Like most innovators, the MGs' style as showcased on 'Green Onions', 'Slim Jenkins' Piece' and 'Red Beans And Rice' may have been plagiarised beyond the point of parody, but the subtle skill of the quartet's interplay has persistently dumbfounded would-be copyists.

Ray Carr

WARNING!

DON'T GO DOWN TO THE WOODS TODAY...

the stranglers

NEW SINGLE
HAS BEEN RELEASED

"BEAR CAGE"



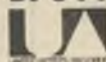
C/W

"SHAH SHAH A GO GO"

TAKEN FROM THE ALBUM "THE RAVEN" UAC 30262 CASSETTE TCK 30262

IN CUDDLY PICTURE BAG

BP344



SAMMY HAGAR
Loud And Clear (EMI)

QUARTZ
Live Quartz — Count
Dracula And Other Love
Songs (Reddington's Rare
Records)

QUARTZ were caught in their clumsy act at Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. And 'Count Dracula' contains all the insight that one would expect from a group who write lines like "Lady, he's trying to fuck the ass off you" and then deliver them with such puerile prurience.

Incidentally, for the word "love" in the title read instead "hate" — this album stinks of the inhibited, venomous attitude to sexual relationships that poisons so much of this sort of sound.

But musically Quartz are quite incapable of bludgeoning into submission even the most timid intruder in the lost world of HM.

Despite the beards, beer-guts and double-chins displayed on the cover, they're still stuck at the toddling stage: bass and drums are shoddily stitched together while the guitar labours under ridiculous delusions of its own grandeur.

Not just continents, but worlds apart from Quartz, Sammy Hagar's album was relatively a relief. But I suspect that the reasons which made me find 'Loud And Clear' bearable, if not in the least desirable, will be the same reasons it fails to satisfy likely buyers. The hardened HM fan needs to suffer for his music — physically from the excruciating volume and vicariously by identifying with his squirming, sweating hero. And although Sammy Hagar is showy, he makes it all sound so easy.

His music is sleekly impressive if you like this sort of thing; it has the smooth speed and veiled power of a large limousine. And although it pretends it's wild and abandoned it's slickly calculated to inspire awe. But it lacks the blood and guts of good heavy rock and it's the sort of refined, removed stuff that has sent the enthusiast in search of rougher, tougher pastures.

Recorded along the West Coast in front of audiences whose size can be calculated from the deep, booming baying before each song, the consummate skill of all concerned is revealed by the perfect, pointless soloing and the clever, considerate interjection of the band.

In fact 'Loud And Clear' is both bold and bland enough to appeal to the closest head-banger who only plays his imaginary guitar in the privacy of his own front room.

Lynn Hanna

HEAVY METAL SPECIAL

Uhuru knocks spots off Leppard

BLACK UHURU
Showcase (D-Roy)
DEF LEPPARD

On Through The Night (Vertigo)

I WISH to say that if I have prior knowledge of the way my weekend is going, I am not going to be making rash promises about reviewing the two albums before me, or indeed, about reviewing albums of any shape, manner or form, at that.

Now, I have nothing whatsoever against the two particular albums, it is just that, the way my weekend goes, I become as separated from reviewing them as from reviewing current monetarist theoretical positions, post-Milton Friedman or otherwise. Further, even then that in fact, seeing as how I am certainly thinking about ravaging my own, private, monetarist position, which is far from theoretical or healthy, when the weekend has finished.

So, on this weekend I am talking about, I am putting myself about quite a bit, or even too much, with two friends of mine from South London, and at one point, with two friends of theirs who I do not know so well but have certainly had cause to greet before, in South London or further north in my home patch, which is Camden, mostly.

Now, it happens that I do in fact have opportunity, of sorts, to give reviewing at least one of these records something of a thought, for one of the reasons I am in South London with two friends and two friends of friends on a Saturday night is to attend a party, thrown by a friend of a friend of a friend, who has hired a double deck for the purpose of supplying musical entertainment for such guests at the party as desire this and even those who don't.

Well, it happens that one of the records played on this double deck is 'Abortion' by Black Uhuru, which is a fine record to be sure, one I have heartily recommended in the past, one I will heartily recommend in the future, and, what's more, one contained upon the album named 'Showcase'. Now, let me take this opportunity to say that I am more than suspicious of this 'Showcase' album, for it seems to me that any citizen as would be forking out the old potatoes on his selection of Black Uhuru — 'Leaving To Zion', 'General Penitentiary', 'Guess Who's Coming To Dinner', 'Abortion', 'Natural Reggae Beat', and 'Plastic Smile' — would be advised that this very same assembly is previously available in 12" single format, which, as only blunt characters do not know, is an altogether cheaper and noisier proposition, generally.

Otherwise, heartily, heartily, heartily recommended. It is not such a bad selection of records played at this party!



HM page invaded by Black Uhurist shock. Pic: Joe Stevens

speak of, although I must say I am usually not a guy such as wishes any truck with the likes of records by Crass, or Athletics Spizz Energi 80, or worse. In fact, if I know that such records are going to invade my earshot, I am going to be off doing something more exciting, like buying shoelaces. But, for all that — and at this party there are more than a brace of extremely student and even Leveller and even anarchist looking characters apt to break into the least tasteful of dance steps, I judge, at the playing of records both tasteful and otherwise — things do not fall so low as to include abominations of the 'heavy metal' style, be they pre or any other historical you care to come up with.

Coincidentally, one or two of the selections at this party are by Joy Division, who are not precisely my favourite group, now or ever, but whose use of loud guitars and dark hues and poetry of the feverish kind I am easily seduced by of a night, and I am not a guy given much to guitars or darkness or poetry, however each or all are rendered. This Joy Division, however, utilise such a genre, and create thereout of another, their own, and I think it is about all I can summon up to say about Def Leppard, that they do nothing of the kind. If I were less the samaritan, I would go as far as to say they do nothing of any kind, except perhaps they sprout clichés.

But I am thinking it is a waste of good breath to go on with even this line of investigation, as well as paper, as well as I am a guy who does not like to keep his editors waiting, especially not for a review as overlong as this one is, indeed.

Ian Penman

So first he pinches my job reviewing reggae albums for NME, and now he rips off my style. — Penny Real
Your style? — The Ghost of Damon Runyon.



Penman 'review' invaded by Def Leppardists horror. Pic: Mike Levy

SAMSON
Survivors (Laser)
NEVER can a new musical 'movement' have had a more inauspicious launching than the 'new wave' of English heavy metal with 'Metal For Muthas'.

The 'new wave' tag is applicable — but only insofar as this is just a new wave of bands playing the same old heavy rock clichés. The only thing that distinguishes them from one another is whether they play harder — Iron Maiden — or slicker — Def Leppard — than the rest.

What distinguishes Samson on 'Metal For Muthas' is the fact they play slower. As it turns out, that's just because the compilers chose a slow cut. Switch on 'Survivors' and you might as well be listening to the 'Muthas' album. Here comes the Purple riff, here the Free lick, verse, chorus, long solo, repeat chorus and fade.

Produced by Gillan's bassist John McCoy, 'Survivors' is extremely early '70s. It's as if they've studied their classic heavy rock albums, learnt them note for note, and here's the result. I feel like a teacher giving marks. Paul Samson scores well right from the off for the guitar break on 'It's Not As Easy As It Seems' — almost the classic hard rock guitar solo, Bert Weedon couldn't have done better — but the drummer

Thunderstick (you know, the one in the rapist hood) probably just tops that for the consistency of his Simon Kirke impressions.

In traditional HM style, Samson evidently reckon songwriting and singing are strictly for cissies. The album is littered with deathless clichés. How can they "hold onto this daydream" when they're "caught on the wrong side of time"? They've got to "shake up reality" because "you're a part of me" (The last three, incidentally, were all lifted from one verse.)

They're transparently happiest when they're screwing up their faces and toting that axe. And the listener? Well, this one does gleam some interest on the couple of occasions they tinker with backwards tape effects. So it's natural that the best track should be an instrumental which also features lots of backwards FX. 'Koz' is a Page-like guitar and harmonics workout which rocks like the proverbial female dog.

'Survivors' has actually been out some time, but as it's the first album any of the 'new wavers' has produced, history demands we record its presence. I'm no Led Zeppelin fan, but at this early point in the 'development' of HM NW I wouldn't swap the entire catalogue for the opening track of 'In Through The Out Door'.

Phil McNeill

THE ETHIOPIANS

RUSH RELEASED—ORIGINAL VERSION

TRAIN TO SKAVILLE

FEATURING TWO LONG-UNAVAILABLE ROCK STEADY CLASSICS

HOLD THEM

DOCTOR DICK

SOON COME RUB UP PUSH UP
JUSTIN HINES AND THE DOMINOES



ISLAND WIP 6596

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Uppers On The South Downs (Safari)

THERE'S no sadder sight than abandoned bandwagons, and right now the glorious cause of mod nouveau appears to be one such — parked down a quiet side-street, windows smashed and wheels missing.

Or do I speak too soon? For what have we here? Truly, a U.S. Cavalry of scootered mods, along the crest of a Southern hill and ready to sweep down, staxons blaring, to the rescue of their beleaguered movement.

Then again, it might just be another dodgy compilation album, taking for its theme the proliferation of mod-aligned combos in the Hastings and Eastbourne areas of Sussex — an alleged hotbed of raw young talents, almost explosive in their potential (it says here) and ready to take the rest of the country by storm. We shall see.

First featured are the region's foremost attractions, The Teenbeats, who kick off with a too-polite reading of 'I Can't Control Myself' which never attains the contrived slobbiness of the (very rocker) Troops original. Their other four numbers are sort of crispy, lightweight A&B — tolerable, but nothing to send a postcard home about.

Pleasantest contributions, if only because they sound relaxed and unambitious (in contrast to the rest), are The South Coast Ska Stars' two pieces — bouncy, shamolic, vintage reggae direct from the village of Ninfield in Sussex. (What is going on down there?). Offering three songs are Missing Persons — pop-melodic beat group stuff, a bit limp in places. Rather different are The Same, whose clever-dick 'I'm A Face' bears little resemblance to mod music at all, being quite contemporary and strange.

Paul Du Noyer

Bobby bounces back into the hit parade

BOBBY VEE

The Singles Album (United Artists)

LIKE a rubber ball, Robert Thomas Velline comes bouncing back every so often for reappraisal. And like a rubber band, my heart strings just snap in expectation of same.

The aforesaid repackage appeared sometime in the mid '70s, a 30 track double LP as part of UA's Legendary Masters series — alongside other Liberty luminaries Fats Domino, Eddie Cochran, Ricky Nelson and The Ventures. 'The Singles Album', a 20 track review, duplicates 19 of its predecessor's titles, omits 11, and includes just one previously neglected work, 'Bobby Tomorrow' from 1953, his last UK chart entry.

Actually, 'The Singles Album' is a very incorrect label for this latest collection though in all fairness the set does contain all of Mr Velline's British hits, including both sides of his 'More Than I Can Say'/'Staying In' incursion. In fact, Liberty issued more than 40 Bobby Vee titles between the years 1959-70, not counting B-sides, which means he is misrepresented here by something in arrears of 75%. Also, to the best of my knowledge, 'A Forever Kind Of Love' was never released on 45, not never, nohow, as Alfie Bass used to say around about the same time as Mr Velline was metamorphosing into Nobby Vee with his first record 'Suzie Baby' — included here — making inroads on the US charts and peaking at 77, courtesy of *Billboard* (1958).

Ironies aside, Bobby Vee's career as teen idol was itself an irony. The natural heir to Buddy Holly, his break in showbiz came directly as a result of that fatal crash on February 3, 1959. Holly, Valens, and Bopper were flying to play in a rock'n'roll show at Vee's home town of Fargo that same day, and Robert was asked to help out the tour with his newly formed Shadows when the tragedy became known. He lined up that day alongside Dion and The Belmonts, and ever after based his style on the late bespectacled rocker.

In addition to his adoption of Holly's nasal vocal inflections, Mr Velline's recorded portfolio reveals further Lubbock references: a tribute to the singer entitled 'Buddy's Song', later refurbished by Fleetwood Mac; a faithful facsimile of 'Everyday' on the flip of 'Rubber



Ball', an LP with The Crickets, and another entitled 'I Remember Buddy Holly'. Plus, his first hit 'Suzie Baby' bears more than echoes of 'Peggy Sue', while 'More Than I Can Say' was originally a Crickets B-side. He is also on record as saying of 'That'll Be The Day' "the most original, fresh, unique record I have ever heard," and — according to Greil Marcus — will correct you if you credit a Crickets side to Holly or vice versa.

