

zigzag

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LOVE

Who are Principal Edwards Magic Theatre?

They are basically fourteen people although the number does tend to fluctuate from time to time which is nice really. If you've seen Principal Edwards Magic Theatre, then you know what delightful people they are and how they use poetry, lights, drama and music in their act. If you haven't seen Principal Edwards Magic Theatre yet then look out for them next time they come your way because they are lovely to watch and listen to.

Now they have made their first album and it's on Dandelion, and you ought to beg, borrow or perhaps even buy one. It's nice to listen to and has some beautiful photographs on the inside. John Peel and Principal Edwards Magic Theatre produced the album and it's in what they call a double-fold sleeve because it

proved difficult to fit all of Principal Edwards
Magic Theatre on one side of
a sleeve



Manufactured and distributed by CBS Records.

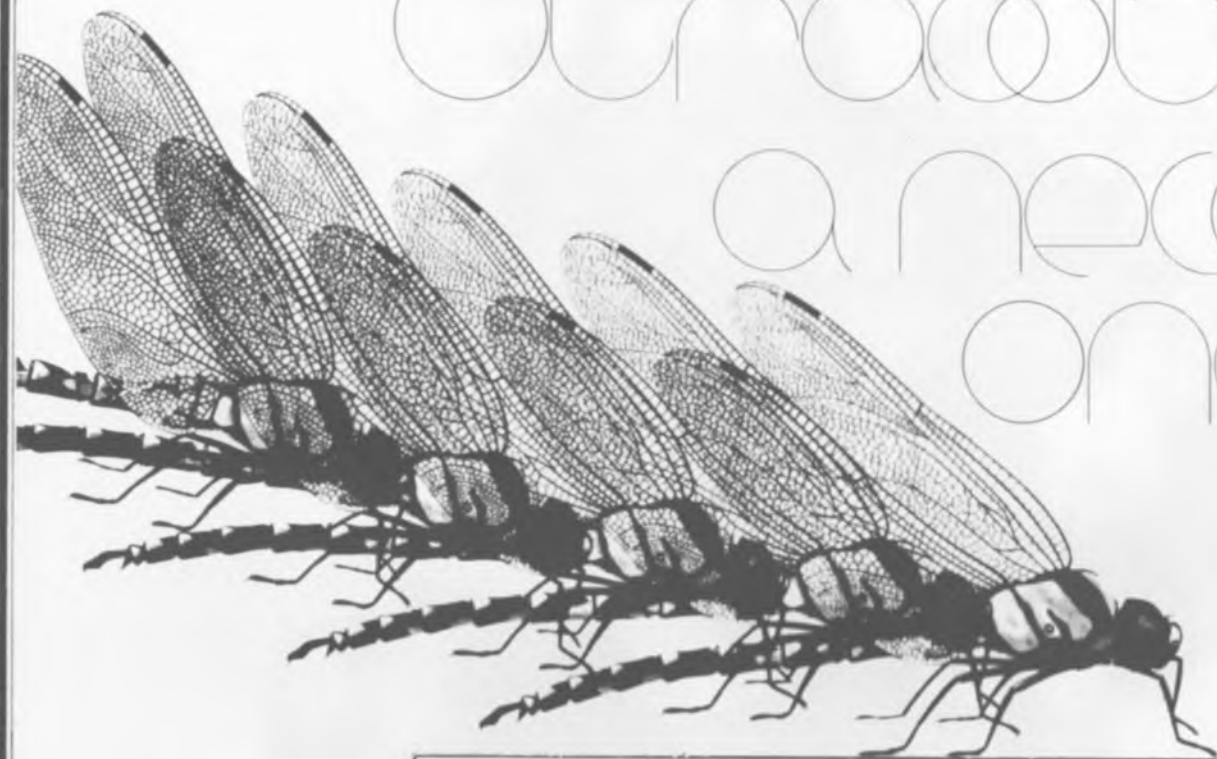
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DRAGONFLY
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1969



1966

LOVE LOVES

"Jac Holzman reckons that Arthur Lee is a genius - and that's not a word he throws around lightly! ... Clive Selwood; Elektra's European Manager. "Are we supposed to be like history?" ... Arthur Lee. "Arthur Lee IS Love". ... Everybody.

It's mostly rumour. There isn't much else, besides his music, on which to build a picture of any clarity.

Arthur Lee - the ultra-proud songwriter, the singer, the style-thief, the guitarist, the drummer even. The genius. Yeah. OK.

But Arthur Lee, the fixer? Arthur Lee, the murder accomplice? Arthur Lee, the over-sensitive recluse in his \$85,000 home, who only once allowed Love to play outside a 3 mile radius of LA (Lee Leaves LA, screamed an Elektra headline... a very short East coast visit.)? Arthur Lee, the Maltese? Arthur Lee, the Peruvian? Arthur Lee, the person?

Factually, Arthur Lee is 26 and was born in Memphis, Tennessee. And that's about all we know. According to an ancient Elektra handout, he "dresses boldly and bizarrely, is gregarious and glib, humorous (see ZZ7; Clive Selwood article) and quick, relies on his impulses, and writes and plays from immediate emotional whim". Oh.

He, John Echolls, Bryan Maclean, Ken Forssi and 'Snoopy' united as Love ("It's a big word... it's the best part of life") at an LA coffee house called Brave New World in April 1965, were admired by Jac Holzman at Bido Lito's, a small LA club ("30 seconds into 'Hey Joe' and I knew this was the rock group I wanted"), and signed to his Elektra label at the end of that year. Holzman said that he saw an ad in the Los Angeles Free Press, and just went along to see them on the off chance, but, in fact, the circumstances were slightly different.

A Hollywood artist/hanger-on called Vito (who also owned Bido Lito's) apparently discovered Love. He was one of these characters who incessantly throws parties, and unless you're invited with great frequency, you don't make it in Hollywood. He'd been conducting these affairs since the 30s, but had changed with the times... he initially set up the Byrds, for instance. Anyway, he found Love and backed them financially, and HE told Holzman about them. At that time, Elektra had put out records by the Byrds (then the Beefeaters) but had lost them to Columbia's more enticing advances - and they desperately wanted a rock act to help get rid of their folkie tag. And so, when Jac Holzman did get to see them, he saw what he thought would be 'the next Byrds', because Love had been playing on bills with the Leaves, the Seeds and other Byrds copy-

ists at various Hollywood clubs, and Lee was reportedly seen studying McGuinn's ideas at Ciro's. He signed them. (Much credit to him for seeing their potential. Compare their albums with those of most of their contemporaries).

Love's four Elektra albums reflect the group's absolute inconsistency of style, but consistency of quality through changes. The last thing you can call Lee is the paragon of originality.... genius, maybe.

LOVE... the first album (EKS74001). Recorded early 1966. Lee begins his recording career by lifting, amplifying, processing and personalising Byrds and Jagger ideas. He uses his models well.

DA CAPO... the second album (EKS74005). Early 1967. Da capo - a musical direction meaning repeat from the beginning. Snoopy leaves the drums for keyboards, and Michael Stuart leaves the Sons of Adam to replace him. Tjay Cantrelli also appears on reeds, looking stereotype hip, beside that pile of stone. (What was that pile of rock on the first two sleeves? Some sort of tribal rallying point? "OK boys, tomorrow at noon... you know where").

Sandy Pearlman, one of the few writers to successfully explore Love's music (see end of article) begins his 'Johnny Mathis theory'. Lee, he says, has now thrown the Byrds thing, the Jaggerism has survived and mutated (witness the vocal cavortions on 'Stephanie knows who' and 'Revelat-

ion'), and a similarity to the aforementioned Mathis has become apparent on some tracks.

