

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

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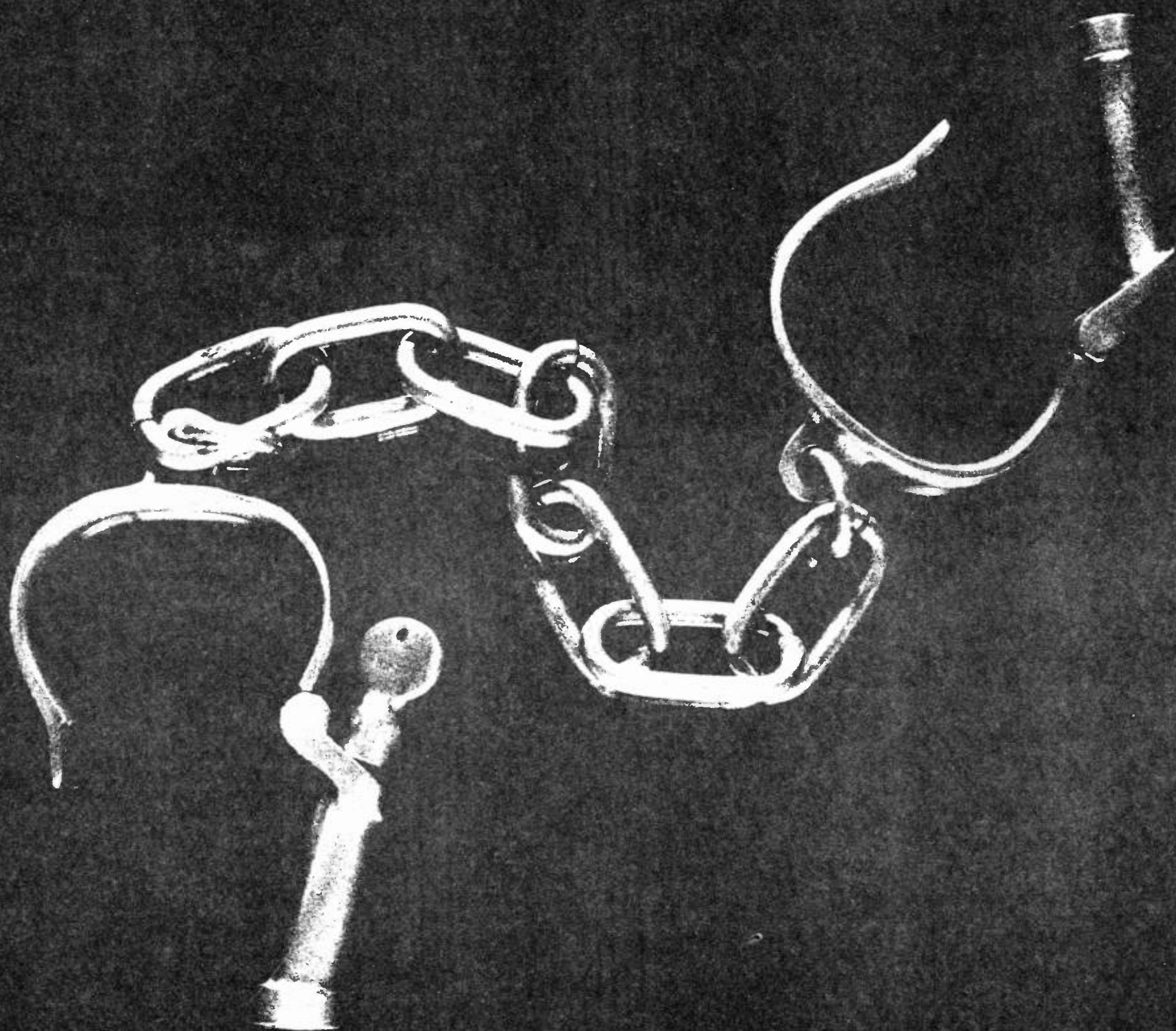
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4 NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE POLY · 5 GLASGOW FURY MURRAYS · 6 EDINBURGH · 7 ABERDEEN VENUE
8 DUNDEE DANCE FACTORY · 10 BIRMINGHAM BURBERRY'S · 11 WOLVERHAMPTON POLY
12 LIVERPOOL POLY · 13 MANCHESTER INTERNATIONAL · 14 HULL HUMBERSIDE F.E.
16 NORTHAMPTON OLD FIVE BELLS · 17 BRISTOL BIER KELLER · 18 COVENTRY POLY · 19 DERBY BLUENOTE
20 SCUNTHORPE BATH HALL · 21 LONDON ASTORIA ·
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PHOTO: NICK WHITE

BB King: Gavin Martin meets the guitar god who can only get it together to play 438 nights a year. PAGE 20



PHOTO: NICK WHITE

POLAND: Łódź of fun with the string-crunching apocalypse of **Membranes** and solid Leg (end) Walensa. Gdansk away the heartaches! PAGE 34

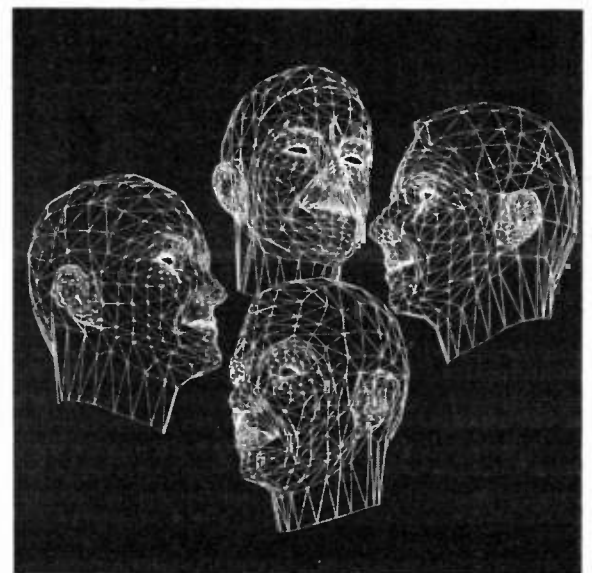


God Told Me To Do It: scam, scandal and commie graphics. PAGE 5



PHOTO: BLEDDYN BUTCHER

James Herbert: The horror, the horror! Will *Rats* writer Jim set his bristling brat pack on the oven-ready genitals of William Leith? PAGE 18



Kraftwerk: showroom dummies turned reluctant sex objects, in cafe conversations with Dessa Fox. PAGE 36



Radar's wild year begins with Tom Waits in *Down By Law*: Bill Forman meets the tab-chewing barboy of Jim Jarmusch's new movie. PAGE 12

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THE FIRST Glasgow Jazz Festival, featuring some of the genre's top names, is now scheduled to take place from June 26 to July 5.

A spokesperson for the Greater Glasgow Tourist Board, who are promoting what they hope will become an annual international event, told **NME**:

"Glasgow used to be one of Britain's great jazz areas and we intend to restore it to its rightful place on the jazz calendar once more. Full details of the festival will be announced later this month, but I can tell you that the event will encompass gigs not only at major venues such as the Conference Centre, Theatre Royal and Citizens' Theatre but also at clubs and pubs. We've been wanting to put on such an event for a long time now but because we wanted to include the pub circuit, we had to wait until we could get some of the licensing laws changed in order to make it all possible. Now that's been done and everything is going ahead."

SECOND MAN DIES

'MALE STRIPPER'

keyboardist and songwriter Miki Zone died in New York City last week, of spinal meningitis, aged 25.

Zone's group, Man 2 Man, are the leading 'Eurobeat' artists in the UK, and their stripping single, credited with Man Parrish, has been in the UK Top 100 for several months. Man 2 Man played at Heaven in London on December 20, but when the group returned to NYC for Christmas Zone was immediately admitted to hospital, where he died. Another keyboard player in the group, Michael Rejinski, died at Boy George's house earlier in 1986. That death, coming amidst the Boy George drugs turore in the media, was widely publicised in the tabloid press.

DAVE GOES SOLO

THE DAVE HOWARD

SINGERS have slimmed down to its original line-up — of one! The group (?) now features solo Dave Howard on Acetone organ, vocals and beatbox and can be seen throughout January on the 'It Doesn't Cut Like A Knife' tour, calling at Nottingham Garage (15), Birmingham Mermaid (16), Newcastle Riverside (20), Brighton Richmond (21), Bristol Moon Club (24) and London ICA (28). The last gig is part of the latest ICA Rock Week.

Howard goes into the studio in February to record the band's debut album and, according to far-fetched rumours, will *not* be appearing opposite Anthony Perkins in the filming of *Psycho IV*.

PSYCHIC TV are releasing a series of 23 live albums over the next 23 months, which they describe as a "documental project" of the history of the band.

Each album will be a limited edition of between 3,000 and 5,000 copies and the first nine will include a "hyperdelic voucher". Collect all nine and you can get the tenth album free, as it will not be on general release. Psychic TV claim to have recorded every gig they have ever played and if all concerts are made available on vinyl, it won't please the bootleggers.

BURDEN OF DREAMS

Russian film director ANDREI TARKOVSKY died of cancer in Paris last week, aged 54. His last film *The Sacrifice*, opens at the Lumiere Cinema in London on Friday. NICK COLEMAN looks back over the man's quarter of a century in movies.

A CLOSE FRIEND insists that *Mirror* is the film he hates most in the world. It's not that he thinks it's a bad film — "can't tell, don't care" — or that it is in any way pornographic — there is no 'sex' or 'violence' — he just hates it. He tells me through blackened brows that he felt savaged by it; overrun and made too vulnerable by the way its massy images and rhythms rolled him back into the nightmares of his childhood. There was no catharsis for him. Just a desire for it to stop. The word he uses to describe it is 'disgusting'.

It is a lugubrious film and a damp one full of spectres of things you half remember. Made in 1974, it's an autobiographical piece about the memory of growing up in a Russian province during Stalin's reign. *Mirror* is one of my favourite films. To me, it is a good dream.

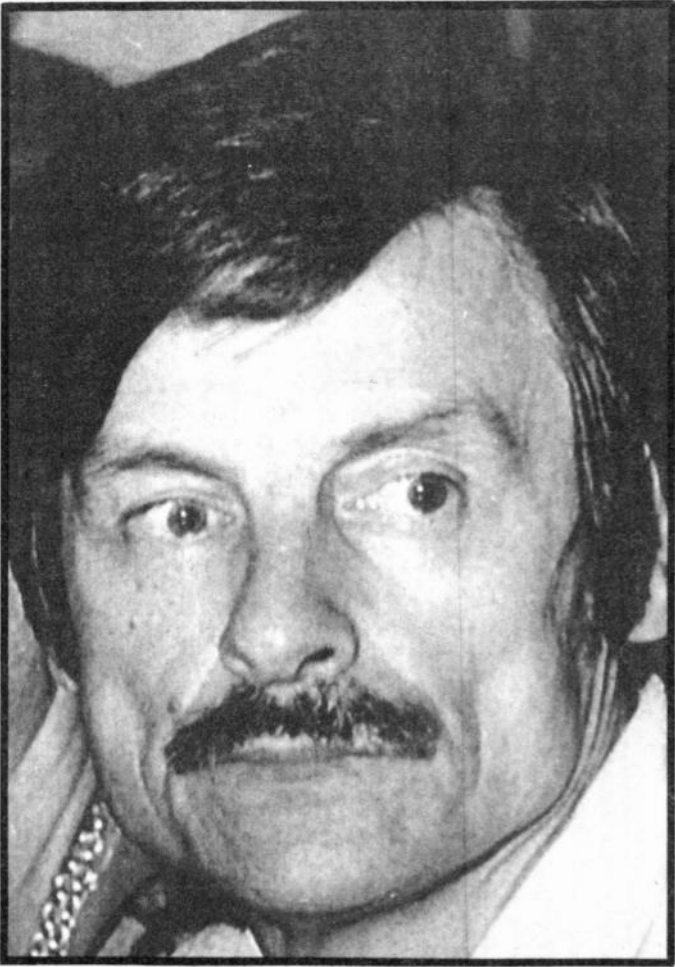
Tarkovsky would have probably accepted both reactions with earnest relish. The point of art, he would insist, is to reconnect people with those things about themselves that have been buried by the excessive materialism of existence, the life which consumes you even as you consume it. Communist or capitalist. Tarkovsky was that anomalous and unpopular thing: a late-20th century metaphysician.

A graduate of the Soviet State Film School, his first feature, *Ivan's Childhood* (1962), won the Golden Lion at Venice, while *Andrei Roublev*

(1966) carried off the International Critics' Prize at Cannes. The latter is a monster of a film, tracing the passage of a doubting icon painter across medieval Russia to his spiritual (and secular) redemption. *Roublev* is certainly portentous and ponderous, but it clearly marked out the ground-rules of his rhythmic style with all the sombre resolution of a tolling bell.

Mirror followed *Solaris* (1972 — a high-brow sci-fi film crippled by pretension and the sort of acid-trip effects you giggle at in *Star Trek*) before *Stalker's* pilgrim's progress into The Zone bleakly began in the '80s and ended the director's Soviet life. He went into self-imposed European exile without his family — a desperately difficult thing to do, he said, especially for a Russian. He was not a dissident. He simply couldn't get on with the Soviet authorities who found his films only suitable for export.

Nostalgia (1983) was made in Italy and took full advantage of the new location to overlay the familiar rites of drenched male asceticism with a veil of renaissance sensuality. Italian actress Domiziana Giordano and some exquisitely dilapidated old churches dominated the dream. It's a confused film, but one that admits sexuality and visual softness into a metaphysical centrefield that had hitherto been the exclusive preserve of



Tarka the auteur

shriven, saintly men and boys. In some sense *Nostalgia* is only the ante-chapel to the big cathedral, *The Sacrifice* (reviewed page 14).

Tarkovsky's films *never* confuse religiousness with Religion. It's impossible not to reflect on the possibility that only an artist born into a system that has no official state religion could recognise and articulate that disjuncture — a thing Westerners find difficult because of the continued association of organised religion with political power.

Stylistically, he was also highly original — possibly too much so to be much of an influence in any broad sense. The hallmark of that style is a preoccupation with poetic rhythm — a thing he would develop with minutely choreographed long takes; a so-called internal rhythm that owes little to the traditional rhythmic conventions of editing and narrative structure. Tarkovsky, like his father, was a poet. That and the fact that he seemed incapable of artistic compromise is the way he will be remembered.

PAUL WELLER and **Mic Talbot** will be making an appearance at the Action Against Aids benefit at London's Barbican Centre on January 26. The Communards headline the event, which also features new chart stars Erasure. Tickets are on sale now, priced £9.50, £8.50 and £7.50.

RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD?

SHAM 69's much publicised return was marred when the old Sham army caused a rumpus outside London's Limelight club, scene of the reunion gig shortly before Christmas. According to one source, about 59 fans were refused admission because their mode of dress and tries rush the doormen and get in see the 'ersham boys without paying. The management were forced to lock the door leaving many legitimate ticketholders outside — and call the police.

The group went ahead with the show, although the club was less than full, and the unruly element outside was dispersed by the boys in blue. A spokesman for the Limelight said: "It was a nightmare. It was quite obvious the crowd outside were coming for more than a good time, you'd think these people would have grown out of that sort of thing. It's at least four years since Sham were their heroes."

"The sad thing is that many genuine punters could not get in because we had no option but to close the doors."

ZTT/ISLAND DEADLOCK

ZANG TUUM TUMB's four day court attempt to free themselves from a marketing and distribution deal with Island failed when they were told to "maintain the status quo".

Judge John Finlay QC directed an early hearing for a full trial of the case, but recommended that the companies adopt a business-as-usual stance until the dispute was heard in full. ZTT claimed that a distribution agreement dating from March, 1983, was no longer valid, and Island were of the opinion that the deal still had a year to run.

JUDAS ON TRIAL

JUDAS PRIEST have found themselves in Ozzy Osborne territory and have been ordered by an American judge to stand trial over an incident involving two youths in a shotgun suicide pact. Details are still fairly vague (the band's record company were on holiday at the time of going to press), but a Hollywood news agency claims the two unnamed youths shot each other after listening to a Priest album for six solid hours. One youth died and the other was seriously injured. Their mothers are claiming the music induced them to take their lives. A similar incident involving Ozzy Osborne was recently thrown out of court.



Going courting: Judas Priest's Rob Halford

thrills!

EDITED BY ALAN JACKSON

THE WRATH OF GOD



'THE VOICE Of The AIDS Generation', 'The Ayatollahs Of Rock', 'The First Band Of The '80s' . . . introducing God Told Me To Do It. But forget about music for a short while, 'cause the overwhelming thing about God (as their fans affectionately call them) is the graphics—bizarre and provocative, they are instant collages involving current issues (AIDS, crack, etc) that thump home in the same way as the work of Jamie Reid.

The band have signed a lucrative deal with the largest pop T-shirt production company before even *thinking* about vinyl. It's an unusual move, but one that's worked—the shirts are selling in their thousands. The only trouble is that—due to their "outrageous" nature—many shops are refusing to stock them. There's even been talk of an outright ban. In a recent article headlined "Ghastly Gimmick", *The Sunday Sport* slammed the group for their 'Crucifox' design which shows a nude, crucified Sam Fox.

God (Sean—vocals; Bug—drums; Bill—bass; Animal MC—guitar) are vehemently anti-press and refused to speak to me (*How original—Ed*). But John Travis, manager and mentor, had his say: "We were very impressed with *The Sunday Sport*. What a ludicrous paper—we had to be in it. The 'Crucifox' shirt is merely a joke

Yet another great swindle or divine intervention? Through hardcore and graphic thrust Beatle-bashers **GOD TOLD ME TO DO IT** (aka The AIDS Pistols) channel their anger against, er . . . modern evil. **RICHARD NORTH** reports on the gospel according to a thousand T-shirts.

at Sam Fox's expense. She is England, the public image. The youth of this country aspire to her. Can you think of a better target?"

GTMTDI are no strangers to scam and scandal. This is the group who a few months ago uncovered and publicised The Beatles' infamous 'Enoch And Roll' tapes. Recorded at Abbey Road in 1969 they feature the fab four singing a selection of their hits, but with slightly altered lyrics (eg. "I don't dig no Pakistanis taking all the people's jobs/Get back to where you once belonged").

Is this for real?

"Yeah we were given the tapes by a studio engineer," explains Travis. "We publicised them in retaliation for McCartney recording 'Ebony And Ivory'! It's just The Beatles being stupid hippies. They're out of their heads

thinking that they're being really funny. Paul McCartney had the gall to deny writing those lyrics in a *Rolling Stone* interview. He gave a trendy, Lefty excuse about how they understood the plight of the Asian community. Bah!"

GTMTDI are also the people who squatted in the Libyan embassy last year. This confused the authorities, who didn't know whether to praise them, ignore them or tow them away. They eventually left quietly, unwilling to be associated with the prevalent anti-Gadaffi sentiment of the time.

But enough of this. What's the music like? Why are you "the first band of the '80s"?

"We're the first band to revel in the '80s, we wallow in every bit of shit going. In the past you've had people like Grandmaster Flash moaning about the big city. Well we live there and we like it. We don't knock the shit, we bring it out and use it. In the '70s you had the Sex Pistols, in the '80s you've got us . . . the AIDS Pistols."

God are currently in the studio working with the guitarist from the best English hardcore band, The Stupids. The music is a fusion of thrash and hip-hop. "We rap where other MC's fear to tread," John boasts. Vinyl results will be heard when they've chosen one of the several companies that are "interested". Until then, get yourself a T-shirt.

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Portly Paul

The flying fingers of **STANLEY JORDAN** point to a revolution in jazz guitar. **MARK SINKER** dials the man who's fearsomely covered 'The Sound Of Silence'.

AFTER ALL this time and too much talk, guitar folds itself into a joke, the kind of object that indie purists, metal rednecks and *Musicians Only* readers hold in shared veneration. Some people have realised this, turned the joke back on itself—Derek Bailey, obviously, along with Eddie Van Halen and the

then I probably would have gone out and gotten a job and I don't know where I'd be right now. But what I was able to do was take the frustrations and channel all that energy into the music. So that even when it was difficult, when I listen to the music I feel that it's somehow *together*, because I was giving it my all."

Well, he's a believer: he believes in guitar, he believes in Jazz, he believes in the way his revolutionary technique is opening up possibilities. He'd just be a craftsman solving obscure problems if he didn't have an uncanny penetration of the pop angle to things. 'Standards Volume One', just released, is the kind of

A DEFINITE case of one over the festive eight in the *Thrills* graphology department. The illegible signature and "Peace and Love To You" message that won such a glowing testimony from handwriting expert Gloria Hargreaves in *NME's* Christmas edition turns out to be from the hand of American soul veteran Curtis Mayfield, *not* this week's cover star Paul Weller. Which is

good news for Mr Mayfield, as Gloria defines him as gentle and delightful, tolerant and genial, responsive and highly creative... as well as a practical joker blessed with psychic powers. And it's good news for Paul as well, for he'd been wrongly named as the owner of a political list well to the starboard. Straight up PW, we never believed it could be you for a minute.

REACH OUT AND TOUCH



Decoding Society's Vernon Reid—but Stanley Jordan turned the object itself on its back and pretended it was a piano. This way he wrings swirls of counterpoised sound out from the most unlikely material. His debut LP for Blue Note, 'Magic Touch', topped the Billboard Jazz charts for 51 weeks, a record-breaking run.

Like most guitar or keyboard players, he's far too caught up in the manual science of playing to be much of a propagandist for himself: too used to translating imagination to fingers, not enough to lips. Maybe, or else it's just that my phone-call caught him asleep, and he hasn't warmed up to the kind of gob-flash that makes the good interviews. But if he isn't animated, he's amiable.

"My first album—which is not in print right now, an album I did on my own label, in 1982, 'Touch Sensitive'—came at a very difficult time in my life... there were so many things going wrong and I had a lot of problems in my basic living situation. Making the album really felt like I was playing for my life. I mean, if the album didn't get done,

thing to get him in trouble with the Wynton Marsalis House UnJazz Activities Committee, because he does a cover version of a Simon & Garfunkel song; a man who can invest 'The Sound Of Silence' with weight and delicacy, with depth and maybe a bit of fear, is someone whose fingers are worth following. He knows he's not all the way there—for all his broad success, he's hardly scratched the surface of the hard stuff he could deal out—that he's still astonishing potential wasted on minor material. Maybe it's strategic populism—he's no idiot.

"I feel that the real topic of music is so vast that none of us have a right to tell anyone else what they should do, and how they should present themselves. The tragedy is not that Michael Jackson makes so much more than Ornette Coleman, the tragedy is that Ornette Coleman has trouble finding a gig. Great music should not go unrecognized. I think the thing is not to lash out at those who are doing well, but to make sure you support the ones who need to be heard."



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DPA

A PAIR OF BURN'T EARS

STAN BRENNAN is the man who invented The Pogues. **JANE SOLANAS** nips into his world.

"FOR A lot of people in the music business, the idea of doing a nine to five job is just anathema. It's not laziness, or stupid I'm-an-artist crap. You just can't help it. You couldn't sit in a bank and work all day. Rock'n'roll is too important to make a pretence out of it."

At 36, Stan Brennan's rock'n'roll CV is broad: singer, record shop assistant, record shop owner, band manager, gig promoter, record producer and label entrepreneur.

"Longevity is a lot to do with it in this business, because if you can last, if you can stick around, you'll probably make it. . ."

About 10 years ago, in the first winter of punk, Brennan was freezing his bum off in Soho market running Rocks Off, a record stall. Though little more than a tin shack, it stocked all the first punk singles and was an important meeting place for the nucleus of London punks. Through Captain Sensible, Brennan and his then partner Phil Gaston became managers of the Johnny Moped Band.

"Management is so like nannying. You do everything but, and sometimes including, wiping their noses for them. Groups are just so fucking hopeless!"

Johnny Moped, who at one point had the punk Chrissie Hynde in their line-up, were perhaps the best live band of that era. But off-stage they were in chaos and gave their managers the boot. Shortly afterwards, Brennan had a far more cosmic experience. He met Shane MacGowan in the Roxy club toilets. Despite MacGowan's obnoxious reputation for drinking, gobbing and mayhem, Brennan swiftly discovered that Shane was not the Punk village idiot. When he saw The Nipple Erectors perform, Brennan was struck by Shane's talent and potential: "I don't think I've ever had it before or since. I knew that I was in the presence of something special. . .". Brennan and Gaston put all their energy and money ("The widow's mite!") into trying to break The Nips, setting up their own record label, Soho, and released three Nips singles.

These singles are, as a result of The Pogues' cult, now collector's items—an irony, considering that Soho was funded by Rocks Off's revenue from selling rare records. But though it had the potential to become a great little label (putting out The Jets and The Passions' first singles, plus The Inmates' 'Dirty Water' hit), Soho just couldn't



PHOTO: DEREK RIDGERS

make it economically and was forced to close.

Brennan remained intensely loyal to Shane MacGowan, however, being instrumental in getting the Pogue Mahone concept rolling. He did a one-off single deal with The Pogues and hawked their first single around every major record label. Only Stiff Records, with its characteristic spirit of adventure, took the bait. Brennan produced The Pogues' first album, but was edged out of further collaboration as Shane's world shifted from the parochial to the commercial.

In August 1985, Brennan set up his own label, Media Burn, signing many of the bands he had put on at a series of gigs in a small (now defunct) pub in Kings Cross, the best known of which are the Sting-Rays. With its propensity for signing garage bands like The Wigs, Bad Karma Beckons and The X-Men, and its excellent psychobilly compilation album 'Meltdown', Media Burn has got itself a reputation as a British 'trash' label, something which Brennan is not too keen to exploit. Ideally, he sees the label as the logical extension of the Soho project, with a catalogue of eclectic but highly accessible young bands who, because of the strictures of the major record labels, would perhaps never get beyond beer money and the popularity of their faithful live audiences. Unlike 'Soho', 'Media Burn' has achieved its aim of producing and putting out product at a far lower cost than the industry would have us punters believe possible.

In the era of the mega-star, the compact disc, the flashy video—the blind faith in style over content, it's a relief to know that careers based on integrity and sheer love of popular music can exist and prosper amidst all that dubious dross. Stan Brennan, a name to remember.

N.B. Rocks Off record shop, and the Media Burn label, are at 36 Hanway Street, London W.1



"I've just remembered what I was doing when I heard that John Lennon had been shot. I was trying to remember what I'd been doing when I heard that John F. Kennedy had been shot."

RYBONHALLBO

ART-NOIZE crazies were appalled this week to learn that NY avant-punkers Spotty Youth had been battered to death in a bizarre love-triangle incident.

Spotty Youth (Thursday Bore, Kim Moron, Lee, Renaldo and Clara the Amazing Child Drummer) had built their cult reputation round a storm of no-wave post-funk feedback: their thin and gorgeous bodies would writhe in the all-American erotic blast of solid-body guitars fed into circular saws and then smashed with felt mallets, and their lyrics plugged into a strain of backwoods psychosis, as in the seminal 'I'm Inane': "Murdered-angel manson-groupie seeking-susan whore/Skipper-light fandango-turning circle-cross the floor/Driller-killer filler Marilyn-Moore/One-potato two-potato three-potato four. . ." Clearly they were forging a link between the likes of Glib Banker—who once wrote a symphonic work for 943 bass guitars without pickups—and first-generation

beatnik-rocker, dyke-poetess and all-round dirty-stopout Patti Tit, who taught them the value of the hyphen in art.

Soon after their notorious LP 'Bad Decision Replay', they changed their name to Maradonna Youth and put out 'Into The Goalie' (Fist First Records), a tribute to mid-fielder Diego Chihuahua. But a move to England proved too much for a nation still crushed and humiliated in what they will always consider their national sport (blatant cheating), and Youth quickly found themselves bound hand and foot, and dressed up as tabloid press cameramen. They were to be deported and delivered at the door of Chihuahua's live-in-lover, player-manager Sean Prick, who was known to be angry at some of their earlier singles, which he interpreted as predatory assaults on his personal relationship with Diego ('Kill Yr Husband' and later 'Expressway To Yr Wife'). He took one look at the massed lenses, and fatal fists began to fly.

BIGMOUTH STRIKES AGAIN

"Oh yeah, I've done acid a few times. But it was terrible, absolutely terrible! I did three courses of it, every one completely awful. I just curled up in the corner, completely wrapped up in myself with these terrible visions. Oh, it was the worst thing ever."

Andy Williams, *Blitz*

"My dad was laying concrete when I was born. He couldn't come in until it was set."

Norman Cook of The Housemartins (*Smash Hits*)

"I've boozed and taken drugs all my life. There's no drink I haven't drunk. I've taken every pill you can think of. I've smoked marijuana and swallowed enough mind-bending painkillers to sedate the town of Memphis. Oddly, I never liked cocaine."

Jerry Lee Lewis, *National Enquirer*

"He's funny and he's definitely eccentric. I think it takes a lot of courage in this day and age to be unashamedly eccentric when everyone is trying to be normal and glamorous and larger than life."

Suzanne Vega on Morrissey, *Q*

"I really could have been a brain surgeon because I was a very bright child."

Cilla Black, *Women's Own*

"Sade's a great one for not knowing who the hell you are. She didn't know who Pete Townshend was when he phoned up once. So when I told her I was Robert Elms of *The Face*—showing off—she hadn't heard of me. Soon after that, I moved in with her."

Robert Elms in Mark Bego's book *Sade*

"My mother would send me back to my room to put on some skirt and she'd always cross my legs but they'd wind open again."

Janet Jackson on her preference for trousers, *The Face*

"I read about Trident. You know it'll cost £500 million just for starters. . . and that's to kill people. On AIDS they spend £20 million to save people's lives."

Dave Allen at London's Albery Theatre

WICKED NUSKER DU

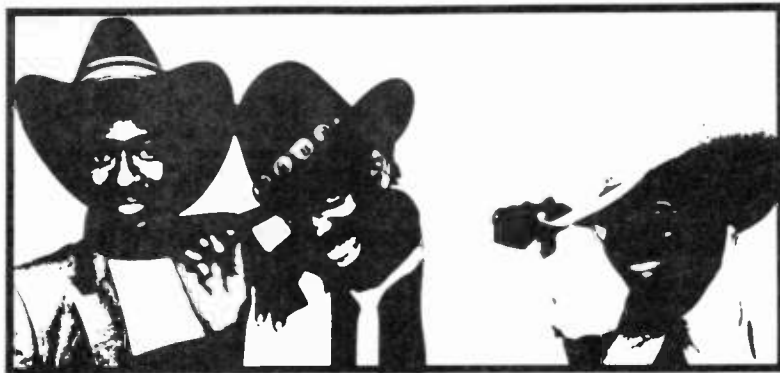
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ZIBBLE ZIBBLE DRIVE!



Hot on the heels of the Kershaw-encouraged Ted Hawkins revolution, THE OYSTER BAND — aggressive folk who are mega in Bangladesh — headline the English Roots Against Apartheid show. LEN BROWN steps outside with them.



PHOTO: IAN ANDERSON

OYSTERS AGAINST APARTHEID

SOUNDS! THERE'S not a beard or chunky jumper between 'em. Nor do they down their beers with fingers in their ears or burst into 60 verse ballads recalling the death of Old Dooley's goose. In fact, Ian Telfer and John Jones — songwriters and leading lights of The Oyster Band — strike me as unusually sane and forward thinking. It's no wonder they're front line statesmen of the latest English Folk revival; a movement which, stirred by Andy Kershaw's championing of such campfire crooners as Ted Hawkins and Michelle Shocked, receives a welcome showcase next Saturday (17) at London's Town & Country Club.

Fittingly the English Roots Against Apartheid bash will complete an important year for the Oysters. 1986 saw them crossover (with Billy Bragg's blessing) from the Merrie English folk scene into independent/rock playlists; saw them get aggressive by adding drummer Russell Lax; saw their favourably received album 'Step Outside' launch the Cooking Vinyl label; and ended with an eye-opening tour of India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

"Living in Western Europe you get the impression the whole world is full of Western pop music, but it's simply not true," says Ian (fiddle, sax, keyboards, hangover, East Scotland). "We were the first live performance of any kind of Western music for seven years in Bangladesh. We had an armed guard in our Dacca hotel in case anyone wanted to kidnap The Oyster Band."

"The last concert in Calcutta before us was Richie Havens and Wishbone Ash," reveals John (vocals, melodeon, glasses, earring, Huddersfield).

Although they're now big in Bangladesh, the Oyster Band still really haven't cracked their home market. Many of those who heard their summer-nonsense single 'Hal-an-Tow' may still regard them as traditionally folksy, but close aural examination of 'Step

Outside' reveals it to be an unusually tough platter of Oysters, mixing freshly arranged old folk songs ('Bold Riley', 'Molly Bond') with the self-penned social realism of 'Another Quiet Night In England' and 'The Day That The Ship Went Down'.

Ian: "The traditional songs, even if they're not ostensibly pieces of social criticism, they're still not official versions of social history. They're voices from the bottom of the ladder."

After 11 years in existence they greatly value their following in folk clubs and at folk festivals. But Telfer and Jones realise that the future lies in destroying the woolly clichéd image of English folk.

Where better to start than the "hottest ceilidh in town" — the English Roots Against Apartheid event will provide The Oyster Band with an opportunity to show its teeth.

John: "The idea's that anyone who's vaguely associated with Englishness or folkiness or rootsiness or whatever will come along and play or dance, have a damn good time and hopefully raise some money."

Ian: "If people get enough beer inside them it should be a cracker."

THE GAP BAND's music-by-numerals approach to the dancefloor has brought them steady success in Britain, most recently with the single 'Big Fun'. SIMON WITTER probes the gap between mainman ROBERT WILSON's ears and comes away with a message for the universe . . .

"WE WERE always known for doing the unexpected, and that's what we've done with 'Big Fun'."

The most unexpected thing about Robert Wilson is his notion of how the Gap Band are perceived. The title of the Wilson Brothers' new album, 'Gap Band VIII', certainly didn't take many people by surprise. Haven't they ever felt the desire to call an album something more evocative, like 'Under The Cherry Moon'?

"Believe it or not, you'll be seeing that change on 'IX'. It won't be called 'IX', it'll be called 'Straight From The Heart'."

For the first time in years the Gap Band are back in the limelight with 'Big Fun'. Hearing Robert talk about the very traditional, unsurprising album which spawned the hit, you sense a work masterplan far more routine and unadventurous than his fantasies would concede.

"With 'Gap Band VIII' we're trying to get back to the grass roots style of our early albums that we kinda got away from on 'VI' and 'VII'. We had so much success with 'I' to 'V' that it completely changed our motivation and we started getting into our own production and stuff."

"Now we're back with our producer Lonnie Simmons, who made all the decisions on the first four albums, and we've let him get back to being the spearhead in the studio. He's always looking into the future. Sometimes we don't even understand the directions he'll be going in but it turns out to be good for us."

The one really hot recent Gap album (not released here natch) was Charlie Wilson's P-Funky 'Billy And Baby Gap' project, featuring Gap keyboardist Billy Young and the mysterious Baby Gap.

"We were in Chicago and this kid jumped up on stage and started dancing, and everyone was really impressed. The next day we were packing to leave and the kid showed up at our hotel and wanted to leave with us. Obviously he couldn't just leave like that, so he brought his parents down and they gave their consent . . . and so he became Baby Gap."