Like Holly, too, Bobby Vee was responsible for a series of instant, catchy and memorable pop op: a High School reworking of The Clovers' 'Devil Or Angel', as well as 'Rubber Ball', 'The Night Has A Thousand Eyes', and of course the Brill cream, 'How Many Tears?'. 'Take Good Care Of My Baby', 'Run To Him', 'Walking With My Angel', 'Sharing You', and more. Unlike Holly, however, posterity regards Vee as merely a purveyor of pop, a lightweight... and perhaps he was, at that.

Nevertheless, a part of me continues to cherish this immediate, disposable music. Personally, I consider the likes of Elvis Costello and Wreckless Eric as retooling the groundwork laid by Vee and Ricky Nelson, but lacking the same unaffected poise and easy melody, with strained artifice and self-consciousness in their stead. The final reckoning would, I imagine, place Robert Thomas Velline somewhere to the rear of Del Shannon and Dion DiMucci, although well to the fore of Brian Hyland and Frankie Avalon. 'Devil or angel, I can't make up my mind!'

The Singles Album stands as a reasonably efficacious introductory testament. Recommended for those still using that greasy kid's stuff

Penny Reel

IMPORTS by Fred Dellar

THEY'RE collar-and-tie neat — though their suits are red leather. Their music is geared for the '80s — though their ticks are pure '60s. And they're known as *The Romantics* — though they hail from Detroit's tough East Side.

It's obvious from the band's debut album, *The Romantics* (Nemperor), that someone's figured all the angles and checked the answers, thereby making *The Romantics* immediately suspect.

File under 'disposable', you say. And you could be right. I still have doubts. For Jimmy Marinos, Wally Palmar, Rich Cole and Mike Sill, who comprise the leathery lovers, have decked out the album with at least one killer item in 'What I Like About You', a genuine wham, bam and thank you Ritchie Valens affair that I've set alongside The Raspberries' 'Overnight Sensation', The Rubinoos' 'I Think We're Alone Now' and (dare I say it?), The Knack's 'My Sharone' as being a great one-off of our time. Now I'll admit that one track doth hardly an album make, and maybe the economists among you will see fit to merely invest in the single, which has just gained a British release. However, the rest of the album provides an interesting exercise in how tomorrow's heroes can be constructed from yesterday's riffs and — thanks to a superior production job by Pete Solley — still be extremely earworthy.

As regular readers of this column will be aware, my critical faculties go somewhat awry whenever a new Smokey Robinson release comes into view, and adjectives like 'mellifluous', 'poignant', 'passionate', 'warm' and 'sinuous' get trotted out with production-line frequency as I pay annual homage to his voice. Not that I'm to be blamed. After all, Dylan himself was conned into his "Robinson is America's greatest poet" blurb by Smokey's sheer vocal idiosyncrasy. With a voice like that, you can make people believe almost anything.

If you twist my arm though, I'll admit that *Warm Thoughts* (Tama), Robinson's latest made-in-Hollywood offering, pans out several points below 'Where There's Smoke', his last release, and a darn sight further below 'Quiet Storm', his best album of recent years. Naturally enough, the vocal performances are beyond reproach. Every swoop and glide remains intact and all the words of love — of which there are many — continue to emerge so tear-stained that you can actually wring them out and hang 'em up to dry. But this time around, the songs are a trifle dull. 'Let Me Be The Clock', a dickory-dock re-vamp of 'Tracks Of My Tears', is easy enough to take. 'Heavy On Pride' presents an interesting juxtaposition of that which is Robinson and that which is Bo Diddley; while 'Melody Men' is sure-fire hit fare, classy MOR-cum-disco, testily devised by Smokey and Wonder-men. Elsewhere the one-time Miracle-worker whispers myriad sweet nothings, provides a travelogue about his true-love's body ('No thrills on earth were ever known/To match those in your torrid southern zone' etc) and generally drifts pleasantly but aimlessly in a manner that should have you snoozing long before the disc gets into its final run-off groove. But then, Horlicks can provide the same effect at a far lower cost.

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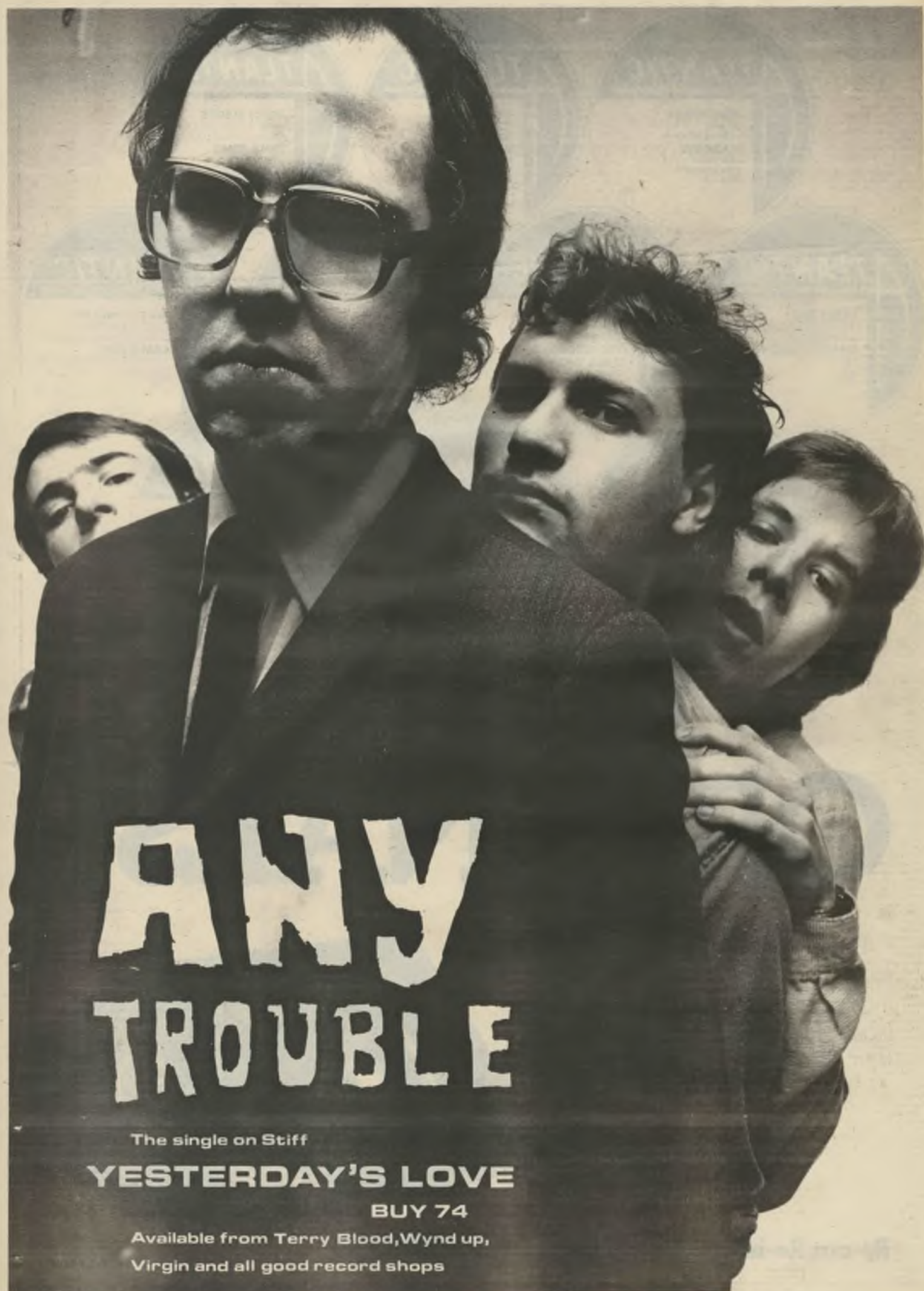


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NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

Thursday

Barnstaple Queens Hall: Dutch Swing College Band
Bath Mole: Sphere
Birmingham Barrel Organ: Chevy
Birmingham Golden Eagle: Dangerous Girls
Birmingham Mercat Cross: Skydiver
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Titan
Blackburn Duck Inn: E.T.J.
Bournemouth Tiffanys: Flying Saucers
Brighton Alhambra: Aippers/Lipstick
Bristol Crockers: The Rejects
Bristol Trinity Hall: The Pop Group
Burnwood Troubadour: The Amazing Darts Horse
Burton 78 Club: The Lambretas
Canterbury Albery's Wine Bar: The City Blues Band
Cardiff Philharmonic: Zipper
Chester Institute: The Photos
Coventry Tiffanys: The Selector/The Bodycatchers/The Swinging Cats
Edinburgh Clouds: Scars
Falkirk The Magpie: Dick Smith Band
Flint Raven Hotel: The Room
Glenrothes Rother Arms: Jim Wilkie/The Mafia
Grassland Red Lion: Die Laughing
Greenock Victorian Carriage: The 45's
Hemel Hempstead Pavilion: Stiff Little Fingers/Another Pretty Face
High Wycombe Nags Head: The Crooks
Huddersfield Coach House: Vardis
Hull Wellington Club: Fatal Microbes
Jersey St. Helier Behan's: The Flash Cats (for four days)
Kingston Polytechnic: The Smirks
Leeds Fen Club: Seventeen
Leeds Peel Hotel: Spyder Blues Band
London Camden Dingwalls: Sea
London Camden Electric Ballroom: Classi Nouveaux/Pislin Characters/Bauhaus/Section 25
London Canning Town Bridge House: The Well
London Chalk Farm Roundhouse: McCoy Tynes
London Clapham 101 Club: Juice On The Loose
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: The Delta 8/Blert
London E.1 City Squash Club: George Melly & The Feetwarmers
London Finchley Torrington: Young Jazz Big Band
London Fulham Golden Lion: The Q-Tips
London Fulham Greyhound: 9 Below
London Fulham The Cock: Trimmer & Jenkins
London Hammersmith Clarendon Hotel: The Basement
London Hammersmith The Swan: Spider
London Harrow Road Windsor Castle: Zorro/The Sound
London Islington Mops & Anchor: Nik Turner's Inner City Unit
London Kennington The Cricketers: Southside
London Kensington De Villiers Bar: Gold Duet Twins
London Kensington The Nashville: The Little Rascals
London Marquee Club: The Original Mirrors
London Oxford St. 100 Club: Clint Eastwood
London Packham Newlands Tavern: Bloodshot
London Putney White Lion: Johnny M & 7th Sun
London Shepherd's Bush Trafalgar Speedball
London Soho Pizza Express: AJ Grey/Jimmy Forrest
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: Matchbox
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: The O.K. Band
London Victoria The Venue: The Planets
London Walthamstow North-East Polytechnic: Lammegys
London Waterloo Royal Victoria: Freddy's Feetwarmers
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: The Expresses/The Set
London W.1 Mauniberry's: Paul Goodman
London W.10 Acton Hall: The Atrix
London W.C.1 New Merlin's Cave: Big Chief
Maidstone Royal Albion: Stuff
Manchester Band on the Well: Alexis Korner
Manchester (Romiley) Grey Horse: The Cheaters
Margate Winter Gardens: David Soul
Middlesbrough Rock Garden: Holly & The Italians
Milton Keynes Stony Stratford College of Education: Spud & The Fabs
Newcastle City Hall: Judas Priest/Iron Maiden
Newcastle Madison's Central Line (for three days)
Norwich Art College: The Vandells
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: The Drug Squad
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Gaffa
Plymouth Tops Club: Metro Glider
Ponmouth Polytechnic: Something Else
Poynton Folk Centre: Jed Foley & Jazz Love
Reading Emmer Green Youth Club: El Seven
Reading Target Club: The Flatbackers
Sheffield Broadfield Hotel: Velled Threat
Sheffield City Hall: Sad Cafe
Southampton Eastleigh Crown Inn: Last Orders
Southampton Hammerhead: The Veins
Southampton Joiners Arms: Lone Wolf
Sunderland Seamus: Steve Hooker Band
Sunderland Mayfair: Elvie Costello & The Attractions/Clive Langer & The Boxes
Whitby Bay Royal Banqueting Hall: Danger In Paradise