A beautiful album nevertheless, and containing 'The Castle' - 3 minutes of perfection (constantly played by Lorne King on Radio London - who dares to criticize Big L?). But as a lyricist, where is Lee's head at? Who can decipher 'The Castle':

Here's my baggage, hand me my staff
I'm leaving in a boat, a plane or
a raft

A my love, B I love-so hard to choose
If I were in my mind, if I would use

Going back to mother
Leaving on the double
Think I'll go to Mexico

FOREVER CHANGES... the third album (EKS74013). Late 1967. Snoopy and Tjay have gone. "Jagger has been absolutely mutated and Johnny Mathis is on top" - Pearlman. The brash clangings of the first LP, the sharp ringing of the second, have evolved to mellow softness and dominant strummed acoustic guitar. (Some sources say that Maclean had taken over lead from Echolls). Orchestras too, trumpets even... dubbed over the finished Love. Some of the lyrics reinforce the "immediate emotional whim" idea - the first verse of 'Live and Let Live' for instance.

One of the finest LPs ever, and certainly among the very best orchestrated rock albums. (Unlike the San Franciscans, the great LA groups - Byrds, Beach Boys, Love, Springfield, etc - were happiest, and at their best, in the studio). Lee's melodies are more supple, the theme expansions are neater, more flexible, more punchy, and, as implied by Mr Pearlman, he avoids previous overt extremes of pronunciation.

Forever Changes was recorded about 8 months before its release. Rumour... Arthur Lee, as well as singing, played every instrument except bass. Another rumour... engineer Bruce Botnik added the strings without Lee's approval. Contradictory rumour... Lee disapproved not of the strings, which he himself arranged, but of Botnik's mix. Who knows?

A SINGLE (EKS45038). 'Your Mind and We Belong Together'/'Laughing Stock'. Both are wrenching, violent, energetic hard rock... Lee's last efforts with the original group, and laden with clues for clue-mongers. Various interpretations suggest that 'Laughing Stock' was in response to criticism of his role as leader, by the rest of the group. It was his intention to sack them because he'd become over irritated by either 1. their inability to match his skills, or 2. their refusal to follow his directions.

I keep on telling myself
Everything is going to change
That I'll find someone to blame
And the people that I see
won't bother me
I keep on hiding myself/away from
everything
But I think if it should rain
I guess I want to be where it
don't fall on me

I keep on playing my drums-hay!
I keep on singing my songs-
I just got out my little
red book
I keep on doing all the things that
I shouldn't have to do
I keep on building my hopes
And you keep tearing them down
What is this going around?
Are we supposed to be like history?

It is known however, that the two single tracks were the best part of an album they completed during 1968 as part of their Elektra contract. Accretates are in existence, but the record was never released... it was so dreadful. As far as creativity was concerned, 1968 was their worst year. (Over experimenting with hard drugs was blamed



for this).

Silence for a year, until August 1969... and a new album:

FOUR SAIL... the fourth album (EKS 74049). "Love's least excessive LP... the group has finally assimilated its own style" - the inevitable Sandy Pearlman. Lee now the sole survivor of the original Love (like McGuinn, THE Byrd). The new personnel provokes a string of rumours and theories - "Did you hear that the old group hanged their roadie?" "I heard that they slit their roadie's throat". These in turn substantiated the previous vine droppings; "Their name is Love, but they're hate" - Peter Albin of Big Brother and the Holding Company, "They're a bunch of hoods" - the editor of the defunct SF rock paper, Mojo Navigator. What exactly did happen was not known by anyone we asked at the time, but Bryan Maclean is certainly alive and healthy and studying classical music at his home in Los Angeles, where this picture was taken at the end of last year. (see opposite)

Love is now Lee, plus Jay Donellan (lead), Frank Fayad (bass) and George Suranovich (drums). Where these cats come from, and where Lee found them... who knows.

BUT... what we do know is that Drachen Theaker, Arthur Brown's drummer, also played on the album, and so we asked him if he could throw any light on the whole Love mystery. As it happen-

ed, he was able to clarify much more than we'd expected. For a start, he wasn't just a session drummer/friend that Lee used to play on the odd track - he was actually in Love for a time.

"I was living in LA for a year and playing with lots of groups. Then I joined Love and stayed with them for about 3 or 4 months".

And did they kill their roadie? "No... there's no truth in that. He died of an overdose of heroin... probably given to him by the group".

Why did Lee get rid of the original Love? "They were getting too heavy for him - they were very strung up on dope, and he left them. Then the other guys just collapsed into the ground, and Arthur started up again on his own, since he was writing all the songs".

Wasn't Arthur Lee fixing then? "No".

So that was the end of the old Love, about whom, precious little is known. Reports of their live performances are scant - a brief column of praise in Billboard after their only New York appearance at The Generation, during which Lee played a 45 minute harmonica solo on 'Smokestack Lightning', and a summary of a 67 concert in LA, when they were seven in number. But that's all.

A female columnist from Hit Parader, a teen magazine, visited them during 1967 sometime, to do a "fresh faced, clean cut, all-American boy" type article and was disgusted and horrified by what



she saw. At the time they were living in an old horror movie set/house outside Hollywood ('The Castle?'), and refused all contact with the outside world - flinging the phone across the room if it rang. Maclean, the chick puller of the group, was groping a woman throughout the interview and got extremely abusive, and Lee was too stoned to be coherent.

Forssi, the bass player, an ex rocker from Cleveland, was, according to an Elektra engineer "a tough thug", but the only one apart from Lee who took recording sessions seriously". As regards Echolls and 'Snoopy', there is no doubt that an (shall we say) unconventional relationship existed between them.

Veritably a very strange bunch of freaks. But what of the new Love. Why didn't Drachen stay with them? "I didn't really regard my spell with them as a high point in my life - I didn't really dig them too much... I only played with them for convenience more or less. They're groovy people, but I don't like their music".

Were they as full of hate as the old Love were reputed to be? "No... they just laid around stoned all the time. They're very mellow people, very mellow. That's what brought me down... they were too mellow - they never used to do anything except sit around getting stoned".

Meanwhile, they produced another LP, OUT HERE... the fifth album (BTS9000). Late 1969. Arthur Lee becomes Arthurly and, in favour of Blue Thumb, Love leaves Elektra, for whom they were as much a landmark as that bloody great pile of stone on the first two sleeves. "Their contract with Elektra had run out, and Blue Thumb gave Arthur a better deal", says Drachen.

I'd heard 'Out Here' referred to as "a bunch of flippant crap" by someone I usually agree with, so was quite unprepared to like it. But, surprise, surprise... I think it's really good. I'm sure that a large part of it is pure piss take and in jokes, but that doesn't alter my opinion. It's still great - much better than 'Four Sail'.

Island, prior to hearing it, had the option to release it here, but now they don't feel too inclined to handle it. I don't know quite what is happening, but if someone doesn't release it soon, we'll bootleg it.

Influences once again are obvious. Lee's been remoulding others' ideas again, or, more precisely, pinching them. ("When he copies someone, he does it well" - John Peel. He's dead right too). They're all here: Hendrix ('Stand Out'), Van Morrison ('Doggone'), Crosby Stills & Nash ('I Still Wonder'), Spoonful/Youngbloods ('Abolony'), Eric Burdon ('Signed DC'), Byrds ('Gather Round'). And 'Run to the top' is the sort of tune that Tony Hatch must hum in his bath.

'I'll Pray For You' really captures that mainstream American rock'n'roll, complete with chordy piano. Pure Presley/Olympics stuff, and one of the best Love tracks ever. But much of the LP is dripping with self pity and pessimism - 'I'm Down' for example, and 'I still wonder', lyrically if not musically.

But the most interesting track (for me) is the re-make of 'Signed DC' (from their first album), a heroin song. Here's what Dave Marsh wrote about it in Creem Magazine:

"Extended and improved, 'Signed DC' now reflects a completely different perspective.

Where on the earlier version, the song was done straight out, this time Lee comments on his statements, both verbally (eg "My soul belongs to the dealer, dealer, dealer/He keeps my mind as well. You know he does".) and instrumentally as the original 3 minute composition is almost doubled to include freer guitar and harmonica interplay. The original self pitying whimper is now at least occasionally translated into questioning grief. All of which is to say that, eventually, one adjusts to smack, I suppose".

This song is probably the basis of the 'Lee is a junkie' thing. In fact, although credited with authorship, Lee didn't write it. Love's first ever drummer (before Snoopy), who was only with them for two months, did. Which is interesting.