But Robert is itching to get back to his own album.

"My favourite song — I know you didn't ask me but I'm gonna tell you anyway — is 'Get Funky, Get Loose'. The story line is "Zibble zibble zibble, get the money". It's not really saying a lot. It's one of those songs like 'Oops Upside Your

Head', but if you listen it is saying A LOT.

"Basically the message is to forget your worries and go for what you want, though it's a bit disguised. You had to really sit down and listen to 'Oops Upside Your Head', 'cos there was a deep message in that song. A lot of people didn't listen to it for the message . . . they listened for the groove and the chants."

Robert's world view never fails to amaze.

"The world's got very sophisticated now. People don't just buy records any more, they read the sleeve, find out who the players are and where it was recorded and mastered. They get into the story of what the album's all about. On the other hand, they have enough money to get the basic things — music, videos, clothes, cars, a place to live and an education."

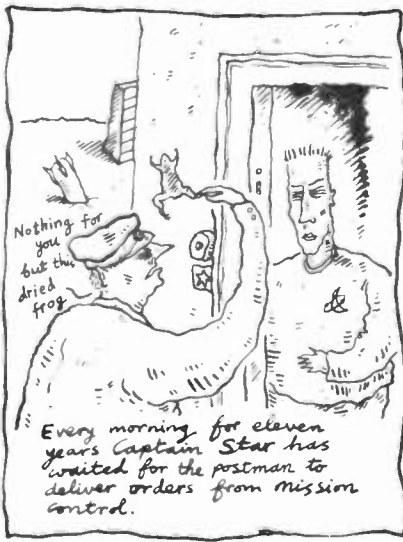
What? And where do the Gap Band fit into all of this anyway?

"We have more knowledge now, which increases our capacity to be successful. We've also grown up — we appreciate other people more."

Errr, no. I was thinking of your music. The very unsurprising Gap Band neither fits into the hip-hop, hard funk nor the very lucrative sub-Marvin Gaye market.

"We like to be just what our name is — the gap in the middle of that space between everything."

The Gap Band show will be passing through Britain ("a place we've been dying to come back to") around late March. Zibble, zibble, zibble . . .



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SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS

Run that tape, 'cos here comes SLAUGHTER JOE! Give us a bit more slagging of the Mary Chain, Joe . . . "OK . . ." DAVID QUANTICK keeps an ear's length from the Creation baddie who's back on vinyl. Slaughter pick: CHRIS CLUNN.

LIFE IS often dull, and popular music even more so generally. In the tight ranks of the music business, in the forced grins of post-Live Aid rock, we have a horrid community of false chums.

Their conversation is as bland as their music, and they are as prepared to make an entertaining record as they are to bare their souls to the world. Admittedly, there are always a few ex-comrades of Prince ready to give their former employer a sound drubbing in public, but to listen to folk in popular music talk these days, you would think that they had all been sharing drugs backstage at Woodstock.

So let's hear it for Joe Foster, director of Creation Records and recording artiste extraordinaire as Slaughter. Joe has just released his new single on Creation, 'She's So Out Of Touch', and it's great, a noisy mixture of melody and loud guitars and bits of the '60s. With its b-sides—the old folk tune 'I Know You Rider', once done (unreleased) by The Byrds and, er, The Grateful Dead, and the snappily-titled 'The Lonesome Death Of Thurston Moore'—it is a single firmly in the Creation tradition of post-psychedelic, post-trash pop, a good bit of loudness. I would recommend that you buy it.

Yet for some reason, we talk but little of 'Out Of Touch'. These are the post-modern 1980s, and so we talk about the music business, and Creation, and its best-known former signing, The Jesus And Mary Chain. In fact, we talk inordinately about The Jesus And Mary Chain.

Sample; "The media never caught on to the thing with the Mary Chain which was *young boys in leather trousers*. They never caught on to the obvious inference . . . I'm not saying anything else, I'm just saying there's an obvious inference to be drawn."

Sample again; "Can you really picture Alan McGhee getting rid of anybody 'cos a couple of illiterate idiots from East Kilbride tell him to?"

There is a famous legend about Joe Foster and The Jesus And Mary Chain, you see. It goes like this; when Creation impresario Alan McGhee was on holiday once, the Mary Chain used to phone the office, where they would have to speak to Joe. Eventually they grew tired of him and, the famous legend has it, Jim Reid said to Alan McGhee, "Alan, the next time I phone this office, I do not want to hear Joe Foster's voice." So Joe Foster vanished temporarily from Creation. But now the Mary Chain are gone from the label and Joe is back.

AT ONE time, of course, The Jesus And Mary Chain were seen as so important a part of Creation records that they almost *were* it. They exemplified a lot of things that were good about the label; its snottiness, its garagey ethic.

One wonders if they were a big part of things.

"Not as large a part as they'd like to think. They were very keen on being on Creation, then when they became a little bit famous, they seemed to think that the whole vibe of the label was attributable to them. It was completely the other way about; the ideas came from me and Alan. The Mary Chain seem to be very much into Stalinism. Rewriting the past. And I think there was an attempt to turn me into Mr. Trotsky and expunge me from the history of the revolution. Unfortunately they're not very clever . . ."

I wonder what this legendary Creation ethic (one finds it difficult in these times to say "vibe") might be. After all, there's been a

lot of awful bands on Creation, and many of their records sound much like any other naff indie single with a cheap, albeit loud, production and a couple of half-baked melodies. Joe, natch, is having none of this. For him, his young friends are not '60s rejects with disfunctional Rickenbackers.

"I want people with vision. I don't want people who'll keep their day jobs. It's *rock'n'roll* . . . that underlies what we do, but for God's sake it's better than to be one of these anorak bands, going 'it's just a hobby, it's not rock'n'roll'. Fuck off!! It's rubbish! They all wish they were in big groups. It's like all those awful women like Elkie Brooks, in early '70s blues bands, who swear undying love to the British blues scene, then as soon as you pull out the major contract, it's on with the Marks and Spencers corset and the Shirley Bassey frock, away doing ballads. You could grab one of these anorak bands tomorrow and say 'I've got 22 grand for you'. They'll say right, what do you want us to play? And that'll be it. They're all totally rubbish."

IT IS perhaps needless to say that Joe holds other independent labels in similar disregard to their artistes. Joe feels that Creation has received adverse comment from the competitors and that they have little to boast about themselves. He doesn't quite put it like that, mind.

"All these interviews in fanzines with

anorak bands, they always write about me and Alan as if we're the inventors of capitalism, as if we're directly responsible for *apartheid*, but *they're* all managed by the lowest scum sharks in the music industry, they're being ripped off by the lowest scum in the music business and *they* call *us* capitalists. None of these labels pay mechanical royalties, and that is actually illegal . . . if you make a record, you have to pay the composer a mechanical royalty and it's not very much, about a penny a record, but they don't."

He pauses. "I think we should slag the Mary Chain a bit more, 'cos I hate them." And away we go.

"Basically, half the reason we got *really* fed up with them was 'cos we got fed up with Jim Reid playing Mike Yarwood being Lou Reed. The guy's from a fucking village. Going to Glasgow for the Mary Chain was like going to Hollywood! You're talking about yokels, fucking straw in their hair . . . And their latest recordings are produced by the guy who produced The Pet Shop Boys. They make The Shop Assistants sound like Motorhead . . . *bland*! And the whole claim that they invented their own sound is rubbish. It was created by me, and Alan said it wasn't extreme enough and remixed it and pushed it up. It wasn't them. And all the feedback sound they had at the time was because they didn't know how to work their fucking amplifiers . . ."



Slaughterhouse jive: Joe (right) and a couple of his horror mask props.

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son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the radar.

Long-time cig-chomper, piano man and barfly TOM WAITS has just made another cinema appearance, in *Down By Law*, directed by JIM JARMUSCH. BILL FOREMAN interviews director and star about the mechanics of black and white moviemaking and how to succeed as the Prince of Melancholy.

"SORRY I wasn't around earlier, I was, uh, bitten by a rattlesnake."

The corrugated voice and hyperactive imagination belong to Tom Waits, a man whose talent for free-association could send a herd of psychiatrists back to their textbooks. Seahorses, bad reputations, motel suites, spies, condensation, men's assistance centres, high fashions and low, low prices all swim amicably in Wait's stream of consciousness, but he's aware that reality can be less colourful.

"That's why people make up these little stories, in order to escape into them sometimes," says the acclaimed song-writer now actor. "You become impatient with your life and so you find these little places where you can move people around, change their names and, you know, alter things a little bit."

In *Down By Law*, Waits finds himself in the position of his own characters, delegating a measure of his free will to 33-year-old writer/director Jim Jarmusch. Cast in the role of Zach, a down-and-out DJ, Waits winds up in a Louisiana prison cell with a pimp (played by Lounge Lizards leader John Lurie, who also starred in Jarmusch's *Stranger Than Paradise*) and a wide-eyed tourist (played by Italian comedian Roberto Benigni).

The prematurely silver-haired Jarmusch says the characters are based on the actors themselves, but only to a limited extent.

"I try to take things from my perception of their personality—which may not always be right—and put it into the character," says Jarmusch. "But I also try to eliminate parts of their personality that don't fit the character. So it's never like, okay, this is a role where John Lurie can just be John Lurie. It doesn't work that way. John Lurie has to suppress certain parts of his personality that don't fit the character."

"It's obvious in the case of Tom Waits that the character he portrays is not really Tom Waits. It's Zach, it's someone that has different obsessions and different

responses to people. But there is a strong element of Tom Waits in that character. It was actually Tom's idea that he should play a DJ. In my first draft, I had him as an unemployed musician, but I always felt that was too close to Tom, and so did he."

"I've been making fun of those guys for years," says Waits in reference to Lee Baby Sims, his character Zach's on-air handle. "Lee Baby Sims is a real guy that I used to hear in Rapid City. He's one of those kinda gypsy DJs that moves around a lot. Those guys live like Fuller Brushmen, change their name, leave town, set up somewhere else, live in hotels. So it's just a voice from my youth I remember."

"I like the way Jim approaches filmmaking," says Tom of the director, who, unlike Jarmusch's friends Susan Seidelmen and Alex Cox, keeps his set closed to visitors. "I consider Jim more a lonesome filmmaker than an independent filmmaker. Lonesome Jim Jarmusch." Tom laughs. "It's a real social activity, so you really have to be simple-minded about what you want. Reorganising details of behaviour—it's a pretty insane thing to be doing, I guess."

Waits is not entirely a social animal himself, and admits to trusting few people apart from his wife (Kathleen Brennan, with whom he writes songs) when he comes to full collaborations. His previous film appearances (in *The Cotton Club*, *Rumble Fish*, *The Outsiders*, *Wolfen* and *Paradise Alley*) were mostly limited to a few lines, and he remembers being real nervous and wanting to back out of *Down By Law*. But once on location in New Orleans, Waits regained his confidence. "It was Dr Sullen [Waits' name for Jarmusch], Bob Angeles [Benigni], the Great Complainer [Lurie], and I'm the Prince of Melancholy. For me, it was like once we got there, it started to feel like something was gonna happen, you know?"

DR SULLEN and the Prince of Melancholy met, by Jarmusch's recollection, at a going away party for John Lurie on the eve of a Lounge Lizards European tour.

"It was put on by this friend of ours who was a painter, and he invited a lot of people like Andy Warhol and Bianca Jagger. And Wim Wenders was there, because he was in town and we told him to come. [Jarmusch apprentices with the German filmmaker on *Lightning Over Water*, while *Down By Law* director of photography



Prince Tom and his doiby.



Waits and Lurie (background) have to content themselves with beans on toast . . .

Robby Muller has worked on several other Wender films.) I don't really much enjoy that kind of thing with celebrities hanging around. I'm still kind of shy, and Tom seemed to be sort of in a corner also. And I just kind of ended up being in that corner with him."

The director recalls mixed first impressions of his future star. "He was sort of shy and guarded, and yet had an incredible sense of humour. His use of language, just in conversation, is really amazing."

Jarmusch, who was already a fan of Waits' music, was soon to be impressed by this acting. The director raves about Waits and his wife's theatrical production, *Frank's Wild Years*, which he saw three times during its run in Chicago, and says he was impressed by Waits' grace in subtly unfolding the character of Zach in *Down By Law*.

"We form an impression of him at the beginning that we slowly let go of by the end of the film, because we know that character differently. And I think that, as an actor, that's something very delicate and not so easy to do."

Jarmusch suggests that the contradictions in Waits' character Zach, a DJ

who doesn't like to talk but does it for a living, remind him of the artist himself. "He's contradictory in certain ways. I mean, his personality is very strong and his opinions and thinking are very clear, but he's very careful before he responds to something. He thinks things through before he says what he feels about something. But he can also have a hot temper."

"He's somebody who's very tough and very gentle at the same time. He doesn't really stop between those two poles. He's always shifting back and forth between them. It makes me like him a lot."

Jarmusch says he personally feels more comfortable with musicians than film people, a preference that dates back to hanging around New York clubs like CBGB's, catching shows by the Rotating Power Tools (who would become the Lounge Lizards) and Talking Heads (for whom he would direct *The Lady Don't Mind* some ten years later). The director tried his own hand at music in a band called the Del Byzanteens, who released an EP and album on Britain's Beggars' Banquet. "I played keyboards and vocals and did some kind of strangely-tune guitar playing," he recalls. "The keyboards were often tapes treated through synthesizers—very crude

Dr Sullen and the silent DJ.

Down on the Bayou.

stuff . . . The band kinda took a strange turn and was less interesting when we did our album, and I don't think it worked very well. But the EP I still like." Jarmusch and one former Byzanteen are planning to record another EP, which promises to sound like "Bo Diddley goes to Istanbul or something."

As for Waits, he's rearranging songs from *Frank's Wild Years* for an upcoming album, trying to make them work on their own without visual assistance. "It's hard to get them to all walk around in the same shoes," says Tom, "so it's all in one piece and consistently mad in its own way."

AFTER GRAPPLING for the right word, Jeffrey Lyons and Michael Medved, the unfortunate filmcrit duo from America's Public Broadcasting Service, decided "goofy" was really the only word to describe *Down By Law*. This of course comes from the same mouths that pronounced *Blue Velvet* "putrid", and joyfully suggested you dress up before going to see the Cannon Films version of *Othello*. The pair also warned that many *Down By Law* scenes are just too long.

But those of us less concerned with wearing tuxedos to opera films will appreciate Jarmusch's talent for taking a scene to the point where it appears played out, and then going considerably further to reach unpredictably marvellous results. His pacing, combined with his spectacular use of black and white film in both *Stranger* and *Down By Law*, has made Jarmusch the sort of director pop film critics like to call "offbeat". And while he frequently devises "oblique strategies" (like having every scene in *Stranger Than Paradise* be a single shot) that gives his work an original style, there is much about his films that has, despite the minimalism, a classical feel.

"All of my films take place in that present, but they have a look that suggests other decades, and that's certainly intentional," Jarmusch acknowledges. "Hopefully they make it not that obvious to the audience, so they just slip into it as an imaginary world that is not very obviously taking place right now. I mean, black and white does that by nature for people. And I'm certainly not interested in the current TV language of editing, that kind of rhythm of films and language of close-ups that tells you, 'This is dramatic, so now we have a close-up'."

"*Down By Law* doesn't fit into a *Miami Vice* style of filmmaking, this kind of MTV disease that seems to be infiltrating everything. "So we can assume Jarmusch doesn't confer regularly with Michael Mann."

"Well, see, I'm not saying that that's garbage. It's just not my style. I couldn't make a film that way, because I don't think that way. So people who do work that way, I don't look down on them or feel that my way is better. But I'm not about to imitate their way because it doesn't come naturally."

"It does annoy me also," he admits, "because I think that when you watch that style of film, you're being treated as though your attention span is only six seconds long. I think that's condescending to the audience."

"It's not that I don't like things that are quick cut, because there are lots of great filmmakers that use that style, especially the early Soviet film directors like Eisenstein and Vertof. They use that machine gun style of editing sometimes that's really effective, really beautiful. It's just how you employ things."

Though less radical in its departure from film convention than *Stranger Than Paradise*, Jarmusch's "prison film" was subjected to its own set of oblique strategies. There are no cutaway shots and, in an effort to keep audiences from associating with any single character, there are also no point of view shots. In order to keep all his characters within the frame and in focus, Jarmusch relied almost exclusively on a 25-millimetre lens, the same type used by Japanese director Ozu, whose regimented camera techniques so

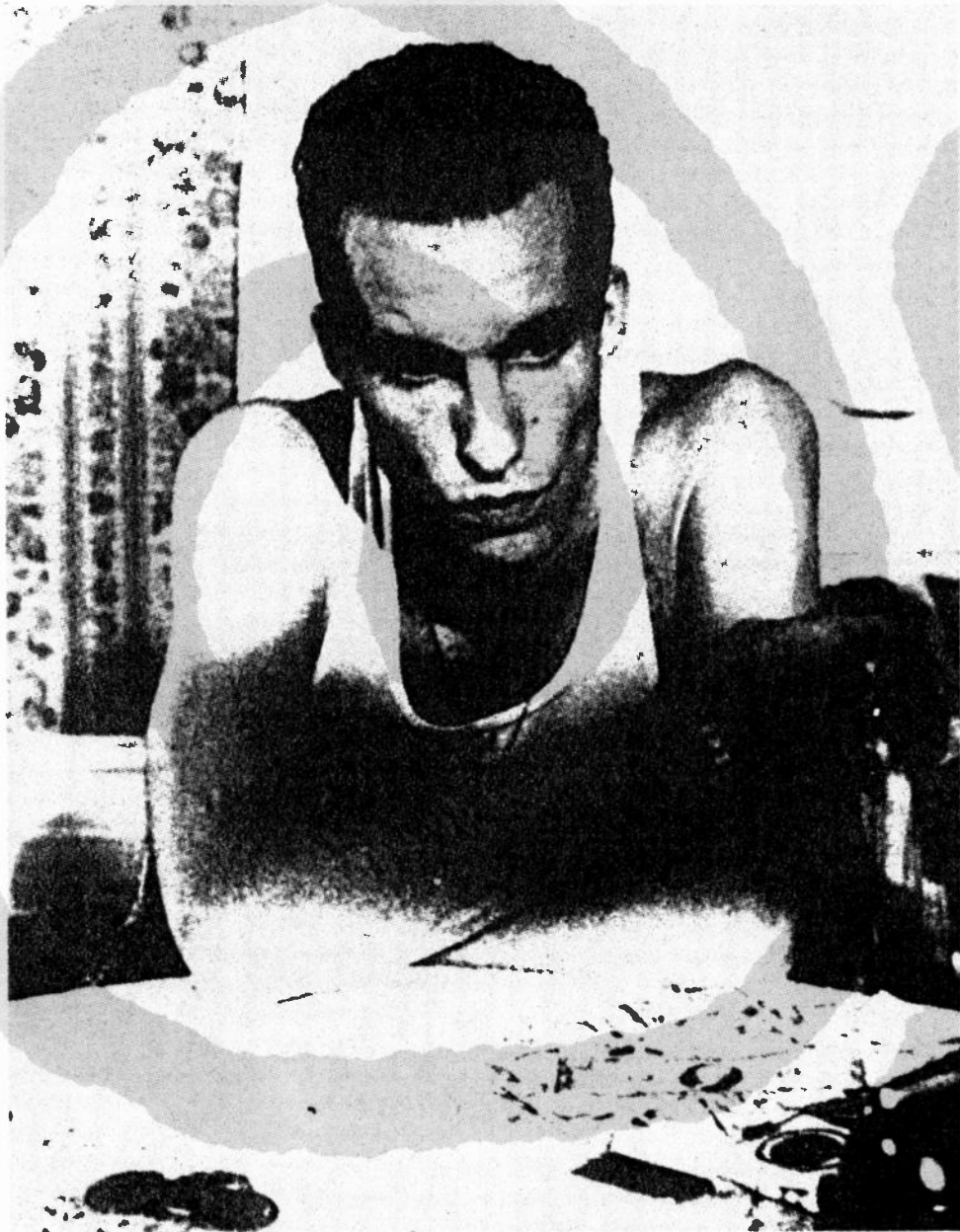
influenced Wim Wenders that he filmed a documentary on them.

"Ozu used to use only two camera positions, as you know from that film," says Jarmusch. "We were not that rigorous, but we did use a 25-millimetre lens for almost the entire film, because we needed to have deep focus in a lot of scenes. . . . If we had used a lens that was any wider, it'd start to distort. It's actually a beautiful lens, the 25."

As is Jarmusch's continuing use of black and white, which these days is more expensive to use than colour. "I had a lot of trouble getting good prints," says the director, "because most of the black and white technicians are retired. And young lab technicians don't really know black and white, they're not trained."

Film costs notwithstanding, Jarmusch's black and white characters are still inexpensive by today's standards—*Strangers* came in under \$200,000 and *Down By Law* held the line at a million. The director doesn't imagine his next film could cost more than two or three million at most, which means he may continue to finance his projects outside the Hollywood studio system. "I'm spoiled in a way, but I'm in a good position right now. I'm very lucky that there are ways I can finance my next projects without having a studio tell me who to cast and how to cut my film and what kind of music to use. So if that were the only way they wanted to finance the project, I'd walk."

But Jarmusch says he has been courted by a number of major studios. "I've only been meeting them to see what they say, to see intuitively how I feel about people specifically. . . . I don't care where the money comes from, I just don't want businessmen telling me how to make my films."



John Lurie in the singlet that hasn't been washed since *On The Waterfront*.

The director concedes that a Hollywood studio might have pressured him to scrap *Down By Law*'s opening sequence, tracking shots of New Orleans neighbourhoods that, while striking, are sometimes blurred. "It's something very strange that happened that we still don't know technically how it happens," Jarmusch admits. "When you shoot something flat on, as opposed to passing something at an angle, you get this kind of aberration: We did tests and everything to try and figure it out, and it wasn't the lenses. It might have had something to do with aeroflex cameras, although we're not even sure of that. But the images were so beautiful that I kept them."

Jarmusch laughs. "I should probably lie and say, Yeah, we intended to do that."

JARMUSCH'S USE of music in films is nearly as individual as his approach to filmmaking itself. *Down By Law*, in addition to its soundtrack of avant-garde atmospherics by John Lurie and raspy songs by Tom Waits, also features a touching scene in which two characters dance to a jukebox playing Irma Thomas' classic New Orleans ballad 'It's Raining'. Likewise, in *Stranger*, Jarmusch used Screaming Jay Hawkins' 'I Put A Spell On You' as a recurring theme.

"I don't have a specific song for the next film that I'm making, but there will be one," says Jarmusch. "It seems like people use music, especially pop songs, in films these days to drive a sequence, something that's not really important in the film. And instead I use them with very static shots, and let the song really interact with the characters, the

way that people listen to music."

Jarmusch's eye for detail and careful approach to each scene can be credited to the influence of director Nicholas Ray, who collaborated on Wenders' *Lightning Over Water*, Jarmusch's first notable film credit. "I learned from Nick about constructing a film in an architectural way, about talking and working with actors, and the fact that every scene has to have one essential meaning for you, the director or writer. And if every scene works as a single idea, then the film will work."

Down By Law does work beautifully, and Tom Waits knows why: "It's a fable. I think to understand that. With Bob Benigni, you know, God protects dogs, fools and little children. Whereas Zach and Jack are cynical, plotting, low-rent, smalltime, chickenshit little guys. You know, they treat their women badly, they're walking around in the dark."

"The character of Jack," Waits continues, "has a bad temper, he's a stick of dynamite. He's a refrigerator. He's like a bad detective. He's a pimp in the woods. Bad table manners, uptight, self-centred, well-dressed, bad attitude. He's like an old cigar."

But Benigni's Italian tourist, says Tom, is like an angel, and it is he who finds his rewards here on earth. "Benigni is filled with hope, you know? He takes off his hat and all the birds fly out of his head. He still believes in songs and things he saw in movies. He walks between the raindrops. So all things come to him, he's a force of nature, he's like a magnet. It's like we scare all the birds away and Benigni puts little crumbs out and they all land in his lap. . . . And you gotta hope you have a little bit of Bob Benigni in you, you know?"

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Radar raves on.

PEGGY SUE GOT MARRIED

DIRECTOR: FRANCIS COPPOLA STARRING: Kathleen Turner, Nicolas Cage, Barry Miller (Tri-Star)

EVERYBODY AT some time wants to turn back the clock and for the heroine of Coppola's *Peggy Sue Got Married* that's precisely what happens. Emotional over-reaction causes Peggy (Kathleen Turner) to black-out at her High School reunion, a traditionally American affair attended out of a perverse sense of curiosity, where people go to clash jawbones with bullies, heart-throbs and the social disasters of their yesteryears. When Peggy comes round, it is 1960 again and she's back at school waiting for graduation day.

Peggy is dating Charlie (Nicolas Cage), the man who 20 years on she's divorcing on the grounds of his extra-marital liaisons. Precisely why she hooks up with this academic no-no, a jerk suffering from advanced adenoidal problems and misplaced self-adoration, is never made clear. Maybe it's his ability to perform pale imitations of Elvis Presley, and



Charlie's girl - Peggy Sue

the pelvic thrust as he whines his way through '50s love ballads. Singer he ain't.

Peggy re-adjusts to her unplanned journey and settles back into California home-town life with remarkable ease invested with the rich experience of 20 years. The possibilities are endless. So what does Peggy do? Tells the algebra to stick her formulae up her logarithm. *Radical Action*. Gets drunk in front of Daddy. *Rebellious Youth*. Makes out with the school's dark and mysterious heart-throb, a beat-poet who mouths tortured verse at the moment of penetration. *Liberated Woman*. . . And ends up with Charlie again?

She returns to the 'real' world not to change anything but to tell her family how much she loves them and make the startling discovery that Charlie is, after all, a really good guy. This is Coppola wallowing in the same whimsy that threatened to destroy *One From The Heart*. It's amusing but as substantial as cinematic confectionery, tempting to look at, enjoyable to consume, nauseating at the end and forgotten within the hour.

Jane Merkin

She awoke in the past
with a chance to rebuild her future.

Peggy Sue

GOT MARRIED

15

A film about love and life
and a chance to change them both.

TRI-STAR PICTURES AND RASTAR PRESENT
A PAUL R. GURIAN/ZOETROPE STUDIOS PRODUCTION
KATHLEEN TURNER
"PEGGY SUE GOT MARRIED" NICOLAS CAGE
BARRY MILLER as Richard CATHERINE HICKS

Music Composed and Conducted by JOHN BARRY Edited by BARRY MALKIN Production Designer DEAN TAVOULARIS
 Director of Photography JORDAN CRONENWETH A.S.C. Executive Producer BARRIE M. OSBORNE
 Written by JERRY LEICHTLING & ARLENE SARNER Produced by PAUL R. GURIAN
 Directed by FRANCIS COPPOLA

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hat'll be the day.

THE SACRIFICE
DIRECTOR: Andrei Tarkovsky STARRING: And Josephson, Susan
atwood, Valerie
iresse (*Artificial Eye*)
IE EVOLUTION of
temporary society is now
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lf of every trace of the
itual... With his universe
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troyed, man no longer has
reason for living."
arkovsky freely admitted
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paring for death. He insisted
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ing to good". Indeed, his
rk—rambling, heightened
etics" of his own cinema—
ng made of words, seems
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thing remotely pertinent to
dern thinking. But that is its
ver. The deviant is the
dern seer.
he *Sacrifice* is a parable. So

Tarkovsky at last had to bite the bullet and use narrative. As morality heaves into view, Old Alexander (Josephson), faced with the reality of the nuclear apocalypse, renews a lost connection with his soul by sacrificing himself for the common good.
The flat landscape makes its own minutely choreographed contribution as doors swing, curtains shiver and flocks of sheep zoom around like Kurosawa soldiery. It takes time, but eventually you cotton on to what's happening: Tarkovsky's piecing together a huge filmic map of a reconstructive pre-medieval gnostic order. And in doing so he moved closer to the style of those fearsome old auteurs, Bresson and Dreyer, which Paul Schrader once called Transcendental.
The *Sacrifice* is a sanctified gesture, a religious act expressing the holy, not merely describing it or strangling it with dogma and doctrine.
The fact of the director's death will lend an almost inevitable sentimental *frisson* to the watching of *The Sacrifice*. The fact of the film will transcend all that, however,

not least because it dares to admit hope without fudging the horror. This *is* soul.
Nick Coleman

HEARTBREAK RIDGE
DIRECTOR: Clint Eastwood
STARRING: Clint Eastwood, Marsha Mason, Everett McGill (*Warner Bros.*)

WHEN *HEARTBREAK Ridge* was conceived it must have looked like a highly bankable proposition: update the old veteran wins respect of rebellious platoon and turns them into darn good soldiers. Hey Presto! or rather Hey Patriotism! you capture the mood of New American Self Confidence and the bucks start here. The irony of course is that it appears at a time when its 'America—Onward and Upward' moral looks less appropriate than at any time since Watergate, sinister subtext thus mercifully transformed into bad joke. Phew!
Heartbreak *Ridge* doesn't seek to rewrite history, rather it attempts to swallow it with a manly gulp and face the future bravely. "...The scars run deep," is the slogan on the poster, and the film opens with footage of the hell of Vietnam. The memories that haunt the mind of one Gunney Highway (Eastwood) as the vet who, his comrade at arms informs us, has "napalm for blood and a dick like a meat cleaver".
Disillusioned by the failure of his marriage, he faces a Marine-Corps riddled with corruption and indiscipline and in need of a good war.
This indeed is what they get—the definition of a 'good' war being one in which the Americans win.
Despite its stupendous

predictability, *Heartbreak Ridge* is actually grossly entertaining in a way that *Rambo* just isn't—due mainly to a series of anally obsessed, utterly nauseating insults, which have apparently so upset the Marine Corps for real. A certain prizewinner is "I'm gonna tear your head off and shit down your throat," and Clint's continuous assertion that he will not be taking long, lingering warm showers with his men. This sentiment is stated often enough to arouse a few suspicions.
The latest news from America is—you can afford to laugh.
Don Watson

THE EXPLORERS
DIRECTOR: Joe Dante
STARRING: Ethan Hawke, River Phoenix, Jason Presson (*Paramount*)

RIDING ON the crest of the "cutesy kid meets equally cutesy alien" comes *Explorers*, and with a director like Joe Dante, the man responsible for the multi-million dollar earning *Gremlins*, not only is the film's success assured, but the storyline is pretty damn obvious too.
Ben (Ethan Hawke) has a recurring dream in which he is propelled over an animated electronic circuit board. On waking, he remembers enough for his mate, Wolfgang (River Phoenix), a scientifically-minded dork with a nice line in above the ankle flares, to construct a similar circuit. This allows them to capture an energy force so powerful that they can travel into space.
A lot of old junk is stuck together in some semblance of a spaceship and on a wing and a prayer, the venturesome kids

blast past the stars to meet Wak and Neek, two chummy humanoid aliens, whose concept of the world has been shaped by American TV stations.
With a plot this thin, the film's only hope is in its wryly amusing script and extensive use of standard and specially developed optical effects, engineered on the same stages at Industrial Light And Magic as *Return Of The Jedi* and *Indiana Jones*. The high quality of the computer generated graphics, which usually appear extremely ropey when transferred to film, provide an interesting technical diversion from the movie's dependence on stereotyped fictional characters.
Of course, it's only boys who have the imagination and ability to traverse the universe, the one young female is fit only to act as the passive object of Ben's youthful desire.
Wolfgang, as the scientist, wears glasses, has Germanic Professor Brainstorm parents, talks in computerspeak and suffers at the hands of schoolyard bully-boys. And predictably, none of the adults understand anything.
Jane Merkin

THE PASSION OF REMEMBRANCE
DIRECTORS: Maureen Blackwood/Isaac Julien
STARRING: Anni Domingo, Joseph Charles, Antonia Thomas (*BFI*)

THE FOUR young black film and video makers who work under the name Sankofa first came to prominence a year or so ago with the haunting video *Territories* which said more about issues of race and identity in 20 minutes than

most well-meaning documentaries achieve in two hours. *The Passion Of Remembrance* tracks over similar ground but with a narrative consistency and a confidence that takes the step from C4 late-night slot to West-End run well in its stride.
Though set mostly in the *terra firma* of urban realism, *Passion* like *My Beautiful Launderette*, is made of the delicate stuff of hopes, fears and relationships. There must be many black British households like the Baptistes: parents looking back on a West Indian past, children with a future to make in Britain; a culture that is the only one they know and—with its imprint of racism and stifled opportunity—one that they by now know only too well. It's to the film's credit, however, that it hardly ever brandishes much of the stock imagery of protest for its own sake, airing instead questions of homosexuality and the sexism of organised politics that seem all too rarely raised in a black context.
Always more sure in the matter-of-fact relations of families and friends, *Passion* can't resist a bit of meta-commentary. Two figures—a man and a woman—meet at intervals in a desert landscape, a kind of blasted heath of black politics, to settle old scores. Here, in the face of the new demands of sexual politics, some of the old shibboleths of black agitation are questioned, in the same way that the narrative itself challenges us to think beyond conventional black images: "... Sports, Entertainment, that's all we're good for."
If you want to see black British film evolving with sureness and with style, this is the place to start.
Steven Bode



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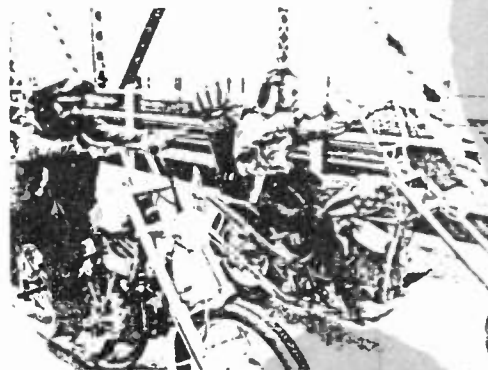
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Easy Rider comes Out Of The Blue . . .

OUT OF THE BLUE AND INTO THE BLACK Wednesday January 7, 9.00pm (C 4)
THE LAST MOVIE Wednesday January 7, 10.05pm (C 4)

Out Of The Blue . . . is the first of two documentaries detailing the growth of a certain kind of American independent film that blossomed for a short time in the wake of hippiedom. *Easy Rider*, *Five Easy Pieces* and *Drive, He Said*—if these titles mean anything to you, you'll be interested to explore the world of youth-cult cinema, a place where Peter Fonda rubbed shoulders and ideas with Jack Nicholson, Roger Corman et al. Tonight's two-hour overview highlights the influence of Corman on a whole generation of American directors. Excerpts from *The Monkees* wacky TV series blend in with huge chunks of *Easy Rider* whilst a story of

Hollywood exploitation unfolds into the industry's subsequent revenge, when the post-yippie bratpack failed to make the required bucks. Still, enough wayward talent on show tonight, from Bogdanovich and Rafelson to the acid-tinged, pre-*Paris Texas*, Dennis Hopper.

Speaking of Dennis, he turns up again as director and actor in *The Last Movie*. Following his success in *Easy Rider*—the '60s youth movie—Hopper went on to be something of a movie maverick (for 'maverick' read 'unreliable') and *The Last Movie*'s mix of allegory and indulgence shows him in *excelcis*. A film about film-making and exploitation full of in-jokes, flashbacks and LA philosophising. In there somewhere, a film within a film—and a western at that. Worth a watch: or watch for what it's worth, meta-textually speaking!