Friday

Abertillery Metropole Theatre: Girlschool
Aberystwyth University: Eddie & The Hot Rods

SIOUXSIE'S IN ACTION AGAIN



Atherstone Orb & Sprocket: Spad Hunters
Barking Old Maypole: Breathless
Bath Mole: Pinky
Bedford Horse & Groom: Vince Pie & The Crumbs
Birmingham Barrel Organ: Grace
Birmingham Digbeth Civic Hall: Slaughter/Dangerous Girls
Birmingham Golden Eagle: Speedball
Birmingham Mercat Cross: No Faith
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Teaser
Bishops Stortford: Triad Leisure Centre
Topas
Bletchley Wilton Hall: Spud & The Fabs/The Craw/Tessa & The Allstars
Bournemouth Town Hall: The Switch/The Hots
Bradford Palm Cove: The Drug Squad
Braintree Institute of Higher Education: The Accidents/The Heat
Brent Hermit Club: Bastille
Brighton Lewes Rd. Inn: The Impulse
Brighton Metropole Hotel: Acker Bilk Band
Bristol Crockers: The Rejects
Bristol Turntable: Shades
Burton 78 Club: Yaltery Yak
Cambridge Corn Exchange: Stiff Little Fingers/Another Pretty Face
Cardiff Sophia Gardens: Pat Travers Band

Cardiff Trinity College: The Circles
Chiddingfold Sax Bells: Spitzbrook
Chingchurch: Somerton Community Centre: Panda Pops/Circus/Treasure Ecstasy & Two Rumenian Boys/Surreal To Real
Coventry General Wolfe: Ice
Coventry Ryton Bridge: Streetlife
Crandall Village Hall: The Rhythm Hawks
Croydon Canton: Seven Year Itch
Croydon Fairfield Hall: The Spinners
Dudley J.B.'s Club: Praying Mantis/Weapon Of Peace
Dundee College of Technology: Colossus
Edinburgh Upstairs at the Playhouse: Flowers/Boots For Dancing
Falmouth Art College: The D.S./Sabotage
Glasgow Dial Inn: The 45's
Grassland Red Lion: Terry Lee
Guildford Shackelford Stag Folk Club: Dave Swarbrick
Hatfield Polytechnic: The Photos
Henley-on-Thames Boswell Park Club: 80 Pop
Inverness Muirton Motel: The Chestnuts
Kirkcaldy Cunzie Neuk: Dick Smith Band
Kirkcaldy Country Club: White Heat
Leeds Cosmos Club: Oodgy Tactics
Leeds University Lipman Building: Agency Column

Leicester Polytechnic: Richard Digance
Leicester The Globe: The Swinging Laurels
Littlehampton The Windmill: Dogswatch/Third Men
Liverpool Bradford Hotel: Alexis Korner
Liverpool Eric's: The Fatal Microbes
London Acton Kings Head: Paz
London Camden Dingwalls: Billy Kerloff Band/The Numbers
London Camden Electric Ballroom: The Cramps/The Fall/Fashion
London Camden Music Machine: 9 Below
London Camden Southampton Arms: Jet-hyrol Blues Band
London Chalk Farm Roundhouse: McCoy Tynes
London Chiswick John Bull: Zorro
London City University: The Pop Group/Patrick Fitzgerald Group/The Raincoats
London Cavendish Garden Rock Garden: The Donkeys
London Drury Lane Theatre Royal: Steve Forbert/Charlie Dore's Back Pocket
London E.16 North-East Polytechnic: The Au Pairs/Tom Kat & The Kipper Bones
London Finsbury Park Stapleton Hall Tavern: Sons Of Cain
London Fulham Greyhound: The Crooks

PURPLE HEARTS START TO BEAT
The Purple Hearts — from left to right, Simon Stebbing (guitar), Bob Manton (vocals), Gary Sparks (drums) and Jeff Sheelbelt (bass) — are promoting their new Fiction Records album 'Beat That' and single 'Jimmy'. They open in London on Monday and Tuesday at the Marquee, and set out around the country at the beginning of next month.

London Hammersmith Odeon: Andree Crouch & The Disciples
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: Night SHW/Zoots
London Hendon Middlesex Polytechnic: The Severn
London Herts Hill Half Moon: Portals
London Holborn Princess Louise: The Singles
London Kennington The Cricketers: Marylene
London Kennington The Nashville: The Quads/The Gangsters/The Thrillers
London Ledbrooke Grove The Elgin: Sploogeneasabounds/Leisure Lotion
London New Cross Goldsmiths College: George Melly & The Feetwarmers
London New Cross Royal Albert: The Johnnies
London Putney Star & Garter: Grieg & Nigel's Folk and Blues Night
London Putney White Lion: Red Beams & Rice
London School of Furniture: The Atrix
London Soho Pizza Express: Johnny M & The Midnight Express
London Stockwell The Plough: Radical Shells
London Tottenham North Polytechnic: The Stag
London Tottenham White Hart: Mound Dog
London Tottenham-Court Rd. Y.M.C.A.: Wreckless Eric
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: Groundation
London Victoria The Venue: The Searchers
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: Sweet Maps/Cut Figures/Exhibit A
London Westminster Bridge Rd. Towers: Johnny & The Jailbirds
London W.C.1 New Merlin's Cave: The O.K. Band
Maidenhead Leisure Centre: Dany's Mid-night Runners/Dolly Mistere
Maidstone Mote Park Pavilion: The Pulsaters/The Performing Ferret Band
Manchester The Factory: The Psychodelic Puns
Manchester R'n'B High School: The Cheaters
Manchester The Millstone: The Twisting Ferraris
Milton Mowbray Painted Lady: Gonzalez
Newcastle City Hall: Sad Cafe
Newcastle Kings Head: Monocomics
Newcastle Mayfair Ballroom: Judas Priest/Iron Maiden
Newport The Metropole: Girlschool
Newport The Village: US40
Nottingham Commodore Suite: Roy Orbison
Paisley Bungalow Bar: Jim Wilkie/The Mafia
Poole Arts Centre: David Soul
Reading Target Club: Money
Reading Target Club: Portentous: Holly & The Italians
Romford Redbridge Technical College: Roaring Jelly
Salisbury Wherehouse: Jimmy Fitz/Brenton House
Scarborough Penthouse: Supercharge
Sheffield Broadfield Hotel: The City Limits
Sheffield Polytechnic: Gerard Kenny
Sheffield University: Matchbox
Southampton The Griffin: The Sound
Swirling University: Siouxsie & The Banshees
Torquay Pelican Inn: Metro Glider
Waterford Breton Hall: Cello Glider
Wallsay The Riverside: Witty
Wimborham Hammett/Hillix
Wolverhampton Lafayette: Dadringer

Saturday

Ashford Ben Truman: Spitzbrook
Aylesbury Friars: Genesis
Aylesbury Old Maypole: The Rhythm Hawks
Beacontree Haymarket Theatre: The Tannahill Weavers
Birkenhead Gallery Club: Alan Heat
Birmingham Barrel Organ: Rialto Horns
Birmingham Bogarts: No Faith
Birmingham Digbeth Civic Hall: The Quads/The Gangsters/The Thrillers
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: Denizens
Birmingham Golden Eagle: Withered Man
Birmingham Handsworth Rialto: Jubala
Birmingham Mercat Cross: Handsome Beasts
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Mean Street Dealers
Bradford Palm Cove: Jimmy Lindsey & Resuli
Brighton Polytechnic: The Photos
Brighton The Northern: Lipstick
Bristol Granary: Girlschool
Bristol Polytechnic: Holly & The Italians
Carnarvon St. Helier Arms: Little Tony & The Tennessee Rebels
Chesham Horstead College: Nine Below Zero
Cotby Raven Hotel: Vardis/Energy
Coventry Theatre: David Soul
Crewe Madley College: Ice
Cromer West Rulton Pavilion: The Lambretas
Croydon Cartoon: Rockola/The Fumble Punks
Croydon Crawdaddy: Embryo
Dalkeith Cross Keys Hotel: Red Letters/No Entry
Derby Ajanta: The Cramps
Dundee Junction Nine: The 45's
Edinburgh Upstairs at the Playhouse: The Solos/Readers
Farnborough College of Technology: Sploogeneasabounds
Forres Mundol Court: The Chestnuts
Glasgow Apollo Centre: Judas Priest/Iron Maiden
Grassland Red Lion: Sledgehammer
Hanley Good Mood Club: The Circles
High Wycombe Nags Head: The B-Sides
Hockley Travellers Rest: Spad Hunters
Hornchurch The Bull: Bastille
Ipswich Royal William: V.H.F.

CONTINUES OVER ...

MORE GIG GUIDE

Kings Langley Ovation Club: Flying Saucers
Kingston Polytechnic: Cimerons/The Touch
Kirkcaldy Bartsgette Hotel: Dick Smith Band
Leeds Haddon Hall: Agony Column
Leeds Staging Post: Doggy Tactics
Lincoln Cornhill Vaults: Valued Threat
Liverpool Eric's: Bad Manners
London Camden Dingwells: Billy Karloff Band/The Numbers
London Canning Town Bridge House: The Leyton Buzzards
London Chiswick John Bull: Spider
London Clapham 101 Club: The Step
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Brian Knight Blues Band
London Crystal Palace Hotel: The Blues Band
London Fulham Golden Lion: Paris
London Fulham Greyhound: The G-Tips/The Rave
London Fulham The Cock: Johnny Q
London Hackney Adam & Eve: Shades
London Hammarasmith Lyric Theatre (lunchtime, free): Bob Kerr's Jazz Friends
London Hammarasmith Odeon: Andree Crouch & The Disciples
London Hammarasmith The Swan: One On One
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: Tania Sheen
London Herts Hill Half Moon: Sex
London Islington Hope & Anchor: The Little Roosters
London Kensington The Nashville: The Step/Thirteen
London Lewisham Concert Hall: Billy J. Kramer/Wayne Fontana/Dave Barry
London Lewisham Odeon: The Selector/The Bodynetchers/The Swinging Cats/Headline
London Marquee Club: Spitt Rivet
London Plumstead Green Man: Fast Eddie
London Putney White Lion: The Evidence
London Regents Park Cecil Sharp House: Annie Power & Gill Burns
London Shepherds Bush Trafalgar: Scissor Fits
London Soho Pizza Express: Al Grey/Jimmy Forrest
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: Big Chief
London Swiss Cottage Holiday Inn Hotel: George Melly & The Feetwarmers
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: Groundation

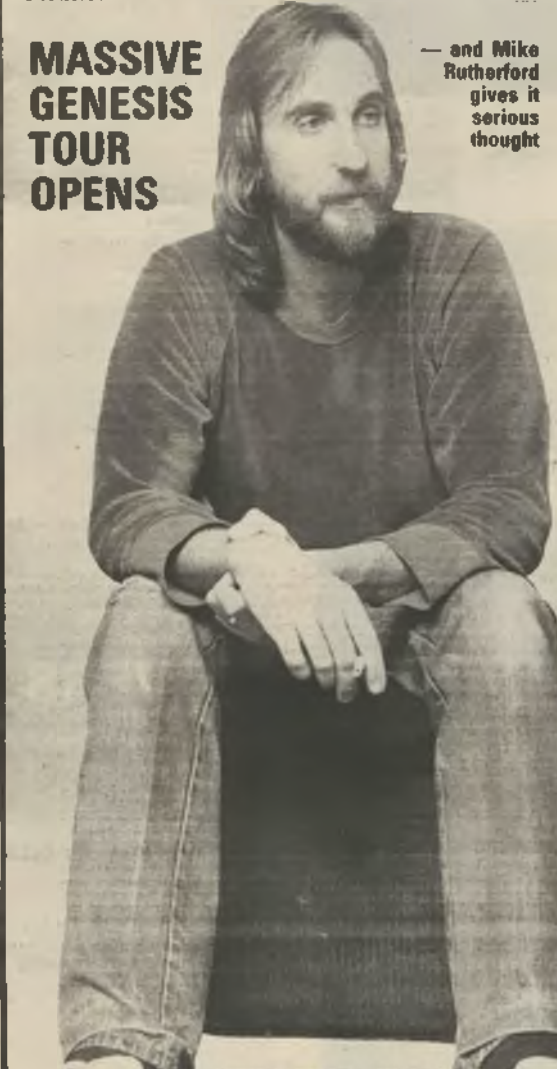
London Victoria The Venue: Mark Andrews & The Gents/Face Dancer
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: Red Beans & Rice/Steve Hooker Band
London Westminster Bridge Rd. Towers: Jahany Storm
London Wimbledon Prince of Wales: The Delux/Six Minute War/Red Opera/The Millman/The Puritans
London W.1 Portman Hotel: Dutch Swing College Band
London W.C.1 New Merlin's Cave: Juice On The Loose
Maidley North Staffs Polytechnic: Hi-Tension
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Roy Orbison
Manchester College: Matchbox
Manchester Mayflower: Clint Eastwood
Manchester Osbourne Club: Slaughter
Nottingham Casino: Newman The Deman
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Side Effect
Oxford Oranges & Lemons: Dangerous Girls
Reading Bulmershe College: The Flatbeaters
Sheffield Polytechnic: Eddie & The Hot Rods
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: Stiff Little Fingers/Another Pretty Face
Southampton Joiners Arms: King Rock
Southampton The Griffin: Lip Moves
St. Albans City Hall: Pat Travers Band
St. Austell New Cornish Rivers: The Skatelines
Stockton The Teessider: Carl Green & The Soons
Stoke Talis Club: Strange Days
Sunderland Polytechnic: The Smirks
Torquay 78 Club: The Velas
Torquay 400 Club: Eclipse
Tunbridge Wells St. Marks Hall: The Elites/The Vital Third
West Calder Regal Suite: Elvis Costello & The Attractions/Clive Langer & The Boxes
Weymouth Celler Vino: The Switch
Widemouth Bay: Metro Glider
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime): The Pests