The group's musical ability is evident (the drummer is an ace, but the guitarist is a clod (most of the time)), but their maturity is not... hardly surprising since they were presumably only in the last stages of nascency when this was recorded, but we now learn that Jay Donellan has left/been kicked out and replaced by an unnamed guitarist.

Anyway, the group is due to start a tour almost immediately (if they ever get here), so we'll be able to see for ourselves how good they are live.

"I think they just want to see England", (Drachen Theaker), "they don't really care whether they play or not... they're just playing because it pays for their air ticket. They're not really going to be particularly exciting because they're really a bad group on stage - they've got no stage presence at all, not even Arthur, who just stands there looking, or trying to look, cool".

This bears out other reports of their live appearances: they arrive late and stoned, tune up at length on stage, argue, play one long number, and leave. When they did the Fillmore in April 1967 with the Charlatans and the Sons of Adam, Bill Graham had to physically grab hold of Lee and force him onto the stage.

Go to the Roundhouse on February 28th and see Love for yourself. (See Stuart Lyons forcing Lee onstage at knife point?). Drachen Theaker, now with Arthur Brown again, is playing on the same bill. It should be a gas. Mac Garry/Pete.

PS We're chicken of trying to get an interview with Lee when he arrives. We'll leave it to braver mortals.

PPS Has anyone ever received a reply from 'The Love Society' mentioned on their record sleeves?

PPPS We thank Paul McKiernan of 26 Tynwald Drive Appleton Cheshire for his help. He knows more about Love than anyone else we know. Write to him.

Further reading:

'Love' by Sandy Pearlman. Crawdaddy 14; April 68.
'Love's Child' by Pearlman. Fusion 15; Aug 22 69.
'Out Here' by Jon Solins. Fusion 24; Dec 26 69.
'Out Here' by Dave Marsh. Creem Vol2 No8.
'Love on the west coast' by Walter Hite. nan.
in Da Capo 6; Jan 70, which was the long, obscure article which we decided not to reprint. Copies can be obtained from us for 3/-. (Allow several weeks).

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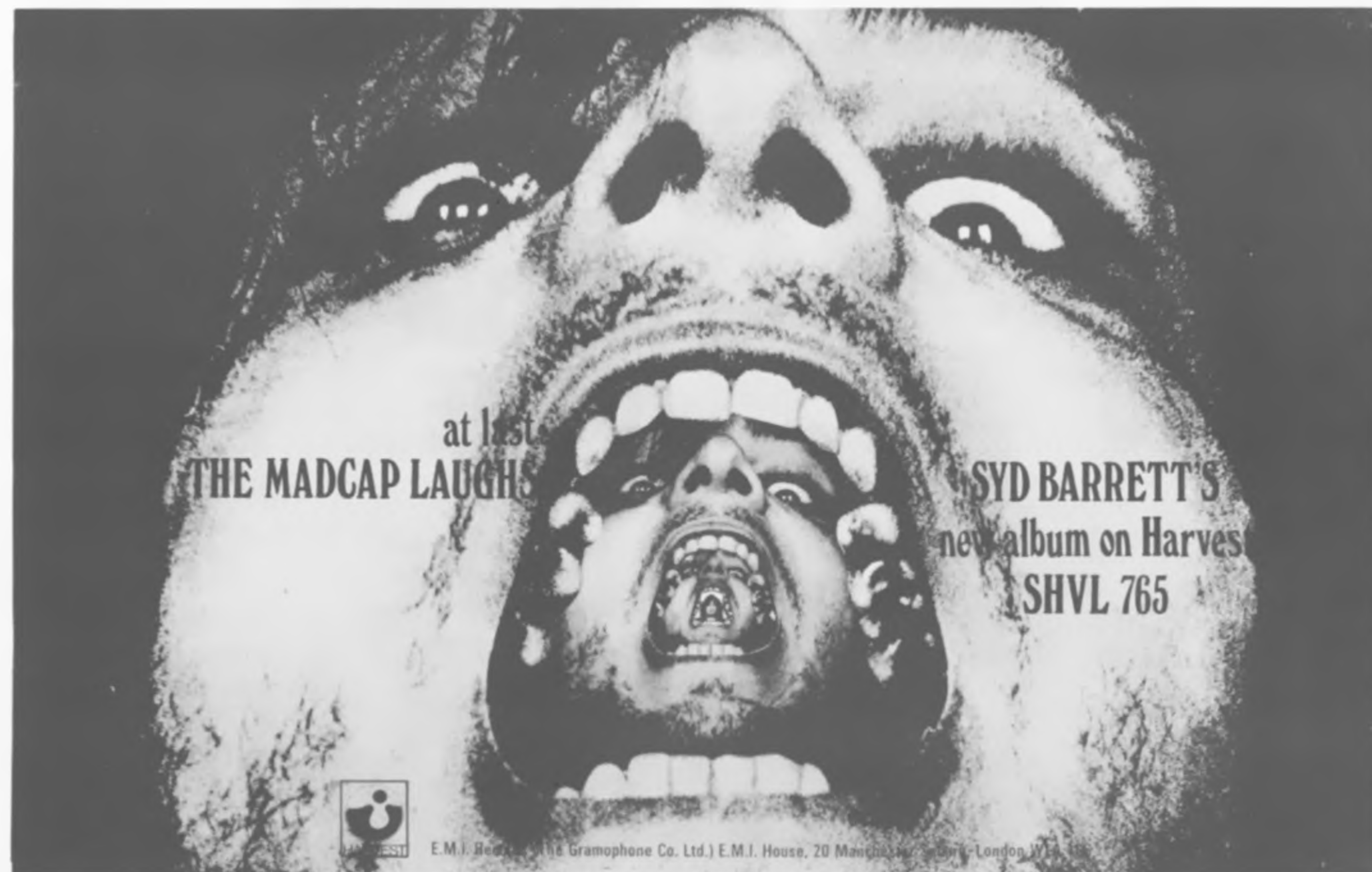
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GOD ROCK

OR "HOW I LEARNED TO TURN THE OFF SWITCH
WHEN BILLY GRAHAM CAME ON TV"

A mediocre but interesting film, one of many in which attempts were made to match the Orwellian 1984 horrors of the future, was "Privilege" starring Paul Jones. Many aspects of it were irritating, but what was interesting was the appearance of the church as a power seeker, using pop music as the catalyst. Church pop rallies were presented with all the trappings and techniques of fascist and nazi rallies which we, the younger generations, never experienced but often heard about. The rallies were successful, and their mass hysteria, provoked by the Christ-figure of Paul Jones, was directed along the desired political channels; youth could be manipulated to become the chief support of the church-state alliance.

The film had to be exaggerated to make its arguments clear. Back here in real life, the churches are probably pleased about the medium success of "Superstar" (it was a catchy tune) but disappointed about the multitudes of record buyers not waving and quoting (out of context) from their leather bound testaments and not rushing into their local corner church to talk things over with their friendly vicars. Attempts "to bring the nation's youth into the church" with rock and gospel concerts and psychedelic services have succeeded in the physical sense - lots of youthful bodies have swayed on hard seats in pleasant and often acoustically splendid churches. But it's over-optimistic to expect to see the same faces back there the following week for music and words at a slower tempo. Of course the churches would be full if they became the venues for interesting free concerts, but the clerics would defeat their own intentions by secularising the church, and the number of converts notched up by that method could probably be exceeded by straight preaching. All along, the process has been amusing and a little pathetic, an off-beam approach, as successful as high jumping in Tuf boots.

People have no wish to be organised, especially in their thoughts and beliefs. Church-rock can never shake off the youth club atmosphere of organised absence from street corners, tepid sweet tea, and one string guitar solos by courtesy of the Shadows at 45 rpm. Youthful apathy about political parties is echoed in a similar lack of interest in the church. People, uninterested in voting, still express opinions about how society could be improved, but see no reason to make any reference to traditional political systems, which are considered if anything an obstacle. The same goes for the church. It's seen as a hindrance in a search for any kind of Al-

mighty. 'A poke at the pope' on Donovan's next LP reflects this feeling.