HEAVEN'S GATE Saturday January 10 (BBC 2)

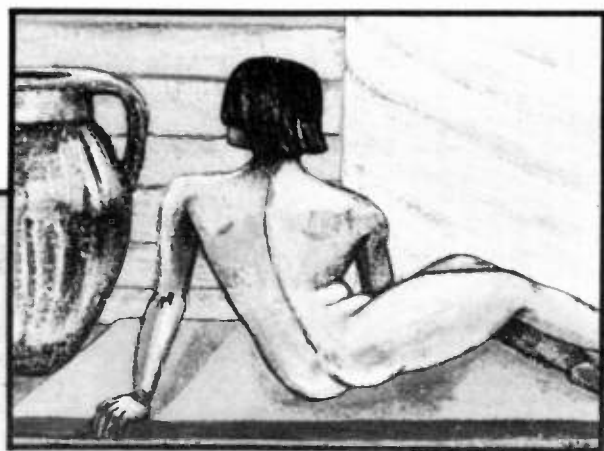
First telly-showing for Cimino's costly and critically—lambasted—labour of love—here shown in full length, *three hours and the some*, timespan. 19th century pioneers attempt to settle in Wyoming and come up against the local cattle-baron *mafioso*. That's the story, offset by some stunning photography and a load of Hollywood alumni including Christopher Walken, John Hurt, Isabelle Huppert and Joseph Cotton. Thought by some cinephiles to be one of the best films of the early '80s. Big deal, huh? Big budget, huh?

WHISTLE TEST EXTRA: MY BLOOD YOUR BLOOD Tuesday January 13 (BBC 2)

From the town of Jarocin, a film by Andrej Kostenka on the Polish underground music scene. Punk, heavy metal, blue and reggae are all mediums of protest and yearly, the main protagonists converge for a huge East European festival. Interviews and concert footage from the cream of Poland's musical subversives. Worth watching for a different perspective on party pop. Fuck art, let's Gdansk.

DUSTIN HOFFMAN SEASON: STRAIGHT TIME Monday January 12 (BBC 1)

The little man gets a season to himself but *Straight Time* is hardly the one to get temperatures rising. Here, Dustin plays an ex-con out and about California, trying to stay straight. Ably supported by Theresa Russell, Gary Busey and the honourable Harry Dean Stanton.



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WORD UP

Scripted by SEAN O'HAGAN

THE FRONT LINE

Nickie Roberts (Grafton £2.95)

IT SEEMS it's okay to do shit-work and stay poor; that's not immoral—but being a stripper or prostitute and earning good money is... Nickie Roberts, an ex-Soho stripper, has written a hell of a book. *The Front Line* is a bitter indictment against society and a bomb which blows all the mythology surrounding women who sell their bodies into miserable pieces.

I finished this book with a real feeling of guilt. Roberts has a special contempt for feminists and the Left, who react sympathetically to strippers and prostitutes yet refuse to acknowledge the feasibility of women remaining in those roles. What kind of rescue, Roberts asks, is it to be taken from a life of independence and high earnings and put back into a society which has only contempt for working class women?

Roberts and the strippers and prostitutes she interviews in her book, all say they entered the ice game to escape what society had prescribed for them: rudgerly, boredom and poverty; and until society offers them prospect other than that, they will stay outside its moral confines and spit in the face of anyone who dares use the word

'degradation' to them.

"There's a damn sight more punters than there are prostitutes..." (Yasmin. A prostitute). Society's contempt for women who sell sex is nowhere near a match for those women's contempt for the society which keeps the industry alive. Prostitutes will tell you more about The Double Standard than any sociological text book. They get slandered by media men condemned by politicians, sentenced by judges, and laughed at by Joe Public—all of whom then turn up requesting sexual servicing. But, of course, this is the sexual potency of the myth of prostitution, that prostitutes are ignorant, low, unclean, and (yawn) nymphomaniacs. The idea that this kind of sex is just a cash transaction will never be allowed to catch on. Society couldn't stand it.

Nickie Roberts decided as a teenager in Burnley that she "wasn't cut out to be a member of the working class". Her only solution then was to spend 10 years stripping in Soho. She earned a packet, spent a packet, drank herself stupid, and went quietly mad: "Nothing would have thrilled me more than to go on stage with a machine gun, and blast the fuckers' heads off..." She was lucky, she disco-

vered her talent as a writer, and got out. Now she is a respectable member of society again, a fact which makes her laugh. A bloody working class female author! Her book is for all the women she left behind and all the women who will follow.

Jane Solanas

GRANTA: MORE DIRT—NEW WRITING FROM AMERICA

(Penguin, £3.95)

MORE DIRT is Granta's sequel to *Dirty Realism*, a collection which was greeted as a new kind of fiction by critics sick of describing successive American novels as *The Catcher in The Rye* of the '80s. Actually, all they really meant by *new* was that it contained stories which dealt with small towns instead of big cities, highways instead of avenues, and everyone knows there's nothing new in that. Long before the days of urban excess, Americans were producing a literature of frontier thrift: *Dirty Realism* and now *More Dirt* simply continue that tradition.

The frontier spirit has taken a bad beating at the hands of the century, of course. Ironically, one of its few remaining legacies, the feeling of being alone, cut off from the rest of the world, gives the characters of these seven stories something in common with those of, say, *Less Than*

Zero: living your life in Spokane or Mohawk is as alienating as living it in Los Angeles or New York. Their response is to cling to memories of childhood and parents and to go to bed with each other not for love or lust, but for comfort.

In Richard Ford's *Empire*, a woman accounts for her sister's mental illness with the words: 'Nothing's normal, right? That's just a concept'. Everyone is a victim, everyone is damaged in some way by nothing being normal. They're alcoholic (the mother in Joy Williams' *Escapes*), they've had half their face burned off (Harley in Robert Olmstead's *The Contagion Girl*), their marriages haven't worked out, or in some more intangible way they're in danger of losing track of where they are (the narrator in Jayne Anne Phillips' *Fast Lanes*).

What makes them different is that they don't complain about it, and perhaps that too is one of the vestiges of the frontier spirit. In five of the seven stories a narrator gives his or her highly personal account, without ever taking things personally. Harley in *The Contagion Girl* can still take pleasure in the small things: 'His house wasn't much, but it was paid for. He lived in a teepee once and that wasn't so bad'. Reading this collection makes you feel a bit like Harley.

Callum Murray

THE OTHER GUY BLINKED: HOW PEPSI WON THE COLA WARS.

Roger Enrico (Bantam, £3.95)

THE OTHER GUY BLINKED is essentially an entrepreneurial 'bildungsroman', a voyage of growth and discovery tracing Roger Enrico's journey across the treacherous terrain of American Consumerism. It is the story of the Cola King's resilience in the face of the free market Sirens, his valour in combating the big business Suitors, and of his ultimate success in making Pepsi the Penelope of the soft drink.

The benign divinity who guided Enrico through such Odyssean perils was Michael Jackson, the Zeus of the synthetic, God of American schizophrenia. Jackson proved to be the 'G spot' for Pepsi's attempt to seduce us with the sex appeal of the inorganic. The popularity of his spectacle—sexual celibate, alluring yet elusive, the hyperac-

tive hypochondriac—was marketed as a spectacle of popularity, the perfect metaphor for a product which is not so much a drink as a transfusion of the sterilized sweat of the American Dream.

Of course, the book that we read is different from the one that he writes. He invites us backstage as witnesses to the intricacies of production whilst we remain in the auditorium absorbed by the consumption of the product. His concern is with commerce, ours is with the commercial.

It is this gap between intention and reception that makes the book worth reading. He proclaims individualism, we reclaim collectivism; he pleads simplicity, we judge complexity; he announces victory, we denounce tooth decay. Their trade is treachery, ours is intervention.

An awful book. Buy it.

Graham Caveney

The Frontier Spirit.



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There's money in them there rodents. JAMES HERBERT has made a fortune writing about the nasty wee beasties. Worse than the fearful Roland, his furry freaks are genital-biting harbingers of Western decay. WILLIAM LEITH cups his hopes in his hands and pays a visit to the great Herbert. Photograph by BLEDDYN BUTCHER.

HOT RATS!

JAMES HERBERT, Britain's biggest-selling horror author, lies in wait for me in the porch as I slam the door of my borrowed car and begin the long hike across his gravel drive.

When I get there he takes me straight into the main room of his house, which is very '70s, very like something out of *The Saint*, and he tells me how terrible he's feeling from the night before. I look around his room and think: if he wrote about universities, or lesbianism, or politics, he would have none of the things in this room.

He wouldn't have the expensive trinkets or the deep pale carpet or the baby grand in the corner. But he writes about horror. He writes, basically, about rats breeding wildly and eating people. And this pushes him into tax-exile status.

Britain's biggest-selling horror author. He must know something we don't. He must have profound insight into the human psyche.

"I'm just an ordinary bloke" he tells me. "There's nothing really exciting about me. I'm not weird. I'm quite normal. It's not good copy, is it? What do you go back and write?"

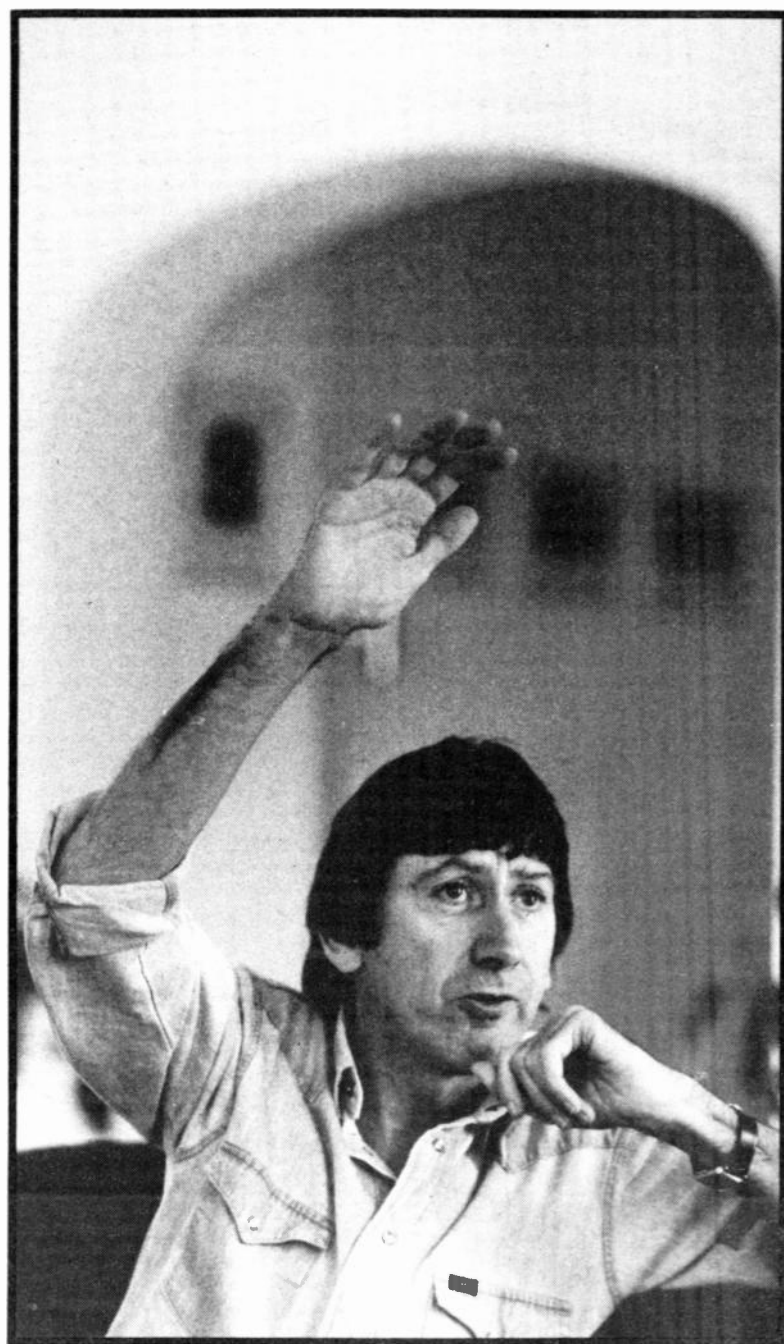
Well, that you're not weird. That you're quite normal. It's something, I suppose.

But what about the rats?

"They moved out from the dark places and stole among the ruins of the city, rain-streaked black beasts, many in number, eager for sustenance. Hunting soft flesh. Seeking warm blood." (*Domain*)

What is it about these rats? Why are they so important to people? I'd expected James Herbert's house to be a sort of rat theme-park, a tribute to the rodents that shot him to fame and wealth. But all I can find on the subject are shelves of Herbert's own books, translated into foreign languages: *De Ratten*, *Las Ratas*.

Herbert, then, a man who spends his weekdays writing new books and his weekends translating old ones into dialogue for the screen, has undoubtedly found a gap in the market. The son of market-stallholders in the East End, he was an art director in advertising in the '70s (Harp lager, Van Heusen shirts, Godfrey Davis car hire, Barclays bank) and thought he'd try his luck writing a book on the side, "never dreaming, well hoping, yes, dream-



You write about rats breeding wildly and eating people—how do you plead? "I'm just an ordinary bloke . . . I'm not weird."

ing it'd be published, but never believing it would be".

The book was about a young schoolteacher — modelled half on Herbert himself and half on Michael Parkinson — who gets caught up in a vast plague of mutant rats that threaten to engulf London. It's an exciting, rather tacky book with a basic disaster-movie plot — hero adverts destruction and finds girl — and a lot of foul descriptions of rats eating their way through people's genitals and faces and so on. Until the end, when a

serum is found, a rat-bite means that the victim swells up and bursts out of his skin within 24 hours. And when he'd finished the book New English Library wanted to publish it immediately and asked him for another. That was 1974.

"I was lucky. Very lucky. Horror wasn't all that popular. It was all spy novels, all 007 stuff, that was the bandwagon to be on. John Le Carré, Ian Fleming, Len Deighton. Now, if I'd been commercially astute, I'd have done a spy novel. But I did what I wanted to do and it

happened to be about rats because of my, er, background in the East End of London. My street was alive with rats."

So you saw yourself as making some kind of social comment?

"Oh yes. The book is more about the bad conditions of the East End, how they've been allowed to run down. And for me, the rats were a symbol of everything bad that was going on around us — if you like, it was the system."

"You see, people said to me afterwards, you were clever to leave it open-ended for a sequel — the rats didn't all get wiped out — I'd no idea that it was gonna be published, let alone a sequel, but really my idea was that these rats represented this huge system that we all come up against and we all have our private battles with. And we can win our private battles, but the system still trundles on. And that was the idea of not killing the rats off. I'm glad I did it that way."

And Herbert tells me more: not only are the rats symbolic of man and his struggles in a more metaphorical sense and general social problems in a slightly less metaphorical sense, but the rats in his first book are mutants. He's got in a nuclear angle as well — these rats were from New Guinea "where they had that atomic blast, 30 years before. So that was another little symbol coming in, how we've actually messed up nature."

So, with his hero triumphant and the rats almost — but not quite — wiped out, where did that leave James Herbert? What could he do next?

"The nun's forehead creased into a puzzled frown. She approached the bed and looked at the near-naked form lying there. Saw the small, bristling shape hunched on the child's stomach. Raised her crucifix to her lips in horror when she realised it was a rat."

Felt nauseous when she realised it was suckling at Alice's third nipple." (*Shrine*)

I THOUGHT, well, what can I do now? I'd gone so far with *Rats* and that was why it was so popular at that time, because it broke down barriers — I suppose you could call it barriers of taste if you like — but really it was, instead of coping out on the violence I actually went into it. I didn't put dot dot dot or leave it to the imagination. I just wanted to do something that hadn't been done before and go into the violence and show how bad it is. If somebody hits you over the head with an axe, then it bloody well hurts, you know. And you've got to let the reader know.

"See, I hate *Tom & Jerry* violence, when they get up and they're back together again, and I hate John Wayne violence where you don't see any blood. I think you have to show the whole thing to show how bad it is. So I've done that with *The Rats*, and I kinda thought, can I go even further? And I did, and I enjoyed *The Fog* so much because it was such a broad landscape and 'cos it's just about . . . madness."

And so began a series of books where London is damaged — sometimes destroyed — by an evil which has its roots in the bad behaviour of man, and in which man and beasts do violent and filthy things to each other in the resultant chaos. Many times people are eaten alive while having a furtive bout of illicit sex, or trying to attack each other, or lying in a drunken stupor in a graveyard. But the important thing is that the evil is always a result — sometimes an indirect result, but always a result — of the misdeeds of man.

"That's why I always call myself a cynical idealist, or an idealistic cynic, because I do have these ideals — see, in *The Rats*, the guy, Harris, the hero, he won, he won out. And that's the idealistic side of my nature. The cynical side is that the system still went on. I just know that, myself, I can fight battles and win. All my books are on the personal level. That's for the reader, and that's for me. I believe I give them some kind of hope. I know it sounds pompous, but because they can see themselves as the hero or heroine, they see that they can win certain battles. They can come out ahead. But not too far ahead. It's always a pyrrhic victory."

"One of the larger rats leapt at his groin, pulling away his genitals with one mighty twist of its body. The tramp screamed and fell to his knees, thrusting his hands between his legs as if to stop the flow of blood, but he was immediately engulfed and toppled over by a wave of black, bristling bodies." (*The Rats*)

NOW THAT he'd established himself in the horror market, ("I don't align myself with horror, would you believe. I just write stories and they turn out to be a bit creepy here and there") Herbert began to suffer the first kick-back effect of his early popularity: he began to be associated with, and blamed for, the excesses of his many copiers. We had *Slugs* and *Spawn* and *Breeding Ground*, all knock-offs of Herbert stylistically, but all hollow and nastier and more pointless. Here was James Herbert, quite willing to take himself seriously, getting to know Stephen King, beginning to wonder what to do with his money, getting a bit of screen interest — and there was all this cheap imitative rubbish giving the whole thing a bad name.

"Everybody else jumped on the bandwagon, so you had writers coming along — they saw, yes, this was the new market, and this guy Herbert is actually describing things that nobody's described before. And they did it. But unless you do it with the right intent, and, to use a pompous word, *integrity* — you know, you've actually gotta do it for a good reason, and show motivation as well — unless you do it that way, then you're a bad writer, and you're just exploiting. And there's been a huge prejudice against me because of the mass of books that came out in the wake of *The Rats* and *The Fog*."

So James Herbert begins to tell me about his integrity, which is a strange thing because he mixes it with telling me about his non-integrity, i.e. what kind of person he was when he worked in advertising ("it was a big joke, the whole thing, really"). But on the serious side he tells me how his favourite book is H. G. Wells' *History Of Mr. Polly*, how he believes in the paranormal, how his book *Domain* — which mixes nuclear war with killer rats — is all about government corruption. He tells me how he did a lot of research into government nuclear shelters underneath London.

"I was snooping around the Embankment and there's this slab of granite sticking up. You'd normally walk past it — it just looks like some kind of monument. But I actually climbed up there — it's about eight feet high. Where you'd think it was solid, there's actually a hole in the top and stairs going down and a heavily-barred door. All the tourists thought I was some

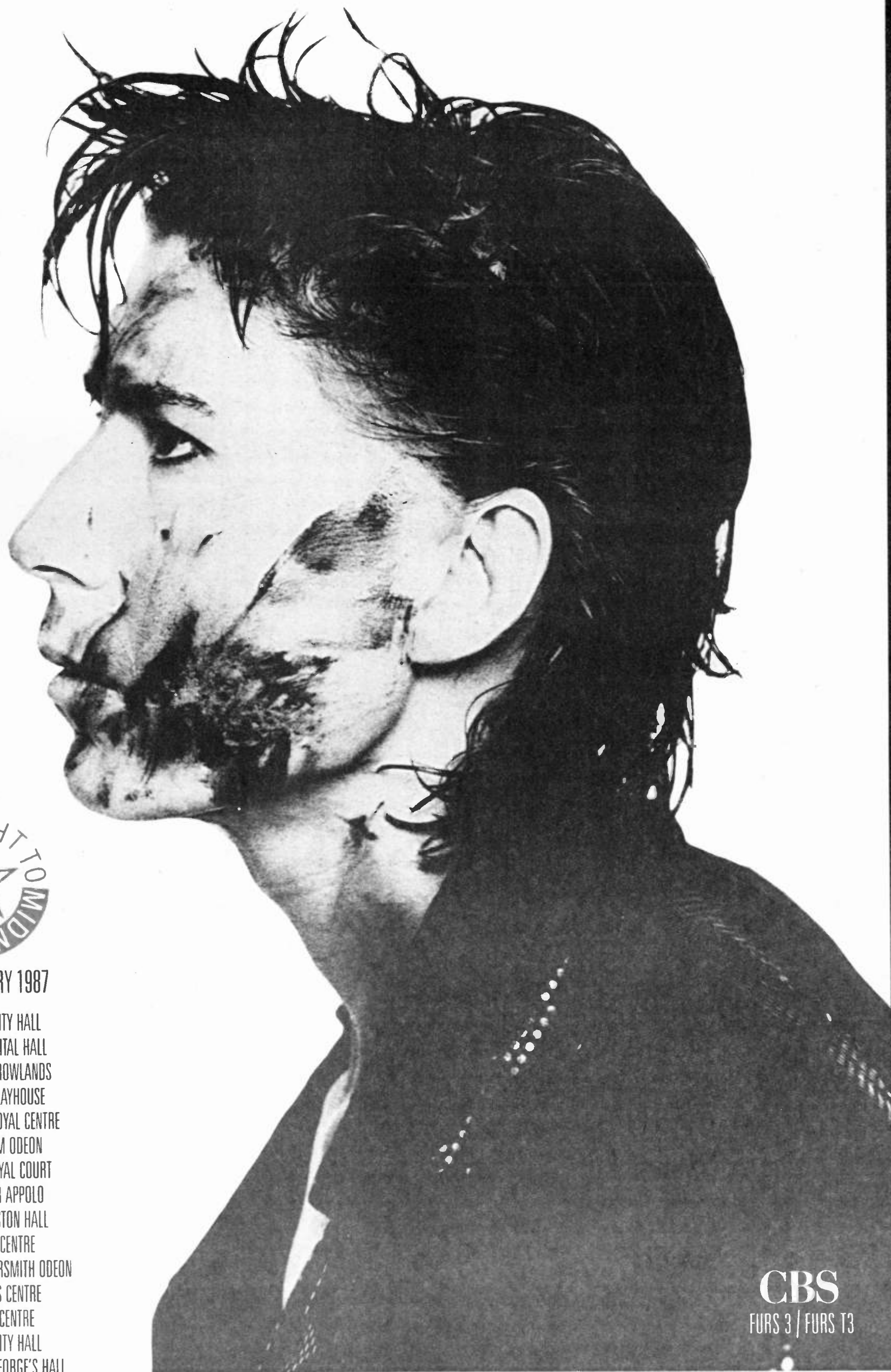
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WORD UP

PSYCHEDELIC FURS



NEW SINGLE ON 7" & EXTENDED 12" ANGELS DON'T CRY



TOUR FEBRUARY 1987

4th NEWCASTLE CITY HALL
6th ABERDEEN CAPITAL HALL
7th GLASGOW BURROWLANDS
9th EDINBURGH PLAYHOUSE
11th NOTTINGHAM ROYAL CENTRE
12th BIRMINGHAM ODEON
13th LIVERPOOL ROYAL COURT
15th MANCHESTER APPOLO
16th BRISTOL COLSTON HALL
17th BRIGHTON CENTRE
19th-20th-21st HAMMERSMITH ODEON
22nd POOLE ARTS CENTRE
23rd NEWPORT CENTRE
25th SHEFFIELD CITY HALL
26th BRADFORD ST. GEORGE'S HALL

CBS
FURS 3 / FURS T3

KING OF AMERICA

300 nights a year, Lucille-loving BB KING is the world's premier blues ambassador, still carrying the standard for black heroes long gone. GAVIN MARTIN swings with the king on the road to Norwich (!) God's guitarman photographed by NICK WHITE.

TWILIGHT HAS set on the world of the Guitar God, now relegated to the role of quaint relic or bit part actor. A surfeit of phallic extension egotists trading in brute force and macho overload lead to the decline, but in our rush to bury the past it would be blindly ignorant to overlook a beacon which burns bright on this benighted terrain.

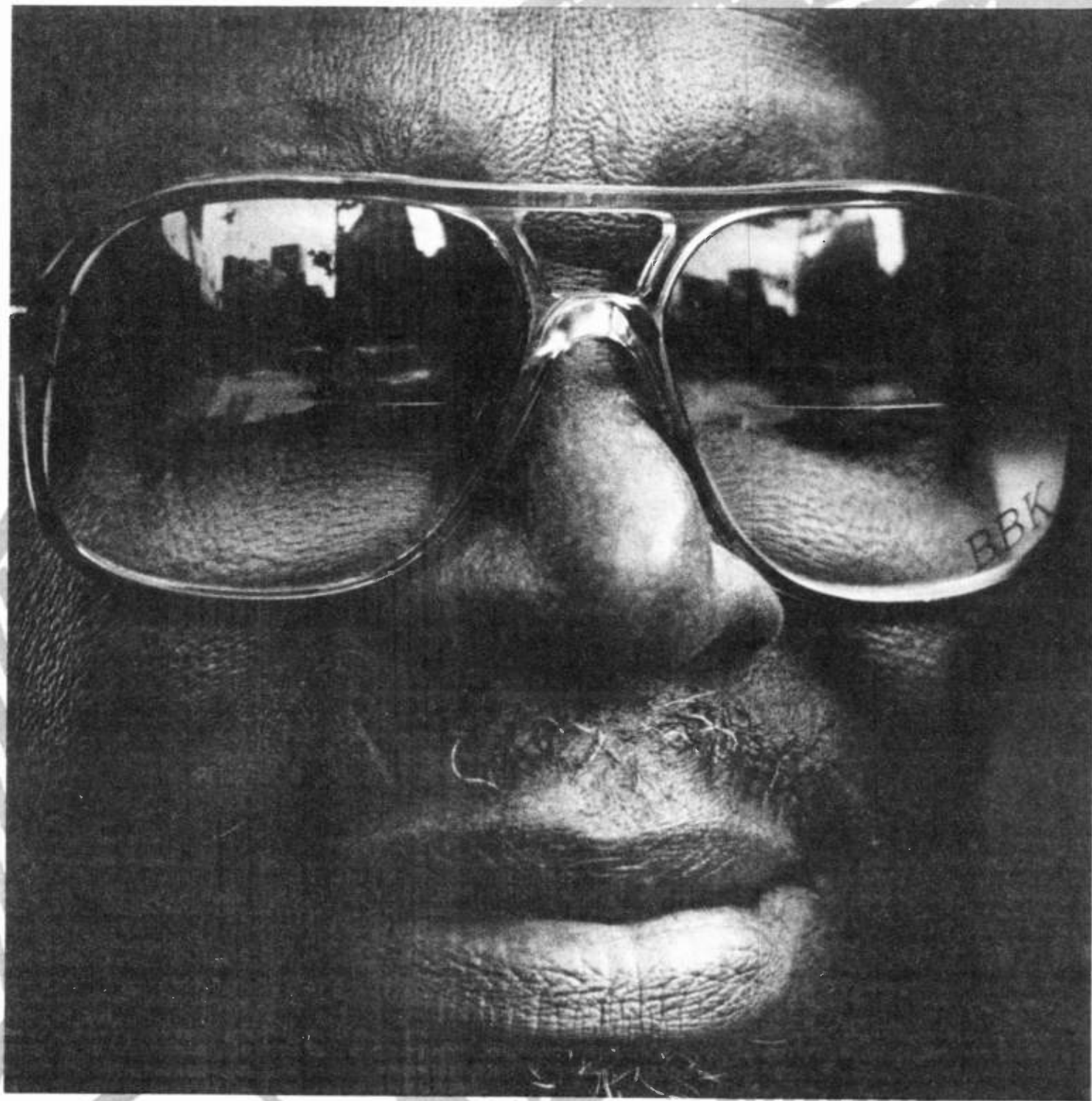
For over 40 years the romance between BB King and his lovingly titled six stringer Lucille has endured, hallmarked by delicacy, humility, thrilling, stinging wonderment. The affair is many sided, a riotous tease, heart melting sexual poetry.

Now 61 BB King is the world's premier blues ambassador; he's brought the music from the cotton fields to Las Vegas, stayed with it while many despised and denigrated it, proving time and again through his tireless innovation that it's still strong, vital, a matter of life and death. He plays an impressive 300 nights per year; his annual visits to this country are one of the few guaranteed joys in the musical calendar. Unlike many of his contemporaries, BB prides himself on never having used a pick-up band. The cost of keeping anything up to 15 men in employment caused him years of privation but it's kept him close to the music's pulse, always able to adapt and find new angles.

These days he leads a seven-piece stellar swing outfit, shifting from roadhouse rhythm and blues, through punchy knuckle funk to sublime jazzy hues; those of you who hold a stereotypical image of the bluesman evidently haven't tuned into the spirited abandon and variety of the King swing.

One of his first jobs was as a DJ, constantly collecting he now has over 40,000 albums and he evidently feels a duty to embrace a multitude of styles in his show—in its way as finely detailed a celebration of black culture as that presented by Prince earlier this year. Through him long gone heroes live on—the jump humour of Louis Jordan, the rapturous guitar flair of T Bone Walker, the melismatic angel voice of a Little Willie John or the unearthly growl of Muddy Waters.

Like a musical sponge, BB has been soaking up influence ever since he left his home in Indianola Mississippi for the big city



BBK: "Blues people can't live in hell all the time . . ."

blues scene of Beale Street in Memphis just after the last war. "I learnt from everybody that played, that does play and will play. But for some reason I'm not able to copy or comprehend ideas as people play them, I'm thickheaded I guess. I can't follow the execution of ideas, I start thinking I'd like to put something else here or something else there."

"I remember the first time I went to The Apollo Theatre in Harlem, I only had one hit record at the time and they knew the temptation was to try and be like the others. I was told not to try to be like Duke Ellington or Count Basie or anyone else because the doorman, the cab driver and the guys who cleaned the theatre would do that sort of thing much better than I ever could. So you just have to do your own thing, it's the only thing that makes you different. And if you weren't different you could end up eating tomatoes, if you know what I mean."

TODAY IS a late start, at 2pm the group and BB's assistants (his bright faced young nephew and crotchety gnarled wind-up man and valet Be Bop) climb on the bus for the ride out of London to Norwich. "The Boss" follows a little

later, offering greetings and enquiring for details of American sports results.

During the rest of the day not much else is said. A varied bunch from the young lone white bass player discovered in a Nashville gospel band to the enormous, duck waddling piano man and drummer. The BB King Orchestra must be one of the quietest, most abstemious bunch of musicians I've ever met for sometime. They don't smoke or drink before the show. Their faces are fixed in a stoic gaze. Their deep respect for their leader has lead them to adhere to a set of unwritten rules—they remember guys who've tried to abuse BB over the years and ended on their uppers. At a recent show an old bass player returned, begging for some money, dressed in a GI coat.

"Yeah, gee, I wish I had one," roars Be Bop.

"This might sound weird but you learn a whole other way of living, like the ways of the street, being on the road. It's very important to me that my band feels like a family, that they care about each other, that they don't become rowdy or pushy when we get to a restaurant or an airplane. I'm not a hard taskmaster but I've been doing this long enough to know that you need certain rules and standards to stay sane and

produce your best," explains BB.

Despite management difficulties and a couple of near fatal accidents BB King took to the itinerant lifestyle like a fish to water. Along the way he's seen two marriages split up though he is presently considering a third go as his present courtship enters its fifth year.

"Sometimes I've been guilty of running my home and private life like an office because everything has to be routine. We Virgos are like that anyway, we don't do it intentionally."

"I don't have any superstitions, for a country boy I'm kinda weird there. For me each day is a good day when I wake up and feel well. When I don't feel well, it's just good to be able to wake up."

"Physically I'm in pretty good shape. I walk as far as anybody half my age. I do most of the things my band do, though maybe I don't do some of the things as much as they do."

As in his music so he is in person—a man of humour, generosity and endless stamina. At first his proud championing of the blues as his people's culture and his constant putdowns of himself—his lack of education, his speech, his literacy—seems like a contradiction. But you soon realise what

he's really putting down is the system that deprived him and a generation of black Americans of the most rudimentary expression, which is why the blues became so central, why the patronage of a whole new young generation black and white both sides of the Atlantic is so gratifying.

"Through the '60s and the '70s young blacks didn't really take too much notice of the blues. There could have been many reasons for that, the civil rights struggle made them feel that being brought over from Africa as slaves and the connection with the blues had kind of belittled their struggle, which was to get the freedoms everybody else had. For some, it was dirty clothes in the closet. But after the TV programme *Roots* I think young blacks started to see the other side that had been hidden for a long time, they started to see themselves and us a people. They started to realise that in history there's been many people's that have had to go through these changes. We weren't the only people enslaved, probably we were the only ones in America but lots of people have been slaves in their own country."

In his show King is always quick to counterpoint intense drama and real heartbreak with an undercurrent of humour.

"I intentionally try to make it funny because everybody has preconceived ideas about blues players. They don't realise that there's two sides to every coin, even people on the cotton fields didn't cry all day, we were happy with what we had. The blues is as life is itself the way we lived in the past, the present and the future. Blues people can't live in hell all the time so I bring the other side to it."

A CHILD of The Pentecostal Church, it was there that the sweet voiced Riley King first came across an electric guitar, the preacher used it to raise the spirit and the roof of the little gospel hall where he worshipped. He began to develop his own style during one of the most productive watersheds in American music history – the r&b scene between WW2 and The Korean War.

From the many great performers of this era he learned qualities of showmanship, pacing and audience rapport. Receptive to the guitar playing of T Bone Walker, Lonnie Johnson and jazz players like Django Rheinhardt and Charlie Christian he'd soon developed a high ringing melodic style of his own.

"Then I was doing what I did to please myself but I soon found people looking up to me. One day I woke up and people were saying he's revolutionised the guitar, he's playing sounds that no one else ever did."

"The reason was I could never really hear low sounds like other musicians. With an electric guitar I could develop the end of the register, it was something I could understand better. But it was just a twist of fate, it wasn't something I'd planned or practised."

The egotism that makes us balk at the conventional axe hero is nowhere to be found in BB King, though for me he makes his instrument talk like no other musician I've ever heard. His facial mannerisms illustrate his struggle to express himself, the playing itself echoes a lifetime searching for acceptance and improvement. From the agonising tightness of a spine binding clench comes sweet release in short, sharp rainbow bursts – when he finds a new sound he looks so awestruck that his bottom lip might fall off.

"All of us, like you as a journalist start with an idea and build up on it. I think of my playing as trying to build from a point. I pull up to the top of the hill and I do smile because I'm happy with how I got there. It's a struggle because you can find it hard to play your musical words in the right place. Many nights I can't seem to place it just how I want it, I may be giving my all but it's just not working. It's like climbing trees – sometimes you just do up like you was on a ladder and other times nothing seems to fit."