Sunday

Aberdeen Music Hall: Slouze & The Bananas
Birmingham Shirley Red Lion: The Crack
Birmingham Top Rank: Magman

MASSIVE GENESIS TOUR OPENS

— and Mike Rutherford gives it serious thought



Currently playing a series of low-key warm-up dates, including a gig at Aylesbury Friars on Saturday, GENESIS begin their massive round-Britain concert series in Bournemouth on Wednesday. But there's no hope of getting in unless you already have tickets, or are prepared to pay enormously inflated prices.

Birmingham (Yardley) The Swan. Video
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: Tracks
Bonyrigg The Chase: The 45's
Bournemouth Festival: The Vipers Like Us
Bournemouth Royal Exeter Hotel: Eclipse
Bradford College Vaults Bar: Ultrar Motives
Bradford St. Georges Hall: Slaughter
Brighton Alhambra: The Vandells
Bromley The Northover (lunchtime): Bill Scott & Ian Ellis
Croydon Cartoon: Yalley Yak
Croydon Crawdaddy: Gha & The Sharks
Croydon Greyhound Suite: The Rhythm Hawks
Desside Leisure Centre: Judas Priest/Iron Maiden
Derby Old Bell Hotel: Strange Days
Dunfermline Kinema: Elvis Costello & The Attractions/Clive Langer & The Boxes
Edinburgh Harvey's: Facial Hair
Exeter New Vic: Metro Glider
Glasgow Apollo Centre: Sad Cafe
Gravesend Red Lion: Death
Greenock Victorian Carriage: Jim Wilkie/The Mafia
Huddersfield Coach House: The Lambretas
Hull Humberide Theatre: Deadringer
Ipswich Royal Wilkins: Beelzebub
Leeds Belvidere Night Club: The Mega-Boys
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: Windows
London Battersea Nags Head: Jugular Vela
London Brixton George Canning: Southside
London Charing Cross Duke of Buckingham: The Invaders (for four days)
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Fashion
London Finchley Tarrington: & Below Zero
London Fulham Golden Lion: Chicken Shack
London Fulham Greyhound: Night-We/The Mice
London Fulham The Cock: Aure
London Hammarasmith Odeon: Stiff Little Fingers/Another Pretty Face
London Harro Hill Half Moon: Mickey Jones Band
London Islington Hope & Anchor: Charlie Fawn
London Kensington The Nashville: The Atrix/The Shades
London Marquee Club: The Passions
London Rainbow Theatre: David Soul
London Soho Piza Express: Ian Henry
London Strand Lyceum Ballroom: The Psychodelic Furs/The Teardrop Explodes/Manicured Noise/A Certain Ratio/Echo & The Bunnymen
London Stratford Theatre Royal: Frogel
London Victoria The Venue: Prince Far I
London W.1 Portman Hotel: The Nightdoctor
London Woolwich Tramshed (lunchtime): Kenny Ball Band
London W.1 Portman Hotel (lunchtime): Crown Swing Band
Maidstone Royal Albion (lunchtime): Slade
Manchester The Ritz: Central Line
Newport Poppell Youth Club: Spud & The Fabs
Newquay Central Hotel: The Winners
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: Medium Medium
Nuneaton 77 Club: Helix & The Italians
Peterborough Gladstone Arms: The Point
Plymouth New Palace Theatre: Acker Bilk Band
Portsmouth Centre Hotel: Robin Williams
Portsmouth Rotary Club: The Switch
Poynton Folk Centre: Telephone Bill & The Smooth Operators
Reading Cherry's Bar: Ian Campbell Band
Reading Coatham Bowl: Eddie & The Hot Rods
Southport Theatre: Roy Orbison
Unbridge Brunel University: Hazel O'Connor
Walsall Dirty Duck (lunchtime): The Amazing Dark Horse
Wollaton Nags Head: The Russians
Wolverhampton LaFayette: The Quads/The Gangsters/The Thrillers

Monday

Ayr Pavilion: Elvis Costello & The Attractions/Clive Langer & The Boxes
Bath The Rock Spot: The Rejects
Birmingham Barrel Organ: Gangsters
Birmingham Golden Eagle: Force
Birmingham Mercat Cross: Gentleman Jim
Birmingham Odeon: Andree Crouch & The Disciples
Birmingham Railway Hotel: The Ramparts
Birmingham Romeo & Juliet: Praying Mantis
Blackburn The Regent: The Cheaters
Bournemouth Winter Gardens: Acker Bilk Band
Bradford College Vaults Bar: Oral Sax
Bradford St. George's Hall: Stiff Little Fingers/Another Pretty Face
Coventry Swanswell Tavern: Cheap Spirits
Croydon Crawdaddy: Scissor Fits/The Pedestrians
Croydon The Cartoon: Bloodshot
Doncaster Rotters Club: The Lambretas
Edinburgh Buster Brown's: Jim Wilkie/The Mafia
Edinburgh Tiffany's: Slouze & The Bananas
Edinburgh Usher Hall: Sad Cafe
Goldford Stagfolk Club: Robin Williams
Ilford Cauliflower Hotel: Original East Side Strangers
Leeds Florida Green Hotel: Black Cat
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: Pete Glavin's Blues Express
Liverpool Eric's: Pyromid
Liverpool Kirklands: The Room

COMPILED BY DEREK JOHNSON



PAT TRAVERS is back in the UK after a lengthy absence and, with a brand new band, he opens a short concert tour at Cardiff (Friday), St. Albans (Saturday), Sheffield (Monday), Wolverhampton (Tuesday) and London Hammarasmith (Wednesday).

London Camden Dingwells: The Mice/RH-Is/The Legend
London Canning Town Bridge House: The Soul Boys
London Clapham 101 Club: One On One
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Bad Manners/Whisper
London Fulham Golden Lion: Bob Kerr's Whoopie Band
London Fulham Greyhound: Idiot Dancers / The Dials
London Fulham The Cock: The Carter Jones Band
London Islington Hope & Anchor: Mike Khan Band
London Kensington The Nashville: Charlie Fawn
London Manor Park Rustin Arms: Radical
London Marquee Club: The Purple Hearts
London N.4 The Stapleton: The O.K. Band
London N.W.1 Royal Exchange: Juice On The Loose
London Oxford St. 100 Club: Stan Tracey Octet
London Putney Half Moon: John Kirkpatrick & Sue Harris
London Putney Star & Garter: Penny Royal
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: Tennis Shoes/The Vandells
London W.1 Marunberry's: Marc Bunyan
Metlock Pavilion: Eddie & The Hot Rods
Newcastle Balmbra's Music Hall: Saboteurs/Rough
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: The Party
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Gwalrh
Nottingham Trent Polytechnic: Roaring Jelly
Nuneaton 77 Club: Slaughter/The Name
Palmerston The Woodmen: The Vains
Paisley Bungalow Bar: Dick Smith Band
Rayleigh Cross: Flying Saucers
Reading Cherry's Bar: El Seven
Sheffield City Hall: Pat Travers Band
Slough Cat Bellow: The Attendants/80 Pop
Slough Fulcrum Centre: David Soul
Southend Focus: Christopher Wave
Spannymoor Recreation Centre: The Types Of Pen Tang
Stockton Flats Club: The Drifters
Weyford Bailey's: Hi-Tension (for a week)
The Wirral (Eastham) Bulls Head: Head-quarters
Wokington Technical College: Super-charges

Tuesday

Birmingham Barrel Organ: Crome
Birmingham Finsbury: Cockle Brujo
Birmingham Golden Eagle: Desperado
Birmingham Mercat Cross: The Ramparts
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Speed Limit
Birmingham The Zoo: Dunes Dunes
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: The Vandells
Bradford College Vaults Bar: The Quick
Brentwood Hermit Club: Richard Dignace
Brighton Basement Club: Swell Maps / The Vandells
Bristol Granary: Slaughter
Bury The Derby Hall: Freefall
Carlisle Market Hall: Elvis Costello & The Attractions/Clive Langer & The Boxes
Croydon Fairfield Hall: Poco Pena
Fleet Fox & Hounds: Adrien May
Folkestone Lees Cliff Hall: Dutch Swing College Band
Glasgow Tiffany's: Slouze & The Bananas
Glentworth Rotters Arms: Facial Hair
Gravesend Red Lion: Martin Dance
Greenock Victorian Carriage: Dick Smith Band
Hull City Hall: Sad Cafe
Ipswich Tracey's: Motives
Jersey St. Helier Bahans: Slade
Leeds Walsley Hotel: The City Limits
Leicester Polytechnic: The Pop Group
London Camberwell St. Gabriel's College: Mobster
London Camden Dingwells: Ronnie Lane Band
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: The Flatbeaters/Kevin Armstrong's Local Heroes
London Deftford Albany Empire: Geoff Castle & Strange Fruit
London Fulham Golden Lion: The Act
London Fulham Greyhound: The Direction/The Odds
London Hornsey Kings Head: The Main Avenue Jazzband
London Ilford Palais John Coghlan's: Diesel
London Islington Hope & Anchor: The Stickers
London Kensington The Nashville: Tigers
London Marquee Club: The Purple Hearts
London North-East Polytechnic: The Atrix
London N.4 The Stapleton: Brett Marvin & The Thunderbolts
London Putney White Lion: Isaac Gullory Band
London Soho Piza Express: Dave Chambers
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: Kilometers/The Dials
London W.1 Country Cousin: Walfstreet Crash
London W.14 The Kensington: Radical Shells

Malvern Nags Head: The Speedy Bears
Manchester Belle Vue Kings Hall: Andree Crouch & The Disciples
Nuneaton 77 Club: The Quads/The Gangsters/The Thrillers
Salisbury Warehouse: The New Flak-kats/Old Manor Psychos
Sheffield King George IV: The Accelerators
Stockton Flats Club: The Drifters
Stoke Trencham Gardens: Judas Priest/Iron Maiden
Stratford-on-Avon Green Dragon: The Strays
Swansea White Swan: Neil & Louisa Thomas
Walsfield Theatre Club: Mary Wilson (for four days)
Walsall Dirty Duck: The Amazing Dark Horse
Wentworth Rockingham Arms: Dave Swarbrick
Wolverhampton Civic Hall: Pat Travers Band