Anti-clericalism has always been respectable and so very often justified. Dostoevsky, in 'The Brothers Karamazov' pointed out that if Christ returned, church officials would see him as such a danger to their church establishment that they'd get rid of him. And Dostoevsky was a devout Christian. Anti-church feelings have often been completely separate from any anti-God feelings. My favourite single of 1965 was anti-church, but by no means anti-God. It was decried by a weekly musical paper which couldn't see the distinction between God and God's 'servants' and for some unearthly reason seemed to object to its singer-writer performing the song in public draped in a monk's habit. The song was 'I'm so confused' by Mick Softley (Immediate IM 014), and one verse is:

"When God's myriad mouths on earth
from the pulpits pray for peace,
I'm so confused,
for the same mouths call out
for the amnesties to cease.
I hope before the armies move
and bullets start to fly
that he who made me
will be the one to save me."

Beautiful. For peace and against hypocrisy and abuse of God by the church. Though it was a 1965 song, it is fully applicable to the mood of today. Religious detergent wars - mine is a brighter white than yours - have long been a lot worse than boring. 'Gulliver's Travels' with its disputes over which end of the egg you slice off, Dylan's 'God on our side', and a lot of other comments still have a lot of inches of high density skull to penetrate.

Trying to bring the youth to the church today is as superfluous as trying to sell tickets for a tube journey from Trafalgar Square to Piccadilly via Tooting Bec. For those who choose to choose, God is all around, not just within stone walls and behind stained glass. The frills and ritual of the church have been recognised for what they are - techniques for creating togetherness and atmosphere - and have been used in music for that purpose. (Remember the Yardbirds' 'Still I'm Sad', and more recently 'Hare Krishna' and many other songs with ritualistic repetitions).

The flower period should not be underestimated for the effects it had. It was the beginning of the togetherness talked about today. It is practised rather less than it is talked about, but the pleasing



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fact remains that it is practised much more than it was five years ago. The Hyde Park concerts would have been inconceivable five years ago for instance. People's feeling of participation is demonstrated by audience behaviour, uninhibited but not to the extent of being anti-social. Who (apart from the faceless committee that runs the Albert Hall) could imagine the audience tearing the seats apart at a benefit concert for Release or some other worthwhile cause. The love one another philosophy of flower days gone by remains. The constant revival of Dino Valente's song 'Get together' is a part of this. Joni Mitchell tried to make it the last song of her performance at the Festival Hall, but the audience was so happy and full of applause that she had to come back and sing some more. Even the Daily Telegraph reporter's mind was blown by the event, they say. This love that is all around, apart from its sexual aspects, has very much in common with Christianity, and has got to where it is via flowers, India and various places east of there.

God and Jesus and various saints have always been a big part of folk, gospel and country music. Then things widened out a little, and Jesus came to be included in other musical sectors. (Although it's interesting to note that most of the few references to the church are not favourable. The church in 'Eleanor Rigby' is a lonely place, getting lonelier; joining the church signified estrangement in the Incridibles' 'First girl I loved!'). The songs didn't use the church as a stepping stone. Leonard Cohen put Jesus directly between two verses about the half crazy Suzanne who gave a lot of love, and

you want to travel blind with both of them; nicely puzzling, but Cohen's Jesus wasn't scorned. Similarly mysterious is the view of Jesus in the 'Ballad of Frankie Lee', and Dylan seems to have as much sympathy for Jesus as Jagger has for the devil. 'We need a whole lot more of Jesus and a lot less rock and roll' sang the Fairport Convention and Linda Ronstadt illtingly, and now the Byrds are bringing a country style Jesus a little further forward with songs like 'I like the Christian life' and 'Jesus is just alright'.

It's not that there's a great movement towards church-free Christianity. A lot of songs in which Jesus appears are gently ironical, in the tune if not the words. The sleeve notes on 'Ballad of easy rider' end "whoever the BYRDS are is just alright", not very reverent in view of the song. And the last track on that album 'Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins' is not a hymn to the moon jumpers. Its last lines are reminiscent of 'God on our side':

"The team down below that gave the go,
They had God's helping hand".

But there is an atmosphere of morality and love around these days, not too far removed from Jesus, but at least a long stone's throw from the nearest church or religious organiser. Billy Graham's attempts to use the rock concert atmosphere to get converts have been only about 0.0001 per cent effective, if that.

Abou Ben Adam, who had never even seen a church or a priest, had his name entered in the book of those who love the Lord. He just happened to love his fellow man.

Ian.

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HARVEY, SUN, DOPE, FUZZ, SPEED, AND THE WORLD

We did an article on Canned Heat's history and music in Zigzag 5, so when we had an opportunity to speak to them during their recent tour, we asked BOB HITE (their singer and renowned slimfit shirt model) and SKIP TAYLOR (their manager, who managed to avoid the draft because his hearing had been impaired by standing in front of Henry Vestine's amp for three years) to talk about some of the things that interested them.

HARVEY

Well, I think the band is tighter now than it's ever been; in order to have a superband, you've got to have all the cats wanting to be there at the same time, and wanting to get it on and do the same thing. When one guy wants to do something different and the other cats aren't into it... well, that's why all groups have trouble. Henry (Vestine) is a good friend and we all love him and want him to be happy - so, if Henry wasn't happy in Canned Heat, then he'll be happy somewhere else 'cause he's a really good guitar player. There ain't nobody like Henry Vestine. Harvey (Mandel, the new guitarist - article next month) is different. He changed us a bit, but not much, because he adapted and jumped right into it... we were really lucky. Like he was right there when Henry split - sitting right there in the dressing room. I was just laying back there in the Fillmore wondering what we were going to do... I knew we had a gig to play, and no guitar player to do it... and I just looked up, and there he was. I asked him if he could play a Fender Telecaster, and he said "Sure". So I asked him if he wanted to play some music tonight, and he said "Sure". So we played and really got away, we really got it on.

Harvey went along with us and worked out so well that it gave everyone fresh incentive, and I think we really realized this at the Woodstock Festival. That was his third gig with us man, and at that time we weren't playing our own stuff so much as jamming,

because that's what he knew - and at Woodstock, I couldn't believe how good we sounded. I'll never forget that day man... we went on just after the sun went down. I think one of the reasons that I'll never forget it is that I've never heard a sound like the sound we heard from that crowd after our first song. Seeing all those people in one place was enough to blow your mind, but when they just all got up and roared. It was five minutes before we played the next tune because we were just all kind of bewildered and we'd never heard a noise like that before. It sounded like an atom bomb going off... it was incredible. That's when everybody in the band - Al, Fito, Larry and myself - thought that if this cat would stay with us it would be a good thing.

SUN

Henry 'Sun' Vestine was getting freer in the head than we were. His musical structure wasn't totally confined to blues anymore (the other members are progressive but still keep to their blues roots), but he argued that despite his freedom, he was still basing his playing on the seven blue notes in the scale - and therefore, he was still playing blues. But he was into a lot of volume and wanted to play louder than the others - so he got pretty unhappy and left.

He has some very strange views. He's been doing an album with Albert Ayler, who's one of the people in this cult which takes a few months off every year to stare at the sun. He's into witchcraft too. (The 'Marie Laveau' track he did on 'Boogie' was named after a New Orleans witch). He goes out of his house at 3 or 4 in the morning every day, shoots his gun off, and shouts "I AM THE DEVIL". And he thinks it's the greatest thing he's ever done!

His new group, Sun, will make their debut at a Chicago Festival at the end of February, and what they are into is volume. They have 4½ tons of equipment, which they set up like an arc or a rising sun - it's

about 12 feet high in the middle, and stretches right across even the widest stage. It'll really be something!

DOPE

Laws regarding marijuana differ from state to state. For instance, in Colorado, first offence for grass is 3-5 years, but acid is legal. In the next state, Nevada, they have a big billboard on highway 61, on the state line, which says "MARIJUANA; possession... 10 years, sale... life".

Nixon recently set up Operation Intercept to confiscate grass being smuggled in from Mexico - they had cops and dogs and helicopters and searches... the lot. And do you know how much they managed to get hold of? Four pounds... just four fucking little pounds! Meanwhile, all the other routes were left unguarded, and a friend of ours brought 10,000 kilos into LA. Nixon's nuts. One minute he says he's going to reduce soft drug penalties, and then he mounts Operation Intercept.