"But it's never the guy's fault, anything that goes wrong is down to me. I've got to make it swing, get them in synch with me. I get a real thrill from my band, I can learn so much from them. This is the main difference between having a pick up group and your own group, you know the feeling is there, because you had it before. It's just a matter of locating it."

"Physically I'm a bit lazy with the guitar, I

never practice, that's why everyone plays so much better than me. Mentally though I practice quite a lot, I've been through quite a few moves since you and I have been talking. Each time the guitar is mentioned something comes into my mind. I picture the neck in my head and hear the chords."

GAINING ACCEPTANCE for his craft on the same level afforded jazz musicians is a struggle that still goes on. Consider for instance the fashionable elevation of Miles Davis compared to his own status.

"Horn players have always been more regarded than guitarists and to be honest they played more on the horn, execution and improvisation was carried out far more on the horn."

"I like to think how can I be anyone but BB King. Friends sometimes say man you can play more than blues. I feel they're putting me down. My job is make the blues that I play better and make it say what I want it to say. One thing people don't pay much attention to is that in my category of blues I can go to the borders of practically any style. I'm just as happy doing that as the guy who's playing jazz or soul or rock or country. I think my category is better to be in than a lot of other people's."

As we approach Norwich BB busies himself with postal voting forms, a keen champion of Jesse Jackson he always makes a point of securing his form before going on the road. Before the show the group go off to eat but BB stays in his dressing room, the heat on full blast.

"He loves heat man, he even wears a jersey onstage," explains piano man Eugene Clarence, "If he arrives in a hotel and it's not warm enough he'll buy a heater and leave it there. That's why he lives in Las Vegas, he always promised himself it got so cold when he was younger that if he ever got the chance he'd always have heat."

"It's for his voice too if that's not at the right temperature then all the keys and everything else goes."

Tonight too much heat is the problem, by the end of the set BB is drenched in sweat, he looks like he's been in thunderstorm. He makes it offstage to the dressing room and the door stays shut, Be Bop returns with the news that his boss doesn't feel well, there'll be no customary encore, no signing of autographs.

For a while everyone looks tense – it would be an ordeal for anyone but for a man his age... The worries are unfounded, after a while he emerges from the dressing room to meet wellwishers and offer profuse apologies, as if a set in excess of 90 minutes hadn't been enough.

"I only had that feeling twice before once in Australia, Be Bop had to grab me when I fell out near the front of the stage. The other time was when I was about 12 and working real hard in the field. I just must have collapsed, the next thing I knew I was laid out under the trees being fanned and having water poured over me. Thought I'd died and gone to heaven."

The show's been wonderful of course – gallant sex wit ("I said everybody shake it. This little lady says, B I ain't got nothing to shake," he tugs at his ample girth, "I said that's OK baby you can have some of mine.") rowdy goodtime and deft artistry. It's a style best represented on his superb 'Blues And Jazz' collaboration with top sidemen Arnett Cobb and Woody Shaw, made three years ago it rates alongside the Ace reissue of 'Live At The Regal' as primetime King recordings.

Since then he's had to present a different side of his work on record. His plans to release an album of delta blues tunes or country standards played with the carefully honed horn-based band he's shaped over the years have been shelved, as he records soundtrack tunes, last year for Landis' *Into The Night* and this year for Scorsese's new movie *The Colour Of Money*. While a group like The Fabulous Thunderbirds can tear up the American charts with their brand of r&b, if BB tries to do it it's seen as revivalist, an echo of past segregation.

"I don't think it was fair in the past and I don't think it is fair now. But we were creative in the past and we'll be creative again now. People set patterns and rules that you have to abide by and sometimes they may not seem very fair. But in order to survive you have to work within the system."

THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAMERS



RUNNING FOR COVER

new single

RCA

REVIEWED BY GAVIN MARTIN
SELF-PORTRAIT BY ART WOMAN OF BLOOMSBURY

SINGLE OF THE WEEK (1)
MICK KARN FEATURING DAVID SYLVIAN: Buoy (Virgin)
Time was when I would sooner have swam in fresh pig's blood than be subjected to the fragrant reveries and shallow pretensions of those wilting petals Japan. Alone, this Karn fella teamed with Angie Bowie, slithering and gesticulating her way around some deeply unprofound poetry, and produced the most exquisitely cringeworthy example of arthouse indulgence ever televised; while the boy Sylvian's solo work (not to mention his interviews) have remained an endless source of bemusement for yours truly. But now I find it's time to don the kimono, order a manicure and a Tibetan retreat (on expenses), cast all caution to the wind and profess that 'Buoy' is some sort of monster.
Stealing from many shores, its charms are applicable to any, with the stock ingredients of piano, drums and horns served in scintillating dida laced sauces—one moment you could be on an Amazonian riverboat, the next in Aladdin's cave, another basking in a mystical Eastern wonderland—'Buoy' floats in the world of its own creation. While Karn fashions the setting Sylvian is Bryan Ferry in an ocean of

suave fantasy and elemental celebration. When he sings "I'm like a mountain made of stone/I'm like a new day dawning/I'll be here every morning" he's half glorious ham, half cheeky devil. It's funky and funny, it's alluring and addictive, you can shuffle your feet to its manifold magic beat sinews or you can bask in its sleek lunar spell.
Japan were a band who tried to flavour their sound with a musical brief far beyond most competitors but this is the first time their aspirations have been attained. It comes at an optimum time—as Paul Simon's 'Graceland' album holds the world in thrall with the spellbinding possibilities of the panoply of African culture merging with whatever the West has to offer, as labels like Globestyle unleash ever more examples of the global jukebox, and the imminent fall of South Africa suggests a potent cultural realignment is about to take place. Rather than suffocating in predestined categories, the spontaneity of music lies in this diversification, a process which expands the artist's understanding and the listener's enjoyment. People of the world unite, you've nothing to lose but limited perceptions. 'Buoy' is as good a place as any to start.

SINGLE OF THE WEEK (2)
THE SMITHEREENS: In A Lonely Place (Enigma)
Recalling the deft poignant portraits etched by Burt Bacharach and Hal David The Smitheereens weave a song of translucent gossamer, the only trill coming from some pine-pricked Spanish guitar. The male/female duet chime together—making a sound like the worn yearning of Love's Arthur Lee and a cool blue breeze over sad glassy waters. A pure unadorned pearl of post pop innocence to rate with The Rubinoos' 'I Think We're Alone Now', 'In A Lonely Place' is a very charming and boot-i-ful record. The heart would shatter if it hadn't already melted.
HÜSKER DÜ: Could You Be The One? (WEA)
Bob Mould's a genius at committing the pains of emotional apostasy to vinyl; combined with forays on utopian bandwagons this can make Hüsker Dü the most persistently primal and sensationally complex sky strafers in the known universe. A flood of screaming, ravaged guitars burning to a core of smelted hyperdelia 'Could You Be The One?' is Bob driving smashed hearts, mangled feelings and a headful of confusion to the outer reaches of parapsychological musical exorcism. Yes friends, it's a goodie.

UB40: Rat In Mi Kitchen (Dep International)
While the output of peers like The Specials and Madness may have cast a shadow over UB40, the former's commentaries on the nation's state being more vivid and telling, the Brum boys have slowly but stealthily built themselves into A Great British Singles Institution in the manner of Hot Chocolate and Eddy Grant. They are secure, reliable craftsmen who won't change much except to perfect their already established craft. As they've grown so they've ditched that despondent cotton-wool-in-the-mouth moaning of mid career and gone for the likes of 'Rat In Mi Kitchen'. Almost up there with the divine 'If It Happens Again' this multi-applicable ditty on pest control adds a knuckle duster to their sweet skanking, the singer moves like a limbo dancer and Herp Alpert's on hand to supply some ultra cool trumpet juice. No big suprise, just an assured piece of radio and dancefloor perfection.

THE ICICLE WORKS: Up Here In The North Of England (Situation Two)
These guys could make the weekly shopping list sound like the tablets from the mount; it's not a style I rush to applaud but here it's injected with enough humour, variety, lush romanticism, raw wonder and sheer intoxication to suggest it is for once warranted. Rather than climb on the true but worn two-nation hysteria and throw in an inner city nightmare, 'Up Here' is a dark but deprecating drama from the heartland where the party pooping left wing, Pete Townshend, stamp-out-smack careerists and alien southerners are ever present demons on the landscape. On the 12-inch they do a dispensable instrumental and three cover versions—Robert Wyatt's 'Sea Song', Robbie Robertson's 'It Makes No Difference' and Randy California's 'Nature's Way', where a sense of the epic is matched by a winning sensitivity. A tendency to make Ian Paisley sound like Aled Jones notwithstanding, I'd say that's not a bad deal at all.

BOBBY WOMACK: I Wanna Make Love To You (MCA)
A much celebrated attribute of prime-time Van Morrison was his invocation of vocal growl, the "yaargh" which became the centrepiece of 'Listen To The Lion' and suggested ancient tongues, spiritual questing, sensual wonder. Bobby Womack is a soulman with a similar priceless talent; when his voice rises to a monumental peak, he unleashes some rare fever from his

lungs. He's not stretched too far on this mid paced prowler—hemmed in by wiry guitar, hedgerow chopping rhythm, functional horn punctuation and a largely superfluous chorus. There's a suggestion of his power but never the full exposition, the emotion-sapping deep soul classicism of his 'Poet' sets. Maybe he should team with Patti Labelle rather than Ron Wood to make him roar again.
HURRAH!: If Love Could Kill (Arista)
Much muttering and wrenching of consciences around the office when this lot left their charmed indie stable to go mega. The fuss eludes me now as then—the gutsy thrill of spangled harmonies, guitar lust galvanised by ravishing melodies, thrashing dance spleen and dynamic refreshment were never noticeable on any of my Hurrah! records. So 'If Love Could Kill', a faint echo of those glories, a watercoloured facsimile that's started to run and smudge, is no disappointment.

TINY LIGHTS: Flowers Through The Air (Temple Records 1984)
Dazed and confused Haight Asbury fallout relocated in Hoboken, kids with dilated pupils and a fascination for the days of kaftans, gobbledegook, too much hair and too few clothes. Hippy shit by any other name, the allure of a well spiked soundtrack is grounded by spectacularly retarded intimations.

THEN JERICO: Let Her Fall (London)
Cortisone enforced, helium propelled dead lead bloat rock—gruelling guitar, rhino stomp drums and a voice from the snake pit. Serve with nembatal and cheap wine and watch those unwanted guests dissolve before your very eyes.

PSYCHEDELIC FURS: Angels Don't Cry (CBS)
Sounding like he forgot to check out the warrant on his beleaguered larynx Mr Butler drags his group into a song styled with all the gaudy frills and horrendous hues of a turn of the century mid west brothel. Talk about a surfeit of stylistic baggage: between heists of Big Country guitar, David Bowie vocals and an explicable charge for home with a Clarence Clemons sax roar there's enough here to indict them on grand larceny. Unfortunately, an additional charge of criminal disinterest is more pressing; the whole thing oozes like a suppurating boil rather than exploding like a glorious volcano.

THE BURNING: Through The Darkness (Bang Bang)
A resolute role model of macho rock solidity is suggested by band and title and confirmed by the wasteland-warrior-searching-for-a-shining-maiden-in-the-dark-cold-beyond sentiment of the song. Too serious to work as wigged-out scorched metal, the only way such worn imagery can be justly served these days.

STEVIE WINWOOD: Back In The HighLife Again (Island)
A less extrovert purveyor of good designer wear than stablemate Robert Palmer, Stevie's voice is a rightly revered blue eyed soul instrument—slightly husky, high reaching but never strained. His performance here is suitably warming, but it's a distinctly unexciting song to be celebrating a judicious return to distant shores where the sun is an ever-present companion and dacquiris flow like a milky river. Compound that with the producer's ability to quarantine all the spice and verve out of the portions of cajun and calypso served up and you have a losing combination.

VARIOUS: Profane 9 (Rouska)
A 10-inch four-hand sampler from Leeds, most of it erring in the pit of antiquated goth, and as you know an old bit of 'erring can have quite a reek. WMTID set off on a precious pseudo voyage into Joy Division's twilight world, casting mournful

shadows like redundant actors picking over a long abandoned film set. God Save The King attempt to turn your flesh into a writhing mass of yellowish chickenbumps, seeing monsters around every corner, looking through dusty tomes for a suitable hex, but the teutonic tedium tells you it's the same old garbage rehash. Heads On Sticks mistake the bowels of a sackcloth and mascara cellar club for Kurtz's heart of darkness. Exceptions are Dust Devils who add scathing swipes, way out spiralling, vaulting trickery and a back beat of Kraftwerk-like insistence to a treatment of Martin Luther King's oratory (fading, rising, then made into a strangulated, vocoded broadcast). A mite more effective than other, much celebrated practitioners of the cut-up brag bag.

HEAVEN 17: Trouble (Virgin)
What became of Heaven 17, high minded principals in a business combining sound, reason and finance? Or Heaven 17, experts in classic pop production? Seems their resources have been used up on par boiled electro ditties with no vitamins and no zest but perhaps pointing to a more lucrative vocation in the world of the advertising jingle.

THE STYLE COUNCIL: It Didn't Matter (Polydor)
Love wrested from adversity is not a cause for exuberance in Wellerworld; it's hard to imagine any outlandish emotion in such a self consciously styled environment. A duet with DC Lee, mixed by The Valentine Brothers, this is an insidious slab of funk deluxe; dance music for people who want to keep their feet clean and creases sharp. Paul purrs and slurs his reflections, snags the good groove on some bristling guitar frazzle, but it's only at the climax where veins begin to bulge and sweat seeps through the pores that the record really loses its ambiguous diffidence and begins to live. Otherwise it's the usual problem with The Styliques' sombre manner—they've crafted such perfect interiors no one wants to risk breaking out. These guys are so cool they may turn into anaesthetic.

TURNING SHRINES: Face Of Another (Temple 1984 Records)
More a musical jacuzzi than a record—dip in, feel the palpitations, water alternately churned by rapids, charged by faint prickles of electricity and, hark, is that the lonesome sighs of a siren on yonder shore or just someone trapped in the boiler room? Cars' engineer Mark Harrington has fashioned this exercise in aural stimulation, fortifying it with a bewildering array of chemical additives and yet it's just superior background music with too many tentacles tickling to really absorb the interest.

SWING OUT SISTER: Surrender (Phonogram)
Smart marketing device for DJ cueing and instant recognition, a carefree giggle from the happy go lucky lass who is this group's public face opens this record. Such details are undoubtably as important as the sultry Sade shadings and low key vowel rollings which make this a less gleefully infectious outing than 'Break Out'. It's no less irritating however, like septic bubbles in a pop pond, SOS are too self-absorbed to cause refractions with the world outside their forced cheesy grins. And giggles.

THE BIG DISH: Christina's World (Virgin)
Rhapsody for wondrous lass, untainted by the world outside her room. The sentiment may be overly wistful, the sound AOR-unfashionable but a better tune it would be hard to find this week. Delicately stitching the space between portent and pellucid this casts a radiant joy, the warm glow at the song's centre offset by a just out of reach yearning. A rare dish and a quality hit. About number eight I'd say.



MANIFESTO!

PRESS UNDER PRESSURE

The Murdoch/Maxwell regimes in Fleet Street and Wapping, linked with Tebbit's attack on the "partisan" and "unprofitable" BBC, have put the British media on the defensive. MARK HOLLINGSWORTH looks at the growing threats to investigative journalism and editorial independence, and at the legal and economic reasons why the Press is less willing to exercise its power to disclose.

FOR RICHER OR POORER

VICTORIAN values? We got 'em.

A report by the Low Pay Unit, based on Department of Employment figures, reveals that the lowest paid workers in Britain today are now worse off, relative to the average, than they were 100 years ago. Meanwhile, a substantial percentage of white collar workers have seen their wages rise dramatically.

"The result of the Government's Dickensian economic policies will be a further widening of the pay divide between the poorest workers and the rest," commented the Low Pay Unit's director, Chris Pond. "In this respect, at least, Mrs Thatcher has achieved a return to Victorian values."

With the introduction of the Government's Wages Act, which reduces minimum wage protection, the pay gulf is set to grow larger as workers in certain areas of the economy face wage cuts. Meanwhile Youthaid — a charity set up to fight youth unemployment — have just issued their report entitled LORD YOUNG'S FLEXIBLE FRIENDS. In it they claim the Government's assertion that the rise in part time work helps women who want to work flexible hours is totally false.

They state that the majority of part time workers are teenagers unable to find full time work and, furthermore, nearly half of this part time youth workforce are only temporarily employed.

It's enough to send you up the chimneys, Guv.

LAST SUMMER I spent three months working on a story with David Leigh and Paul Lashmar of *The Observer*. The subject under investigation was MIS's links with the BBC, specifically the fact that the Security Services had been vetting and blacklisting the Corporation's employees for nearly 50 years. One of the victims of MIS's vetting procedures was Isabel Hilton, who is now *The Independent's* Latin America Editor. She had successfully applied for a job with BBC Scotland, but — after the BBC's personnel office had checked with MIS — the offer was swiftly withdrawn. The Security Services claimed that she used to be a member of the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding (SACU) which was classified as a subversive organisation. This was despite the fact that SACU's chairman was Lord Asa Briggs, the BBC's official historian.

On Thursday August 15 1985, three days before publication of the article, we contacted Isabel Hilton, who was then an Assistant Foreign Editor on *The Sunday Times*, and told her how MIS had stopped her from working for the BBC. Hilton immediately rushed over to tell the Foreign Editor, Stephen Milligan, about the story. "Rubbish," replied Milligan, "that sort of thing doesn't happen in this country."

This response ensured that *The Sunday Times* did not follow up the story and *The Observer* was given a free ride over its main competitor. But Milligan's response revealed more than professional misjudgement. It showed a much deeper malaise that is permeating through most of the printed and broadcasting media: a lack of moral and political backbone to take on the institutions of power and authority in our society. Instead of calling all agents of authority and control to account — the City, the State, unacceptable faces of capitalism and the government of the day — most of the media now attack the weak and defenceless. I call it the Rotating Scapegoat. Hence the following solutions: Unemployment? Blame the "scroungers". Crime? Blame the blacks. Inflation? Blame the Trade Unions. "Permissive" society? Blame the teachers. The end result, of course, is that the real guilty men (and women) get off scot free while their victims (the poor, the unemployed, black people and anyone else who can't sue for libel) are blamed for any economic or social crisis that arises.

But has this always been the case in Britain? I would say not. It is true that there has always been a section of the media that will pillory the weak and protect the strong. But until recently there has also been another group of journalists and broadcasters that will just as vigorously defend the weak and attack the strong. The old *Sunday Times* and *Daily Mirror* were notable examples of this. In the '60s and most of the '70s these newspapers had the ability to expose social and economic injustices without being politically partisan; a crucial test of editorial independence. Many television and radio current affairs programmes performed a similar public service. But the current position is that only *The Observer* and Granada TV's *World In Action* fulfil their proper function — to monitor power in a sceptical and inquiring manner.

Why has this happened? Some journalists like Donald Treford, editor of *The Observer* since '75, argue that it is

due to draconian legislation, obsessive secrecy and government intimidation.

"The law doesn't touch papers who libel poor people, make up interviews, invade privacy and engage in general muck-raking," says Treford. "But it makes life impossible for papers who want to investigate the rich and powerful, to probe the waste in government departments and to find out about the financial connections of politicians. It does this through refusal to reform the laws on official secrets and libel, and by refusing to reform properly the law on contempt."

There is some substance to Treford's claim. For example, there is no legal defence if alleged defamatory remarks are published in good faith after months of diligent research on an issue of public interest. Instead, by using the libel laws and delaying tactics, devious lawyers have enabled corrupt Establishment figures to escape exposure.

Hiding behind Britain's veil of obsessive secrecy is not enough to explain why most of the media has descended into a posture of supine subservience towards the Establishment. No, the real reason lies in the changes in ownership in Fleet Street, notably the purchase of *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* by Rupert Murdoch and the Mirror Group by Robert Maxwell. Not only has this meant that the national press has become even more Right-wing and pro-Establishment, but Murdoch and Maxwell have also used their new acquisitions to promote their business and commercial interests in cable and satellite television. In order for Murdoch and Maxwell's TV commercial ventures to be profitable the BBC, in particular, had to be undermined; this put pressure on the government to privatise parts of the corporation and put the franchises up for auction. And guess who would be first in line with their bids? Murdoch and Maxwell.

Unfortunately the campaign against the BBC has its effects. The Corporation is increasingly deferential to the Government and editorially weak (hence the *Real Lives* fiasco and other programmes which have been shelved because they were deemed "controversial"). Although the broadcasting services have not resorted to Fleet Street's propaganda and overt partiality, there has been a tendency to cover themselves with a spurious form of "objectivity". For the BBC management, this means that if they are criticised both by the Left and Right of the political spectrum then they "must be on the right track". The result is what Tony Benn rightly calls "the SDP at prayer".

What is needed is a return to an old maxim coined by the American investigative journalist Brit Hulme who said: "They (journalists) shouldn't try to be objective. They should try to be honest. Their so-called objectivity is just a guise for superficiality. . . They never get round to finding out if the guy is telling the truth. What they pass off for objectivity is just a mindless kind of neutrality".

Mark Hollingsworth is the author of *The Press And Political Dissent — A Question Of Censorship* (Pluto Press, £6.95). He is a journalist on TVS' current affairs programme *Facing South*.

SANCTIONED

The Lyric has stated that the play will not be taken off but the protest does come at a time when, it is rumoured, the Anti Apartheid movement are gearing up for a massive protest against Paul Simon's impending April concerts here in Britain.

Simon, who broke the cultural boycott by using South African musicians on his best selling 'Gracelands' LP, has consistently claimed that by paying the musicians full rates and according them every amenity, he has broken no sanctions. However, many Anti Apartheid supporters are reported to be disappointed with this response. Watch this space for further developments.

HAMMERSMITH's branch of the Anti Apartheid movement is currently urging theatre audiences to boycott The Lyric's production of *The Bijers Sunbird*. AA claim that the play, which is performed and produced by an all white Azanian cast, supports the current Botha regime through its lack of comment on the Apartheid struggles in South Africa.

"The South African government," commented AA's Steve Parry, "is very particular about who it lets out of the country and this is an export which contravenes the boycott. Our demands for the play to end will continue and we will be picketing every day while the play runs".

FACING THE FUTURE

EVERY TWO hours in Britain someone commits suicide, while the suicide rate for under-25 year olds is steadily increasing. *I Can't Face Tomorrow*, a new publication by Samaritans worker Norman Keir, sets out to demystify the subject and break down misconceptions. His survey is aimed at families or friends affected by the suicide of someone close, those who themselves feel suicidal, and anyone

generally wanting to find out more about the issue. Possible causes are discussed, along with practical sections for help. Published by Thorsons Ltd at £4.99, *I Can't Face Tomorrow* is an important contribution to a problem that — in an era of rising unemployment and with the 'sword-of-Damocles' threat of nuclear annihilation — has become as political as it is personal.

THE USE AND ABUSE OF TERRORISM

THE PREVENTION of Terrorism Act was rushed through Parliament 13 years ago as a 'temporary' measure in response to the IRA bombing campaign in Britain. Since then over 6000 people, most of them Irish, have been detained and questioned for up to seven days under the Act — but only 1.2 per cent of these have been charged under its powers.

Suspect Community, a hard-hitting new GLC-commissioned video, highlights the real purpose of this legislation: "The PTA has nothing to do with terrorism. . . it's used to gather information and to harass Irish people to stop them becoming involved

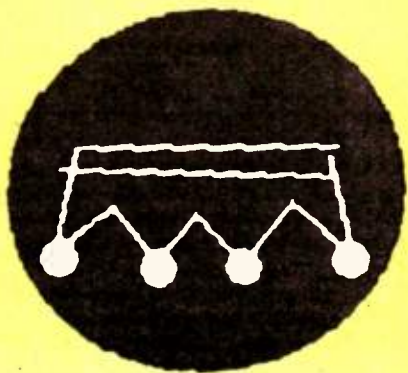
in Irish political affairs".

Few people watching this 50-minute video can fail to be shocked by the ex-PTA detainees' recollections of their horrifying treatment while in police custody. The Labour Party is committed to repealing the PTA, and the National Council for Civil Liberties believes the Act "has severely undermined the principles of natural justice and the rule of law".

Suspect Community can be hired for £12.50 a day or purchased for £60 from Albany Video Distribution, The Albany, Douglas Way, London SE8 4AG (01-692 6322).



"And were those macs on England's pleasant pastures seen?" The Queen's Councillors.



NEAT JACKETS IN JERUSALEM

The revolution, as we all know, will not be televised, but those ever changing dudes THE STYLE COUNCIL reckon that's no excuse for the ritual humiliation bands habitually endure on primetime TV. So, to coincide with their latest vinyl outbursts, they've made *Jerusalem*, a film of their very own. STUART COSGROVE lists their latest leanings on life, love, Lefties, lighting and loafers. QC Lee and her boys twigged by DEREK RIDGERS.

where we fit into the scheme of things on TV and radio."

Is the "old shit" that Janice Long plays intrinsically worse than the Saturday morning programmes, the romper slot, in which television fulfils its greatest function, the babysitter that doesn't raid the fridge? Mick Talbot, a father and a wit, finds it impossible to condone either the excited infancy or the pop and slapstick formulae of children's television:

"When we did *Saturday Superstore* we were on with Cheggers, a great moment in my life, I really tried hard to get into the whole thing, our record company had always been accusing us of being miserable bastards. I thought we were really trying, being all all chirpy and 'Hi kids, how's tricks'. But they still moaned. No matter how much we tried we came over looking like the mean uncle every kid hates."

Paul Weller, single and childless, seems to agree:

"When we look back at the video of *Saturday Superstore*—it was when 'Ever Had It Blue' came out—we just look stupid. We just don't fit into those sort of things, it's really humiliating. It can look really desperate, as if you really need to sell records to kids or your career's in ruins. We don't even like the idea of having bill posters stuck up when a record comes out. They look just as desperate. You don't have any control about who's stuck up next to you. I don't want to be up on a wall next to Kim Wilde; it looks like you're desperate for publicity."

THE STYLE Council are about to release a new single 'It Didn't Matter', followed by an album 'The Fourth Long Player' and a 33-minute debut film *Jerusalem*. The film is their way of trying to ensure they stay far away from the ranks of desperation and at least preserve some control over they way they are represented. "We couldn't really take programmes like *The Tube* seriously after they had Paul McCartney on, that was mutual desperation. A man of his age, it's disgusting. I have this horrible feeling that one day in the past someone decided there wasn't enough pop on television so we were punished with *The Tube*."

Jerusalem is a difficult film to describe. It shifts generically from satire to sit-com and from a parody of the pop video to wayward costumed drama. Richard Coles of The Communards is the film's narrator and he adds a further layer of confusion by imitating the confiding English tones of *Brideshead Revisited* as he recounts the travels of four style councillors, Mick Talbot, Steve White, D. C. Lee and Paul Welly as they embark on a Lambretta odyssey through England's green and pleasant land.

Jerusalem thematically reflects The Style Council's hostility to the self-congratulatory whoredom of pop television, particularly in a studio based scene which cruelly satirises *The Tube*, by featuring Yvonne French as a flirtatious interviewer coming face-to-face with a fictitious super group, The Very Tall Buildings. One by one the group parody the excessive vanity of real pop stars. Mick is a drunken Liverpool scally, Steve White is a barely coherent 'coke' addict who does anti-drug benefit gigs, D. C. Lee giggles incessantly and Paul Weller flirts with Nazi regalia, wearing a Jerry helmet, a toothbrush moustache and a kilt. The words used throughout this sequence are

apparently real quotes culled from the pop press in which modern designer groups like The Thompson Twins and Wham! mouth Yamamoto platitudes in which image, false idiom and 17 grand haircuts are the order of the day.

Jerusalem, directed by Richard Belfield who previously worked for *World In Action* and *Diverse Reports* as a documentary film-maker and produced by Lucy Hooberman, was filmed on location over four weeks last year. Initially it was intended as a 'B' feature film for cinema release but it now seems likely that the film will be screened on either Channel 4 or BBC2 sometime in the next few months. It has the obvious stamp of The Style Council, equal measures of 'politics' and 'romance' within a visually stylish format that satirises currents within contemporary British society and shows a detailed sense of the cloth and its cut.

The small picturesque village of Aldbourne, complete with croquet on the village green, is populated by black villagers who go about their daily routine oblivious to the role reversal that has taken them out of the inner cities. A black Queen Elizabeth stands at the village cross reciting the hymn 'Jerusalem' as The Style Council drive by on scooters, dressed in white Levi suits, primary colours and the inevitable loafers: nice jackets in *Jerusalem*. According to Weller, the film is as much a joke about them as a comment on contemporary society, "we're always being accused of being self-righteous, but the film is a joke at our own expense, it's self-effacing".

Like Matt Johnson's *Infected*, broadcast recently on Channel 4, *Jerusalem* comments on Britain's national subservience to the USA. In a church sequence in which the Stars and Stripes fly over the pulpit, Weller plays on a well-worn metaphor. America is the free democratic system of the Wranglers advert, a democracy in denim, and Britain is just the torn back pocket.

"It's a typical anti-American tirade which sends up the image of Paul Weller as the angry young man stereotype. The rest of the group just sit around listening, really pissed off with my speeches. It's having a go at America and me, but in a way that scene isn't representative, it's really an anti-British film, against the nationalism of the Empire and the football hooligans."

AS JERUSALEM unfolded in the lanes and hamlets of Wiltshire, Mick Talbot re-discovered himself, playing the unrequired role of a stock-company actor, a Victorian gent with flagging moustache in one scene, a withering coward in the next and off-camera the fiction continued as he hammed up even the most mundane tasks.

In the lounge-bar of The Savernake Forest Hotel, when shooting had well and truly stopped, his Stanislavskian tones still wandered from lucid commentary to self-parody. Mick even dignified pints of lager by drinking with hushed gentility, knowing that a bar full of locals had already spotted his *alter-ego*, the renowned thespian, Sir Michael Talbot OBE, a friend of the Redgraves, an Attenborough in loafers and Argyle socks. Pardon the adenoids viewers, but this gentleman is above pop television, only a *South Bank* retrospective is good enough.

Melvyn Bragg: Tell me about *Jerusalem*.

Sir Michael: "I'm not sure if it will turn out to be what's expected of us. Hopefully it will be entertaining to people who stumble on it. The imagery is very good but I think people will probably be expecting a *radical statement*, partly because The Style Council are usually associated with politics and partly because we went outside the pop video scene and used a director with a background in documentary films. Some people will probably think, 'Oh yeah. Heavy number coming up here'. But it isn't."

Melvyn Bragg: Can you talk about the film's influences?

Sir Michael: "We're fans of film much more than video. We like Lindsay Anderson's work, the way he comments on everyday society by using fantasy. And we wanted a really good visual look; it sounds really pretentious, but I like David Lean's films."

Melvyn Bragg: Yes. The scene with you and Paul on the Lambrettas is very

reminiscent of *Bridge On The River Kwai*. (Pause for aesthetic self-gratification.) Does it depart from politics?

Sir Michael: "No it's not a departure from politics, The Style Council's stance hasn't altered at all, the references are probably more oblique than people might expect, but they're still there. You could think of all sorts of things to describe it—I'm definitely going to regret this—the film's a sort of surreal satire. God that sounds so pretentious. How will that look in the *NME*?"

Melvyn Bragg: I'm not sure; I read *Smash Hits*. It has what Roland Barthes called *jouissance*. What problems did you encounter making the film?

Sir Michael: "The worst problems were actually getting it off the ground. We went to see this guy at Channel 4 and told him our plans. We said, 'We want to keep it insular, the story-line will be developed within the group.' He said, 'Well, have you written dialogue before?' And we said, 'We know what we want to say and we'll improvise around that.' Then the guy started to give us this long lecture, he said, 'You have to consider people like Harold Pinter. When he says "Pass the cigarettes", he doesn't mean "Pass the cigarettes", he means something much deeper. He thinks about every pause. Every comma has a meaning.' We should have told him where to go."

Melvyn Bragg: He's right. You shouldn't mock culture. This might be ITV but every advert is 30 seconds of cinematic purity. Claude Chabrol with Persil in the starring role. You should never mock culture.

As the lights fade on Sir Michael, he is reduced to his rightful role as a pop star, a fan of the cinema, a reluctant commentator who knows that even the most simple conversation about film can creep unobtrusively into the land of the pseud. Spare him. Permit Mick his sense of *social satire*, this is the *NME*, where every comma has a meaning,,, and every sentence its own full stop

THE STYLE Council's public loathing for mainstream pop TV has led them, perhaps inevitably, to appear on less prestigious shows like *Solid Soul*, the Friday evening soul programme that regularly attracts more viewers than the higher profile and better funded 'giant' *The Tube*. Appearing on *Solid Soul* was something of a statement, a rejection of the rock and pop legacy and an alignment with modern black music. It's an alignment that has increasingly gathered momentum since The Style Council recorded the miners' benefit song 'Soul Deep' under the auspices of The Council Collective and brought together two generations and two nations of soul culture in the vocal shape of Britain's Junior Giscombe and black America's Jimmy Ruffin. Subsequently, Paul Weller has remixed General Johnson's beach soul hit 'Lover Boy' and invited The Valentine Brothers to produce his current single 'It Didn't Matter'. To compound and advance the 'soul connection', The Style Council have also worked with British rappers The Dynamic Three on a vote registration rap, 'Right To Go'.

The opening song of *Jerusalem* takes soul another degree deeper with D. C. Lee standing swathed in white silk singing the opening bars of Anita Baker's 'Angel'. The Style Council's 'Angel' transforms the song into a duet, and emphasises its pop potential, but it will undoubtedly get caught up in yet another tangled argument about the merits and morality of cover versions. Since the '60s when The Beatles weighed in with Barrett Strong's 'Money', The Stones recorded The Valentinos' 'It's All Over Now' and The Moody Blues had a hit with the Bessie Banks ballad 'Go Now', the commercialisation of black American music by British-based white artists has controversially lurched from homage to exploitation. Paul Weller is adamant that The Style Council will set the agenda for 'Angel':

"It'll only be criticised by soul snobs. 'Angel' isn't a classic from 10 years ago, it's a relatively unknown song from an import album that deserves to be heard by more people. It's a great song, that's why we've recorded it. I hate all that thing about 'you ruined a good song'. If someone came up to

CONTINUES PAGE 33

THE MISSION



THE NEW SINGLE WASTELAND

7" WASTELAND
C/W SHELTER FROM
THE STORM - LIVE

12" WASTELAND
(EXTENDED VERSION)
C/W SHELTER FROM
THE STORM - LIVE
(EXTENDED VERSION)
& DANCING
BAREFOOT - LIVE

RECORDED DURING THE
WORLD CRUSADE BRITISH
TOUR OCT/NOV 1986



7" MYTH 2 · 12" MYTHX 2



Can you feel the 'force'? A CERTAIN RATIO's decade of inconsistent, meandering flight between trash and flashes of brilliance may well have come to an end. JOHN McCREADY is reconverted to the funky FAC boys by the new album, by their long-term struggle, and by tales of tantrums with Tony Wilson. Forces' favourites photographed by STEVE PYKE.