Wednesday

Birmingham Barrel Organ: Brujo
Birmingham Beggars: Chicken Shack
Birmingham Mercat Cross: M. S. Night-work
Birmingham Odeon: Judas Priest/Iron Maiden
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Salmehar
Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: Rones
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: The Gunners/Jay Ride
Bournemouth Winter Gardens: Genesis
Bramtree Weavers: Motives
Brighton Alhambra: The Chels/The Objects
Cardiff Top Rank: The Quads/The Gangsters/The Thrillers
Cardiff St. Helier Arms: Bop Street Kids
Chesham Plough Inn: Roadsters
Colwyn Bay Dinealand Showbar: Money
Croydon Crawdaddy: The Mice
Edinburgh Bonness McTavish's: The Drifters (for four days)
Epsom School of Art: The H. B. Band
Exeter Routes: Slaughter
Glasgow Doune Castle: Facial Hair
Hereford Rotters Club: The Strays
Huddersfield Polytechnic: The 45's
Ilkley Folk Club: Dave Swarbrick
Lidworth Uttington Inn: Ice
Liverpool The Masonic: The Accelerators
London Camden Dingwells: Merges
London Clapham 101 Club: Portraits
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: The Au Pairs/Chris Lucas
London Deftford Albany Empire: Juice On The Loose/Rubber Johnny
London E.2 Earl of Aberdeen: Lionel Griggs Quartet
London Fulham Golden Lion: Searrette
London Fulham Greyhound: Kilometers/Missing Persons
London Gt. Portland St. The Albany: Alien Kult
London Hammarasmith Odeon: Pat Travers Band
London Hammarasmith The Swan: The Idiot Dancers
London Holborn Princess Louise: The Flatbeaters
London Islington Hope & Anchor: Paul Suttillworth & The Latest Craze
London Knightsbridge The Grove: Free Beer
London Old Kent Rd. Thomas A'Beckett: The Realists/The Dipsicks
London Putney Star & Garter: Dana Simmonds & Greig's Folk and Blues Showcases
London Shepherds Bush Trafalgar: Furniture
London Soho Piza Express: Claude Williams/Dia Daley Trio
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: The Records/The Jump
London Wimbledon Nelson's Club: Les Karmain Band
Maidstone Technical College: Seventeen
Middlebrough Teesside Polytechnic: Skitzofrenic
Newcastle City Hall: Andree Crouch & The Disciples
Newcastle The Copperage: The Junco Partners
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: Gwalrh
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Some Chickens
Preston Guildhall: Sad Cafe
Preston Polytechnic: The Circles
Reading Target Club: The Speedy Bears
Sheffield Brincliffe Oaks Hotel: Tony Leigh Quintet
Slough Fulcrum Centre: Dutch Swing College Band
Southampton Eastleigh The Crown: Disco Students
South Woodford Railway Bell: Original East Side Strangers
St. Ives St. Ivo Centre: John Coghlan's Diesel
Stoke Jollies: Roy Orbison (for four days)
Swansea Institute of Higher Education: The Revillos
Swinton Oaks of Wellington: The Trend
Walsfield Community Hall: Stiff Little Fingers/Another Pretty Face



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Friday 21st March 70p ★ ROLL UPS ★ + The Guvnors	Tuesday 25th March 80p ANGELO PALLADINO + The Alsatians
Saturday 22nd March 80p LEYTON BUZZARDS + The Guvnors	Wednesday 26th March 80p NEVER NEVER BAND + Rent Boys
Sunday 23rd March 70p Q-TIPS + Holidays Heroes	Thursday 27th March 80p LITTLE ROOSTERS + The Cannonballs

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Sunday 23rd March ★ ROLL UPS ★ + The Mice	75p
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Saturday March 22nd 7.30 pm
The Keepers of The Key Come Home

GENESIS

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Ticket demand for the concert was stronger than for any concert in Friars eleven year history. Unfortunately no tickets will be available at door on night. This will be the sixth Friars Aylesbury Genesis concert and their first at Friars since September 1972.

Duke

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The Magnet — Maidenhead

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Tickets from The Venue Box Office and the Ticket Machine in the Virgin Megastore 16 Oxford Street. W1
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Weds 19th March	£2.00
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The welcome return of 9 BELOW ZERO	
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--	--

Doors Open 8.00pm Fully Licensed bar

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Royal College of Art, Friday March 28th.

DEAR FRIENDS

Please could all advertisers make sure that their copy for April 12th issue is in by 3 pm Thursday 3rd April, due to the fact that it is Easter Bank Holiday.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

CHARMIAN

LIVE PAGE

FRIDAY 28th MARCH

NO NUKES MUSIC

JOHN COOPER CLARKE

ESSENTIAL LOGIC

THE IVORY BROTHERS

A RICHARD MOLLON PRODUCTION

CENTRAL LONDON THEATRE, 112 NEW CAVENDISH STREET, W1

NEAREST TUBE STATION: CIRCUS

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THURSDAY MARCH 27

AT 7.30 PM

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THE CURE

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MCP

PEP TRAVERS BAND

at Girl

ODEON THEATRE, HAMMERSMITH

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SECRET AFFAIR

plus special guests

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Phone 01-262 1140/1141

Right, this is a **LIVE!** page filler, OK?

You lot out there haven't been advertising your gigs all that much recently. It doesn't cost much, and the results are great, loads of people read these pages for a great night out, not just in London, but all over the country. So all you promoters, students union secs, concert hall managers, band managers, band members, anyone, place your ad in the **BEST** music paper in the world.

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100th ISSUE

OF ZIGZAG

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WITH DRUM

BY THE BEAST

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ONLY 4.00

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LIGHTS?

FOR THE LOVE TO COME & SEE

Information CITY

EDITED BY FRED DELLAR



Tom Waits for no man. Pic: Chris Horler.

I'd be extremely grateful if you could give me a complete run-down on the career of Tom Waits.

J. CRIMMINS, Dublin.

● Waits, who was born on December 7, 1949, but has managed to reach the age of 65 well ahead of time, first surfaced on the West Coast around the beginning of the 70s.

"I rolled around in the bowels of the small folk circuit in the Los Angeles area, picking up music from Mississippi John Hurt, Utah Phillips, Rev. Gary Davis, Zoot Sims and Ray Charles recordings. I'd been a bit of a misfit in the '60s — I didn't find a whole lot of meat to carve there — and I'd always been an early subscriber to Downbeat. So I became a bit of a curator, I guess."

Eventually, in '72, Zappa's manager Herb Cohen, heard the Waits chops in action at the L.A. Troubadour and helped the world's last beatnik get a record deal with Asylum, since which time the self-confessed unemployed gas station attendant has regaled us with such albums as 'Closing Time' (K53030 — 1973), 'The Heart Of Saturday Night' (K53050 — 1974), 'Nighthawks At The Diner' (K63002 — 1975), 'Small Change' (K53050 — 1976), 'Foreign Affairs' (K53068 — 1977) and 'Blue Valentine' (K53088 — 1978). There's been no new album for a helluva while now, but Waits once told me: "I've got a lot of new songs around — the only thing is that some of them haven't been written yet. But I've got the titles and if anybody wants to cover them, then I'll be glad!"

COULD you tell me if the theme music to ITV's *Armchair Thriller*, composed by Andy Mackay, is available on record?

JUDITH A. LOXLEY, Leicester.

● According to Mike Preston's useful *Tele-Tunes 2*, the theme, which is called 'Armchair Thriller', is not

currently available on disc. And before anyone writes in and asks about the Preston book, I'll pass on the news that it's now available from The Record Information Centre, 78 Birchfield Road, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY11 6PG for the fee of £2.95 post free. A 162 page tome, it lists the themes to hundreds of TV programmes and commercials, also providing various info on TV advertised albums, voices used on commercials, film soundtracks and showbiz pop awards. Meanwhile, I'm still puzzled why Alan Hawkshaw's theme to *Grange Hill*, should be retitled 'Chicken Man' and also utilised on ITV's *Give Us A Clue* series. Then, lots of things about ITV puzzle me!

PLEASE help by listing all the records released by Absurd Records. I have several but there appears to be some gaps. Finally, John Peel recently played a record by Bette Lynch (not the Coronation Street star surely?) and I've been unsuccessfully trying to get a copy. Is this disc generally available?

PAUL MOLLINEUX, Sale.

● After sorting around the singles stockroom at HMV, Oxford Street, I eventually came up with the following Absurd discography — Blah Blah Blah 'In The Army'/'Why Diddle?' (AB1), Eddie Fiction 'UFO Parts 1 and 2' (AB2), 48 Chairs 'Snap It Around'/'Psyche Sluts' (AB3), Gerry And The Holograms 'Gerry And The Holograms' (AB4), The Mothmen 'Does It Matter Irene?'/'Please Let Go' (AB5), Cairo 'I Like Blue Beat'/'Version' (AB7) and finally, Bette Lynch's Legs 'Riders In The Sky'/'High Noon' (AB10), which ought to be obtainable from any record emporium of rock calibre. By the way, Cairo and The Outline are the same band, though the version of *I Like Blue Beat* on Ariola is re-recorded.

Umbrella Productions, Nightingale Music and Levi's say

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LIVE!

Lux Interior. Pic Anton Corbijn.

Peter Gabriel

Hammersmith Odeon

IN NONE of his incarnations has Peter Gabriel ever mattered much to me. Yet even at a distance his capacity for self-destruction is viable, and faintly appealing. Here, after all, is someone who, with everything to lose in his career and nothing to gain, leaves Genesis — a band of progressive rock superstars — and, apparently indifferent to expectations, returns sounding more abrasive and looking a lot less stupid.

Obviously, Peter Gabriel is striving. His fans sense this. They give him a wide berth. If he emptied a revolver into the front row or bit off the head of a live chicken they might take exception; short of that, he couldn't do wrong.

I think they see a soul in torment, striving for expression, striding onwards. A sense of rapture covers the audience like a blanket. Of course some are just

enraptured with the light show, but others see also a kindred sensitive middle-class spirit, of sorts, whose wistful, ironic views of England and Life must be infinitely comforting.

If you've ever wondered why Barclay's Bank advertises in *NME* go and see a Peter Gabriel concert.

Gabriel hasn't broken with his past as much as he would perhaps have liked to. He plays his carefully designed and staged show to a mature version of his old following, and for them he provides a more mature evening. Progressive rock grows up and acknowledges its absurdity. Everybody gets their jollies without forfeiting their dignity.

The low-key science fiction set and band uniforms provide that touch of theatre; the solos are crisp and short; and long instrumental passages are noticeable only in their absence. The band look and sound fit and drilled. The light crew know the paces. Gabriel, also in

Down by the Trent at midnight

The Cramps

Nottingham

IT'S cold and damp down by the river. There's thin mist on the black water that drifts up into the dark air. And inside a tiny club not 30 yards from the Trent, myself, a couple of hepcats, a bunch of punks and a small selection of the curious stand around shivering, waiting for The Cramps.

There's a truck outside alright and they've tested the PA, but the DJ says the band have left the building. He thinks they'll be back.

Just when I've decided that The Cramps are only the product of a fevered imagination, American phenomena from a third-rate film, Lux Interior is on stage saying "Sorry you had to wait. We didn't know. We'll make it up to you."

Then he throws up his microphones, knocks a small, round hole in the ceiling and the sound stops. Brian nervously bites the tattooed skin that's stretched over one bulging bicep. Even Ivy looks rattled when her guitar gives up. But as the wise spectator behind me says, "This is the best worst gig I've ever seen."

The music is a raw, bleeding blast of mutated, twanging, tremulous guitars, heavy, bumping heart-beat drumming and blasting, stuttering, screaming vocals. And after Lux has hauled the stacks of speakers round so he can hear what he's singing, it's even better.

The Cramps have stripped down sound to rock's garish dawn then pulverised it so that past and present implode to produce a primal, fiery, perverted progeny.

Behind the drums, eye-brows askew, sculpted quiff and cool eternally intact as he chews gum or stops to smoke a leisurely cigarette and bange out the beat with one hand, Nick Knox looks like an Italian extra from *West Side Story*. Ivy Rorschach has a black blouse, gold lurex pants, copper curls and a carved, chilling, fallen-angel face. She stands impassive; an occasional inscrutable glance rakes the crowd. And when things really get going, a slight movement of her head indicates approval.

At the other side of the stage, peering over his shoulder at the audience, lips pouting and nostrils flaring as he ravages a number with

savage feedback, Brian Gregory is playing pink, polka-dot guitar. One of his painted eyes flashes flirtatiously; the other is hidden beneath the thin white waterfall of hair that contrasts with the greased-back blackness of the rest of his coiffure.

Meanwhile at the front, Lux Interior slavers, sweats and shakes.