Wherever we go, people come up and lay stuff on us... every country, every city, everywhere. When we were in Copenhagen, we'd go out to visit people in their houses and smoke hash all night long. We got high, but not anyway near as high as we'd get on one joint of good grass in the States. You just can't beat it. But Denmark is very civilised... the sex offence rate has really dropped since they stopped censorship, and they're on the point of legalising marijuana.

FUZZ

My Crime, on our second LP, was about our bust in Denver.... "Police in Denver, don't want no long hairs hanging round". This guy called John Grey was a big hero in Denver, because he came on TV

and swore that he would rid the city of all the long-hairs, saying that they were commies. He'd been bugging the Family Dog ballroom there so much that Chet Helms got an injunction against him, keeping him from going in there and searching everybody, and he was very annoyed about that. So he came into our hotel, planted the place, and busted us. The band was absolutely clean, but the cops said it was hidden in a chair lining... so they took us away and we spent the weekend in jail, until we got out on bail on the Monday morning. We got convicted, and we're on probation.

The band didn't want to do My Crime (I (Skip) had written the lyric with Bob), but I got them to do it because that's what the blues is to me - the relevant events of today, told in a modern way, but with old music.

Sic'em pigs is another song I wrote. The lyric got rottener and grosser - we never thought we'd get it released, but Liberty put it out... and they even put the full version, with Henry's monologue on the album.

Last year we played in Chatanooga, Tennessee, which is about five years behind the rest of the United States. The cops were there taking pictures of the band, and gently lifting girls off the stage, whereas in New York they'd just smash them off with a club. Anyway, this girl came backstage after the gig and said that she wanted to do the whole band in... so she took all her clothes off and was sitting there naked, ready to go at it, when in walked the Chief of the Chattanooga Police Force. The actual Chief! "Wait a minute, what's going on here?" he says, "looks like we're gonna have us a little scene. Don't nobody move - I'll be right back". So we just sat there - scared to death, preparing our defences and innocence, when he came back in with these three other cops. But he started rubbing his hands and said "We're gonna have a little fun in here". Well, they were down there with that chick, and I was taking pictures of the whole thing. I tell you, if they ever got published, it would be

all over for the cops in Chatanooga Tennessee. All over.

SPEED

Amphetamine Annie? Yeah, we were all sitting in Bob's house, and the band was doing 'The Hunter'. Anyway, it developed into Annie, using these lyrics that Al and Bob had written about speed. It's a big establishment slogan - SPEED KILLS - so we got a big chorus on it too, as a sort of lampoon on the whole subject. It was just a fun song really. Henry was completely out of his head on reds at the time, and someone said to him "Speed'll kill you, won't it Henry?". So he thought for a while, then looked up and drawled "Well....maybe".

THE WORLD

Music is changing the world. This year, the rock festival thing will be the biggest thing that ever hit the face of the earth - there's going to be one in Japan at Expo 70 at which they're expecting to get a million people; Flto and I are organising one just outside of Mexico City in August, it'll be free and we expect about a million people there too. Just as soon as the weather turns a bit, they're going to be all over this world - everyone I know is organising one, or knows someone who is organising one. The film that they made of the Woodstock Festival last year is the best thing to come out of pop for years - it's just beautiful....the involvement, the participation, the feeling of togetherness....it's just so amazingly good.

But rock audiences are really searching now - and they're like children who need proper direction. Billy Graham thought that, and so he got up at the Miami Festival and spoke to the people....and they really wanted to hear something - I mean, this guy is one of the most eloquent speakers there is. So everyone was sitting there, stoned on their arses, waiting to hear the answers....they were ready to be convinced that maybe Jesus Christ is the way. But he couldn't convince them....he said things like "the search for Jesus Christ is more powerful and psychedelic than 100 acid trips"....and the people just sat there and thought "Yeah man, have you ever

taken acid?". So they politely clapped, and I'm told they had 6 people ask for pamphlets. Graham said he was going to go to other festivals, but he was hurt by it - visibly - because he thinks he is able to help people.

Religion has lost its battle with the youth of America - it hasn't changed with the times to suit the people's needs. Most people believe in God or in some superior being, but nobody in conventional religion is giving answers to satisfy intelligent minds. Minds have progressed beyond "Get married in the fear of God" because people want to believe that God is a loving creature who wants you to do good.

I don't think people are looking for God anymore - he's just there and guides the world. But you should spend less time looking, and more time doing. It's like all the philosophers - they discuss the problems of the world....but if they would get up off their arses and DO something about it, then something might get done....because most people don't even have the thoughts. But I think that music is the religion of today. It's the only thing that unifies the kids, that they can understand, feel close to and so on. Concert halls are becoming the churches of today - they come and sit, and watch and participate - they do the same thing that their parents do at church, which is see who's there, what they're wearing, feel they've cleansed themselves a bit, and maybe they pray for a bit more bread or something. People go to concerts to communicate, to be with one another, to listen, to have their minds cleansed a bit, to hear some new songs, to be stimulated, smoke some dope, and maybe feel a little bit closer to the ideal they wish existed on the street. And, like in Copenhagen, in the Walking Street, it exists...in the street....the same vibration that you feel in the concert hall comes over.

It would be pretty nice if that sort of feeling existed everywhere - in the department stores, factories, offices, everywhere, - and it can. There's nothing at all to stop it - the establishment has created the framework to allow every freak in the entire world to do what he will to bring the world together. The parts to the puzzle are all there, just laying around the world. It only needs a bunch of people to put them together....and it doesn't even have to be a gradual process. It could happen tomorrow.

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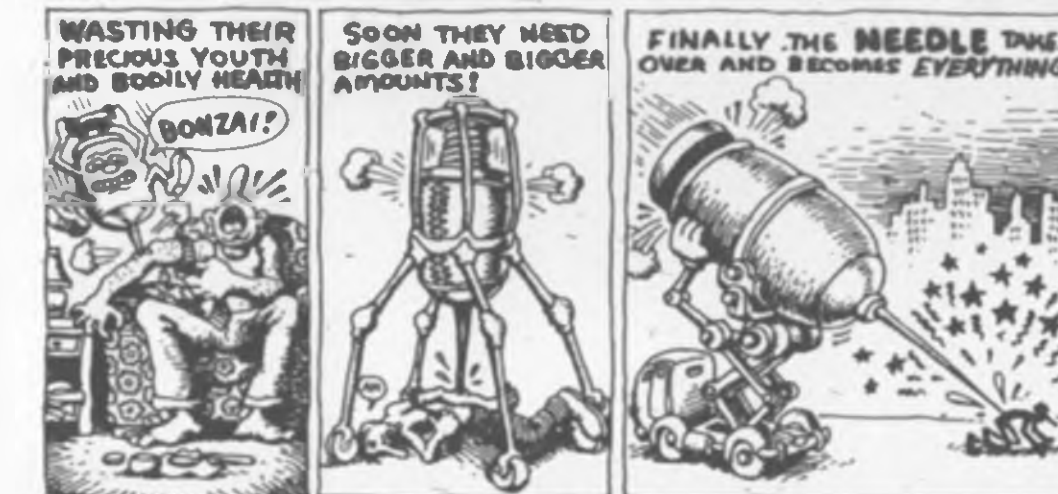
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The Third Ear Band; playing the pop scene game.

We hear so much from musicians, especially young players in jazz circles, about "free" music that it is perhaps surprising that most of the music we hear is still very formal and even stylised. It is as if most of the people who talk about, and undoubtedly have their musical freedom, are scared of using it. They stick to the traditional ideas of taking a theme, developing it, and going wild in the solos. Certainly, there is more freedom in the solos now than there ever has been before, but this is more an extension of the jazz and blues tradition than something new.

This is no bad thing, but it is strange to hear musicians talking about their new-found freedom and then find them playing on, improvising round formal patterns with pieces that have been worked out with predetermined beginnings and ends, as if nothing had happened.

There is a lot of very good music being played; it is exciting to hear and it must be incredible to play, but it is improvisation, rather than innovation.