IN A bar that plays Prefab Sprout and Motown Gold; a bar that sells French cigarettes and designer lager, a bar that houses all seven of Manchester's Golf-driving yuppies, four reasonable young men count their pennies. They have a manager called Mick.

"Hey, Mick," they say, "lend us a fiver." In the scheme of things, they should be drinking cognac on the house. But life's not like that.

A Certain Ratio have spent ten years making music which has gone up and down but never over and out.

They were just bits of kids - 16 and 17 - when they began their all-night party; growing up in public, shifting from funky headaches and existentialism-made-easy to jazz flecks and serious rhythm. As musicians, A Certain Ratio became proficient. As a human being with more than just music to think about, I got bored.

Now we're sitting here, talking over Marvin Gaye and Faron Young, thrown back together by 'Force', a startlingly complete new record from a group who, ten years on, have nothing but sticks and strings and drums and wires to call their own.

Martin Moscrop thinks there's something wrong. "The record industry is like any other. The workers get ripped off. There are people on 30 grand a year telling you, *the musicians*, the shop-floor workers, what to do. They then take the profit. But I'm more concerned about the music than the money. I'm happy as long as I can pay my rent..."

Jeremy Kerr says, "We couldn't put a financial price on our music. But we know what it's worth in terms of respect."

Respect. Recognition. Justice. When Donald Johnson sleeps at night, these are the things his dreams are made of. When Donald wakes up, he is not modest.

"We're not saying we're great cos we know we're f*****g great. And we can back it up on any stage in the world, with any band anywhere in the world. But we're not as popular as we'd like to be. We're still the sort of underground, *culty* type of band. Over the past year or so, we've looked at other record companies, other ways of putting our music out. But nobody wants to take risks. A lot of people look at ACR as a risk. They've been around so long, why haven't they had a chart hit? - it's a load of shit. There are loads of people around who don't need that fool's yardstick to justify their existence. Look at Cameo, they made *eight* albums before they got what they deserved..."

'Force' is the fifth recording by A Certain Ratio. It's the point at which all those disparate threads, the parched rhythms, the shrieks and sparks and those oddly *sedated* melodies break the surface; start making sense. Jeremy Kerr, who's lived with these sounds since 1977, can't see what all the fuss is about.

"Maybe it's just taken people a long time to accept our music. What we do now is what we've always done. People have accepted this LP more readily than any of the others... I don't know why that is."

Do you resent the fact that 'Force' has brushed the rest of your history under the carpet?

"No, I don't resent it - I think about it but I don't resent it..."

Donald Johnson tells me A Certain Ratio

TEN YEARS ON THE FACTORY FLOOR

are "into the Miles album". Martin Moscrop says a friend told him 'Tutu' reminded him of the group. Martin seems very proud of that. Donald talks of Davis and Anita Baker and Cameo as 'quality music'.

A Certain Ratio are 'quality music' too and, if prompted, Donald will also tell you that pop criminals like Sigue Sigue Sputnik and Duran Duran, things that dispense with songs and sticks and sweat in favour of high heels and hairspray, will soon be getting their cards.

"None of them create *music*. They just create a mass of crap which is sold as music. It's all around us 24 hours a day and we're conditioned to think that it's music. But it's not. We know we're far superior to all of that. Look at Anita Baker. What's that about? It's about singing and *music* and craftsmen playing their instruments. It's *not* about someone programming tricks and toys which make exactly the same noise every time they're switched on... who's going to play a Sigue Sigue Sputnik record a year from now? It's dated, it's finished, it's *out of the window*."

While Donald's war on the bullshit pauses for breath, I get a doubt in edgeways. What about all that technology on 'Force', the expensive funny noise machines. You've used those things too.

"Exactly. But we *interact* with them. We use them, they don't use us."

And this thing about glam and glitter. Haven't there been people who've made great music while looking like great jessies?

"Well... yeah... maybe Marc Bolan did it..."

As a funky drummer who survived the funkadelic storms of the early '80s (Favourite shirts and fascist grooves) Donald would do better to think about The Chocolate Coated Freak himself—George Clinton.

BUT OF course, there are those who can't see the difference between Sigue Sigue Sputnik and ACR. Both make noise, records and potentially money, say those unit-obsessed capitalist bogeymen who used to wear silk bomber jackets with 'Clapton Tour '73' zapped across the back. Now they disguise themselves with 501s and Good To Go caps. 'Force' and the relative furor it has created means one or two record co. Sierras have made their way up the M6. ACR are on the shopping list. Will Donald Johnson end up in pink rubber trousers? Will we see Love Missiles flying over Manchester? It hardly seems likely.

Though the relationship between ACR and Factory Communications seems slightly less than blissful. Until 1983, Tony Wilson, executive fetishist and Granada reporter, played the part of manager to the Thin Boys from the Hulme flats.

"He was like our dad when we started," says Martin, "but he refused to believe we'd grown up... we were just teenagers when we signed to Factory and he looked after us in those early days. I think it was a situation he enjoyed. But now he's got to respect us—we're not kids anymore... we haven't had Tony on our side. He lost interest in us and it made a difference."

A story unwinds of the errant father and his funky sons falling out over Factory's pre-'Force' lack of support for ACR.

Has it come to blows then, Donald? "I've threatened his life several times and I've meant it. He winds you up. A couple of months ago he wouldn't talk to us and, now that he's heard the album, he wants to live with us. He tries to manipulate you mentally. He knows I'm very extreme and I have a very short and *bad* temper so he winds me up in front of people who he knows will stop me



ACR (clockwise from left): Donald, Martin, Tony and Jeremy, forcing a smile.

from killing him there and then... but I've sussed it now..."

Is it wise to say these things, Donald?

"I'll say it right to his face (I believe he would). It's not that kind of relationship. He's spoilt basically, an only child and I want you to put that down..."

I will do.

"Good. What would you be like if you had no-one to play with as a kid..."

Through laughs, Jeremy, Martin and quiet saxophonist Tony Quigley warn Donald that such remarks may result in a lawyer with a Peter Saville-designed writ calling on him.

"I don't give a f**k—I know where he lives..."

There are more laughs. Then Jeremy—after telling me how in New York, he and Martin assaulted Tony in a club by stealing his joint and spitting in his face—dons his diplomatic head.

"Things have changed at Factory, but I can't really see us being able to work with anyone else. We have a lot of freedom. And it's great that we do have a personal relationship with the guy who runs the

company. We can sort out any grievances face to face. You couldn't do that on a major... I think we're sorting out a way of working together. But it has to be said that things have changed at Factory. We used to feel a part of something special. I don't feel that way now..."

JEREMY KERR writes the words that worry the music of A Certain Ratio. If the job were handed to Donald Johnson, the first thing he would write would be:

"*Music was my first love and it will be my last*". And John Miles, of course, would sue.

"When we make a record or play live, we try to make our music as good as it can be. We practice a lot. There aren't enough hours in the day to do all we want to do. There are always new ideas, new ways and not enough hours to work on them. We regard sleep as a waste of time. If there were another 24 hours in the day, we'd be happy

guys. It's an unfashionable attitude but we don't give a f**k. We see each other every day, not just when we're playing live or recording. We don't have holidays or shit like that because we want to be in that rehearsal room working, stock-piling tunes. I don't want to go out in front of 1,000 people and sound like a jerk... But don't get me wrong. We're not musos and I don't want you to put that we're musos. We just love *playing music*. There is a difference."

The others nod agreement. Donald sounds excited. Is it better than sex then, this music?

"No, nothing's better than sex."

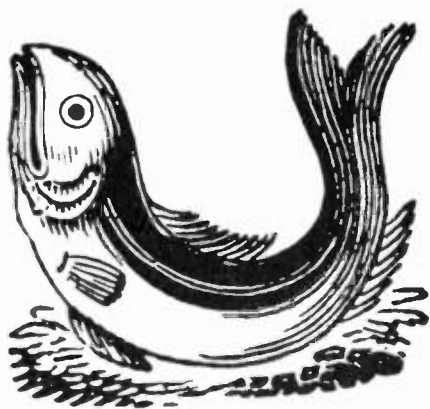
A close second?

"Not even a close second?"

There is laughter. There are handshakes. The interview falls apart and I make my way out. It's raining in Manchester. A Certain Ratio drift toward the station studying their timetables. They should be rumbling through the city in a big car, supping champagne and pulling pampered faces through the plate glass windows. But life's not like that.

THE TROUBLE WITH BERNIE...

Haringey council leader and prospective Labour MP, BERNIE GRANT shot to infamy over his anti-police remarks during the Broadwater Farm riots. TIM LOTT finds out whether the "Barmy Bernie" bashing by Fleet Street has forced Grant to compromise his political beliefs and become more tactful. Hero or villain by BLEDDYN BUTCHER.



THE FIRST time I saw Bernie Grant, he was making a speech in front of a rapturous crowd of students. He was enjoying it. It sort of lit him up from the inside, the politician in his element. I walked out halfway through, the nip of my teeth nearly cutting my lip. The cause of my one-man boycott was a remark by Grant that football hooligans were not really hooligans at all. It was apparently all Thatcher's fault, he claimed. This was said after some particularly vicious outbreak of soccer violence which had turned my stomach, and Grant's comment struck me as, at best, insensitive.

Insensitivity is only one of many descriptions that have attached themselves to Bernie Grant since his celebrated comments about the police getting "a bloody good hiding" in Tottenham's Broadwater Farm riots. Others, from a variety of different perspectives, would probably include tactless, honest, uncompromising, naive, stubborn. For some on the Left, he's a hero; for many on the Right he's the bogeyman successor to Arthur Scargill. The Labour leadership are embarrassed by him; a reconciliation with Kinnock after Grant's "bloody good hiding" remarks was almost immediately destroyed by Grant's condemnation of Roy Hattersley as a racist.

This outspokenness has given the yellow press a field day with Grant or "Barmy Bernie" as *The Sun* likes to describe him. Barmy or not, his forthrightness seems to have strengthened his political base. In the local election following the riots, he was returned with an increased majority and subsequently was selected as a prospective MP in a safe seat.

THE MODERNIST, rather shabby concrete block of Haringey Civic Centre is a long way from the palace of Westminster. Employees have to watch their ideological step; the lady who shows us up to The Leader's office immediately apologises when she describes the caravan dwellers camped in sight of the windows as "gypsies" — "sorry, I mean travelling people". Bernie Grant is sometimes Bernie, sometimes Mr Grant, but most often just the Leader. It's just a traditional form of courtesy, but in these surroundings it has a curiously threatening, Orwellian ring about it.

In person, Bernie Grant is anything but threatening. He is friendly and, by and large, mild, but at the same time guarded and highly sensitive about the press. This becomes almost immediately apparent

when I draw what Bernie considers to be a wrong conclusion about his early political affiliations. Growing up in Guyana, he was educated at a Catholic school but idolised Che and Fidel Castro. I suggest it is odd to be both a Catholic and a communist, a remark to which he bristles.

"I wasn't a communist and never have been a communist. It's you that suggest this. This is the problem I've got with the media, nobody asks me what I am. This is partly the arrogance of Fleet Street, partly the arrogance of white people."

Grant's sensitivity is hardly surprising, given the beating he's taken from Fleet Street, but the remark also contains hints, later to become apparent, that in this area, Bernie is his own worst enemy. For the time being, however, it's enough to make a mental note of the fact that Grant has stated with a great deal of vigour that he was never a communist. Nothing, of course, to be ashamed of in the first place.

He arrived in Britain in 1963 — "it struck me as grey and drab. I wasn't one of the people who thought that Britain was the land of milk and honey. There was a lot of racism, it was cold and tough."

At this time, he was largely apolitical, studying engineering in Edinburgh. Grant left because as a black student, he wasn't allowed to South Africa on a scholarship. Having dropped out, he finally ended up working at the Post Office and became involved in a strike by telephone workers because of "ridiculous and archaic management. We had to raise our hands in order to go to the toilet, and this idiot would say yes or no. If the place was busy, people would be forced to wet themselves on the seat. If you were a minute late, your pay was docked."

In the end the executive sold out the strike and this angered Grant enough to drive him into revolutionary politics — he joined the Socialist Labour League, an earlier incarnation of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

In 1976 he joined the Labour Party because he couldn't see a revolution coming after all. After a spell working with the London anti-fascist campaign — physically blocking fascists from marching — he became a councillor in 1978. Fighting the fascists bolstered his already powerful hatred of the National Front.

"If I had the power, I would ban them and whatever flows from that, and arrest them and gaoil them and deny them freedom of speech. I don't believe in all this nonsense of giving fascists the right to speak."

Bernie of course, is at his most passionate when talking about matters of race; it's the issue which resulted in his ill-advised comments after the murder of PC Blakelock. He admits to regretting those comments but he continues to defend the youth on the Broadwater Farm estate. "They felt they were fighting for their lives, that is why it was so violent, they thought the police were coming to exterminate them." Grant also says he would be prepared to die in the fight against racism.

THE FACT that the British police, and the British public at large, have a deep racist streak is undeniable. More complicated, but equally vital, is the question of its source and how, and if it can be removed.



"If I go to Hampstead the police will pick me up... police stop Blacks and beat them up and take away their freedom like they do in South Africa."

"I do not think it can be eradicated. I don't think people are born racist, they acquire racism through the society they live in. We can change that society, that's why we're socialists."

"Racism came out of the whole power relations in world domination of white people because they used technology to enslave and oppress. Racism flowed from that. The whites had to find a moral justification for domination, so they said 'these people are like savages, we are helping them out'. But they denied culture and language. If the power relations are changed then a lot of racism will die away."

"White people are racist, they can't help that, because you're brought up in a racist society. You can't avoid that — unless you take deliberate steps to unpick the racism within you. Racism came before capitalism, it's one way the ruling class use to keep people separated, divide and rule."

Grant says the black youth believe that racism in Britain in many ways parallels that in South Africa. He believes the comparison is valid.

"Oh yes, youth say they saw injustices in South Africa, and the hypocrisy of whites saying how terrible it is there, when they felt on Broadwater Farm they were suffering similar racism. For example we have pass laws in Britain; if I go to Hampstead the police will pick me up. This is absolutely valid. British racism is very subtle, because police stop Blacks and beat them up and take away their freedom like they do in South Africa. This is how the youth see it. I have to see it as different, because there are clear differences; because I'm leader of the council people don't call me nigger."

BERNIE GRANT is his own worst enemy. Not because he is inconsistent — true of most politicians — but because he is simply not yet very good at concealing these facts. At one minute he claims he has never been a communist, then minutes later openly confesses to having spent three years in a Trotskyist revolutionary organisation. He openly reveals that he resigned from Heriot Watt University not on a matter of principle as a stand against apartheid, but because they wouldn't let him go. He then says he would not only prevent NF members from speaking, but put them all in gaol, a step beyond anything in British political tradition and a lovely morsel to chew on for unfriendly forces who wish to portray him as an authoritarian nutter.

One moment he claims racism can't be eradicated (ie, that it's a product of human nature) then the next that it's a product of capitalist imperialism. Of course, it may be both, but if that is Grant's view, he doesn't make it clear. Finally he comes close to saying that there's hardly any difference between Britain and South Africa, another tasty dish to serve the tabloids.

In a sense Grant has backed himself into a corner. His outspoken stand after the Broadwater Farm riots won him considerable political support. At the same time the radical opinions that brought that support are like red rags to a bull. If he wants to be wise, he won't talk to a journalist again until he has learnt to be as glib and fraudulent as politicians are required to be. If he wants to be honest, then he is bound to suffer the consequences.

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EDITED BY ADRIAN THRILLS

ATTACCO DECENTE

United Kingdom Of America
(All Or Nothing)

THEY OUGHT to be Frank and Ernest, but in fact there are three of them – Mark Allen, Graham Barlow and Geoff Smith make up Attacco, political folkies whose maxi-single/mini-album is so right on its cover is graced by an endorsement from Billy Bragg. "Don't let anyone kid you about a 'folk revival'," he warns. "This band are as contemporary and important as any group making music for the late eighties."

Well, a glance down the instrumental line-up would tend to suggest the 'UKA' might be the sort of music best absorbed while wearing cheese-cloth and swigging cider at some West Country Tree Fair. Flamenco guitar, assorted dulcimers, a zither and a tiple (?) aren't the normal weapons of the political activist, but Attacco's barbed lyrical skills and hoarse delivery steer them clear of the twee or predictable. America's cultural and martial imperialism, Britain's two-faced legal system, the chilly reference points of Sellafeld and Debendox and Thalidomide... there's even wife-battering and the licence to wank of 'Touch Yourself', a song that could become the marching anthem of the safe sex generation.

So, scarcely a hey-nonny-no in sight – just three unimpeachable Socialist consciences on parade. Billy B claims they'll have us all dancing in the aisles when we catch them live, but meanwhile this opening salvo should set them in motion in most Labour strongholds.

Alan Jackson

RUBY TURNER

Women Hold Up The Sky
(Jive)

SOMETHING'S HAPPENING here. Well, not exactly here. Down in Willesden really. For at their High Road studio, Jive have concocted a formula that's already worked to their and Billy Ocean's advantage. The whole gizmo has something to do with taking black music sounds then producing them in such a ritzy fashion that the results become prime commodities for yuppie-ware parties without causing hackles to rise among the *Blues And Soul* fraternity.

It's a neat trick and Jive have turned it with some aplomb, recently re-moulding Millie Jackson into something acceptable to both the Whitehouse contingent and deep soul diehards.

Now's the turn of Ruby Turner to strut her stuff for the perusal of those in sock-stench bedsits and Aremis-aromatised boudoirs alike. And, yet again, the play works, as the passion-filled Brum-hummer vocally stretches out over a collection of songs that include her Ocean-produced turntable hit, 'If You're Ready (Come Go With Me)' once a Staples staple; Womack and

Womack's 'Hurting Inside'; Alice Cooper's 'Only Women Bleed'; Dan Penn and Spooner Oldham's 'Woman Left Lonely'; along with a clutch of originals penned or co-penned by resident Jive jazzier Jonathan Butler.

Eminently able to deal with anything tossed in her direction – an ability fine-honed by long-service in everyone's back-up squad – Ruby sounds equally at home in a reggae or in a contemporary R&B situation. And when she heads back to the Chicken Shack via 'I'd Rather Go Blind', though she opts for the subtle rather than the full-frontal approach, at no point does the lady suggest that she'd rather go bland. Something's happening here. Really!

Fred Dellar

VARIOUS

Rob Olson's Chicago Jack Beat
(Rhythm King)

IN THE Windy City, House's legacy has always been one of exclusion. An underground phenomenon for well over five years, its purveyors were reduced to concocting their makeshift replies to an early '80s electro-boom by virtue of being excluded from clubs where hipness levels were measured in terms of the amounts of imported vinyl consumed.

In return, and keeping with the separation ethic that's a way of life, these Jackmasters devised jacktracks that would seem impenetrable to the untrained ear; to anyone unaccustomed or unwilling to deal with the pump-pump-pump of regulated beats; to the other side.

But, once distanced from such an uncondusive environment, House hoists itself up on flamboyance then becomes pop. These examples of high energy-levels, short lifespans and functional uniformity, make their presence felt through economy; an economy of means. They're licensed from a cluster of small labels. They reapply the garage sound electronically, sparingly. The Force's 'It's OK', for instance, dwells on stretching and extending the word 'it' and you marvel at the method by which they use less for more. Simplicity is operative here. Along with tackiness and innuendo. These are all good things. But not so much as some uncredited voice on The Elite's 'I'm House'. It's the stand-out; imperfect past.

Side two is ecstasy, innuendo, heavy breathing. But methods again prevail. These three jacktracks draw their clout from espousing the positive aspects of being flimsy; by sounding like they were cobbled together in an afternoon, to be floor-tested later that same day. The allure of Instant House. It's still reaching these shores by the boatload. And will continue to.

Dele Fadele



SLOW: HEAVY TRAFFIC

FELA KUTI

Teacher Don't Teach Me Nonsense
(London)

TWO FELA stories:

A friend of mine nearly drowned in a bathtub while listening to Fela's 'classic' 'Lady'. She was waiting for the singing to start and she, er, fela sleep after 20 minutes. OK, it was me.

Guy walks into a record shop in New York City and says "Hey, I want that African shit, ya know, like 'I Zimbra' only more authentic. Kinda like Sunny Ade, but this guy plays like these really long introductions and, like, his entire family and wives play on his records". The man behind the counter points him to the F section. The man of the eternal introduction is Fela Anikulapo Kuti.

Fela is big on brassy prologues. He drags every syllable out, explores every melodic possibility either side of every note, and fills in what's left with much gasping and grunting. By the time he gets to the actual song, it's quite possible he's sired six or seven more Kutis to fill in another horn section.

So, no raised eyebrows please when you buy the new double LP and find only two songs on it. 'Teacher Don't Teach Me Nonsense' (instrumental and vocal) and 'Look And Laugh' (instrumental and vocal). The first is about the farce of the Nigerian election and the second about the ills of Nigerian society, particularly Fela's bum rap for armed robbery.

The 'nonsense' being taught on the first track is the government's lessons of corruption and tradition, as the lyrics ring out in call and response, much like a musical civil rights

VARIOUS

Play New Rose For Me (New Rose)

THIS IS a double LP of New Rose artists covering other New Rose artists' songs. Which, on the face of it, may seem like a crappy deal. But, as it turns out, more stars shine on New Rose than they do in heaven.

An exaggeration, but it's a surprise to find people like Bo

meeting. The chorus' responses progress from servile to inquisitive to cynical to hopeful. It's a brilliant structure, carried by a swirling, seductive brass section and distant, haunting conga drums: how to be lazy but still politically correct, as if we needed lessons in that!

He alludes so heavily to Oyinbo's European fixation, you wonder where the line is drawn between cultural preservation and xenophobia, though Fela's argument is easier to swallow than Matt Johnson's simply because Africa is so far away, and, more importantly, Fela's a better musician.

But he's also a bit of a misogynistic prat, which is why it's harder to sympathise with the sentiment of 'Look And Laugh': those who read the Fela interview in these pages will listen and swear. Musically, it's faultless, which makes the instrumental version more of a blessing than a rip-off. The issues he tackles in 'Look And Laugh' range from the collapsing Nigerian economy under former president Shagari, to the burning of Fela's house, murder of his mother and his arrest for armed robbery; the lyrical link between the general distress and Fela's personal problems is a verse on road construction being halted – could be a metaphor, but probably just elusive Kutian logic – meaningful only to those well-read on Nigerian current events.

Which is not to say you can't appreciate Fela if you have only a vague understanding of Nigerian politics, and scorn for nepotism, misogyny and sexism.

'Nonsense' is still a musical triumph. Go run that bath water.

Michele Kirsch

favourite, The Sirens Of 7th Avenue's dub-scratch-rock mix of 'Ultra Violence'.

Of special note: The Dead Kennedys' approach to 'I Fought The Law'... "and I won". A tirade against Dan White who murdered San Franciscan gay leader Harvey Milk and became a "hero". As is usual with the Kennedys, the music is shit but the sentiments are spot on.

Richard North



Chumbafun?

CHUMBAWAMBA
Pictures Of Starving
Children Sell Records
(Agit-Prop)

SURPRISINGLY, and unfashionably, this is not all about fast girls and cars in tight T-shirts. Oh no, Chumbawamba are intent on digging their own grave commercially by subtitled their album 'Starvation Charity And Rock & Roll, Lies & Traditions' – far too complex a mouthful for any nipper still laden with granny-given record vouchers. The diatribes of the 'wambas' are massed instead against the mighty multinationals and plump pop stars of this world who, burdened with guilt and dollars, helped alleviate starvation and "feed the world".

In leading us through the Third, sorry Developing, World of poverty, starvation, persecution and exploitation, Chumbawamba point the finger at chemical giants Unilever, 'Coca-Colonisation', and Thorn-EMI ("There's one solution and this is it / The dog leaps on the gramophone / And has a shit"). Their purpose, of course, is to show that the corporations who morally supported the Live Aid, Band Aid and 'We Are The World' projects (which emphasised "helping African people help themselves") are the self-same multi-nationals who exploited the continent in the first place; who made their fortunes on the back of cheap labour and who dictated the terms of trade which turned nations rich in natural resources into depressed debtors to the West.

"The companies sponsor Aid because they know it can never force change," argue the Chumbas. "Every time we offer charity we strengthen the Third World's dependence on us..."

By now you'll have guessed that Chumbawamba's music is merely a carriage for their polemic, for their urges to boycott products, support strikes and take direct action – "Burn the House of Commons" or "Letter bombs only to BP House". The main strengths of these songs/rants lies in the sweet, persuasive delivery of Alice Nutter and the brass of Mavis Dillon. But while Nutter conveys the passion of Chumbawamba without off-putting aggression, leader Boffo seems to favour the soap-opera Paul Daniels-meets-wild-eyed-Trot approach, which will only please the converted.

Although I find their 'Slag Aid' attacks on individual Live Aid artists – Bowie, "a suitful of compassion and a gobful of shite"; Cliff Richard, "We're going to nail you up to a cross tonight" – unnecessarily personal, they do at least attempt to tackle the present problem of some bands supporting charities purely for media-grabbing purposes. For 'How To Get Your Band On Television', and Chumbawamba's stimulating lyrics concerning the shape of modern colonialism, I will recommend this album strictly to the politically hyper-active. If a dogma dictates your life, feed it Chumbawamba.

Len Brown

COMMODORES
United (Polydor)

IT LOOKS strictly off-the-peg, this Commodores collection. Judging by the cut of their suits, they're definitely aiming at the Romford leisurewear posse, and to this end, they've persuaded nice English boy J. D. Nicholas to do an appalling gorbimey rap on 'Goin' to the Bank'. You get the weary old joke about "early withdrawals", although there's no mention of overnight deposits. It's the old story about his woman spending his money and borrowing his Mercedes — my heart bleeds, you really should get together with George Michael, you'd have so much to talk about. I'm also worried that life in America is having an adverse effect on J.D., who thanks "Mom and Dad" on the sleeve, and co-wrote 'Land Of The Dreamer', which definitely suggests some form of indoctrination. In the USA, it seems, "There's a never-ending party for the creative mind", and "If you got the tools you can make the rules". Tools in the hands of fools. What we have here is creative minds on vacation.

Jonathan Romney

MICRODISNEY
Crooked Mile (Virgin)

PLEASE EXCUSE my pretentiousness, but William Morris wrote in *The Earthly Paradise*: "Dreamer of dreams, born out of my time, why should I strive to set the crooked straight?" Microdisney's 'Crooked Mile' begins and ends with dreams; desperate to change the world, Cathal Coughlan unites social realism with a cutting humour that rises above depression and helplessness. His odd observations, his weirdly ordinary characters — the "big fat matron with turquoise hair", the 'Armadillo Man' who ignores the propaganda and visits "red-infested land" — act as a perfect contrast to Sean O'Hagan's addictive, almost pop-fodder, tunes.

Prick half an ear to 'Angels' or 'Big Sleeping House' or 'Town To Town' and it could be daytime Huey Lewis, Georgie Fame, hell even It's Immaterial ('Rack' attacks such pop hack categorisation), but if you catch a snatch of 'And He Descended Into Hell' then "when screaming in the street use a disco beat" will lure you deeper. Similarly 'Hey Hey Sam' reels you in with "The Anglo-Saxons make their love in frogman suits and boxing gloves" before hooking with anti-military, anti-establishment barbs.

But because of the surreal nature of many Microdisney images, and because the colours of their dreams are by no means distinctive, the lack

of clear directions throughout 'Crooked Mile' signal a weakness. The crammed, scrawled lyric sheet/inner sleeve omits the words to 'And He Descended ...' opting instead for "look out the dosshouse window vote Nazi die quicker". And have Microdisney been censored over 'Mrs Simpson'? Didn't this song originally link the abdicated Edward VIII's missus with Hitler? Has the move to Virgin weakened their attack?

More directly there's 'Our Children', a heartfelt country & western croon, lifted by the sweet vocals of June Miles-Kingston (who also featured on last year's 'The Clock Comes Down The Stairs'). Here "you say it's not fair, you'll get used to it as you get old" most clearly represents Microdisney's worldview; they resent the empty posturings of idealistic youth which too often descend into middle-ground/aged/class smugness.

'Crooked Mile' is less aggressively angry than its predecessor but Microdisney still fuel their songs with a disgruntled bitterness about the State Of Things ('People Just Want To Dream'). They align themselves with the dispossessed, the alienated, and the broken-hearted purely because they don't fit into the scheme either; their songs are infectious enough to seduce the deafest of DJs but Someone In Authority will no doubt deem these words 'unsuitable' for human consumption.

Len Brown



Dreamchildren — Microdisney's Cathal and Tom

CHORCHAZADE

Made To Be Devoured (Get Ahead)

CHORCHAZADE (pronounced Cork-uh-zade) displace familiar landscapes and relocate them in an unsettling twilight zone. Though they're from Bristol, you'd be forgiven for thinking of Manchester. Anxious rhythms place them as distant cousins of James, inventive guitar suggests Stump, but 'Made To Be Devoured' has no close blood relatives.

The beat staggers ('Tom Dander'), the beat swings ('Beak'): guitars lock in a dense mesh ('Piemaker') then open into wide spaces ('Half A Crown'). Blurred vocals distort the view, enticing you to peer further into the dimly perceived core. 'Made To Be Devoured' never grins in welcome when it can stand with folded arms and invite you to make the move.

This is a Harry Lime record, teasing you with the sight of a familiar shadow before slipping out of reach, leaving only an echo of running footsteps. Catch it if you can, the chase is compelling.

Campbell Stevenson

ESTHER PHILLIPS

Set Me Free (Atlantic Import)

LET'S HIT the hyperbole. Esther, who died in 1984 at the age of 48, was the real successor to Billie Holiday and Dinah Washington. She made important, truly soulful, records right from her initial 'Double Crossing Blues', cut at the age of 13, through to the '70s, when her 'A Whisper To A Scream' album caused Aretha to hand her Grammy Award over to Esther, claiming that the latter deserved it more.

This essential double-album goes some way to explaining the reason for Aretha's action. Compiled from singles and previously unreleased sides made by the one-time Esther May Jones during her brace of stints with Atlantic in the middle-to-late '60s and early '70s, it demonstrates her ability to tackle R&B, gospel, soul, blues and country material and transform it all into one heart-wrenching commodity that defies any single appellation.

The Nashville-born 'I'm Sorry', best known as a Brenda Lee hit, here rears its head as a prime example of good old-fashioned

preach and teach; a string-laden version of Van Morrison's 'Crazy Love' comes on relaxed yet as emotionally charged as a revival meeting. The good-time stroll that is Lieber and Stoller's 'Some Cats Know' will never ever again sound so appealingly feline.

Hel! I could use every superlative in the book and still not describe how Esther's blues-tinged, nasal, cutting-edge voice could transform even the most mundane of material into something that could pick you up and dump you in a sweaty heap in the nearest corner. Only her records can really do that. Records such as this.

Fred Delland

VENOM

Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (Neat)

ABADDON, CRONOS and Mantas are Venom, the grungiest of HM bands and close pals with Old Nick. This live double album (people still make these things?) proves that the devil does not have all the best tunes. In fact, he seems to have none at all, but you must admit his PR department is hot. Venom are worse than Black Sabbath and play about as well as Eater. Had I sold my soul to some dubious con man, I'd have ensured that a smidgeon of talent was included in the bargain. All Abaddon's achieved is the chance to change his name from Conrad to something more demonically suiting. It's cheaper by deep poll, sunshine. 'In Nomine Satan' and the other 19 (oh god) tracks have the subtle intelligence of an amoeba with a hangover. 'Eine Kleine Nachtmusik' is, aptly enough, hellish.

Campbell Stevenson

CHELSEA

Rocks Off (Jungle)

THIS RECORD is quite likeable. It encompasses a wide range of styles, from the country of 'Memory Fades' to the glam of 'Sidewinder' and the fey '60s balladry of 'You And Me'. It has a naff version of 'Street Fighting Man' and a slightly odd production by Dave Goodman, who is overly fond of letting keyboards do the work of ten men. Gene October's voice works best on the more wistful material, for it does not have the power or the range to accommodate a proper "rocker". There is also some naff pompish stuff like 'Fool's Paradise', and there is a rock aboogie song called — and quote — 'Hard-Upp Baby'. 'Rocks Off' is not a record that inspires either contempt or deep love. It is rather ordinary.