Clad only in torn leather trousers that appear to be in imminent danger of complete disintegration, the wet, white flesh of his torso is gored red by his own scratch marks. With small, pale eyes and a running nose in a face that's been moulded from some unearthly pink plastic, he's like a hideously demented Incredible Hulk. He go-go dances grotesquely as if an inventor has inadvertently crossed the wires in an insane, mechanised, macabre monster.

Leaning out from the stage, his saliva and perspiration pouring onto the crowd, his rabid slab of a face barely three feet from mine, he's a terrifying manifestation of utter madness.

"Do you understand?" he shrieks in a hiccupping paroxysm of foaming paranoia: I quell. I don't. But I'm enjoying it anyway.

It's only after "Strychnine" ("My favourite drink. Have one at the bar on me"), "Garbage Man," "I Was A Teenage Werewolf," "TV Set," "Tear It Up" and "The Way I Walk" that The Cramps get out of control and all hell breaks loose.

Lux reaches up, drags down some more ceiling, launches himself from the stage and tumbles through the audience, grovelling on the ground, attempting to swallow the microphone and indulging in an unfathomable telepathic communication with a similarly stripped aficionado. He clambors back up, starts to do something very strange to the monitor, rolls over and, clasping it to him, sits dazed on the stage.

Then a weird, charged calm prevails as The Cramps play a bizarre, maudlin "Lonesome Town." Over in the corner a couple start slow-dancing and I wonder whether I'm simply delirious or suffering a severe and extraordinary hallucination.

Dimly, from a distance, I hear an awed voice in the audience: "Different, aren't they?"

The Cramps are just plain gone.

Lynn Hanna

uniform, steers clear of self-indulgence, limits the mime to a few precise gestures, and generally behaves like someone who isn't exactly thriving on the whole experience.

Having rehearsed all spontaneity out of the set, he seems embarrassed by the suppliant adulation awaiting even the faintest cue. Perhaps he's just taking the piss when he falls off the edge of the stage into the outstretched arms of the audience at the front. Probably not. Nevertheless he apologises for playing "Games Without Frontiers", dedicates the song to "the entire nation of Eddie Wierings", and then crows from the applause that greets even this abstruse extension of the metaphor.

"Games Without Frontiers" is without doubt a weird and fascinating follow-up to Pink Floyd's "Another Brick In The Wall". I'll wager those were the last two records that the majority of this audience bought. Both are possessed of the same suffocating gloom. But Gabriel's is slightly more sinister.

And there's something slightly sinister about Gabriel himself. His music is like Tenniel's illustrations for Lewis Carroll: whimsical, English, twisted. For the most part he acquiesces to his fans, then suddenly he turns around looking like Quasimodo and radiates malice in wonderland. The dynamics of the songs are similarly abrupt.

Maybe he's mad. My most pervasive memory is of Peter Gabriel intoning over and over again to a hushed auditorium the words "We do what we're told".

No, he's not mad. A rum fellow and a queer channelling, perhaps, but not mad. Just badly parked.

Paul Ramball

Gabriel. Pic Allen Befford.



The Nips

Rock Garden

IT TOOK a perverse sense of humour to book The 45s as support to The Nips who, far from getting bigger, have packed it in altogether. The 45s play ostensibly ingenious pop; bright, breezy and utterly meaningless.

Last song? 'Fun Fun Fun'. Huh. One puff and it's gone. A glance round the Rock Garden at the mixed clientele during the closing phases of The 45s suggested that they were going down quite well and would be back for an encore. Not so. Sterner stuff was the order of the day.

Thus The Nips, condemned to play the last gig of a three-year career at the Rock Garden. They were fronted by Shane O'Hooligan, the sort of performer it's impossible to miss. He's got big ears which stick out at right angles and too many teeth; a heady combination which readily calls to mind Plug in the Beano.

Shane was angry and frustrated and mounted a fearsome assault which was sustained until the very last mauled and mangled semi-quaver. Spitting and snarling, he turned everything around him into the blandest of Co-Op wallpaper.

Chiswick single 'Gabrielle' served as curtain-raiser, with O'Hooligan blitzkrieging away at the front and mowed-headed guitarist Fritz tackling a none-too-docile change of tempo midway. Fritz's pimpler R'n'B guitar was consistently wrenching throughout.

Certainly it was a passionate set, though much of the energy was of the same genre as an exploding box of ammunition — potentially lethal fragments shooting everywhere. Songs like 'Fuss And Bother' and 'I Don't Want Nobody' were rammed home with brute force, lacking any visible distinguishing marks. Not songs really, just crude and ordinary slogans: stuff 'em.

The most successful parts stemmed from O'Hooligan. He sang lines like "Got no reason for living/Got no reason to die" with his finger poised dramatically over the 'Abort' button, he gestured violently at hecklers, he even threw in Winston Churchill's cliché about this being "Only the end of the beginning" with apparently passionate conviction.

Let's face it, the boy's a slob but he's got... well, not style exactly, but a sort of natural megahyperbole.

A neat touch was The Nips' inclusion of Gary Glitter's 'Rock & Roll' as an encore. This was, I'd like to think, aimed at the disgusting bunch of leathery oafs in the corner who spent the whole gig screaming "Rock and roll!" Whether The Nips were playing this or not.

Nurse, the elephant gun.

Impressive too was a spoof funk number which had Shane delivering a talk-over about going back to Detroit and keeping God in your heart. Fritz and bassist Shane were too bad to be serious but much better than awful. 'Can't Say No' was very like the Pistols' 'Submission', with the strangely normal Mark Harrison's drums providing forward motion.

And there we have it. The Nips are splitting because of lack of cash and other basic problems. Plans are already being laid, though, for the re-emergence of the members under different guises. There's power worth harnessing in there somewhere.

Adam Sweeting



A Doll called Leven. Pic Santo Besone.

Doll By Doll

Porchester Hall

PLAYING to a vast, chandelier-hung half-empty dancehall after a packed and rampant Marquee, or even a drunken euphoric Venue can be very disconcerting, and tonight Doll By Doll's usual aggressive exuberance is tinged with apprehension and reservation.

But it is probably only those who have seen them in full throttle that are aware of it; to the small group of newcomers clustered round the front of the stage, it must be obvious that Doll By Doll are still one of the greatest rock bands around.

Lead singer Jackie Leven is

half Romany-half Scot and this immediately conjures up wild and romantic images which are depicted physically and in DDD's music. He is heavily built, and across his wide, surly face there's a permanent sneer; hair licking his collar, he throws himself around the stage like a wild man, hammering his guitar with such force, his arm working like a pumping iron, that you half expect the strings to give way and his fist go splintering through the wood.

His voice is sensational, crooning, growling, bellowing and almost yodelling as he reaches effortlessly for the top notes. But as a contrast to the aggression of his guitar and vocals style, there's a genuine



O'Hooligan's last nip. Pic: Justin Thomas.

Punk rock

softness and emotive warmth when he sings such numbers as the album title track and single 'Gypsy Blood' and two other album tracks, 'Strip Show' and 'Hey Sweetheart'.

He sings sincerely, sometimes pitifully, of an idealist, romantic love and a turmoil of emotions. But there is an overall, sometimes conflicting foreboding of doom and despair caught up in the vocals and lyrics.

Behind him the music pounds and tears furiously, but keeps to a tight rhythmic beat, the band never losing

contact with each other, even on the sharp, bursting introes and endings. Guitar and bass come in at unexpected moments — as in 'Palace Of Love' — where Leven begins with mysterious, sporadic buzzsaw clucking guitar, crouching low over the front of the stage. He hesitates; then Tony White butts in on bass; a minute later Jo Shaw adds more guitar... suddenly, in a burst of light and thunderous drumming, they're into the number. They always display this split-second timing — beying

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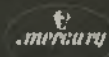
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Weapon A Peace UB40

The Clarendon

WITH London's music venues scarcely keeping pace with its music, it is gratifying to see a new showcase for '80s music opening up in the capital.

Every Thursday, upstairs at The Clarendon Hotel, Hamersmith — large, congenial, club atmosphere and within megaspill's distance of both the Odeon and the Palais — will be the home of Alternatives On Broadway. The opening night was typical of the adventurous booking policy being pursued by Alternatives' promoter Leslie Palmer, with white and black rockers UB40 supported by Wolverhampton reggae outfit, Weapon A Peace.

Palmer, who for the past 18 months has been promoting roots reggae outfits like Amer, The Cool Notes and others, sees Alternatives as reflecting the increasing cross-fertilisation of black and white musicians and musics.

UB40 are but one of the intriguing new breed. Their thumping, gleeful style of rockers is bright and accessible; their front line of twin vocals/rhythm guitars fast and snappy; though at this stage they have little material of lasting resonance. Better, hopefully, must come.

Weapon A Peace are more conventional a breed of black British reggae, and at first their mix of lovers rock and, mid-tempo rockers seemed all too familiar and sluggish. They improved, though, and by the time they closed with a harder version of Third World's '96 In The Shade' had won over the mix-up audience for a genuine encore. Their greatest asset is their powerful lead singer who typifies the Midlands militancy the name implies.

With Dave 'Sportswear' Hendley at the sound system controls there was certainly no shortage of challenging and exciting music, and for once Broadway lives up to its name.

Neil Spencer

Any Trouble

Hope and Anchor

WELCOME, if you will, Son of PubRock. I saw it! It was at the Hope and Anchor and it's called Any Trouble.

At the moment there's a gaucheness about Any Trouble, who've just signed to Stiff. Their set was delivered on this occasion in two halves and was unbalanced by several worthless numbers. Any Trouble may be competent, but if you shouted "Ducks Deluxe!" at them across the street they'd all turn round.

This Hope appearance featured a strong turnout of home supporters from Manchester and Stoke, who were continuously thanked for coming by the band's unusual lead singer, Clive Gregson. He looks like a sweetie and flustered Phil Silvers, has an ill-fitting suit and a convincing voice. If it wasn't for him Any Trouble would be in plenty of it.

Songs like the opening 'It's The Hook' and the aged 'Imagination' gave Gregson scope to get stuck in, and he can even sing Abba's 'The Name Of The Game'. But Any Trouble won't get far without some stern editing and rewriting.

Adam Sweeting

Wilko Johnson

Venue

RHYTHM, neurosis and blues: there's something running through this music that's like a current of pure worry. It starts at the gut-punching back beat of the drums and shoots along a zig-zagged live wire to its terminal points in those mad, staring eyes.

Objectively speaking, rock 'n' roll's achievements might be few and small, but not least among them is that it gave Wilko Johnson something to keep him occupied — it's disturbing to wonder what he could have got up to otherwise.

Positively radiating unease as he strides mechanically on stage, Johnson jerks the band — Russell Strutter on drums and Alex Blines on bass — into the opener 'Everybody's Carrying A Gun', which is sleepless and wound-up R&B, a grimly clipped reminder that just because you're paranoid it doesn't mean they're not out to get you. 'Walking On The Edge' is similarly bitter; still stalking the stage with nervy restlessness, he chops out aggressively staccato chords with detached hatred.

Still, with a haircut like that you've got to make sure no-one feels like taking liberties, I suppose.

Tight-lipped, not to say ashen-faced, he pushed dourly onwards, carving up number after number with almost monotonous ferocity. New single 'Down By The Waterside' is a shuddering, jingly thing; the living Diddley-beat crawls tortuously through a psychic undergrowth. I missed most of it, trying to catch the waitress' attention.

Yet all of that was to seem as harmless and carefree as so many nursery-rhymes in comparison with what followed: Wilko Johnson's version of Jay Hawkins' 'The

The Neurosis Blues



Tranquil Wilko. Pic Tom Sheenhan.

Whemmy' is a one-man festival of obsessive excess. A slow and ominous blues, it

erupts periodically into orgasmic climaxes ('My mind's in neutral,' rings out

the anguished scream) of riveting intensity. And underneath it all, that taut-stretched thread of authentic anxiety prevent it from lapsing into cheap melodrama.