The Third Ear Band profess to be a pop group, yet they play with the real freedom of people who have abandoned the framework of Western music. Their music is completely open, and no one, least of all the group, knows what is going to happen when they start playing. Glenn Sweeney plays hand drums and occasionally makes other percussive sounds; Richard Coff plays violin and viola; Paul Minns plays oboe; and Ursula Smith plays cello.

Basically, what usually hap-

pens is that someone will start playing a note or a phrase and as the others join in they will find a general direction. They play as they feel at the time and the music will evolve, building ideas and patterns upon each other until the force is spent. Glenn compared this process to the growth of a seed. You plant the seed which can grow to be a tree, or a plant, or a flower, but the way it grows depends on light, water, warmth and all sorts of external influences. So it is with their music. The seed is there, but the form the music takes depends on so many things - how they are feeling, what occurs to them while they are playing, and the mood of the audience. They do not go out to create a mood with a particular style of music, as so many other groups do - they hope that the mood will help to create the music.

"We could have written it all down and faked it every night, but we didn't want to do that", said Glenn. "It's a bit nerve-shattering to go on stage, face an audience and not know what you are going to do or how it is going to come out, but it usually works. The audience have to work as hard as we do. If they respond, then things go very well, and sometimes even hostility is good. At least you have some kind of feeling going between you and the audience. The only battle I think we have ever lost was at the Speak-easy".

Glenn said this when I spoke to him at a college gig in Manchester. Things went very well there with an attentive and responsive audience, but more recently they had to play to an audience of Al Stewart fans at the

Queen Elizabeth Hall. They had to play before Al Stewart, and the atmosphere felt soggy, depressing and uninspiring. The audience were waiting for the star of the show and - though they clapped politely, as most groovers do if they don't understand something, there was no communication - not even hostility. Consequently the music suffered.

It is ridiculous to try to judge the Third Ear Band within the context of a musical framework that they have completely discarded. Technically, they are all very good, and all but Glenn were formally trained as "classical" musicians: "I came over from the States to study chamber music", said Richard.

Glenn has been through a number of musical phases, starting in the '50s when he was "one of the minor kings of the washboard" in the skiffle era. He progressed through straight jazz and "free" jazz until he found the freedom of expression that he wanted in the Third Ear.

Each time they play, it is different - just one moment in time - so records are not really a very suitable medium for them. "Alchemy" is good, but it lacks the essence of the band, which is spontaneity and two-way communication with the listener. They play the pop scene game, but only as a game - "The worst thing is to take the pop scene seriously" (Glenn) - and they are getting through to a lot of people, from skinheads to besuited businessmen.

They like to be known as a pop group so that people come to see them without any preconceived ideas. They will probably hate me for writing this

Steve Peacock.

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THE SOUND OF THE SEVENTIES



Zigzag: You were projected as 'Marc the Mod' in that Observer colour supplement article by Nik Cohn, yet that terrifying photo of you was taken long before the Mod craze, wasn't it?

Marc: Yes. In a way, it was very similar to what's happening now; if you are interested in guitars, you get one and learn by listening to established figures like Eric Clapton, George Harrison, and so on. At that time, and I was only about 12, I found that clothes thing very appealing visually, and I got right in there and made myself look like these other cats, who were somewhat older than I was. By the time the Mod thing really happened, I was out of it and living in France. I was never a Mod... there was no such thing then; that all came later, with 'Ready, Steady, Go!' and all that sort of stuff.

We were very into sounds - I was into Motown; 'Please Mr Postman' and things like that - and clothes really... in the way that I'm into clothes now. I hadn't bought any clothes for about 3 years - until I began again recently. It helps my head to function... you've got to have clothes, and sounds, and Les Pauls and so on to make it all work.

Z: I read that you lived in a tree in France; is that right?

M: I lived in a forest for a while, and then in a chateau with this cat who was a magician. But I went to France after my parents had moved from where we were living in Stamford Hill, Stoke Newington to Wimbledon, and there was nothing there that I could associate with... I spent about a year without communicating with anyone except my parents and brother. I'd left school when I

was 14, and all I used to do was go to the pictures a couple of times a week, the library, and second hand record shops. I'd buy one LP for 12/-, stick a few others in the sleeve with it, and flog them... I used to make a couple of quid a week doing that.

Z: To what extent was this French cat you mentioned a magician?

M: He wasn't a black magician; he was very aware of the workings of the human mind, and the elements. He had very many old books about control of environment by thought projection, and he could transmit feelings so that you understood what he meant implicitly... which is magic to me. It was a yoga magic rather than one involving sheep sacrifice at midnight on Glastonbury Tor. It was very nice to be around someone like that.

Z: So in some ways, that was beneficial to you later.

M: It helped me, yes. It's just coming through to me now. What impressed me then was his big house, his car and that sort of thing.

Z: You did some acting and modelling before making records....

M: Yeah - I did some kids things. I was in a series called 'Orlando' for instance, but I did all that because I didn't really know what I wanted to do. I was very into sounds then, but I hadn't thought about actually singing, and I did a bit of modelling to get some bread together.

Z: How did you manage to get into such relatively closed spheres as TV acting?

M: It was very easy really. Once you think

TEXT
SAURUS
REX
OMNIA
VINO
AMANT
TRAX



about it, and that thought's literally coming out of your head, you walk into a place wanting a job as an actor and you'll project the right thoughts to them. I hadn't got any money and was having bad scenes with somewhere to live and so on, and I just needed to do it. I believe very strongly in guardian angels. . . . I've led very little of my own life - it's all been directed from above. I'm part to do with it, but I don't believe that it all comes from me - I'm not that important. . . . we're all vessels to make the earth the way it ought to be, in the same way that Hitler and people like that were used as vessels by dark angels to make it the way it shouldn't be. This is why the ego pop things are a drag. . . . you can't believe all that stuff - no-one's that important. I can't associate with that sort of thing; as people we're all important, but Marc Bolan as a plastic cut-out has got to be a drag.

Z: Your first leap into music was with John's Children, wasn't it?

M: No. I made a Decca single in 1965. . . . It was called 'The Wizard'. We still do it. That did very well - it got to about No 40, but I can't think of anything to say about it really. Then I did a song called 'Hippy Gumbo', which John Peel played on 'The Perfumed Garden'. Then came the period with John's Children, who I joined because nothing was happening for me and they needed someone in the band who could write. But I just did 'Desdemona' with them, and then I split.

Z: What about 'Go go girl'?

M: I wasn't on that. At the 'Desdemona' session, we also put down some backing tracks of just guitar and drums, and after I split they used them with their own lyrics. 'Go go girl' was the backing track for 'Mustang Ford', but they changed the words. I wouldn't write 'Go go girl', would I?

Z: Yeah, I was going to ask how you jumped from lyrics like 'She's all put together with chocolate and feathers' to the words of, say, 'Child Star'.

M: That's it. . . . I only wrote the music and played guitar. I only did one English gig with John's Children - in Leatherhead - and then we went on a German tour with the Who, which was a gas. When we got back we recorded 'Midsummer Night's Scene', which was incredible. . . . we just did it and it really made it. But it got rearranged by producers and things, and when I heard the way it had been reduced and mixed, I left the group, because it really brought me down.

Z: Were you in those naked publicity pictures?

M: No - I'd left before then. It was a drag because it could have been a good situation, had it gone how I'd wanted.

Z: Do you still get royalties for 'Go Go Girl'?

M: Yes. . . . but I freaked when I saw the title. I really needed the bread at the time though, because Tyrannosaurus Rex had just started and we didn't have a penny.

Z: First time I ever heard T.Rex live, was on one of the first Top Gears. . .

M: Yes, it was the second one.

Z: How did you get on that, because you weren't recording then, or well known or anything.

M: I met John when he came off Radio London, and he was like us - he couldn't get any gigs. I'd just started work with Steve, who was the only survivor of four. (I'd originally wanted a five man rock'n' roll band - it was going to be like John's Children, because I wanted to keep the

sound I got on Desdemona, which I really dug. But I couldn't find others that I could work with). John got a gig at Middle Earth when it opened, and we went along and played - just acoustic guitar and bongos - un-amplified. Then gigs started to happen. . . . £10 sometimes - really heavy bread!