David Quantick

THRASHING DOVES

BEAUTIFUL IMBALANCE



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NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

WEDNESDAY 7

Barham Old Coach House: **Peter Vanderbilt**
Birmingham Odeon: **Human League**
Brabourne Five Bells: **Maroon**
Cardiff St David's Hall: **Chris Barber**
Charing Swan Hotel: **Two's Company**
Croydon Cartoon: **Mandrake**
Ipswich Corn Exchange: **Fairport Convention**
Liverpool Yew Tree: **Alternative Radio**
London Bloomsbury Theatre: **Harvey & The Wallbangers**
London Brentford Red Lion: **Papa George**
London Brentford Watermans Arts Centre: **Tim Richards**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Corn Dollies/One Style/Stanza Set**
London Camberwell Union Tavern: **War Toys**
London Camden Dublin Castle: **Doc K's Blues Band**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Velvetones/Pink Noise/Tough Guys Don't Dance**
London Finsbury Park Sir George Robey: **The Shrub/The Noseflutes/The Splinter Group/James Joyce**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Yahoo Trumpets/Toxic Kangeroo Babies**
London Fulham King's Head: **Hoozhoo**
London Hammersmith Clarendon Broadway: **The Stygian Ferryman/Skin & Heart**
London Harlesden Mean Fiddler: **Roysters/Kingfishers Catch Fire**
London Kennington Cricketers: **Dean Kennedy's All Stars**
London Kentish Town Bull & Gate: **Frontier/Saviours Of Pop Music/The Jade/City Giants**
London Marquee: **Blitz Krieg Zone 2020**
London N1 Bass Cleft: **Bryan Spring Quartet**
London New Cross Goldsmiths Tavern: **Barb Jungr & Michael Parker/Linda Ross/Mr Nasty/Mark Thomas/Mad Dickie Disney**
London Putney Zeeta's: **Sidestreet**
London Putney Zeeta's: **Iron In The Soul**
London Queen Elizabeth Hall: **The South Bank Editions**
London W1 100 Club: **Ken Colyer's All Star Jazz Men**
London WC1 Logan Hall: **Episteme**
London Walthamstow Royal Standard: **John Le Story/Tu Kan Dance**
Manchester Band On The Wall: **John Cooper Clarke**
Monks Horton Black Horse: **Ticked Pink**
Oxford Hoskins Hotel: **Premier Jazz Band**
Preston Guildhall: **A-ha**
Slough Pied Horse: **Charmed Life**
Wirksworth Anthony Gel Club: **Gah-ga**

THURSDAY 8

Barham Old Coach House: **Bert Waller**
Birkenhead Hard Rock Cavern: **Erogenous Zones**
Bracknell South Hill Park Cellar Bar: **The Subway**
Brighton Zap Club: **The Sound Asleep/The Birdhouse**
Cardiff St David's Hall: **London Mozart Players**
Cleethorpes Winter Gardens: **Fairport Convention**
Croydon Cartoon: **Shev & The Brakes**
Dover Louis Armstrong: **Uncle Lumpy & The Fish Doctors**
Harlow The Square: **Tokyo Rose/Dirty Harry**
London Bloomsbury Theatre: **Harvey & The Wallbangers**
London Brentford Red Lion: **A Bigger Splash**
London Brentford Watermans Arts Centre: **Dutch Kitchen Bounce**
London Brixton Old White Horse: **Johnny Lovemuscle**
London Camberwell Union Tavern: **Bad Tune Men**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Swimming In Sand**
London Camden Dublin Castle: **Forest Hillbillies**
London Chalk Farm Gypsy Queen: **Bullet Train**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **49 Screem**
London Finsbury Park Sir George Robey: **Bad Karma Beckons/Nigel Lewis/Margin Of Sanity**
London Fulham Greyhound: **News Of The World/The Cherubs/Newcombe & Roach**
London Fulham King's Head: **Flight**
London Hammersmith Clarendon Broadway: **The Galley Slaves**
London Harlesden Mean Fiddler: **Microdisney**
London Kennington Cricketers: **The Doonicans**
London Kentish Town Bull & Gate: **The Locomotives**

London Kentish Town Bull & Gate: **Primery/Company Of Cowards**
London N1 Bass Cleft: **Jim Mullen Quarter/Simon Purcell Trio**
London Putney Half Moon: **Bluegrass Ramblers**
London Putney Zeeta's: **Mr President/J Grey J**
London Queen Elizabeth Hall: **The South Bank Editions**
London Royal Albert Hall: **Eric Clapton**
London SE12 Old Tigers Head: **Pride & Prejudice**
London W1 100 Club: **The Chat Show Roundabout**
London W1 Gossips: **M25s**
London W1 Le Beat Route: **The Fabulous Lampshade Sisters**
London Walthamstow Royal Standard: **The Raplers**
Manchester Band On The Wall: **Munch ManShip**
Manchester Boardwalk: **Third Law/Main Influence/ElectraComplex**
Newcastle Riverside: **Head In Hands/The Jaywalkers/The Honest Johns**
Petham Chequers Inn: **Streetbeat**
Poole Arts Centre: **Human League**
Tenterden White Lion Hotel: **Invicta Jazz Band**
Sutton-in-Ashfield The Oval: **Gah-ga**
Westgate Nottingham Castle: **Terry Benson**
Whitstable Harbour Lights: **Varooka Joe**

FRIDAY 9

Aldershot West End Centre: **Terry Smith's Blues Band**
Basingstoke The Hatch: **Blues Intrusion**
Birmingham Mermaid: **Xenon**
Birmingham Odeon: **A-ha**
Bracknell South Hill Park Cellar Bar: **Frederick Benson/Mr Nasty/Bob Boyron/Podonnoffski**
Bracknell South Hill Park Recital Room: **London String Quartet**
Brighton Zap Club: **The Fabulous Gender Bender**
Cardiff New Bogey's: **ETA**
Cardiff St David's Hall: **Human League**
Chesterfield Stonebroom Community Centre: **Gah-ga**
Croydon Cartoon: **Bad Influence**
Dorset Institute Of Higher Education: **Howlin' Wilf & The Vee Jays**
Greenock Subterranean: **Razorcuts**
Hebden Bridge Trades Club: **Bradford**
Hull Adelphi: **Jamie Wednesday**
Inverness The Phoenix: **We Free Kings**
Liverpool The Queens: **Alternative Radio**
London Bloomsbury Theatre: **Harvey & The Wallbangers**
London Brentford Red Lion: **Steve Gibbons Band**
London Brixton Loughborough Hotel: **The F1-11s/The Mercy Working Stiffs/The Invisible Set**
London Brixton Old White Horse: **Simon Fanshaw/Jenny Lecoat**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Lick The Tins/The Doonicans**
London Camden Dublin Castle: **Juice On The Loose**
London Catford Green Man: **The Ya Ya's**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Major 5**
London Cricklewood Hotel: **Andrew Bailey/John Hegley/Otzi Cannelloni**
London Cricklewood Production Village: **The Reactors**
London East Ham Town Hall: **Tony Lee Trio**
London Finsbury Park Sir George Robey: **The Deltones/The Rivals**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Dogs D'Amour/Isabella**
London Fulham King's Head: **Steve Warley Band**
London Greenwich Tunnel Club: **Exit/Tempest**
London Hammersmith Clarendon Broadway: **The Saddle Whores/The Rover Girls/The Frantics**
London Herne Hill Half Moon: **The Cats**
London Kennington Cricketers: **Forest Hill Billies**
London Kentish Town Bull & Gate: **Danny & The No Good Nicks**
London King's College: **T'Pau**
London Leicester Square Comedy Store: **The Richard Ills**
London N1 Bass Cleft: **Cayenne**
London Marquee: **The Godfathers**
London Putney Half Moon: **Steve Marriott & The Official Receivers**
London Putney Zeeta's: **Ha Ha Bonk**
London Queen Elizabeth Hall: **The South Bank Editions**
London Soho L'Escargot: **Barb Jungr & Michael Parker**
London ULU: **James/The Primitives/Mlaow/Ed Barton**
London W1 100 Club: **Boogie Brothers Blues Band**

NOW THE last party popper has been popped, the final cracker pulled, the feast of Stephen is well behind us for another year. Time to start gigging again as the live scene lurches back to life and this week's highlight (depending on your own ear, of course) is the return of FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD after a two-year absence, with shows at Manchester on Saturday and Wembley on Monday and Saturday. HUMAN LEAGUE get to the big venue stage of their ongoing outing and turn up at Birmingham (Wednesday), Poole (Thursday) and Cardiff (Friday). ERIC CLAPTON does his Slowhand stuff at the Royal Albert Hall (Thursday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday) and the most interesting arrival from America is probably MICHELLE-SHOCKED, who brought us the 'Texas Camp Fire Tapes' album at the end of last year. She starts her short trek in Brighton on Tuesday.

Send us your dates! *Gig Guide* wants your live information nine days before the date of publication, ie the previous Monday. Send details to *Gig Guide*, NME, 4th Floor, Commonwealth House, 1-19 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1NG.

SATURDAY 10

London WC2 Bunjies: **Janet Russell**
London Walthamstow Royal Standard: **Vardis/Smokestack**
Manchester Band On The Wall: **Oshama**
Northampton Spinney Hall: **Fairport Convention**
Redbourn Bell & Shears: **Rich For A Day**
Southampton The Onslow: **Charmed Life**
Tynemouth Park Hotel: **The Amazing Squibs/After Midnight**
Wallsend Buddle Arts Centre: **Hang The Dance**
Ayr 110 Bar: **Razorcuts**
Aldershot West End Centre: **The Railway Children/The Brilliant Corners/Bluetrain**
Birmingham Mermaid: **Beki Bondage & The Bombshells**
Birmingham Odeon: **A-ha**
Boston Haven Theatre: **Fairport Convention**
Brighton Art College: **Whirl**
Brighton Hairy Dog Club: **Tora/Moloko Plus**
Brighton Zap Club: **Nickleodeon/Owen O'Neil/Barker & Boyer**
Cardiff Clwbwr Dach: **TV Smith/U-Thant/Born Sinners**
Cardiff New Bogey's: **White Heat**
Cardiff St David's Hall: **Stuart Burrows/Owain Arwel Hughes/BBC Welsh Symphony Orchestra**
Croydon Cartoon: **Dave Markee**
Harlow The Square: **In Flite/Loot 'n' Joe**
Hitchin Angels Reply: **Forest Hill Billies/Floating Crow Bars**
Hull Adelphi: **Tough Guys Don't Dance**
London Bloomsbury Theatre: **Harvey & The Wallbangers**
London Brentford Red Lion: **Bobby Tench & GB Blues**
London Brentford Watermans Arts Centre: **Sovereign Sounds/2 Crush MCs/APM/Tempo**
London Camden Black Horse: **Stanley Accrington**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Eddie Kirkland/Blues 'n' Trouble**
London Camden Dublin Castle: **Little Sister**
London Catford Green Man: **Boogie Brothers Blues Band**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Raplers**
London Dalston Junction Crown & Castle: **Barb Jungr & Michael Parker**
London EC1 The Horseshoe: **Peter Campbell/Ailison Goldie/Claire Dowle/The Dinner Ladies**
London Finsbury Park Sir George Robey: **The Balham Alligators/Lick The Tins/Tim Cody Band**
London Fulham Greyhound: **A Bigger Splash/Major Flood**
London Fulham King's Head: **Chicken Shack**
London Greenwich Tunnel Club: **Shang-Hai/90 Per Cent Proof**
London Hammersmith Clarendon Broadway: **Laughter Castle/The Raining**
London Kennington Cricketers: **Steve Gibbons Band**
London Kentish Town Bull & Gate: **Big Chief**
London Marquee: **The Godfathers**
London N1 Bass Cleft: **Kintone**
London Putney Half Moon: **Juice On The Loose**
London Putney Zeeta's: **Blue U**
London Royal Albert Hall: **Eric Clapton**
London Tufnell Park Tavern: **JCM Jazzband**
London W1 100 Club: **The Jivin' Lindyhoppers/The Sound Of Seventeen Big Band**

London WC1 New Merlin's Cave: **The Beach Bombers/The Rhythm Wreckers**
London Walthamstow Royal Standard: **Steve Marriott**
Luton Switch Club: **The Sinister Cleaners**
Manchester Band On The Wall: **Victor Brox**
Manchester Boardwalk: **Mood Six**
Manchester Boardwalk: **The Wise Acres/McCarthy**
Manchester G-Mex Centre: **Frankie Goes To Hollywood**
Portsmouth Basins: **Bloodhound/Shakin' Sharks**
St Austell Coliseum: **Human League**
Sheffield Leadmill: **Treebound Story**
Stockton-Tees Dovecot Arts Centre: **Jamie Wednesday**
Tain Balnagowan Hotel: **We Free Kings**
Watford Warhol College: **T'Pau**

SUNDAY 11

Birmingham Barrel Organ: **20 flight Rockers/Speil Blinders**
Birmingham Triangle Arts Centre: **Joan Collins Fan Club/Barb Jungr & Michael Parker**
Brighton Zap Club: **The Crackerjack Pencils (lunchtime)**
Cardiff St David's Hall: **A-ha**
Croydon Cartoon: **Roy Peters (lunchtime)**
Croydon Underground: **Pop Icons**
Glasgow Rooftops: **Razorcuts/The Boy Hairdressers**
London Brentford Red Lion: **The Amazing Rhythm Burglars (lunchtime)/Little Sister (evening)**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Line Of Fire/Fair Guns/Vital Spark/Hondo/Ritzen Ratzan Rotzer**
London Charing Cross Wispers: **Wait & See**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **NBT/Major Flood**
London Deptford Albany Empire: **That Petrol Emotion**
London Finsbury Park Sir George Robey: **Iggy Quall (lunchtime)**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Whiplash/The Shrew Kings**
London Fulham King's Head: **Dogtown Rhythm**
London Fulham The Swan: **The Reactors**
London Kennington Cricketers: **Sox (lunchtime)/Miles Fenwick Band (evening)**
London Kentish Town Bull & Gate: **Portland Sound**
London Kingston Dolphin: **Tough Guys Don't Dance**
London N1 Bass Cleft: **Gulldhall Big Band (lunchtime)/Tommy Smith Quartet (evening)**
London Portman Inter-Continental Hotel: **Nat Temple Quartet**
London Putney Half Moon: **The Groundhogs**
London Royal Albert Hall: **Eric Clapton**
London W1 100 Club: **Eddie Kirkland**
London WC1 Yorkshire Grey: **Georgia Jazzband**
London Wimbledon William Morris Club: **Aunt Fortescue's Bluesrockers**
London Wood Green Trade Union Centre: **Andrew Bailey/John Hegley/Otzi Cannelloni**
Manchester Boardwalk: **Glen Yardwood/The Heather Dawson Experience/Escalator**
Norwich Theatre Royal: **Fairport Convention**
Nottingham Russells: **The Coat Hangers**
Nottingham Venue 53: **The Lynch Bros**
Portsmouth The Salvation: **Charmed Life**
Sheffield Leadmill: **Hill & Cropper**

MONDAY 12

Harlow Square One Club: **Skint Video/John Moloney/Mark Miwurdz**
Leeds Polytechnic: **Fairport Convention**
Liverpool Oscars: **Alternative Radio**
London Brentford Red Lion: **Hollywood**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Iain Campbell Band/Save Us**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Blood Brothers Go Furlous/Zero Zero**
London Finsbury Park Sir George Robey: **Dick Gaughan**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Milk 'n' Knives**
London Fulham King's Head: **Life After**
London Hammersmith Clarendon Broadway: **Another Planet/Dreamtime/Go For Jo**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Human League**
London Herne Hill Half Moon: **Tough Guys Don't Dance**
London Islington Pied Bull: **Mississippi Slow Jim**
London Kennington Cricketers: **The Primevals/The Corn Dollies**
London Putney Half Moon: **Howlin' Wilf & The Vee Jays**
London Royal Albert Hall: **Eric Clapton**
London W1 100 Club: **Pride Of Passion/Lazy**
London W1 Le Beat Route: **Witch In The Wardrobe/Keanan & The Barbarians/Dangerzone**
London Wembley Arena: **Frankie Goes To Hollywood**
Manchester Band On The Wall: **Brendan Croker/Steve Phillips**
Newcastle Riverside: **Instigators**
Newport Centre: **A-ha**
Southampton The Waterfront: **Charmed Life**

TUESDAY 13


Bracknell Wilde Theatre: **Episteme**
Brighton Richmond: **Michelle - Shocked**
Brighton Zap Club: **Red Herring**
Bristol Colston Hall: **A-ha**
Liverpool Plummers: **Alternative Radio**
London Brentford Red Lion: **Out To Lunch**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Bob Calvert & The Maximum Effect**
London Camden Dublin Castle: **The Crayfish Five**
London Camden Palace: **You You You**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Casper Hauser/Split Second**
London Finsbury Park Sir George Robey: **The Jack Rubies/Psycho Surgeons**
London Fulham Greyhound: **I Can Crawl/25 Miles**
London Fulham King's Head: **Potato Joe**
London Greenwich Tunnel Club (Altar Club): **Stipese/Frantic Flintstones/Purple Worm**
London Hammersmith Clarendon Broadway: **Storm Of Glass**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Human League**
London Kennington Cricketers: **The Avons/Dr Fondle**
London Marquee: **Sad Among Strangers**
London N1 Bass Cleft: **Tommy Chase Quartet**
London N1 King's Head: **Barb Jungr & Michael Parker**
London Putney Half Moon: **Paz**
London Putney Zeeta's: **Chain/Family Fratre**
London W1 100 Club: **The Pharaohs**
London Walthamstow Royal Standard: **The Rage/Reflection**
London Wembley Arena: **Frankie Goes To Hollywood**
Manchester Band On The Wall: **Dick Gaughan**
Masham Town Hall: **Fairport Convention**



"How many dates are Frankie doing this tour, Holly?" "Er... dunno. Ask Paul."

PHOTO: STENIE PYKE

GARY MOORE



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Saturday 10th January

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Sunday 11th January

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(Feet Johnny Marr and Miles Fowlerick)

Monday 12th January

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+ **THE CORN DOLLIES**

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THE AVONS

+ **DR FONDLE**

(ex Farmer Boys)

Wednesday 14th January

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+ **THE FEVERLY BROTHERS**

Thursday 15th January

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THE STYLE COUNCIL

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me in the street and said "Angel" is really good' then I'd listen to them, not all those wankers who set themselves up as some kind of authority on what soul is. They're all fucking white boys anyway. I don't take any notice of that crap."

So what separates The Style Council's right to record black American records from other comparable cover artists like Kim Wilde or The Housemartins?

"They're fucking diabolical those things. We wouldn't do a bad version, the difference is that obvious. We're more talented, more creative. The Housemartins' record annoys me. It's a fucking disgrace. The original record is brilliant and the people who played The Housemartins should have got behind The Isleys. I don't like all their jokey references, it degrades the song. Apart from Curtis Mayfield's 'Move On Up', which was admittedly a bit rank and should never have been released, we don't do cover versions. You should only cover songs you can add a new dimension to. The Housemartins have added nothing, they've fucked up a good song."

HERE ARE three of us round this table (Weller, Talbot and me) all able to move easily across the soul forum and talk of imports, originals and cover versions. We are all fucking white boys and all guilty at some stage in our lives of fostering the myth of style counselling, that increasingly more desperate, occupation of deciding who, what and where is 'stylish'. As the world judges people by their kind actions or criminal activities, these three white boys sometimes judge people on the size of their turn-ups. Look he's wearing grey socks. Guilty. To talk to The Style Council inevitably means you talk 'style', possibly the most influential and the most debased coinage of the early '80s.

Mick Talbot agrees that 'style' has turned into an occupation. An attitude has been appropriated from the streets and turned into an industry, a textile factory that weaves the raw material of Freds and threads into 'meaningful' commodities. Style has been spoilt by pomposity: to buy Doc Marten soles has become a Faustian pact with your shoe shop.

"Yeah, there's too much written about the meaning of clothes. There's a whole spate of journalists, like Peter York and all the junior Yorkies like Robert Elms and old Jon Savage. It's like they've found an alternative to the gossip column. Spout loads of rubbish, write 3,000 words on the significance of ties and sent it to *The Face*."

But the career moves self-consciously performed by 'stylists' (including these three fucking white boys) are less important than the militant values that have crept into the style game. Most of us have believed our own sales pitch and turned clothes into an ideology: the dictatorship of the informed. His turn-ups are too big, off with his head.

Has style turned into the language of the elite? Is it conservative? A pathetic joke enjoyed only by those who think they can spot a real Prince Of Wales jacket in the dark?

"It's really a personal thing," for Paul Weller. "I don't sit about worrying what Robert Elms is doing, do me a favour. If you talk about style too long, people who aren't on your wavelength probably think you're screwy. But it should be about something you love, something you feel passionate about. There's nothing wrong with that kind of style. I think it's part of our culture. I don't care how pretentious it sounds, style is part of our way of life. I think it's a good thing."

But a good thing has become one of the great exaggerations of the '80s. If ever an account was overdrawn, it's the meaning and mythologies of style: the loafers, white socks, 501s, adverts, magazines, faces, careers and casualties. Style has become an institution, something frozen stiff with its own false sense of importance. When punk turned into an institution and threatened Paul Weller's personal development, he disbanded The Jam. Is 1987 the year he will disband The Style Council?

"You can't compare the two, The Style Council isn't a group in the conventional sense. People come and go, so it can always change and refresh itself. But I suppose if you've decided we should split, then that's it."

You could detect the irony with a magnet. There was a distinct smell of indiscretion in the air. My black leather Gibsons have never shifted so fast. Exit one fucking white boy, and then there were two.



(left) "... and zis vun is called 'Dark Streets Of Warsaw'. The original Pogues patiently await their 15 minutes.

(below left) The harsh realities of Polish meat rationing take their inevitable toll on John Robb.

(below) The Membranes (l to r; Coofy Sid, Wallis, John Robb) and The Legend! (in the basket).

With the multinational dross-spreaders and the candyfloss radio stations celebrating another year with their boot-heel on the throat of popular music, **THE MEMBRANES** — godfathers of British spikipunk — continue their frantic quest for communication in Poland. Stowed away in the back of their van, beneath amps and oily rags, is **THE LEGEND!**, driven abroad in search of that manic pop thrill. Poloroids: **NICK WHITE.**



LOVE AND FURY FOR EXPORT

IT WAS like walking into a scene straight out of the '60s, or maybe Glasgow.

Iron grills stretching round the bars, a gaggle of hard-backed chairs, zero lighting, a low stage upon which a three-piece were furiously battering hell out of the ears of the assembled, all underpinned by a general atmosphere of sordidness and subversion.

Half-interested punters, dressed in the obligatory drab colours, comprised the bulk of the crowd seated in front of the stage, whilst, to the side, there was standing room only as bottles smashed and voices rose in laughter. The curfew came at eight.

The Membranes were playing as we entered to fair appreciation and a dreadful sound — my god, half the time the bassist was playing a different song from the other two.

"Is *this* what we've travelled so far to witness? Oh my god!" I could've wept — instead I collapsed in a corner and let the atmosphere sweep over me. The Star Club in Hamburg, perhaps? People danced (sporadically) and, afterwards, drugs were proffered (unsuccessfully). Welcome to Poland.

"Poland's an ace country — like Ireland (all green). The music fans don't seem to know what to do at concerts but I think people probably would come down the front and slam around and things if they were pissed out of their heads, but, because of the difficulty of obtaining alcohol here, they're all really sober and hence are too embarrassed. In some ways, I think they just like sitting down and watching things, like going to the pictures." (John Robb: Membranes)

SEARCHING FOR AN ALTERNATIVE

CRUISING AT 30,000 feet above the continent, half an hour out from Heathrow, forcing down as may free Pan Am coffees as my aching lungs will allow, the realisation slowly filters through my mind. I'm flying! En route past the mythical metallic curtain and into the Polish heartland we travel, feeling like yesterday's man, a wave of total displacement washes over me as I realise just how far from my roots I've ventured. What the hell am I doing here??? Culture shock ten thousand times over.

Flying to Poland in search of a solution, flying to Poland for a new perspective on a lost dream, flying to Poland *because it's there* — images and myths flock up to greet me. . . .

All the energy and excitement seems to've disappeared out of music recently as major record companies and music papers exercise their freedom to place a stranglehold on any music which *challenges*, which is *instinctive*, which *communicates*. Too many knowing A&R executives.

You can't theorise about instinct, that's

why the press frown upon it — you don't make money fast enough from wilful alternativism, that's why the companies shun it. In Poland they are still looking to their music, their *underground*, as a force for change; something loud, brash and uncompromising. Something to emphasise the generation gap, something to make anyone over 25 look like a has-been. Music can still be revolutionary — the Membranes would agree.

"There are so many different interpretations on anything you do. It takes a concerted effort to make anything revolutionary, but music can act as a catalyst for change; that's why certain indie bands aren't allowed in the charts. A lot of indie bands are revolutionary — bands like the Ex from Holland, or the Dead Kennedys from America."

"Chart music isn't there to keep people in their places, it's there as another easy system to make money and they don't need anything mucking that up. People are so paranoid, building 20 foot high hedges to keep their neighbours out, it's the same all over the world. Music, as the one true international language, can help bring those barriers down."

The state of music reflects the state of Thatcher Britain precisely — isolated pockets of resistance; but in the main indifference, apathy, old boy networks, elitist brigades, conservatism. The independent 'alternatives' are no better: fake entrepreneurs, cliques of fans supporting their own second-rate imitation 'pop' chart groups, too many rich kid hobbyists, too many 60's/70's/80's revivalists, bands imitating other bands from three months past, bands with no interest in anything beyond their next career move. The

Membranes — loud, witty and intelligent, imbued with the power to inspire/fire/perspire, change and challenge — are needed round these shores more than ever, but are being forced to seek justified acclaim elsewhere. So why choose Poland? Mr. Robb explains.

"Well, it's not for the money — you aren't allowed to take any currency out of Eastern Bloc countries, except Yugoslavia. It's mainly through interest, to see what it's like out here. The bloke who organises these tours thinks that it's really important for people from the West to come over to the East and close the gap. Lots of groups play here, mostly through curiosity."

. . . and so here we are, ever-closer . . . searching for a reason to continue, a reason to believe . . .

EVERYBODY'S GOING TRIPLE BAD ACID YEAH!

WE STEPPED off the express from Warsaw to Lodz straight into another world — transported as if by timewarp into a scene straight from *Pygmalion*. We found ourselves in a square courtyard surrounded by wooden buildings with virtually no street-lighting where open-topped stalls abounded, selling everything from vodka to candyfloss. A taxi-queue beckoned for those wishing to venture further abroad, but, in all, it was an unsettling settling. Cast adrift into the Polish heartland with but a scrap of paper between us and oblivion (assuming we could find a recognisable phonebooth).

"There were a lot of people in the dressing room tonight (first night in Warsaw) and they were really polite, asking for autographs and stuff, but last night it was

pandemonium; I scampered off stage and about 50 people jumped on me. They seemed genuinely in our type of music, already having heard the Exploited. It was quite necessary for us to play and show them that exciting music can be intelligent as well."

Lodz might've been purgatory, but Warsaw was bliss! The concerts in Warsaw took place inside a giant lecture hall; 800 people sitting in long rows in pitch darkness, clapping politely, trooping out in an orderly and efficient fashion as soon as the concert was over. A Polish television crew added to the unreality of the event, by filming half a Membranes song for live transmission on their current affairs programme, all the while steadfastly avoiding any shots of the audience or brave stray dancers.

The Membranes were magnificent! Any lingering fears I might've harboured about them being redundant, past their peak or pointless were blown straight out the window as they thundered their way through a blistering set of hard noise/pop classics; some old, some new. 'Songs Of Love And Fury' suddenly *crystallised* into perfect sense, black and white.

John Robb, striding up and down the stage in determination, dropping notes and battering rhythms, never in less than total command, beating crap out of his guitar, raising hope with his primordial screaming and twisted facial expressions. Wallis, proving himself worthy of the mantle of a Membrane, wrestling in ferocious concentration at his persecuted bass riffs, and the ever-brilliant Coofy Sid, supercharged on sticks—towering great jangles of noise, screaming commonsense into foreign ears.

"It's still dead exciting play live. When you arrive somewhere you always feel exhausted, but once you soundcheck the adrenalin starts flowing and by the time you're ready to go on stage everything's fresh once more. It's important to me that music should be exciting—too many groups nowadays just fill in space for no apparent reason—I like a bit of enthusiasm. Sometimes I can become carried away when playing live and it looks like we're taking the piss, but all it comes down to is the fact that I still find it really exciting playing loud and noisy guitars."

THE ELVIS I KNEW WAS NO JUNKIE

ON FIRST viewing, Warsaw doesn't seem that different from a less affluent suburb of London, Stoke Newington say. No bright colours and so a perpetual greyness abounds. This isn't helped by the vast distances between buildings, the massive jostling roads you could fit a six-lane motorway along and the gloom which pervades from the dismally archaic, if structurally beautiful, monuments.

The black market was impossible to ignore: it wasn't the clothes so much (with the exception of Nick, the photographer, we were a fairly motley collection) as the *sterling*. The importation of foreign currency into Poland is illegal and yet the only way to buy certain electrical goods is with Western currency in special government-sanctioned shops.

Driving through Warsaw, The Membranes were waylaid by some black marketeers who offered them ridiculous amounts of *zlotych* for pounds (around *five times* the official exchange rate) and showed them where to purchase (rationed) diesel. After blindfolding the driver, the van was taken down a shady little lane detour to a barge on a river, where a man in a shack kept a constant lookout. We ordinary punters were simply accosted for (ex) change every now and then.

Corruption in the public services seems rife. On another occasion The Membranes entourage was stopped by some inquisitive travel cops, who, upon noticing that they were Western, immediately charged them with speeding (they weren't). Understandably anxious, the party hung around nervously until one of the police, who'd been rooting around in the back of the van, stumbled across their cache of Membranes records. Suddenly, all was beams and handshakes as the officials distributed two each amongst themselves as statutory tariff and allowed them to continue on their way.

Likewise on the E. German/Polish frontier where The Membranes' entourage were following two vans of fellow wandering minstrels across the border. Preceding them, a Polish folk troupe were forced to take out their instruments and give a free recital to prove that they were actually

musicians, whilst the guards fell about laughing. A little nervous about proving their worth as 'proper' musicians. The Membranes looked on. When it came to their turn, however, two records apiece and all proceeded smoothly.

The price of hipness a foreign record, in ONE WEEK'S WAGES for yer average Pole. The lure of a Western group which sells records/t-shirts/badges after one of their concerts is therefore irresistible for any true music fan. In Lodz, the Membranes were mobbed solid for an hour as they were inundated with offers of money or anything in the slightest bit exchangeable for their merchandising: badges, buckles, bracelets, shirts, food, jackets, ANYTHING just to have one of those precious items.

BIG FUN TONIGHT?

THE INTERVIEW was conducted in complete darkness (no electricity) in a hostel room in Warsaw and with an eerie silence which was broken only by the sound of a tape recorder clicking and a consistent flow of verbitum from the unstoppable motormouth of John Robb.

Do you ever see yourselves becoming more popular?

"It's not up to us, is it? Everytime we put a record out we sell slightly more, but some bands seem destined to remain cult bands, especially in England. We're presently doing a lot better in other countries, such as America, where we're signed to Homestead, and Germany, where we're on Constrictor. We're going down really well on this tour—some countries are completed wild, like Holland and Germany where we're credited with helping start the whole indie scene, whereas some are more refined—like here in Poland."

Do you see any similarities between yourselves and other bands on the music scene?

"Vaguely, for the energy mostly. There are a few things we hear nowadays where we think, oh that sounds a bit like us—there are a couple of bands I know who've taken one of our riffs and built a whole song round it, but it's influence mostly. I think that a lot of bands play intelligent-sounding music, but until they meet us trotting round the country, never realize there is any potential for it."

"In Europe we are often aligned with Sonic Youth and the Ex; alternative bands are given time to develop there instead of the UK swift burnout theory. Other bands we feel an affinity to for 1987 are Age Of Chance, PiL, Bogshed, Philip Boa, Meat Puppets, Dead Kennedys etc."

What about the equation 'small = shit' otherwise it would be in the charts?

"No, you know how it works; you can hype anything into the top twenty with enough money—like when The Jesus and Mary Chain finally get into the chart, it's only on the back of some massive promotion, and it's the same with a load of crap like Lloyd Cole and the Commotions. If I was EMI, I'd push us into the Top Twenty rather than some faceless act that'll disappear overnight. It's all manufactured record company groups now—it always has been, but it's excessive at the moment."

Are the British charts an accurate portrayal of what life's like?

"No, not at all, same as the way that the news on television isn't an accurate portrayal of what's happening in the world. I think our records are more accurate—they're a reflection of our lifestyles, anyway. Maybe that's why we don't sell more records, because our lifestyles are pretty much totally different from everyone else."

Do you still believe in independent labels?

"Yes—they mean that more people can obtain access to the media and express themselves and that's a good thing. People should always make use of their opportunities. It means that there's more shit about, but that's negligible compared to other things. I don't see what's so good about being big—that's just some ridiculous capitalist notion that it somehow makes you better because you make more money. It doesn't prove anything—look at the Noseflutes, they're brilliant and they only sell about 40 records."

POSTDETERGENT VACUUM CLEANER MAN

HOUGHT to admit this now. John Robb had faith in me. Thrown off Creation for continually selling zero records around the time the Mary Chain arrived, Mr. Robb turned round and offered me a recording contract on the recently-revamped Vinyl Drip label, alongside the

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THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAMERS



RUNNING FOR COVER

new single

RCA



ONE GIANT BLEEP FOR MANKIND

Those radioactive road-runners Kraftwerk are back with a new record of atomic rhythm 'n' blues. Leading man-machine RALF HUTTER celebrates androgyny, subversion and sirens, while an all-too-human DESSA FOX wonders what the well-dressed dummy will be wearing this year. Artwork?

A NEW Kraftwerk LP has arrived, a spacious but wistful thing that mixes romance with static interference; it sounds like Wagner in an airport lounge, trying to ring an escort service.

'Electric Cafe'—Kraftwerk's fifth album since 1974's 'Autobahn'—contains more of their patented *Industrielle Volksmusik*: songs of innocence and experience shot through with dial tones, pocket calculators, lights, dance, lovers distant as satellites and the smell of expressways in the morning. What better lyrics for atomic rhythm and blues than "BOOM, TSCHAK, BOOM"?

Here on the second floor of the EMI building PR people are tapping their feet to 'Techno Pop's' glacial bomp. A few Christmas decorations shiver on the wall. Across the room Ralf Hutter is the very picture of composure. His parted, trimmed hair is as neat as two wafers, his handshake hovers around the 98.6 mark, and his black sweater and trousers are irreproachably versatile, suitable for office or living room. When I ask him if he's pleased with the album, he pulls carefully on one thumb and replies, "I don't know". Outside, a siren accelerates down Oxford Street. Hutter holds up a happy digit. "Wait," he smiles, "someone is playing a rhythm track out there."

FIFTEEN YEARS ago four ex-classical musicians from Dusseldorf took a new God for a spin down the Autobahn in Ralf Hutter's old grey Volkswagen. ("In the past people said that God could hear everything. Today the tape recorder is the new God," Florian Schneider, 1977.) With the plastic god dangling out the window, Messrs Hutter, Schneider, Bartos and Flur taped the sounds our indifferent ears filter out: receding traffic, random honks, compressed air, vibrating lungs, trembling radio. Back at the newly formed Kling Klang studios they reproduced these noises electronically, and thus was born 'Autobahn', without which we'd all be listening to New Christy Minstrels records.

Kraftwerk were the first pop people to demonstrate that the invention of the tape recorder was also the invention of a new musical language. Hutter and Schneider weren't interested in blank tape as a means of embalming the past (which would be the good German thing to do; to put Bach in a better box), but as a means of scanning the present. 'Autobahn' was the sound of diligent European craftsmen landing majestically and unhysterically onto 20th century tundra, a vast cool place of factories and cars and cameras and meshed, invisible wave forms. Being romantics, the explorers turned chaos into order; here was a record that not only introduced the listener to some fairly bizarre noises—say, the ripped-air effect cars make on leaving tunnels—but cushioned these noises on positively pastoral melodies. And this from four nightclubbers who can still remember all the lyrics to Barry White songs.

Between then and now came the chromium views of 'Radioactivity' ('75), 'Trans-Europe Express' ('77), 'The Man Machine' ('78), 'Computerworld' ('81), and a

one-off composed for the French bicycle race, the 12-inch 'Tour De France'. All of these are spectacularly primitive albums, not in the sense of simple or minimal but perfectly economical; Kraftwerk get to where they want to go without resorting to aural furry dice. In the wake of each LP the band left countless brilliant techniques—new ways of using electronic percussion, new ways of using deep-focus mixing, new ways of reducing songs to slivers (a la 'Planet Rock'; Kraftwerk are hip-hop's Teutonic uncles), new ways of democratising computers, and most of all new ways of looking in the mirror. Kraftwerk are almost single-handedly responsible for one of the great musical icons of the '80s—the EuroAlien. In 1980 every synthesiser-carrying Mode/Minds/Foxx/DAF on the block yearned to be enigmatic molecules on the great Autobahn of life; updated Kerouacs who'd swapped a Greyhound bus-pass for a Corbijn portrait by a cenotaph. Kraftwerk gave us the Concorde version of that old saw, the Disaffected Guy.

But this is looking backwards, something Kraftwerk rarely do. The abovementioned heroic effect would probably provoke shrugs in the KK studios, being just another notch in the balance between man and machine. The band continue to view themselves as *robotniks*, workers in sound rather than musicians or artists. They remain firm friends with their technologies ("We are their colleagues. We play the machines, but they also play us.") and the studio is something they can sometimes get drunk with, or aloof with, or do the hippy hippy shake with.

Is there any reason why one side of the album seems very less-is-more, and the other side very lush?