Another drink, I think, and something stronger this time. 'Paradise' follows on, and then a nod back to the earlier days with his own 'Back In The Night'. If contemporary R&B tends to suffer from its dearth of good original songwriters, Wilko's done more than most to remedy that deficiency. Two more staples of his stage-act crop up as encores: 'Highway 61' and 'She Does It Right'. Johnson contributes something else to modern R&B as well. Where even the best of the young white groups fall down in compulsion with their old black counterparts is in this: they can't present that same sense of personality behind the music. No-one matches that same sense of personality behind the music. No-one matches the massive individuality that, say, a Sonny Boy Williamson could bring to bear on everything he did. Instead we get the bare format preserved — and energised — in a way that's fine so far as it goes, but never equalling its prototypes for simple emotion. But there are moments when Wilko comes close to it, because he imprints his character so dramatically that it actively shapes the music. It's still somewhere short of greatness, but we could do with more of it.

And if tonight's set didn't generate much tension en masse, I'd put that down to the restrictions of the Venue, where atmosphere seems to evaporate and disappear fast. It was just too relaxed for anything as downright jumpy as Wilko Johnson.

Paul Du Noyer

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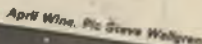
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WILKO

From page 24

John Denton, equally is one of the best rock'n'roll pianists in the UK, not just a technical adept, but a magnificently natural, performing pianist, who speaks in reverent awe of how Jerry Lee Lewis at the Rainbow the other week tore off the lid of his piano and threw it across the stage. John, a long-time Southend crony of The Wilks, is pure talent. His position in the band is still undecided, a result of his own indecision as to whether he should turn professional. Wilko concedes that there is an on-stage chemistry between the two of them that is the equivalent of that between him and Lee Brilleaux, and openly admits that at one time he was prepared to turn The Solid Senders into a semi-pro outfit just so he could play all the time with John Denton. Come on, Denton, you know it makes sense.

Totally self-controlled, and totally flipped out at the same moment, Wilko does his Wilko bit all over the stage, his red shirt and black suit matching the colours of his guitar.

It's true: I prefer The Solid Senders to Dr Feelgood. Not the present Feelgoods, either, but the original Wilko band. The Solid Senders are far more subtle and possess/suggest far crazier, looper possibilities, that often dance about on the edge of genius.

They get the strongest, wildest, most loving applause I've ever heard and are only prevented from playing more than two encores by the cramps in Wilko's right arm.

THE JOURNAL is filled in immediately afterwards: "The highlight of a career", "Immense", "The sort of thing that could stunt your growth" are just a few of the plaudits attributed to an exceptional gig. "Piano monitored by D12 placed in soundhole and out through Poland Amp. Two Sennheiser digitally delayed 1/2 second output — technical data on excellent Bechstein grand rig-up..." — this all in Gilm's handwriting.

Writes Russell: "Gig was fantastic. People chanting 'Wilko' like it is an international football match. 'Back In The Night' and the middle of the mixing platform vibrated and fell out. 1st encore: hundreds of flames everywhere. The best gig I've ever experienced."

Written in the cramped, creased pen of Wilko Johnson: "What can I say, boys? You've done it again. Social sec, British Legion, Gt Woking, 1972."

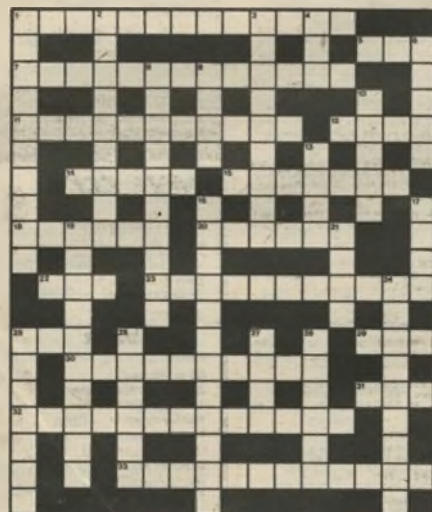
AFTER the show a number of young people collect together for fun and party-time in Wilko's room. Impassioned, profound conversations on The Meaning Of Life break out with the same ease with which youthful Ports sub a wall with a slogen.

"Jesus was a Communist," proclaims the obligatory Weird Girl.

"Actually, I think he was a Fascist," disagrees Glum.

"No", decides Wilko, from where he is stretched out on his bed. "God definitely votes Tory, Jesus is a Liberal, and The Holy Spirit's probably an anarchist."

NME X-PRESS WORD



- 10 See 30
13 See 4
16 The original was by The Fabulous Ronettes (4,1,4,3)
17 Gary's gang?
19 Reggae combo who hit the disco chart in '78 (5,5)
21 Type of music
24 'Airport' was their big debut hit (3,6)
25 Rainbow boss
26 Ricky or Bill
27 Made their debut on 'Music From Big Pink'
28 Liverpudlian recluse

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

- ACROSS: 2 Rufus; 8 'Hey (Joe)'; 9 'My Sharona'; 10 'Stomp'; 13 'So Lonely'; 14 Paul Cook; 15 (Joe) Ely; 16 Edgar Froese; 18 (Gang) Of Four; 19 Cat (Stevens); 21 Rush; 23 Annie; 25 George Melly; 26 'Hey' Joe; 27 Gladys Knight; 28 Joe (Ely).
- DOWN: 1 Dr Hook; 3 Fast; 4 Sham (89); 5 'My World'; 6 Dr Feelgood; 7 Andy Partridge; 11 Orchestra; 12 Pioneers; 17 John Lodge; 19 (Stewart) Copeland; 20 Gang (Of Four); 22 & 24 Helen Reddy; 26 John.

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GASBAG

ALTHOUGH Neil Norman's review of *Rude Boy* is a fair and perceptive assessment of the film's issues, his viewpoint underestimates the imaginative and creative elements that constitute part of the final visual collage. His sense of the film as primarily documentary disregards the extent to which the material was actually malleable and the techniques that made it so. His misapprehension is limiting in that it encourages a rather one-dimensional viewing, ignoring some of the more complex and multi-faceted aspects of the work which have been noted in varying degrees by other critics.

In this attempt to balance out his review I must admit to having played a small part in the film as one of Ray Gange's (principle *Rude Boy*) girlfriends (I'm in the game... I can speak only for myself — not for any other cast member — and express what is merely personal opinion based on a brief and minor association with the making of the film, but my intention was never that the film was intended primarily as visual reportage, a sort of *The Clash* — *This Is Your Life* — *The Ape and the Ecstasy*, drawing its significance, story and 'universal implications' (N.N.) in a usual way from straightforward, orderlily edited documentary evidence. I assumed (partly on the evidence of Hazan / Mingay's previous film *A Bigger Splash* with its meticulously skilful editing) that it was to be a far more subtle and complex montage utilising a variety of methods to achieve its overall effects.

Ray Gange apparently typifies Salient Characteristics of the Black Generation and the film tracks, convincingly, his involvement with a rising punk band (member — circa '78). The whole — at times genuinely touching and now evidently threatening — tale is performed before a veritable back-plunge of racial tension, not at all too toned down. This open synopsis acquires its present content from an edited assemblage of footage 'acquired in various ways': direct documentary filming; spontaneous events 'captured' on, or re-enacted for, the camera; and sequences structured and contrived to meet the directors' aims in sustaining and substantiating the messages and style of the film.

So, documentary-drama, factoids, New Journalism — all are attempts to define types of this form of expression — and mean, essentially, a conscious and selected synthesis of 'facts' and imagination designed to convey whatever message or project it might be. *Rude Boy* is *Rebel without a Cause* but 30 very odd years on after *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, after Ziggy Stardust, Warhol, *Performance* and *In Cold Blood*.

Thus, in the film are the reasonably straightforward documentary concert sequences (musically riveting). There are sequences such as my short scenes with Ray which, (without going into a detailed, ym, blow by blow account of London balling on a scatalogical location) were constructed from a variety of suggestions, observations and actual recollections intended to convey the sort of experience that might characterise the sort of life lived as Ray portrays it on screen, depicting another aspect of the attitudes and character.

There are also sequences in which, as one of the directors claims, 'I try not to be manipulative. I frame the picture in a certain way and let

NME presents

RUDE BAG

Starring
THE READERS
Featuring

A letter about The Clash
(surprise surprise)

A CSM production



No-one prints
what the
Rude Bag
prints

Post your toast the Gasbag way, send us a letter every day.
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London W.1.

things happen within the frame." But the frame is there and the actions, reactions and confrontations of the characters are, I think, inevitably relative to the overall intentions of the film and its directors. This is a long way from the old-style documentary film with its persistent dogging Seeing-Eye camera, anonymous, invisible, the unobtrusive Recorder-of-The Truth / The Reality (or rather, what was meant to be seen as The Truth and Reality...).

Such documentaries can be viewed straightforwardly, it sceptically. *Rude Boy* is both more and less realistic. Natural characteristic events, provoked and unprovoked, are incorporated and utilised alongside deliberated, crafted, improvised-acted sequences. Spot the difference. Or forget all this *Cahiers Du Cinema* bullshit and just rock around your digital time-piece, or tear up a few seats in the local Seneanderama A.B.C., 1,2,3...

Liz Young, Camden, London.
This Bag is constructed entirely from genuine

(white jacket / jeans. Chic?) and nothing changed. Will it ever? Honest, punks, I'm not a Space Alien — just black — so why the looks? All that putrid mob racialism. One popular terrace chant "We all hate Wogs". Why? What have we done? Ranking Roger goes on about being criticised by blacks but what of the verbal flak and cold stares from white punks? That feeling of "Is this white man's territory?" are exacerbated when a reggae band comes on the support slot and are booed off with accompanying tedious racial insults. White punks are so cool (sic) wearing their Nazi T-shirts, pendants, ad nauseum.

Anyway, Roger, you looked so strange in your bondage pants and Rasta big black hat I honestly thought that this was some kind of subtle joke. Senatorial elegance now is nearly on your side. Fank God for 2-Tone.
Black Boy in the Green Mac (soulie / dread).
Some people just can't see why we should keep politicking out of rock, can they? — CSM.

What's so special 'bout the 2-Tone "thing"? Am I the only one who remembers G Parker's 'Heat Treatment' LP of 1977? Does the Speciale exception prove the rule "Catch 22 says if I sing the truth they won't make me an overnight star"? *The Holy-Road Boy*, Edinburgh.
And they won't thank you, either. — CSM.

What about the Folk Revival then?
Cecil Sharp, Brampton Morris. Most topical letter of the week. — CSM.
I agree with Jah Wobble's assertion that *The Guardian* is totally for progressive teachers at comprehensive schools and no-one else. "You don't realise you're being misled..." (NME 9.2.80) but talk about the kettle calling the pot mucky-arse! Who does he think likes NME or listens to PIL? That rubbish is totally for weirdo vegetarian students, name dropping posers, Anne Nightingale and other

bourgeois pseudo like Meckinnon who want to be in, and no one else! It's so subtle you don't realise you're being misled hahahahaha...
Peter Moore (rock fan), Glengormley.
Well, I hope that numbers all you arty types who after all keep us going. I know it's true because I've never seen anyone reading NME in McDonalds. — CSM

How come Si of Tunbridge Wells can only find one member of the NME staff to dislike? I suppose listening to Simon and Garfunkel emphasises the perceptive stupor. Very interesting... must try it in the laboratory.
Pavlov, Barking.
No, do the DOG (not the donkey). — CSM

Could I be the first to complain about the price increase? *John Connolly, New Berner, Herts*.
Well, maybe... — CSM

Can I be the first to protest over the NME's decision to follow *Sounds* and increase its price to 25p?
Brian Clark, Bradford University.
Better, but... — CSM
Follow *Sounds*? — NS

My folks own a newsagents so the price increase is unlikely to affect me.
Stan, B. W. Powys.
... this bloke takes the uh-proverbial cake — CSM
In actual fact, we were the first to complain about the price increase. — A
CONCERNED PERSON

With reference to 'Riots Mar Rats' Dublin Show' (NME — 8.3.1980) I wish to state that your report was both unjust and inaccurate. There were no riots during the concert, in fact it was one of the most peaceful shows I have ever witnessed. The little bit of trouble that occurred was small taking into consideration the large attendance. But alas the reports were not interested in the music. They went to Laidup with the sole purpose to discredit the Rats! It's amazing the way they never

reported the trouble that occurred at a recent Still Little Fingers gig in Dublin.

Secondly there were not 99 injuries as you stated. The official figure from the St. John Ambulance Brigade was 30, most of them being the result of crushing and fainting. I would finally like to thank the Rats on behalf of the 14,000 people present for one of the most enjoyable days of my life.