Z: Why did you choose the name Tyrannosaurus Rex, which after all was a huge ponderous monster with a minute brain?

M: It excited me to think that beasts that big walked on the earth; and everyone is so unaware of things like that now. I've said it many times in papers and so on, but that is a dragon, and people are very much against mythology. Mythology is old truth, changed and woven, because people do that, but it's truth. . . . those creatures were around, and perhaps a million years before, they breathed fire. . . . why not? I can't get together a 40 foot creature that had the earth to itself, but they have bones to prove it. If people understood that, it would make everything less hard - like their tax problems and so on, all the bummers that you go through - because 90 million years ago there were those creatures around, and in 90 million years from now. . . . who knows? And I like the pictures of them too.

Z: The first LP wasn't a particularly brilliant production job, was it?

M: No, it was very bad.

Z: Was that because Tony Visconti wasn't into your music?

M: No. Tony was really with us. But it was the first LP he'd ever produced and it was done at Advision on an 8 track - the first in the country - and they didn't know how to use it. The stereo was awful. When we were doing it, it sounded good, but when it was on record, it sounded very thin and nasty. But we did it in 2 or 3 sessions - the whole thing only cost £200 to make, and 'Deborah' only cost £30. I like the feeling of the first LP, but as a production, I can't listen to it.

Z: I'm intrigued by a lot of songs on that album, but 'Child Star' and 'Graceful Fat Sheba' particularly. Were these based on reality?

M: No. . . . I just liked the idea of a young classical star writing incredible melodies at 5. But they killed him, and when he was dead, they didn't see what his music was about anyway. It was going to be a book. . . . but I've never read an article about anything and thought "Wow, I must use that". Not consciously anyway.

Z: What about real people? 'Sheba', for instance.

M: That happens. Sheba was a couple of people stuck together. . . . that was my first anti-meat song really. It's funny - I can't remember how some of my earlier songs came about, and I certainly couldn't sing them now. . . . I've forgotten the chords and the words. In some cases, I see people that fit the songs after they're written, which is the heavenly guidance thing I think. Like 'Scenescof', I used as a baddie. . . . all the bad things, I crammed into him. Whenever I got uptight with people bringing me down, they were all Scenescof. I don't use that anymore though - I don't need it.

Z: When Scenescof was killed in 'Dynasty', was he killed in your mind too?

M: I guess so, yes.

Z: When your first, and particularly your second, albums came out, they seemed to meet with deluges of criticism from the sort of people they weren't made for. For instance, Ray Connolly in the Evening Standard

said "Maddeningly monotonous; pop at its most pretentious", and Derek Jewell really tore your Queen Elizabeth concert to shreds in the Sunday Times.

M: I really dug that Derek Jewell thing, if only because he had read the programme and quoted lyrics, and ended by calling me a poet and making comparisons about the capacity of other poets like Ezra Pound to have filled similar halls. He took the trouble to examine the event thoroughly, and I respect him for that. I sent him a letter saying "thankyou" actually.

Z: Then in Oz, they stuck the "boring" tag on 'Pewter Sultor'.

M: Yes. . . . I don't know why, but the Underground Press always puts us down. They have this incredible paranoid thing about my being pretentious. . . . but I only deal in truth, so how can I be pretentious. You can't tell me that the music is all the same on our new album because we've got bass, harpsichord, electric guitar and so on. . . . even as far as the uninitiated ear is concerned, there are sound textures that are different. Because I've spent some time with Eric Clapton lately, the guitar on the new record sounds like Eric to me, because his whole vibe is within me. And it sounds a bit like the Beatles to me, because I got very into Abbey Road. I'm a pop song writer. (I'm also a poet, but that's something else). The ideal for me is really good melodies and lyrics that aren't, you know, "hold my hand, I understand, all your charms, in my arms".

Z: You said in your Fusion interview that your music was "to make love to a lady by".

M: Yes - I meant that my music should be used to create your environment. For instance, 'Dove' on the new album is a very sad song, and was written as a very tender love song. . . and you have to be really insensitive not to get that vibe. Consequently, when you're sad, I want you to turn to that song, because that is how I felt when I wrote it, and I put all that I could muster into it. On the other hand, some of my songs are funny songs; and 'Deborah' was an up song - whenever we play it, it brings us up straight away. So, when you're making love, I'd like our music to be on in the background.

Z: Having completed them, do you play your albums much?

M: Not really. I really only remember recording techniques when I listen to them. I'd rather just sit and play. The records are more like libraries to me - to make sure that I don't do something I've done already.

Z: Donovan was pleased recently because someone called him "bisexual", whereas they'd always called him homosexual before. You must be aware of the same kind of thing said about you - for instance, you were called Mr Unisex in the latest Blackhill Bullshit. Do you want to say anything about that?

M: Well, I used to be with Blackhill, so it's probably just a dig. . . . but there must be something worth saying here. Sexually, I believe that one should love what one loves, and I quite enjoy the Greek idea of two warriors going to war and mentally being very close - they didn't actually screw each other on the battlefield, but mentally they were really into each other - and they had wives who bore them children. And I think that's a very groovy idea, having Socrates as your guru, and cats you really get on well with - which is what is happening in music. Eric Clapton and George Harrison have been working together, because they get on well, and I've been

playing on David Bowie's new record, because I really dig David - I like his songs and we have a very good head thing. . . . but we don't make love. To make love wouldn't be repulsive to me. . . . It would just be a bit of a bore with bums, and it'd hurt. But I wear chicks' shoes, because they look nice, and because you can't get men's in green and silver and purple, and because they were only £2. And I wear chicks' sweaters because I like tight clothes. But it's clothes to me. . . . I don't think "Wow" just because it's a chicks' shop. Now, if it were a bra. . . .

Z: Let's leap on to 'Unicorn'. What is Romany soup?

M: It's something we bought in Cornwall. It's made by Knorr or someone, and it really tasted a groove.

Z: You said that 'Unicorn' is spiritual - how did you mean that?

M: Let me see now. When we did the album, it was very obvious to me that it was going to be the last I did with Steve - in fact, we both knew that at the time. We were living in Cornwall and Wales, and I was very close to the earth. . . . It was a period of clarity and purity - and 'Unicorn' was very much into my soul; it was all me. It was the first time I got into production as well. . . . like 'Romany Soup' has 22 tracks on it and took 5 hours to mix. And on the 'Unicorn' track, the drums gave me a real buzz, because I wanted to get a Phil Spec-tor sound. I don't know how well it came off.

Z: Why did you have that piano on 'Cat-black'?

M: That song was really inspired by those 'Runaround Sue' sort of songs - the chords and so on - and I wanted to do that sort of melody with nice words. I brought the piano in so that people who are into rock'n'roll piano could relate to it a bit.

Z: You haven't a very high opinion of American bands, have you?

M: No. Most of the bands we saw over there were very bad. We did a Festival in New Orleans with just about every big band you could name, and there were only two who were consistently good - they were Santana and It's a Beautiful Day, both of whom were a gas. . . . unbelievable. All the rest - Jefferson Airplane, Grateful Dead, Janis Joplin, The Byrds - were awful; so untogther. They just puked and swore, and I don't think that's music. . . . no-one dug it. America is a very difficult place to tune into - I can't pretend to understand what it's about. The audiences there are lovely, but the country is horrific; a nightmare. But it was an incredible tour.

Z: Blue Thumb are really putting some effort into promoting you over there. . . yet one hears these stories about Bob Krasnow.

M: Well, Beefheart has gone back to Blue Thumb. Kras is an American businessman. . . . he's perhaps the best of a bad lot, I don't know. He's not a baddie at all. . . . he was really incredible to us.

Z: Well, I'm really glad to hear that, because Blue Thumb seem to be such an aware, enthusiastic company. Let's talk about your "mythology realm". . . tell me about Najinsky Hind.

M: Yes. . . . Najinsky was a dancer in the 1920s. He was huge for three years, and then he freaked. . . . he was very similar to Syd Barrett in that he was so into what he was doing, then he freaked partially



and everybody kicked him in the face. Everyone said he was mad, and he died about 4 years later. And I just liked the idea of a creature, an animal as agile as Najinsky. . . . and the song just explains what a gas the creature was. Unicorn was very much into that, and I'm writing a book now for people who are interested in that sort of thing. It'll be a paperback for mass consumption, in as much as I'll try and make it as understandable as possible. It's altogether in my head - it's just a question of finding time to get it all down.