It's not pre-planned; it's just a result of the flow, of bits of tape edited together in a certain way. We try not to be too consistent—sometimes we're quite chaotic and other times very organised. Also we don't play one role 24 hours a day. We work in sounds, we work in words, we work in video, we work in plastic, so we don't think in terms of specialisation. For example, if you feel like taking photographs you just get your camera and move your little finger. It's quite good; it only takes one centimetre of physical action to be a photographer... **Is this a good thing—that technology does most of the work? Some people say it's too easy, that you get a lot of boring, technically correct photographs...**

I think it's more what's in the picture—it's where you direct it, it's the brains behind the stance. In terms of music, remember that in the old days a pianist would have to practise eight hours a day just to keep the fingers supple. But we don't need to worry about that; if we want to play fast we programme for speed—we increase the beats per minute or something. So what it takes is input. And then you have the question: are we being programmed ourselves? By educational systems, by parents...

By sex differences...

Oh certainly. Immediately, certain behaviour patterns are imposed on us from birth: the colour blue for boys, rose for girls. I mean, can you imagine a system that uses two different kinds of schools? It's crazy, it has to do with fear of the sexes from both sides. But the origin is that most men are afraid of women.

Uh oh.

Oh yes, especially in the music business. Where does this whole macho posing thing

come from? I find it very interesting, for example, when somebody is playing in a studio and girls come in—no, let's not say girls, let's say females—when females come into this very male environment, with male engineers, and the music changes.

But Kraftwerk has been looked at as very much a boys' club.

We are more androgynous. We just happen to be born with the physical appearance of males. But synthesisers, or electronic waves, are an androgynous medium, more so than playing the guitar. The guitar is an ersatz type of penis, and Prince has shown this. We have been playing synthesisers for 16 years. Also I think there has been too much concentration on the differences between the sexes. This seems to be another form of nostalgia, where people want the comfort of divisions. Actually, what we've noticed in the studio is that we pass through all sorts of roles. Sometimes we can be childish, needing to learn, or we can be fatherly, and taking the part of teachers. And the situations change emotionally all the time. **In 1981 you referred to yourselves as "the second generation of electronic music". Is hip-hop the third?**

Well, I think we are also in there with our use of pocket calculators, and sampling, and scratching. So I think there is a wider extension, but not really a break.

Everyone's still waiting for something new to happen musically—"everyone" meaning "especially journalists". Maybe we'll all go back to listening to acoustic guitars.

But that's just a psychological desire at work, the desire for old things, like dreaming of an old friend. Nostalgia means you are uncomfortable with the present; the trick is to select from the present and look forward. For example, I think that the good thing about electronic music now is that the whole field is so much wider, with hip-hop and so on, and as a result people seem to be getting away from the cult of the individual. I think people are back to music and sounds, and not so much concerned with this raving personal cult stuff.

Could the new thing be happening somewhere else? In books, or films?

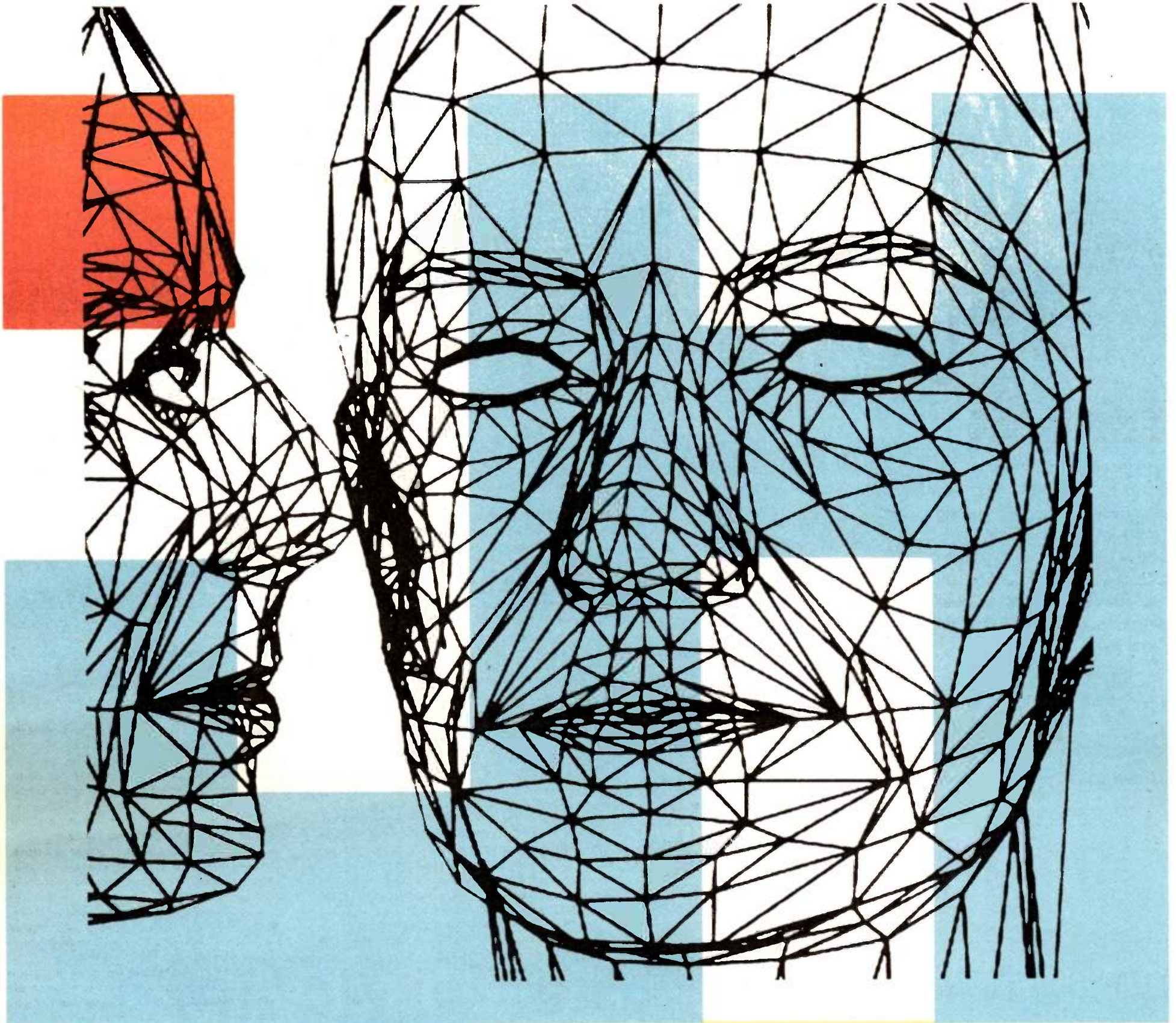
You mean the *zeitgeist*... the human being has different senses: eyes, ears, mouth, nose, etc. Sometimes the spirit of the age will move from, say, ears to eyes—for example in Germany film was very prominent in the '30s. And then other times music is dominant, like in the '60s and '70s, and literature is mute.

What will your next stage show look like? Will you be using the dummies again?

I think the dummies will be travelling with us because we have become friends, and because they are also very popular. They get a lot of kisses, they take very good pictures, and they can stand for hours and hours in the studio without complaining. And then they get into their coffins at night... they like to travel.

Probably they're always bothering you for new clothes.

Oh yes—but we have to get them new clothes, because the old ones rub off. **Your last appearance here—I think it was in 1979, at the Hammersmith Odeon—was technologically stunning, with the programmed dummies and the use of video projection. Do you feel the pressure to come up with something equally innovative next time?**



Yes, like Howard Hughes.

Maybe Huxley was right – the thing that's going to do us in isn't surveillance or segregation or repressive legislation but a lifetime of swallowing consumer sweeties, which makes us stupid.

I think that you must develop a counter-creativity. For example, we work in this field of entertainment, but we try and create small spaces for people to plug themselves in, to use their imaginations. The *creative* consumer is the new man-machine; you pick up something from your information system, you have a certain time to digest it, and then you act. I mean, you can't stuff yourself for 24 hours. I don't know . . . the whole idea of media adoration we are not into at all; media should be on a bread and butter level. Certainly in Germany, as opposed to America, there seems to be a great deal of awareness. The TV critique by Postman (*Amusing Ourselves To Death*) was very high on the best-seller lists for over a year. And people are very conscious of mass communication from the Nazi days, which is when the whole thing started for us. So Germany has a very informed media background. Also, there is a strong counter culture to conventional media, both on a personal and organisational level. **Such as the Green Party . . .**

Yes . . . in Germany we have rockets in stereo, East and West. The left channel has the SS20s and the right channel is the Cruise missiles. In Bonn there is a performance group that does everything from pantomime to cabaret; some people call this

group the government. They appear on TV and in front of microphones in suits and ties, and make speeches, and move their mouths, and people applaud. A part of the Green Party perform in this theatre, which is the theatre of democracy. But subversive groups or movements make little guerilla actions at night, like cutting electrical connections. There are lots of activities at different levels. And since Chernobyl all sorts of people are waking up – I mean you go into the supermarket and the product on the shelf doesn't say 'milk' any more, it says 'Includes radiation percentage'.

Why have Kraftwerk made so few soundtracks for feature films?

It's because we don't have a telephone. Actually, most of the time we just don't like the projects; usually the plots are ridiculous to us. We're not interested in the whole literary thing. Anyway, since 'Autobahn' a film sensibility is built into the music; we try for a sort of 3-D effect. Our music can be seen, so the film part would have to complement this. But we've done some things – we did pieces for the British director Christopher Petit, in *Radio On*. And two films for Fassbinder – *Chinese Roulette* and *Berlin Alexanderplatz*. And now some producers have approached us for a film of Tour de France, a documentary on the race. We already did one record for this, but perhaps there will be another.

What do Kraftwerk do at night?

Dance around with our eyes closed.

But in that show we used pocket calculators, which you could get around the corner; it was just the context we used them in that maybe seemed unusual. In a concert people are surprised to see pocket calculators, whereas in an office they would be bored. I remember once in Dusseldorf we gave the calculators to people in the audience, so that they could manipulate the sound. Some of them were quite happy, but others seemed frightened; they didn't want to touch it. The responses differ a lot – we're not dealing in hardware exclusively, but in software too . . . but to answer your question: we don't worry too much about staging new spectacles. We just keep on going. Sometimes innovation doesn't move too quickly, and sometimes it accelerates. **In an old interview you talked about embracing a "technological lifestyle". But pushed to the limit this translates as one person sitting in a chair, with all sorts of fantasy toys within arm's reach. Does technology create isolation?**

I think the opposite. It could very well be that with all these toys there will be more human beings communicating with each other in more ways. Males and females being more social, using anything from tape recorders to electronic games. With us, the tools are there for *one* person to do the work – one person could have everything digitised, and send everyone else home – but instead we choose to work together. **I suppose I'm thinking of Americans, who seem to cream themselves with naff ego fantasies . . .**

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TOUR NEWS

METAL CHURCH, the Californian five-piece who released their debut album 'The Dark' on WEA Records in November, make their first live appearance in Britain as special guests of Anthrax at the Hammersmith Odeon on February 15.



JULIAN COPE has confirmed three live dates for later this month, including a show at Westminster Hall, next to the Houses of Parliament — one of the few occasions the hall has been used for a rock concert. The dates start at Leicester University (21) and Julian then moves on to Norwich East Anglia University (22) and London Westminster Hall (23). A new single, 'Trampoline', is out this week followed next month by his first album for Island Records, 'St Julian'.

THE SHRUBS, whose new single 'Blackmailer' will be out soon, have January dates confirmed at London Finsbury Park Sir George Robey (Wednesday), London Brabant Road Community Centre (16), Romford Rez Club (21) and Woolwich Thames Polytechnic (23).



T'PAU, the six-piece fronted by vocalist Carol Decker, will be releasing their debut single and album soon, produced by Roy Thomas Baker, and have also got three live shows to look forward to. They play London Surrey Street King's College (January 9), Watford Warhol College (10) and London Covent Garden Rock Garden (21).



THE MISSION, whose first year in business resulted in two sell-out British tours, silver LP and a top 40 single, have confirmed another half dozen dates for March and can be seen at Glasgow Barrowland (March 21), Nottingham Rock City (23), Bristol Studio (24), Manchester Apollo (26), Birmingham Odeon (27) and London Brixton Academy (28). Another single, 'Wasteland', is lifted from their 'God's Own Medicine' album this week, backed with a live version of 'Shelter From The Storm'.

RECORD NEWS

SINGLES

BAD TUNE MEN: 'Jail Head Rack' (Nonchalant) a 12-inch E.P. — out now. ● **MARGO BUCHANAN**: 'Keep On' (London) self-penned debut from the lady who has sang with Tina Turner, Pet Shop Boys and Dire Straits — out now. ● **CHINA CRISIS**: 'What Price Paradise' (Virgin) there's also a 12-inch plus a five track CD filled with 'Best Kept Secret', 'The Instigator', 'Black Man Ray', 'You Did Cut Me' and 'Arizona Sky' which is available for the same price as the 12-inch. All out on Monday (12). ● **ERIC CLAPTON**: 'Behind The Mask' (Duck) with Phil Collins on drums. A limited edition 7-inch featuring live at the NEC versions of the Cream tracks 'White Room' and 'Crossroads' is also available — out this week. ● **COCK ROBIN**: 'When Your Heart Is Weak' (CBS) from their debut album, but a new one is threatened in the Spring — out now. ● **DEEP PURPLE**: 'Call Of The Wild' (Polydor) from the forthcoming album 'The House Of Blue Light' — out now. ● **GIRL TALK**: 'Falling For You' (WEA) debut single by two girls from Essex — out January 12. ● **STEVE 'SILK' HURLEY**: 'Jack Your Body' (London) from the 'Sound Of Chicago' LP — out now. ● **HURRAH**: 'If Love Could Kill' (Arista/Kitchenware) — out now. ● **JAMES LAST & ASTRUD GILBERTO**: 'Listen To Your Heart' (Polydor) the girl from Ipanema meets the man from Germany — out next week. ●

LITTLE RICHARD: 'Somebody's Comin'' (WEA) from the 'Lifetime Friend' album, produced by Stuart Colman — out now. ● **LOOP**: '16 Dreams' (Head) a Croydon based trio apparently — out January 16. ● **LOVE AND MONEY**: 'River Of People' (Mercury) — out this week. ● **LENA LOVICH AND NINA HAGEN**: 'Don't Kill The Animals' (Arista) claimed to be "the ultimate in vegetarian dance tracks", a rap duet released in aid of PETA (People For The Ethical Treatment Of Animals) — out now. ●



PSYCHEDELIC FURS: angels

BENJAMIN ORR: 'Stay The Night' (Elektra) solo effort from The Cars member who provided the vocal on 'Drive' — out now. ● **THE PSYCHEDELIC FURS**: 'Angels Don't Cry' (CBS) from the forthcoming LP 'Midnight To Midnight' — out now. ● **STACEY Q**: 'Two Of Hearts' (Atlantic) re-release of the U.S. hit by the one-time elephant rider from Barnum's Circus — out now. ● **T LA ROCK**: 'Back To Burn' (10) from an album due soon — out now. ● **ROUEN**: 'Let It All Out' (EG/Virgin) from Bewdley where, as all real trainspotters know, there's a steam railway with lots of puffs-puffs running on it — out Monday (12). ● **RUN DMC**: 'You Be Illin'' (London) from the album 'Raising Hell', the official follow-up to 'Walk This Way' — out on Monday. ● **CARLY SIMON**: 'Coming Around Again' (Arista) the theme to the new Jack Nicholson-Meryl Streep movie *Heartburn* — out this week. ● **THE SUBMARINES**: 'Grey Skies Blue' (Head) — out January 16. ● **TERRAPLANE**: 'If That What It Takes' (Epic) features New York rapper Wendell Morrisson — out January 26. ● **TINY LIGHTS**: 'Flowers Through The Air' (Temple) a "layered wall of sound creating an almost baroque quality", claim the label PR people — out now. ● **TURNING SHRINES**: 'Face Of Another' (Temple) fronted by former freelance sound engineer Fred Gianelli from Boston, Massachusetts — out now. ● **TWO PEOPLE**: 'Heaven' (Polydor) a song about taking risks when you're young, or so they say — out now. ● **WHO THE HELL DOES JANE SMITH THINK**

SHE IS: 'Use Imagination' (Influx) — out now. ● **XTC**: 'The Meeting Place' (Virgin) originally announced for a January 5 release but now put back till later in the month, unfortunately. Shame! Boo!



LITTLE RICHARD: single comin'

RAZORCUTS, making a dent in the indie chart with their Subway EP 'Sorry To Embarrass You', travel north of the border this weekend to play Greenock Subterraneans (Friday), Ayr 110 Bar (Saturday) and Glasgow Rooftops (Sunday).

THE CHEVALIER BROTHERS headline at London Ronnie Scott's on Thursday with The Questionnaires supporting. Tickets are £5. . . **BABY FUCKOO** and **CHROME MOLLY** have added Birkenhead Hard Rock Cavern (January 23) to their co-headlining tour schedule. . . **THE CULT** will not be playing Newport Centre on March 23 but can be seen at Cardiff St David's Hall on that date. . . **FREDDIE JACKSON** has added a fourth date at the Hammersmith Odeon, on January 26.

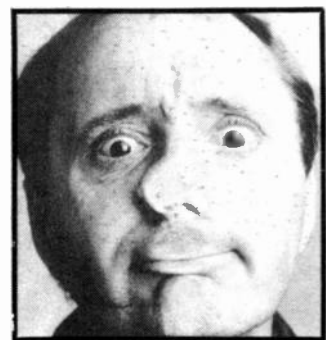
GEORGE MELLY, having just completed a short season at Ronnie Scott's in London, goes out on the road with John Chilton's Feetwarmers and visits Burton-on-Trent Town Hall (January 23), London 100 Club (24), Bingley Arts Centre (25) and London Woolwich Tramshed (31).



SIMPLY RED, whose second album 'Men And Women' is released next month, have announced details of a lengthy British tour, which kicks off at Dublin SFX (February 24 and 25), and moves on to Belfast Mayfield Leisure Centre (26), Leicester De Montfort Hall (March 1), Nottingham Royal Concert Hall (2), Bristol Hippodrome (3), Birmingham Odeon (5 and 6), Liverpool Empire (7), Glasgow SEC (9), Edinburgh Playhouse (10), Newcastle City Hall (11), Manchester Apollo (13), Bradford St George's Hall (15), Brighton Centre (17), Portsmouth Guildhall (18), Cardiff St David's Hall (19), Swindon Oasis Centre (21) and London Hammersmith Odeon (23, 24, 25 and 26). Tickets are on sale now, priced £8 and £7 for London, £7 for Glasgow, Brighton, Cardiff and Swindon, and £7 and £6 for the rest.

ELVIS COSTELLO'S entire back catalogue of albums is now available on his own Imp label through Demon. The final four LPs, 'Punch The Clock', 'Goodbye Cruel World', 'The Best Of Elvis Costello - The Man' and 'King Of America', are issued on the new label this month. The 17-track 'Best Of. . .' collection is packaged in a brand new sleeve, trainspotters.

HUSKER DU follow up their major label debut of 'Candy Apple Grey' last year with a second Warners album due out soon — and this one's double. As a curtain-raiser to the long player, a single 'Could You Be The One' is out this week, backed with 'Everytime'. The 12 inch features an extra track, 'Charity, Chastity, Prudence And Hope'.



JASPER CARROTT: cosmic

ALBUMS

JASPER CARROTT: 'Cosmic Carrott' (Portrait) a release that reveals why plumbers' bums always hang out of their trousers — out now. ● **DEEP PURPLE**: 'The House Of Blue Light' (Polydor) ten tracks produced by Roger Glover — out on January 30. ● **CURTIS HAIRSTON**: 'Curtis Hairston' (Atlantic) — out now. ● **HIDDEN CHARMS**: 'History' (Jungle) a Swedish new wave outfit, influenced by Roky Erickson, Alex Chilton etc. — out this week. ● **JAMES LAST & ASTRUD GILBERTO**: 'Plus' (Polydor) well, it makes a change from those dubious backing singers he usually works with — out next week. ● **JIMMY REED**: 'Boogie In The Dark' (Blue Moon) a repackaged, mid-price job — out now. ● **SYLVESTER**: 'Mutual Attraction' (Warner Bros) includes versions of Gershwin's 'Summertime', Stevie Wonder's 'Living In The City' plus Syl's own 1978 hit 'You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real)' — out Monday (12). ● **THE TEXTONES**: 'Midnight Mission' (Volumbe) Phil Seymour's new band, with guest spots by Ry Cooder, Don Henley, Barry Goldberg and Gene Clark — out this week. ● **JOHN WILSON**: 'Understanding' (Legacy) features Wilson's sister, the once-behived Mari, on backing vocals — out Monday (12). ● **ZERRA ONE**: 'The Domino Effect' (Mercury) produced by Barry Blue — out this week.

THE GODFATHERS, who have recorded a new single, 'Love Is Dead', for release on St Valentine's Day, have three British shows lined up before leaving for a tour of Finland. They play London Marquee (January 9 and 10) and Manchester Boardwalk (15).

ELKIE BROOKS is going out on the road for the first time in three years this spring, playing songs from her most recent album 'No More The Fool' as part of a two hour show. The full itinerary takes in St Austell Coliseum (March 23), Bristol Colston Hall (25), Gloucester Leisure Centre (26), Brighton Conference Centre (27), Manchester Apollo (29), Edinburgh Playhouse (31), Birmingham NEC (April 2), Liverpool Empire (5), Newcastle City Hall (6), Oxford Apollo (8), Bournemouth International Centre (9) and London Wembley Arena (12). Ticket prices range from £7.50 to £9.50.

WORKING WEEK are off to Japan soon, but before they leave these shores they play a one-off at Brixton Fridge on January 22. Tickets are £5 and are on sale now from the venue or from Ronnie Scotts club in Frith Street, Soho during the day.

MICHELLE-SHOCKED has made some alterations to her tour schedule and also added some new dates. The revised timetable is Brighton Richmond (January 13), London Queen Elizabeth Hall (14), London Kennington Cricketers (15), London Clerkenwell Apples & Snakes (17), Deptford Albany Empire (18), London 100 Club (23), Putney Zeeta's (26), Camden Dingwalls (30).

WAS (NOT WAS), the band that's the ever-changing creation of Don and David Was, is shortly to play some UK dates. Joining them on this debut trip will be Desy Campbell-Banks, the former Floy Joy member who recently became part of the current Was (Not Was) line-up. In an effort to grab a little attention prior to the gigs, the band have just released a remixed version of their 'Robot Girl' single on the Mercury label.

ROKY ERICKSON, leader of the legendary Texas psychedelic group 13th Floor Elevators, has two albums issued by Demon this month. The first, 'Gremlins Have Pictures', is a collection of previously unreleased live performances with various backing groups recorded between 1975 and 1982. The second is 'I Think Of Demons', credited to Roky Erickson & The Aliens, a reissue of his 1980 CBS set with two extra tracks.



ERIC CLAPTON: single mask

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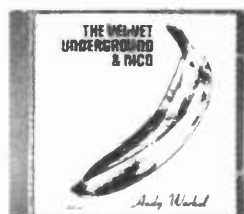
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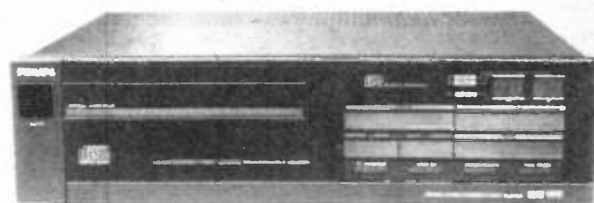
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GAY GUY 24. Straight Looking, seeks masculine Gay Guy 21-35 Photo returned with mine, Nottingham Area. A.L.A. Box No. 7515.

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RECORD FAIRS

BIRMINGHAM'S NO. 1 Saturday January 17th - Central Hall, Corporation Street. 11am-5pm. 50p. (10am-£1).

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PAUL SIMON Appreciation Society. S.A.E. Ref. 1, P.O. Box 32, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 7RP.



SPECIAL NOTICES

ABSOLUTELY FREE Songwriting booklet from International Songwriters Association (NM2) Limerick City, Ireland.

EVERY SECOND 16 animals are butchered for meat. **STOP** this barbaric slaughter **NOW.** Send S.A.E. to (Dept NME) Vegetarian Society, Parkdale, Dunham Road, Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 4QC.



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45s INDEPENDENT LPs

1	1	KISS	Age Of Chance (Fon)
2	2	INTO THE GROOVE(Y)	Ciccone Youth (Blast First)
3	3	PEEL SESSION	Joy Division (Strange Fruit)
4	4	SOMETIMES	Erasure (Mute)
5	6	STUMBO	Wiseblood (Some Bizzare)
6	5	STEAMING TRAIN	Talulah Gosh (53rd & 3rd)
7	11	GOING TO HEAVEN TO SEE IF IT RAINS	Close Lobsters (Fire)
8	7	THROWAWAY	Mighty Mighty (Chapter 22)
9	8	POPPYCOCK	Pop Will Eat Itself (Chapter 22)
10	23	EVERYTHING'S GROOVY	Gaye Bikers On Acid (In Tape)
11	19	REALLY STUPID EP	The Primitives (Lazy)
12	14	BEATNIK BOY	Talulah Gosh (53rd & 3rd)
13	12	SERPENT'S KISS	The Mission (Chapter 22)
14	(-)	ANAL STAIRCASE	Coil (K422)
15	15	COMPLETELY AND UTTERLY	The Chesterfields (Subway)
16	18	INSIDE OUT	Into A Circle (Abstract)
17	7	SHAKE DRILL EP	Wire (Mute)
18	10	BIZARRE LOVE TRIANGLE	New Order (Factory)
19	22	PEEL SESSION	The Undertones (Strange Fruit)
20	26	LEE REMICK	The Go-Betweens (Situation Two)
21	(-)	THE DAY BEFORE TOMORROW	BMX Bandits (53rd & 3rd)
22	17	JUSTICE	Batfish Boys (Batfish)
23	13	HANG TEN/JUST MIND YOUR STEP	Soup Dragons (Raw)
24	RE	OWN THEM, CONTROL THEM	Misty In Roots (People Unite)
25	RE	PEEL SESSION	The Wedding Present (Strange Fruit)
26	RE	PLEASE DON'T SANDBLAST MY HOUSE	1000 Violins (Dreamworld)
27	RE	I WANT YOU	Elvis Costello (Imp/Demon)
28	25	PEEL SESSION	Madness (Strange Fruit)
29	RE	PEEL SESSION	New Order (Strange Fruit)
30	24	THE GRIP OF LOVE	Ghost Dance (Karbon)

1	1	BEDTIME FOR DEMOCRACY	The Dead Kennedys (Alternative Tentacles)
2	2	PICTURES OF STARVING CHILDREN	Chumbawamba (AgitProp)
3	5	QUARK OUT	Stump (Stuff)
4	4	HIT BY NIT	The Godfathers (Corporate Image)
5	8	CBS	Various (NME/Rough Trade)
6	3	YOUR FUNERAL... MY TRIAL	Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds (Mute)
7	7	IN THE PINES	The Triffids (Hot)
8	6	THE MOON AND THE MELODIES	Cocteau Twins/Budd (4AD)
9	17	WONDERLAND	Erasure (Mute)
10	12	MISERABLE SINNERS	The Creepers (In Tape)
11	10	THE QUEEN IS DEAD	The Smiths (Rough Trade)
12	20	LOVE SHARKS	Guana Batz (ID)
13	11	BROTHERHOOD	New Order (Factory)
14	14	WHAT'S IN A WORD	Brilliant Corners (SS20)
15	13	STOMPING AT KLUB FOOT VOL 3 & 4	Various (ABC)
16	15	MEDUSA	Clan Of Xymox (4AD)
17	9	SUN FAMILY	Balaam And The Angel (Chapter 22)
18	22	BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE	Elvis Costello (Imp)
19	19	ON THE BOARDWALK	Ted Hawkins (Brave)
20	25	WATCH YOUR STEP	Ted Hawkins (Gull)
21	28	FORCE	ACR (Factory)
22	29	SEWERTIME BLUES	The Meteors (Anagram/Cherry Red)
23	RE	BACK IN THE DMSS	Half Man Half Biscuit (Probe Plus)
24	24	SMOKE SIGNALS	MDC (Radical)
25	16	SAINT OF THE PIT	Diamanda Galas (Mute)
26	18	GEOGRAPHY	Front 242 (Mask)
27	23	HAMMER PARTY	Big Black (Homestead)
28	21	FLAGREE AND SHADOW	This Mortal Coil (4AD)
29	27	THE RETURN OF MARTHA SPLATTERHEAD	The Accused (Cor)
30	RE	RETARD PICNIC	The Stupids (Children Of The Revolution)

45s

UK TOP FIFTY

LPs

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK		HIGHEST
1	2	MEET PETITE	Jackie Wilson (SMP)
2	1	CARAVAN OF LOVE	The Housemartins (Go! Discs)
3	3	OPEN YOUR HEART	Madonna (Sire)
4	4	THE FINAL COUNTDOWN	Europe (Epic)
5	9	CRY WOLF	A-Ha (Warner Bros)
6	11	IS THIS LOVE	Alison Moyet (CBS)
7	5	SOMETIMES	Erasure (Mute)
8	6	SO COLD THE NIGHT	The Communards (London)
9	8	THE RAIN	Oran Juice Jones (Defjam)
10	7	SHAKE YOU DOWN	Gregory Abbott (CBS)
11	12	BIG FISH	The Gap Band (Total Experience)
12	10	LIVING ON A PRAYER	Bon Jovi (Vertigo/Phonogram)
13	14	BECAUSE OF YOU	Dexys Midnight Runners (Mercury)
14	13	YOU TAKE MY BREATH AWAY	Berlin (CBS)
15	16	LAND OF CONFUSION	Genesis (Virgin)
16	32	NO MORE THE FOOL	Elkie Brooks (Legend)
17	15	STEP RIGHT UP	Jaki Graham (EMI)
18	23	THE MIRACLE OF LOVE	Eurythmics (RCA)
19	17	DREAMIN	Status Quo (Vertigo/Phonogram)
20	24	HYMNI TO HER	The Pretenders (Real)
21	22	OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY	Gary Moore (10)
22	18	FRENCH KISSIN' IN THE USA	Debbie Harry (Chrysalis)
23	21	SHIVER	George Benson (Warner Bros)
24	29	ONLY LOVE REMAINS	Paul McCartney (Parlophone)
25	20	EACH TIME YOU BREAK MY HEART	Nick Kamen (WEA)
26	19	THE SKYE BOAT SONG	Roger Whittaker/Des O'Connor (Tempo)
27	30	THE BOY IN THE BUBBLE	Paul Simon (Warner Bros)
28	41	WALK LIKE AN EGYPTIAN	The Bangles (CBS)
29	26	CANDY	Cameo (Club/Phonogram)
30	39	ALL I ASK OF YOU	Cliff Richard & Sarah Brightman (Polydor)
31	25	BREAKOUT	Swing Out Sister (Mercury)
32	33	YOU KEEP ME HANGIN' ON	Kim Wilde (MCA)
33	31	BALLERINA GIRL	Lionel Richie (Motown)
34	(-)	YOU CAN DANCE... Go Go Lorenzo & The Davis Pinkney Project (Boiling Point)	1 34
35	42	FOR AMERICA	Red Box (Sire)
36	37	ON MY FATHER HAD A RABBIT	Ray Moore (Play)
37	36	SHOWING OUT	Mel & Kim (Supreme)
38	28	SANTA CLAUS IS ON THE DOLE	Spitting Image (Virgin)
39	26	SWEET LOVE	Anita Baker (Elektra)
40	34	IF I SAY YES	Five Star (Tent)
41	50	A SPACEMAN CAME TRAVELLING	Chris De Burgh (A&M)
42	40	WAR (WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR)	Bruce Springsteen (CBS)
43	(-)	HIP TO BE SQUARE	Huey Lewis (Chrysalis)
44	47	REAL WILD CHILD	Iggy Pop (A&M)
45	(-)	C'EST LA VIE	Robbie Nevil (Manhattan/EMI)
46	(-)	ALMAZ	Randy Crawford (Warner Bros)
47	(-)	MUSIC OF THE NIGHT	Michael Crawford & Sarah Brightman (Polydor)
48	(-)	EVERY LOSER WINS	Nick Berry (BBC)
49	49	BIG IN AMERICA	The Stranglers (Epic)
50	46	HEY! LUCIAN	The Fall (Beggars Banquet)

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK		HIGHEST
1	1	NOW VH1	Various (EMI/Virgin)
2	5	GRACELAND	Paul Simon (Warner Bros)
3	3	HITS V	Various (CBS/WEA/RCA)
4	2	THE WHOLE STORY	Kate Bush (EMI)
5	6	EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE - THE SINGLES	The Police (A&M)
6	8	SLIPPERY WHEN WET	Bon Jovi (Vertigo)
7	7	TRUE BLUE	Madonna (Sire)
8	4	LIVE MAGIC	Queen (EMI)
9	11	SILK AND STEEL	Five Star (Tent/RCA)
10	13	REVENGE	Eurythmics (RCA)
11	9	FORE!	Huey Lewis And The News (Chrysalis)
12	23	LONDON O HULL 4	The Housemartins (London)
13	10	SWEET FREEDOM	Michael McDonald (Warner Bros)
14	26	THE SINGING DETECTIVE	Various (BBC)
15	14	DIFFERENT LIGHT	The Bangles (CBS)
16	38	SCOUNDREL DAYS	A-Ha (Warner Bros)
17	12	TOP GUN - SOUNDTRACK	Various (CBS)
18	24	THE FINAL	Wham! (Epic)
19	31	AN ALBUM OF HYMNS	Aled Jones (EMI)
20	36	BROTHERS IN ARMS	Dire Straits (Vertigo)
21	20	LOVERS	Various (Telstar)
22	17	REMINISCING	Foster And Allen (Stylus)
23	18	SOUTH PACIFIC	Various (CBS)
24	16	NOW - THE CHRISTMAS ALBUM	Various (EMI/Virgin)
25	RE	GET CLOSE	The Pretenders (Real/WEA)
26	49	INFECTED	The The (Some Bizzare)
27	43	THE COMMUNARDS	The Communards (London)
28	35	IN THE ARMY NOW	Status Quo (Vertigo)
29	19	LIVE 1975-85	Bruce Springsteen And The E Street Band (CBS)
30	15	AUGUST	Eric Clapton (Duck)
31	27	SIXTIES MANIA	Various (Telstar)
32	44	MOTOWN CHARTBUSTERS	Various (Telstar)
33	RE	DANCING ON THE CEILING	Lionel Ritchie (Motown)
34	33	WHITNEY HOUSTON	Whitney Houston (Arista)
35	22	THE FINAL COUNTDOWN	Europe (Epic)
36	(-)	WONDERLAND	Erasure (Mute)
37	29	HIT MIX '86	Various (Stylus)
38	30	HIGHWAY OF LIFE	Harry Secombe (Telstar)
39	34	RAPTURE	Anita Baker (Elektra)
40	21	THROUGH THE BARRICADES	Spandau Ballet (Reformation)
41	28	THE GREATEST HITS	Bonnie Tyler (Telstar)
42	39	MOTORIOUS	Duran Duran (EMI)
43	25	CHRISTMAS	Elaine Paige (WEA)
44	(-)	JUST GOOD FRIENDS	Paul Nicholas (K-Tel)
45	42	SO	Peter Gabriel (Virgin)
46	RE	A KIND OF MAGIC	Queen (EMI)
47	48	INVISIBLE TOUCH	Genesis (Virgin)
48	50	DISCO	Pet Shop Boys (Parlophone)
49	(-)	NO MORE THE FOOL	Elkie Brooks (Legend)
50	(-)	HOLLYWOOD AND BROADWAY	Richard Clayderman (Decca)

DANCEFLOOR 20

1	FUNKY GROOVE	Hardrock Soul Movement (Streetwave 12")
2	LET THE MUSIC MOVE YOU	Raze (Grove St. 12")
3	IT'S THE NEW STYLE	Beastie Boys (Def Jam 12")
4	STILL SMOKIN'	Trouble Funk (TTED 12")
5	I CAN'T TURN AROUND	J. M. Silk (DJ International)
6	JACK THE GROOVE	Raze (Grove St. 12")
7	COAST TO COAST	Word Of Mouth With D.J. Cheese (Profile 12")
8	GENIUS	Quando Quango (Factory 12")
9	ART OF DRUMS	Macattack (Baad Records 12")
10	MUSIQUE NON STOP	Kraftwerk (EMI 12")
11	FALLING IN LOVE	Sybil (Next Plateau 12")
12	KING OF ROCK (CUT UP MIX)	Run DMC (Profile 12")
13	MY LATIN LOVER	Q-Pid Featuring Nicki-Q (Rhythm King 12")
14	SLOW RIDE	Beastie Boys (Def Jam LP Track)
15	DROP THE BOMB	Trouble Funk (TTED 12")
16	SEVEN WAYS	Hercules (Trax 12")
17	MINIFIELD	I-Level (Virgin 12")
18	SEE ME (LP TRACK)	Luther Vandross (Epic LP Track)
19	PUT YOUR RIGHT HAND (IN THE AIR)	Redds And The Boys (London 12")
20	SUMMERTIME SUMMERTIME	Nocera (Sleeping Bag 12")

(Chart by DJs Mark & Brian, "Fizz Club" at the Man Alive Club, Groovenorst, Manchester.)