Paul Bracken, Dublin.
Typical NME bold to smear the Rats again and then thought they could wessal out of it with one folklin' letter in the Bag! You're foolin' no-one, and as for Joe Strummer... — THE DUMMY
BOB GELDOLF

Dear A. Guppy, I was shocked to find out you were a fish. I thought I was the only one that could write. I have been a fish for a year now and was getting very lonely.
A. H. Fish, Stoke Goldfishbowl Emetick.
And welcome to Aquatic Solutions In The Bowl — CSM



ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES IN THE DARK is just an anagram of: MARK, VD RAMONE, ANUS TESTICLE HERO. N'est-ce pas?
Pete Dorey, Sussex.
This correspondence is now unfashionable. — CSM

Could someone please tell me which XTC records I electronically processed shattered and layered with other sounds or lyrical pieces on my new album, 'cause I've forgotten, and I'm damned if I can work 'em out.
Mr Partridge, Swindon

Feeble, Partridge, feeble. Keep listening and you'll find 'em. After all it says on the cover they're there. Right, Neil? — CSM
Next letter, please. — NS

I'm beginning to get the feeling that NME has got something against 'Heavy Metal' music. I was not surprised at Glenn Gibson's unfavourable review of the Rainbow gig in your March 1st issue. One could hardly blame him for expressing such an opinion, especially when you remember that the last time one of your writers went to see Rainbow, and had the nerve to say he thought Blackmore was brilliant, he was rewarded by having his name left off the bottom of the piece.

Your comments in last week's rag about the March 1st Wembley gig were even more blatantly biased than usual. "So much for the myth of peaceful Heavy Metal gigs," you said. Well, unless I'm mistaken the only damage was done to the Arena itself, and look at the faces in that photo, they don't seem particularly anguished, do they? Does this mean that NME makes no distinction between damage done to property and that done to human life? At the risk of being unfashionable, I still prefer a gig where people bang their heads on the stage to one where they use other peoples'.

Mike Whiteway (no address given)
Total agreement with your last point, Mike, but HM-orient audiences only maintain their noisiness when none of their preconceptions are challenged from the stage. Ever hear about what happened to Wayne County and The Mighty Diamonds at the '77 Reading Festival? — CSM

I'm sure we all sympathise with G. Holman who wrote into *Gasbag* about his cancelled Clash gig, but spare a thought for me and my friend Carol, who travelled the 300 miles from Middlesbrough to see The Clash at their Mile End gig in London, only to find it cancelled, and then being faced with the problem of where to spend the night. I don't care, I still love 'em! *Christopher Todd, Middlesbrough*.
Just what is it that makes Middlesbrough so different, so unique? — CSM

In response to A. Ringpeaces' somewhat emotional — and, I might add, unjustified — outburst in which he expressed his dissatisfaction at the deficiency of live bands in Middlesbrough (NME 8th March) may I just state for the benefit of himself and indeed all readers with an active interest in Middlesbrough, that the Cleveland Philharmonic Choir and Cleveland Youth Orchestra had a concert here just last week, thus proving once and for all that Middlesbrough really is "the entertainment centre of the North".
Chris A. Reistick, Middlesbrough.
No answer to that, is there? — CSM

Concerning the 5ft pair of pink plastic apex stolen from the Fabulous Poodles (TZers — March 8th) — I saw a young punk in a pink Captain Sensible jumper taking them home on a 92 bus in Birmingham on Sunday March 2nd and I claim my prize.
H. E. Bates, Solihull, W. Midlands.
Ah, the best of the summer apex... — CSM



documentary letters. There are no scripted sequences, no 're-enactments', and no staged sequences. — CSM
The answers, however, are portrayed by professional actors. — A PURIST.

How come whenever BBC Radio makes cutbacks it's always the black programmes that are the first to go?
Paul Webb, London.
No idea. This is, after all, a society totally free from racism. — CSM.

I was at the Clash concert,

T-ZERS

L OOPY! Lame-brained! Politically unsound! Extremely silly! These are the comments flying around a hectic T-Zers desk in response to the week's most frolicsome exhibition of Self-Destructive Mindless Violence Provoked By The Demon Rock Music. And all because The Lady loves... The Roomtown Bats! Now T-Zers has not professed great admiration for recent Brats' output, but the reaction of society prankster Lady Sophia 'Minkie' Murphy could be deemed a trifle over the top. Furthering the fine art of "bungy-jumping", wherein the participant flings himself from a great height while attached to a piece of elastic, 'Minkie' leapt off the highest bridge in the world — the Royal Gorge in the Rocky Mountains — screaming 'Rap Trap' as she plummeted towards the foaming Arkansas River 1,052 feet below at a speed in excess of 50 mph. Meanwhile a church choir sang 'Lead Us Heavenly Father Lead Us' from the clifftop. "I'm doing this because of The Boomtown Rats", Minkie later emitted. "They've made me realise that you have to experience everything in life..."

Action of a fervently religious nature was being taken of late in Amarillo, Texas, where hundreds of righteous citizens thronged before the Civic Centre waving candles to protest about the arrival of heinous pagan extremist rock group Kiss. They claimed the cartoon cut-outs advocate "demon worship, sexual perversion, etc." "If only it were true..."

Not 'at' as bad, mark you, as the brand of brainless bravado provoked by the new Clash skiffle *Rude Boy*. Following a press screening, excitable *Observer* gossip columnist Tom Davies, 38, set upon co-director David Minge without warning and thumped him in the laughing tackle. Said Minge: "I was horrified. There's never anything like that at the wildest rock concert." (*Shows how many you've been to — Ed.*) Said Davies: "I found the film very pornographic. I've never punched a man before in my life but it was what I felt like doing at the time. Violence is horrible and squalid," added the heckling hack.

Bushy-browed TV comedian Denis Hasley, seems to have traced a link between rock's subversive element and our sceptred Isle's ailing cash stockpiles. He told a shocked crowd in Cardiff last week: "It's this half-baked punk monetarism which is pushing Britain towards terminal decline..." And it's not just the UK that's suffering a drastic lack of loot. Scanda-pop monopolists Abba appear to be losing a cool two million bucks in some dodgy crude oil deal. Pol Oil, a company owned by the mercenary megastar, have been hawking 55,000 tons of "crude" around Rotterdam but due to the current oil glut around the Dutch domain they can't get a sod to buy it. The heart bleeds...

Dumb, Dorkish. Politically unsound etc. Yet more cruel observations volleying around the T-Zers desk this week on account of the latest edition of that never-ending serial, the Rock Romance Post Mortem. "On that first night together he carried me into the bedroom and I discovered after far too long just how beautiful a young man's body can be..." Could this really be R. Mugabe apropos his fateful first meeting with Governor Soames? Sorry, we err. Make that ex-playmate Marilyn Cole on Bryan Ferry



How does Jean-Jacques Burnel (Stranglers bassist, very famous) maintain his uniformly awesome state of excellent health? The mystery is that there is no mystery. If you too would want to be a glowing example of physical fitness, the solution is obvious. Get a small female child to sit on your ass. (A Doctor writes: "This advice is not only medically irresponsible but dangerously sexist. We recommend fifteen hours sleep a night and no drugs.") Pic: Rex Features (whoever he is).

(or was it the other way round?). Ms Cole was reminiscing in the sunny *Daily Mirror*...

Ex-Red Indian squawker) Cher, on her marriage to Grassin' Gregg Allman, which ended after nine days when Gregory fell face-first into a plate of spaghetti. "It was like going to Disneyland on acid. You knew you had a good time but you just couldn't remember what you did"...

Mick Jagger's memory is evidently in better shape. Jag, with soulmate Jerry Hall on his arm, walked into Bianca

and the new love of her life, New York millionaire John Samuels Jr. at a party thrown by sexual therapist Woody Allen. By all accounts it was a chilly meeting. Bianca nodded coldly to Mick and Jerry, and Mick winked at Bianca, gritting the two immortal words "Hello, gal". Nobody, however, winked, nodded or said anything to Mr Samuels.

Progressive rocker Steve Marley, who's recently severed the knot (nasty, that) with chanteuse Yvonne Keeley, is apparently to re-tie

it (amazing what modern surgery can do) with Dorothy Crombie, an air hostess who Stevie met on a flight to Edinburgh. "They've been inseparable ever since," a close friend let drop... It must be the time of year. Music millionaire and reggae impresario Chris Blackwell is to wed French actress Nathalie Delon, ex-wife of heart-throb Alain.

It is the time of year. Richard Jobson, tall, cool, sultry singer with Scots fashion models The Skids, has revealed to a horrified world how he fortifies with the over-40s. T-Zers is aghast to learn that older women tend to take a bit of a shine to Jobbo and — worse — they're prepared to pay for it!

Gauche, Gruesome. Politically, etc. Such was the outcry in the region of the T-Zers desk that greeted the revelation that Elvis Presley is soon to be warbling duets with the likes of Southern firecracker Dolly Parton on an upcoming album. His resurrection is to be achieved by stripping backing vocal tracks from The King's old hits, whereupon new voices

On the left is a man deeply concerned with the state of his health. He is Jimmy Vaughan of The Fabulous Thunderbirds, and he knows that the more intently he reads his copy of NME, the faster his broken leg will heal.

And on the right is another man equally concerned with corporeal well-being. He is Dave Stewart of The Tourists and he knows that the more the nurses rub his chest, the faster his punctured lung will repair itself. Which of them is right? Only Burnel knows for sure. Ray Marlowe and David Thorpe were there men in the surgical masks and the sterile lenses.



will be dubbed in and harmonised. Both Barbra Streisand and herb farmer Wacky Macca have been approached for the project but it's not known yet if either have given the 'thumbs up'...

Whofolk Pete Townshend, Ox Entwistle and Kenny Jones nipped into Oxford Street's Classic Cinema on Monday lunchtime to present a Lambretta scooter to the lucky winner of a *Quadrophonia* film comp. Also spied in the Parks-packing throng was Phil Daniels, fresh from rehearsals with his underground combo The Cross and bracing himself for the imminent release of his latest celluloid sortie *Breaking Glass*...

A Jam For All Seasons and one in the eye for all the Def Iron Saxones of this world as The Jam enter BBC's chart at No. 1. After consulting our very own Doomsday Books in the very bowels of IPC's crumbling towers we observe that this is the first time this dreadfurious feat has been achieved since one Samuel Ploewmanne's madrigal composed on the death of Sir Thomas More, 'Aire On A Stubborn Catholic' (Version), was the toast of Hampton Court way back in the razzzy 1520s.

D ID YOU know that Marion 'M' Nugent, Ted's old dear, pens a monthly column in the *Illinois Entertainer* music mag? Thought not... Or that Pink Floyd's meisterwerk 'Dark Side Of The Moon' has now overtaken Carole King's 'Tapestry' in enjoying the longest run for a 'contemporary' LP in the Stateside charts? 303 weeks now out. Fearful innit? And did you hear how monotony maestro Mike Rutherford, of gospel trio Genesis, managed to play a whole two hours of Radio 1 *Star Special* without once deviating from the path of 'classic' rock records that everybody and his (or her) dog knows all too well. Or that Tom Verlaine is to apply his acid fretwork to the projected Bowie album? Thought not.

The Jam's next single is to be 'Heatwave': Elvis Costello's is to be 'Ghost Train'; Dr. Luther's Assistant' and The Pretenders next is 'Talk Of The Town'. Don't say we never warn you...

An international critics poll scoured from such revered rags as *Music Life* (Japan), *Stern* (Germany) and *Avent Garde* (Newton Popholeford) voted sylvanlike David Sylvian of the foppish Japan 'The Most Beautiful Man In The World'. For reasons which are not clear, NME's nomination was not sought, much to 'Handsome' Monty Smith's chagrin...

It gives us moderate pleasure to welcome into our staff ranks Mr Adrian Thrills, the celebrated star of stage, screen and Stenvenage Labour Exchange. Mr Thrills — whose petit stature ensures he is always the last person to know it's raining — signs with us on a four million pound contract inked just before the deadline from BBC2's *Arena* programme, where last week you may have seen him revealing all about 2-Tone Records. Adrian — or Christian Aid as we know him — supports Tottenham Hotspur but doctors say he should regain consciousness in time...

Skeleton of the week: current office faves The Q-Tips, who are about to shake the nation with their thundering version of Joe Tex's 'Letter Song', used to be chart novelty act Streaband, of 'Toast' fame (some of 'em, anyway)...

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