FUNK 20

1	GOOD MORNING KISS	Carmen Lundy (Blackhawk) US LP
2	RITMOS CUBANOS	Belson/De Los Reyes (Pablo) Euro LP
3	BRUTAL HOUSE	Nitro De Luxe (Cutting Records) US 12"
4	EN CAVALE	Isabelle Antena (Freelance) Euro LP
5	SEXY	Masters Of Ceremony (Strong City) US 12"
6	MOONLIGHTING	Rippingtons (Passport) US LP
7	MR BIG STUFF	Jean Knight (Stax) US 7"
8	I FOUND LOVE	Darlene Davis (Take One) US 12"
9	CEM CAMINHOS	Quinteto Maria João (Nabel) Euro LP
10	ONE SCOTCH, ONE BOURBON, ONE BEER	Amos Milburn (Aladdin) US 7"
11	PERFECT TIMING	Donna Allen (Atlantic) US 7"
12	SURRENDER	Swing Out Sister (Polydor) UK 12"
13	NEVER MISS YOUR WATER	Bobby McClure (Edge) US 12"
14	STRAIGHT NO FILTER	Hank Mobley (Blue Note) UK LP
15	BEST OF YOU	Booker T Jones (A&M) US LP
16	I LIKE IT	Marvin Sease (Polygram) US 12"
17	FALLING IN LOVE	Hamilton Joe Frank And Reynolds (Playboy) US 7"
18	HOUSE NATION	Housemasters (Dance Mania) US 12"
19	TAKE IT TO THE LIMIT	Ray Goodman & Brown (EMI) UK LP
20	I LOVE BRAZIL	Sarah Vaughan (Pablo) Euro LP

Chart by Nigel & Dave at City Sounds, 8 Procter Street, London WC1

REGGAE 45s

1	CRAZY LOVE	Maxi Priest (10)
2	FOOTSTOMPIN' HANDCLAPPIN' MUSIC	Administrators (Groove & 1/4)
3	ROCK WITH ME BABY	Winsome & Nerious Joseph (Fine Style)
4	KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOUR	Debbie G (UK Bubbler)
5	FULL FOR YOU	Peter Hunningdale (Street Vibes)
6	GOLDEN TOUCH	Janet Kenton (High Power)
7	DANCE HALL VIBES	Mikey General (Digikal)
8	LATELY	Naturalites (Realistic)
9	GOING TO A PARTY	Ricky Tamlin (UK Bubbler)
10	READY AND WAITING FOR YOU	Michael Gordon (Fine Style)

REGGAE LPs

1	INTENTIONS	Maxi Priest (10)
2	COUNTRY LIFE	Sandra Cross (Ariwa)
3	THE EXIT	Dennis Brown (Trojan)
4	SOUND BOY BURIAL	Andrew Paul & Mikey General (Digikal)
5	TROUBLE AGAIN	King Kong (Greensleeves)
6	BORN TO CHAT	Asher Senator (Fashion)
7	LAY IT ON THE LINE	Wailing Souls (Live & Learn)
8	RAGAMUFFIN YEAR	Junior Delgado (Mango)
9	DOUBLE DOSE	Sugar Minott & Gregory Isaacs (Greensleeves)
10	THE ORIGINAL HIT SOUND	Ethiopians (Trojan)

Chart by Dub Vendor, 274 Lavender Hill, London SW11.

US

- 1 WALK LIKE AN EGYPTIAN The Bangles (Columbia)
2 EVERYBODY HAVE FUN TONIGHT Wang Chung (Geffen)
3 NOTORIOUS Duran Duran (Capitol)
4 SHAKE YOU DOWN Gregory Abbott (Columbia)
5 THE WAY IT IS Bruce Hornsby And The Range (RCA)
6 C'EST LA VIE Robbie Nevil (Manhattan)
7 CONTROL Janet Jackson (A&M)
8 WAR Bruce Springsteen (Columbia)
9 STAND BY ME Ben E King (Atlantic)
10 DON'T GET ME WRONG The Pretenders (Sire)
11 TO BE A LOVER Billy Idol (Chrysalis)
12 IS THIS LOVE Survivor (Scotti Bros)
13 LAND OF CONFUSION Genesis (Atlantic)
14 VICTORY Kool And The Gang (Mercury)
15 AT THIS MOMENT Billy Vera And The Beaters (Rhino)

US

- 1 LIVE 1975-1985 Bruce Springsteen (Columbia)
2 SLIPPERY WHEN WET Bon Jovi (Mercury)
3 THIRD STAGE Boston (MCA)
4 THE WAY IT IS Bruce Hornsby And The Range (RCA)
5 FORE! Huey Lewis And The News (Chrysalis)
6 GRACELAND Paul Simon (Warner Bros)
7 DANCING ON THE CEILING Lionel Richie (Motown)
8 TRUE BLUE Madonna (Sire)
9 EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE - THE SINGLES The Police (A&M)
10 NIGHT SONGS The Police (A&M)
11 WHIPLASH SMILE Cinderella (Mercury)
12 WORD UP Cameo (Atlanta)
13 DIFFERENT LIGHT Billy Idol (Chrysalis)
14 TRUE COLORS The Bangles (Columbia)
15 RAPTURE Cyndi Lauper (Portrait)

Charts courtesy Billboard

WILSONS

10



Wicked Pickett.

- 1 JACKIE WILSON
2 SIR HAROLD WILSON
3 WILSON PICKETT
4 NANCY WILSON
5 WILSON, KEPPEL AND BETTY
6 BRIAN WILSON
7 WOODROW WILSON
8 TONY 'FACTORY' WILSON
9 WILSON OF THE WIZARD
10 FLIP WILSON

Chart courtesy of Wilson Fire

ELVIS

52



Merle. Photo Peter Anderson.

- 1 HILLBILLY CAT Presley In Mind (Bull's Head)
2 D'YA THINK I LOOK LIKE ELVIS PRESLEY Big Ed And His Rockin' Rattlesnakes (Black Lagoon)
3 THE GREATEST STAR Slip Jackson (Tubbs)
4 GOODNIGHT ELVIS The Teardrops (RCA)
5 FROM GRACELANDS TO THE PROMISED LAND Merle Haggard (CBS)
6 COME BACK ELVIS The Tearful Trio (Whitehouse)
7 ELVIS Jenny Nichols (RCA)
8 IT AIN'T NO MYSTERY Orion (Sun)
9 THE KING IS GONE Ronnie McDowell (Scorpion)
10 SHOOT ME PLEASE (I WANT TO MEET ELVIS) Truckin' Tommy (White Line)

Chart from the Eddie Vincent Presley Disco, Bootle Street, Manchester M2. Elvis would have been 52 this Thursday.

STYLE COUNCIL 10

- 1 SLY CELTIC OUT, HEN
2 LOCH LEE, TINY CUTS
3 LUCY CENTI'S MOTEL
4 SELECT LOU CHINITY
5 CHUTNEY SLICE LOT
6 COE SECT HUNT LILY
7 YOO, LES, CHET, CLINT
8 SUE T. HILTON CYCLE
9 USE TONY CHILL, ETC.
10 CUTE CY HILL'S NOTE

Courtesy Anna Gramm

LEST WE FORGET



Abba: four of'em.

5

YEARS AGO

- 1 DON'T YOU WANT ME? The Human League (Virgin)
2 ONE OF US Abba (Epic)
3 ANT RAP Adam And The Ants (CBS)
4 IT MUST BE LOVE Madness (Stiff)
5 THE LAND OF MAKE BELIEVE Bucks Fizz (RCA)
6 DADDY'S HOME Cliff Richard (EMI)
7 WEDDING BELLS Godley & Creme (Polydor)
8 I'LL FIND MY WAY HOME Jon & Vangelis (Polydor)
9 MIRROR MIRROR Dollar (WEA)
10 YOUNG TURKS Rod Stewart (Delite)

10

YEARS AGO

- 1 WHEN A CHILD IS BORN Johnny Mathis (CBS)
2 UNDER THE MOON OF LOVE Showaddywaddy (Bell)
3 MONEY MONEY MONEY Abba (Epic)
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US BABY David Soul (Private Stock)
5 PORTSMOUTH Mike Oldfield (Virgin)
6 DOCTOR LOVE Tina Charles (CBS)
7 LIVING NEXT DOOR TO ALICE Smokie (Rak)
8 GRANDMA'S PARTY (EP) Paul Nicholas (RSO)
9 SOMEBODY TO LOVE Queen (EMI)
10 LIVIN' THING Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)

15

YEARS AGO

- 1 I'D LIKE TO TEACH THE WORLD TO SING New Seekers (Polydor)
2 ERNIE Benny Hill (Columbia)
3 THEME FROM SHAFT Isaac Hayes (Stax)
4 SOMETHING TELLS ME Cilla Black (Parlophone)
5 NO MATTER HOW I TRY Gilbert O'Sullivan (MAM)
6 JEEPSTER T. Rex (Fly)
7 SOFTLY WHISPERING I LOVE YOU Congregation (Columbia)
8 SOLEY, SOLEY Middle Of The Road (RCA)
9 SLEEPY SHORES Johnny Pearson (Penny Farthing)
10 TOKOLOSHE MAN John Kongos (Fly)

20

YEARS AGO

- 1 GREEN GREEN GRASS OF HOME Tom Jones (Decca)
2 MORNINGTOWN RIDE The Seekers (Columbia)
3 SAVE ME Dave Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mick & Tich (Fontana)
4 SUNSHINE SUPERMAN Donovan (Pye)
5 WHAT WOULD I BE Val Doonican (Decca)
6 HAPPY JACK The Who (Reaction)
7 ANY WAY YOU WANT ME The Troggs (Page One)
8 DEAD END STREET The Kinks (Pye)
9 IN THE COUNTRY Cliff Richard (Columbia)
10 YOU KEEP ME HANGIN' ON The Supremes (Tamla Motown)

FRED FACT

IF I may be granted one last glance back at '86, I guess the thing I'd home in on was the way in which a whole new public suddenly latched onto the great black singers of yesteryear. Okay, James Brown had always been there on the horizon. But until 'Living In America' he hadn't funk'd his way into the US Top 20 since 1972 and 'Get On The Good Foot'. Little Richard, who, with 'Great Gosh Amighty', also ventured into the upper reaches of the Stateside statistical survey in '86, had endured an even longer hiatus, his last major hit in his homeland being 'Good Golly, Miss Molly', way back in 1958. Ben E. King whose 'Stand By Me' brought about yet another change of fortune for the Drifter, would have to check back to 1975 to ascertain when a major record, 'Supernatural Thing', last gave him gold card credit rating. It's claimed that King's success is down to 'Stand By Me' being revived as the theme to a movie of the same name and doubtless, when the record takes off over here, everyone will immediately point a dodgy digit in the direction of a new Levi's ad and the sartorial tightness in the rear of one Eddie Kidd, whose former claim to glory was hurtling over the tops of 19 buses on a souped-up bike. But it's much more fun to speculate that King's success, like those of many others, could be linked to some sort of Prince connection. After all, his real surname is Nelson! The unfortunate Sam Cooke represented another of 1986's flashbacks. It's likely that some kids will always remember him as another of the voices that sold 501s to bathbums, but those who have always snuggled up with Peter Guralnick at night will prefer to hitch their memories to the revival of 'Wonderful World' and the accompanying 'The Man And His Music' album, which went Top 10 in the NME chart some 22 years in the wake of the one-time Soul Stirrers' mysterious death in some seedy motel. Finally, as '86 sank slowly in the West, the charts provided a reminder of Jackie Wilson, another of black music's unlucky sons, who died in January, 1984, after laying in a coma since September, 1975. Oddly enough, the SMP reissue of 'Reet Petite' which gave the ex-boxer his first Top 10 hit since 1972, was released in August, 1983, and had hung around ever since. Then, many things connected with Wilson were odd. One of his favourite singers, for instance, was Al Jolson, a Broadway performer whose forte was blacking his face to sing such songs as 'Coal Black Mammy' and 'The Pullman Porters' Parade'. Wilson could never see the absurdity of his admiration for a purveyor of 'coon' songs. At one point he even made an album called 'You Ain't Heard Nothin' Yet' (Jolson's catch-phrase) and filled it with his versions of Jolson's greatest hits. Thankfully, he never got around to admiring the speeches of Oswald Mosley.

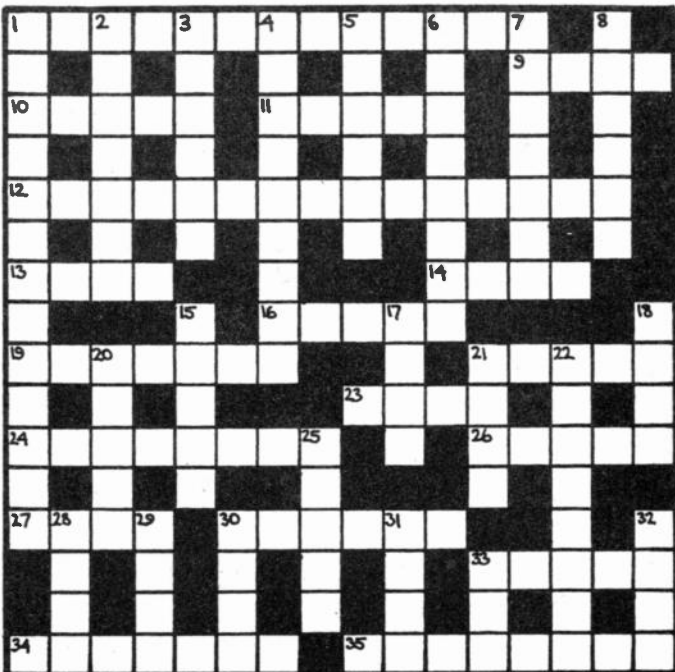
Fred Dellar

X PRESSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

- 1 It certainly beats using the back seat of a mini - but you'll need to pull first (7-2-4)
9 + 35 across Not something that Ian Dury wants to talk about regarding his '4,000 Weeks Holiday' (4-8)
10 Dee Generate banged the drums for them; their output included 'Get Your Yo-Yo's Out' (5)
11 Decompose with a rather personal smell coming from within - blame the Tornados! (5)
12 "I want a doctor to take your picture, so I can look at you from inside as well" (7-8)
13 + 20 down Fruity but mature work from Frankie Paul (4-5)
14 American rock band whose line-up comprises Paich, Lukather and the two Porcaro brothers (4)
16 Stare strangely when asked about a Chameleons single (5)

- 19 Main set altered to include this group who charted just once with 'The Walk' (7)
21 + 7 down 'It's In His Kiss' and 'Getting Mighty Crowded' were both minor but well remembered hits, of hers in the '60s (5-7)
23 (see 34 across)
24 Learner of grand alterations as part of The Three Johns (8)
26 Aural discordance from the Shop Assistants (5)
27 + 25 down Leather Nun certainly didn't make a quick killing with this mini-album (4-5)
30 "And they're American _____, made in America, smoking or non-smoking" from Laurie Anderson's 'O Superman' (6)
33 _____ Ryder and the Detroit Wheels (5)
34 + 23 across "There's too much pain and too much sorrow, guess I'll feel the same tomorrow" (3-4-4)
35 (see 9 across)



Compiled by Trevor Hungerford

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Madness took two greatest hits albums to reach 'completely and utterly' - this Subway band achieve it on one single (13)
2 "But then he mumbles in his coffee and he suddenly roars it's a _____ Julie, and we've been caught" (3-4)
3 + 8 down Their releases during the last year included 'Love Lasts Forever' and 'Don't Look Back' (6-6)
4 "I woke last night and spoke to you not thinking you were gone, and it felt so strange to lie awake alone" (2-7)
5 A '50s-era manufactured Elvis Presley whose talent didn't match the hype (6)
6 Belfast band rejected in their own social circles? (8) (see 21 across)
7 (see 21 across)
8 (see 3 down)
15 Some of the best, if fortunate, form this record company (5)

- 17 Pouring Oran' Juice, Jones? (4)
18 Sean, guitarist with Geno Washington's Ram Jam Band, he formed Ducks Deluxe in 1972 (4)
20 (see 13 across)
21 William, Maggie or Archie (4)
22 Colin, producer whose credits include Human League's 'Reproduction' and Duran Duran's 'Rio' (8)
25 (see 27 across)
28 One of three ingredients required for a Pogues LP (4)
29 On which Pink Floyd found themselves 'Comfortably Numb' (4)
30 Joe, guitarist who perhaps got by working with the likes of Oscar Peterson (4)
31 Were Yes once close to working with U2? (4)
32 Sorry, I thought you said you'd had your fill of Genesis (4)
33 Carolyn _____; with Christmas finished you might remember her name (3)

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1 + 9 down. Your Funeral My Trial 9 + 21 down. The Sin Of Pride 10 + 3 down. Trouble Funk 11. In Tape 12 + 23 down. Age Of Chance 14. Sun 15. Klein 20 + 36 across. Brass In Pocket 25. Car 28. Lean On Me 29 + 22 across. Little Richard 32 + 35 down. Kick In The Eye.
DOWN: 2 + 17 across. One Great Thing 4. No Fun 5. Rat Race 6. Loose Ends 7. Yo Boys 8. Seven 13. Frida 16. Lurie 18. Inch 19 + 37 across. Cry Like A Baby 24. Ron 26 + 26 across. Yeah Yeah Noh 27. Hello 30. Tina 31. Lady 33. Imp 34. TVC.

GOT SOMETHING TO SELL?
It's only 30p per word to advertise in NME classifieds.

FLAG BAG

WHAT'S THE HUBBUB, BUB?

The Legend! has discovered his penis. His singles review would have been extraordinary if only for awarding his SOTW to Broooooce, this honour coming from a man who wouldn't know a well developed arm muscle if it jumped up and hugged him at a Hobgoblins gig. But NO—he didn't stop there... He went on to—SHOCK. Allude to the Swans! (Aren't those ears too tenderised by "loving ba-ba's" to handle the sheer squawk of the Swans?); Use the phrase "Creep into bed next to me"! (Wait, he means to infer he has company in bed and that's not always his Thomas the Tank Engine Stuffed toy?); But a Talulah Gosh flexi! **UNTHINKABLE!**

He made Talulah Gosh—teeth rotting sweetness, hand painted guitars—he lapped that gush up. Sure he balances these precedent (five issues of *The Legend!*) breaking reviews in B.M.X. Bandits and Rote Kapelle raves, but the evidence is hard to

reading it since 1963 so I know it's taken me rather a long time to figure it out!). The answer lies on page 36 of the Xmas Double Issue, in Stuart Cosgrove's piece where he details the disagreement about "What direction should the *NME* take?"

The answer is NO DIRECTION AT ALL; as Duke Ellington once said "There's only two types of music, good and bad," and quite simply the *NME* should follow the good music, whichever road that may lead it down. Black, white, yellow, the labels don't matter.

One final thing, can someone explain to me the fates of two LPs released this year. Prince's 'Parade' was slated when it came out (I mean the *NME* review) yet ended up as Album of the Year!, whilst David Sylvian's 'Gone To Earth' received a very favourable review yet didn't even make it into the Top 60! Where's the logic please? *Stewart J. Tray, Crompsall, Manchester*

EDITED BY THE LEGEND! ART BY HELEN JONES. HOIST YOUR VOICE TO FLAGBAG, NME EDITORIAL, COMMONWEALTH HOUSE, 1-19 NEW OXFORD STREET, LONDON WC1A 1NG.

hate articles. Good music will survive me and you. *Niklas Dabolins, Lansmansgarden, 64300 Vingalier, Sweden* And a happy new year to you too, Niklas. It's a sad old world, isn't it?—LI

DUCK SEASON!

I admit that Iggy was second only to Jesus in the retroactive history of punk, but I found Mr. Alan McGee's attitude ("Iggy is a God"... etc) to be rather puzzling.

When punk came pulsing out the Gwent valleys all those years ago, we were trying to get rid of the idea that 'Stars' can thrive off their contribution to ROCK'S RICH TAPESTRY. Mr. McGee, however, seems to be suggesting to Mr. Legend! that the Ig be somewhere beyond criticism, even though his new record sounds like one of Pete Whatzit out of Bauhaus's awful rip-off cover-version, and the Ig has just been on No. 73 waltzing about with a teddy bear!

We did not fight the PUNK WARS for this! *Carlton B. Morgan, Cwmbram, Gwent* My sentiments precisely, Mr. Morgan. I thank you. There's only one thing left worrying me though, Alan. I'd always assumed you'd based your whole career around The Jam's second album—you're not trying to tell me different NOW, are you?—LI

Dear FLAB BAG I believe that Socialism and Capitalism are unimportant and were invented to give people something to argue about.

Therefore I suggest we all drop the subject because it is pointless and write in about more important things, like *Blockbusters*. *Ken, York* Where've ya' been, Ken? 'Decadent' Bob Holmes stopped being vital three years ago—LI

RE: Alan McGee's remarks about what garbage Pigbros are, in last week's *Flag Bag*—I guess that means there's no chance of a recording contract with Creation Records? *Nick, Pigbros*

WABBIT SEASON!

The Legend! —is 27 years old (that is, he has no excuse for liking the Soup Dragons as he was a viable teenager when Buzzcocks were extant).

—went to a public school (which explains it—he was tucked away somewhere with his Genesis tapes being terribly unhip in 1976—this advocacy of groups which sound like hip groups he missed out on is a weak attempt at compensation for his goofiness of ten years ago).

—is actually called Jeremy (need I say more?).
—his roommate is cuter.
—he has serious conversations about liquorice.
Having said all that—he remains, however, not only fab, but gear as well (truly).
Beat that.
Dee Dee Ramone Appreciation Society, Camden You blew it with the last line kid. Better luck next time—LI

Sir, please please please permit Ledge Baby to review the new 45s every week or I will come round there and crimp your goolies. It is reassuring to see a man of his proportions doing the business. Keep it up. *J. Hitchcock, Leytonstone, London E11* I don't know you by any chance, do I?—LI

OF COURSE, YOU REALISE, THIS MEANS WAR!

In recent months many of the letters you have printed seem to have concerned themselves with Paolo Hewitt's championing of 'black' dance music. The explanation of this is rather simple.

You see, Paolo remembers the way in which all the boring old fart rock hacks were purged from the music press when punk swept into fashion, and, seeing a similar change in musical tastes occurring at the moment, is adapting so that he can keep his job. Those writers who constantly witter on about monkey-booted pop bands (Shop Assistants, Fuzzbox etc. etc.) don't seem to realise that their music means nothing to your average 16-year-old.

Paolo has seen the future of music—it is (for better or worse) black and beat-box based, and Paolo has to bear his job prospects in mind.

Marc Harley, Lee, London SE12 A trifle cynical perhaps, Marc—I'm sure that Paolo covers the type of music he does because it appeals to him, same as the rest of us. Personally, I think that both you, and Stuart Cosgrove's (in the Xmas Issue), assessment of the current 'new' music scene is WAY, WAY OFF THE MARK—this paper isn't called *Blues And Soul*, y'know. Punk was simply a new, refreshing angle on the same old rock; beat-box is another language and country altogether. It's a mistake to even mention the two in the same sentence—LI

RIOT!

Dear *NME*, I am returning two pieces of your rag to you. Talk about self importance. Face it, Thrills, Pye, Kelly, O'Hagan, Cosgrove and all you other bastards you are just a bunch of TRENDY STUPID POMPOUS, (I don't know which is worst, you lot or Queen) HYPOCRITES.

As for Illustrated Songbook, is that supposed to be Art? Never

in my life have I had the misfortune to witness such crap. As you'll notice this letter is unsuitable for publishing, that is because it's just a private note to tell you to crawl up your own arses.

I wonder will you turn on Kinnock if he gets in? I mean, you've turned on everyone else. One word describes your paper. POMPOUS. The lot of you need the shit kicked out of you, soul posing bastards.

I agree with Geldof in the fact that I hate you. As a working class person I am not interested in your middle-class opinions; in fact all this shite about soul music, who gives a shit what you like, who are you to put your opinions forward? As Socialist as Hitler!

Unsigned Although I do fear your language is a trifle strong, I do admire the succinctness of your prose. You're not Garry Bushell by any chance?—LI

SUFFERING SUCCOTASH!

So it's the end of another year, the hacks' final chance to tell us what was what in the wacky *NME* world of pop. Perhaps one of the most amusing things to rise out of 'Pros And Cons' was A. Thrills esq.'s championing of the C86 brigade, a point he takes further elsewhere in the issue with an article on said tape/bands. *NME*, apparently, 'supported' new bands where its rivals 'sneered', then 'followed'! If he means one or two freelancers, who managed to have printed a deluge of two-paragraph-long pieces on these new bands (seemingly pointless when most read the same), then I suppose the *NME* did support them... Meanwhile the likes of Mark E Smith turn up every few weeks; The Fall as safe and conservative now as any of the other patronising garbage which graces the front cover from week to week.

But Mr Thrills, and many of his other 'class of '76' colleagues, have 'supported' these young independents. Oh yes. More 'diverse' than hip-hop or early punk, says he. Yet given half a chance to put as many groups under one banner as possible, you'll jump at it. But what can I say? Well done again *NME*. Still the tops. At the end of a year where the most spot-on observation is the Creation Records boss saying 'Iggy is God', one can only hold one's breath for the new year... *James Robert, The Hyde, London NW9* Quite right too—LI

HERE WE ARE, PIZMO BEACH AND ALL THE CLAMS WE CAN EAT!

Bob Geldof is entirely accurate in his assessment of the *modus operandi* of *NME* journalists during the punk era. If you weren't from the tight little Roxy elite (yawn—LI) or CBGB's (yawn—LI) then forget it, sucker.

Especially if you're Irish.

As for him having no musical talent—well, a song like 'Rat Trap' actually reflects the way that some of us have to live (yeah, sure sure—LI)—no, not *NME* journalists with their £200 plus a week end West End payola (lucky bastards—LI), record company drugs et al—but us out here in the real world... *Sue, Birmingham*

Does *NME* as a major recruitment journal of the Music Industry operate an Equal Opportunities policy? Neil Taylor's prospectus for The Wishing Stones is a blatant example of jobs-for-the-boys insider dealing. Who was it written for? The hidden text reads as a full page application complete with Curriculum Vitae: past experience; qualifications; references; interests and career ambitions including a suggested starting salary!... "this is worth at least £8,000 PA". In case it's not clear to whom it's being aimed at, it is spelled out: "they need a manager, an offer from one of the interested majors". The terms and conditions—"it's a major deals not majors that are the problem". Then the invitation to buy not "just another crummy independent band" and to buy now before "someone (else) up there—someone with a great wedge of money—is going to sit up and take note". Well good luck to them, but why doesn't Neil Taylor use the classifieds like everyone else or at least take off his journalist hat whilst he is repping? *Prof Bore, Dept. Of Media Studies, School Of Hard Rock* Because he earns more money this way. What are you, stupid or something?—LI

POSTSCRIPT CORNER!

Why doesn't your paper try reviewing proper music instead of all the HIP HOP CRAP? *Wayne Hussey's Black Shades, Cheshire* Gear point Wayne!—LI

Who is William Leith? Is he running for Parliament? *Mr. Turvey, Lucton* (i) A *NME* freelance writer (ii) NO—LI

For my tuppence worth, the LP of the year, so far, was... 'Visions Of Excess' by the Golden Palominos, but so what? *Stewart J. Tray, Crompsall, Manchester* So what indeed, Stewart!—LI

Ever seen Stephen Pastel and David Shep (huhh?—LI) in the same room? *Lester Bangs' Landlord, London* Yes—LI

Maybe there is now a glimmer of hope for this country's teeny sweenies... *Danny Moran, Manchester* Hmmm, maybe there is, Danny. Who can say? Not me, for sure—LI

If I was Madonna's lawyer I'd take you lot to the cleaners. *J. Dashwood, Soton, Hants*... and if I was James Brown, I'd take us to the bridge!—LI

THAT'S ALL FOLKS!



ignore—the man who created this whole scene used that singles review to get out while the getting was good. I can see it now—in six months he'll have traded in the Shop Assistants T-shirt for an oil-soaked Motorhead one and be writing a new fanzine *John Bonham Is God—KICK ASS MAN!* Public Castration is good—public backpedalling is merely embarrassing. He wrote half of the *NME* last week—surely the only feasible way this can be accomplished is by an over-production of testosterone? Just a theory.

Lester Bangs' Landlord, London. Funny you should mention it, but I actually traded in my old sweat-stained Motorhead T-shirt for a natty two-piece yesterday (true!). If I'm to 'epitomise the new conservatism', I'd better start looking the part—LI

HONEST AND FOR TRUE!

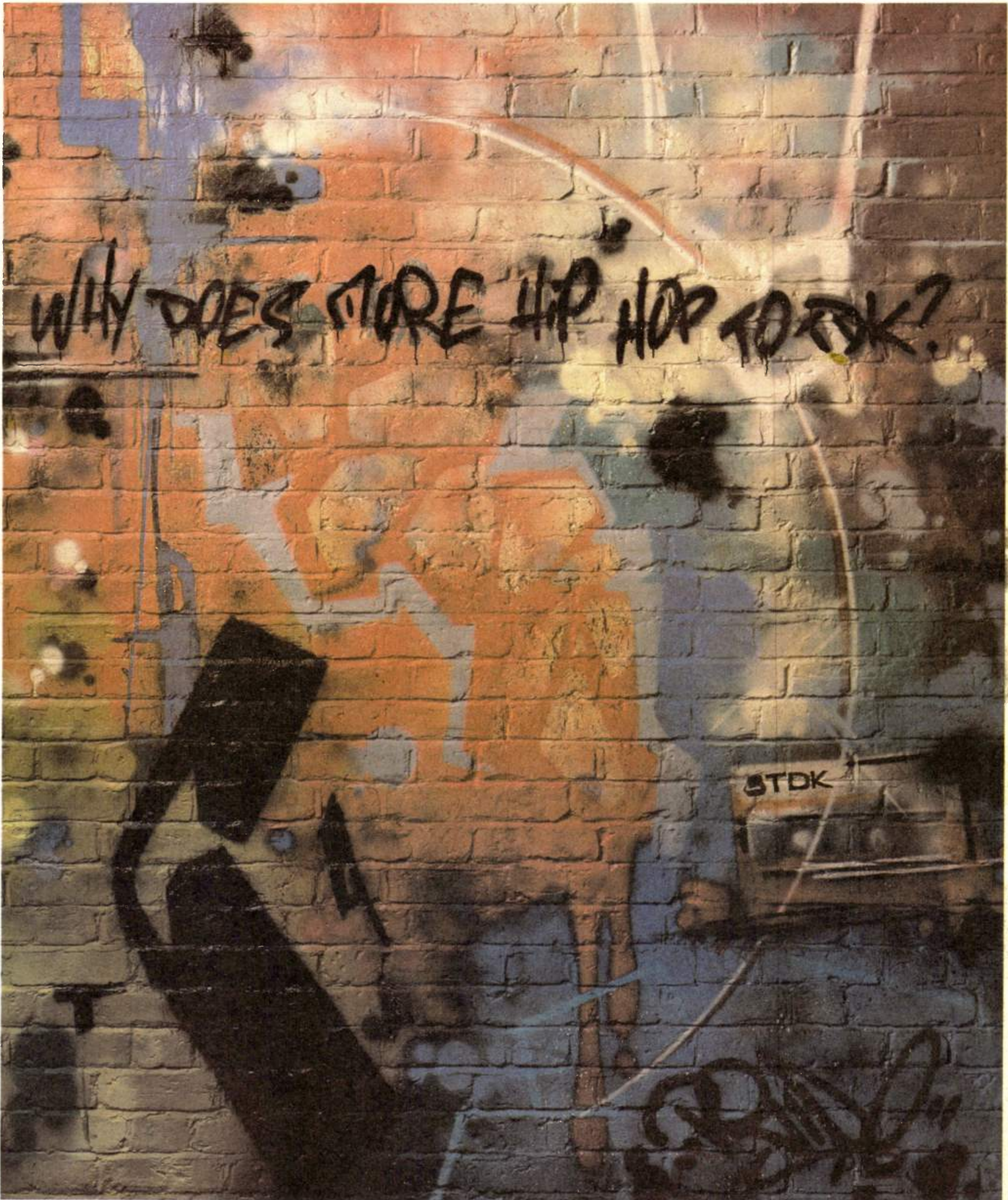
I've just discovered what's wrong with the *NME* (and I've been

I would heartily concur with you on your first point; the difficulty lies in the differentiation and the fact that varying people's ears will lean more naturally towards certain types of music than others. What IS good? What IS bad? Is there a God?... as to your second point, the answer's very simple and very obvious. There is no house policy on taste at the *NME*—individual tastes change from critic to critic.—LI

WHISTLING DIXIE!

To all journalists at the *NME*! Good music is good music no matter how old it is. There will come a time when you will hail and like the old gods because: the more you listen and learn about music, the more you like. The good music will survive all trends and all bad journalists. Who listens to Adam Ant or Gary Numan these days? But people still buy and listen to Led Zeppelin, The Who, Genesis, Yes, Deep Purple, Pink Floyd and Jethro Tull etc despite all your

'Pride' of the Chrome Angels. One of a series of illustrations commissioned by TDK.



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