Z: I suppose there is a wealth of literature about mages and the like. . .

M: Oh yeah. . . everything I sing about, I've read about in some form or another.

Z: Those books on the back of 'Unicorn', were they put there as a 'guide' to your audience? Like suggestions for further reading?

M: Yes. They were what I was reading at the time. If it's going to help communicate, that's good.

Z: Why did Steve leave, and how well is Micky fitting in?

M: Communication really. . . we just grew apart. We never were that together. Steve was a really good percussionist, but when it got to expanding, we just couldn't make it work together. The one electric gig we did at the Lyceum was disastrous, but with Micky, it came instantly. We worked at it 12 hours a day, which is what was needed - and I couldn't have done that with Steve, because we'd already been through that scene once.

Z: And the fruits will be seen on 'A Beard of Stars'?

M: Yes, that's right. Pete Centrefold photo copyright Pete Sanders Photo this page by Jak Kilby.



ARGENT



Where progress is concerned, standing still means going backwards. This is what was happening with the Zombies. Pop music is a sphere which is, by definition, one of progress and evolution, and in their case, the process of change had ground to a halt. So, in the face of a deluge of protest they decided to split in 1968.

They were still going out for good money (they rarely dropped below £100 a night), but they'd known for about a year that they'd reached their limit as a creative musical unit, and exuberance had been replaced by routine. Rod Argent, their organist, had grown tired of just plodding on and

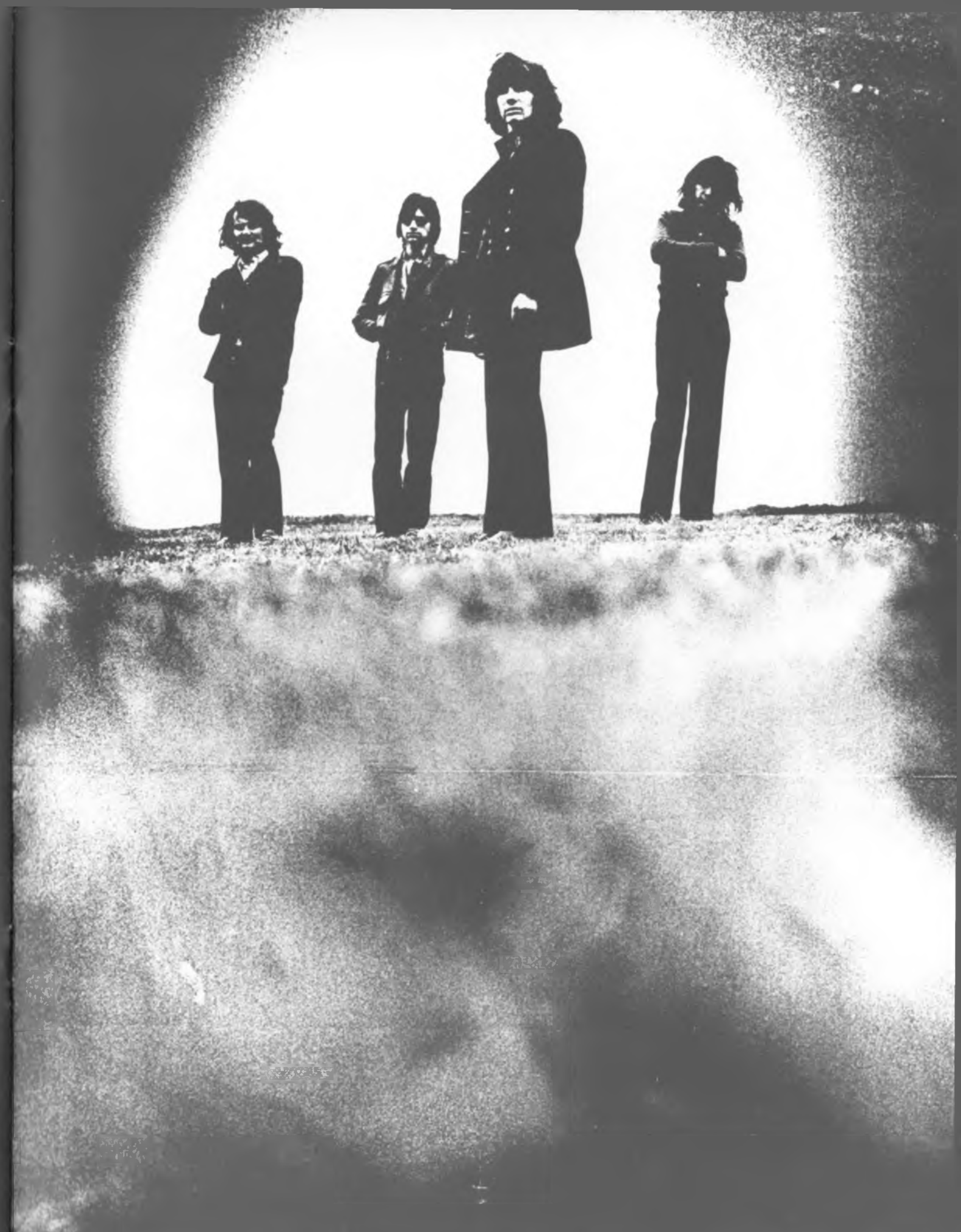
wanted to gather some better musicians and form another group.

Throughout their career on Decca, they'd been dissatisfied with their promotion and more particularly, the production of their records. Some of their later singles for that label had been ruined by insensitive mixing - on "Going out of my head", for instance, intricate harmony arrangements had been lost by the producer's insistence that the bass harmonies should dominate, and on most, the overall effect had been wishy-washy and dull.

Consequently, having decided that they should do a final album before splitting, they moved to CBS, one of the conditions of their signature being that they be allowed to write, perform, produce and mix the record themselves. This they did, producing a fine album, full of ideas - 'Odyssey And Oracle'.

Sales were only reasonable, but a single pulled from the album - 'Time of the season' (a song Rod had written in about a day) - sold over two million copies in America. Sales here, following the total promotion of two radio plays and a couple of routine ads, were abysmal, though most people singled it out as being THE track on the 'Rock Machine' album.

When 'Time' was top in America, Rod and Chris White (Zombies bassist) were in New York sorting out some business details and were offered £20,000 to get a couple of other guys and do just one concert. But they declined. The Zombies, as a group, was dead. Paul Atkinson, their guitarist, had gone into record production; Colin Blunstone, the singer, became Neil McArthur and made an ex-



cellent re-recording of 'She's not there' (the first Zombies hit); Hugh Grundy, the drummer, became a promotion man for CBS; and Chris became one third of Nexus, a producing and publishing company in which Rod is also involved.

(Recently, several groups adopted the Zombies name in an attempt to capitalise on their success. Mike Carr and the Cadillacs, a harmony group from Bristol who had been doing the rounds for years, suddenly emerged as The Zombies, but dropped it again after court action was threatened. But in the States, there are two or three groups masquerading as The Zombies. "One of them", reckoned Rod, "had the nerve to phone CBS for an advance because of all the publicity they were giving them. They're getting good money and playing all our songs - badly, of course, because a group that would resort to tactics like that must be pretty bad in the first place. They get bad reviews - but a lot of people still think they're the original group - it chokes me off, but there is not much we can do.")

This month CBS release the first album by Rod's new dream group (as the sleeve notes describe them), Argent.

"The nucleus of the group was Jim and me", he says, Jim being Jim Rodford, who used to play bass in the Mike Cotton Sound. "We've known each other for years, and knew what we were after. The first two guys we got, however, just didn't seem to fit so after 6 months of rehearsal we scrapped it and started again. Then we found Bob Henrit (drums) and Russ Ballard (guitar) who really fitted in well." They had been with Adam Faith's old backing group, the Roulettes, and Bob, who's been drumming professionally since the days of 'Oh Boy' (he'd been on "The Storm" by Danny and the Hunters), had previously turned down offers to join Procol Harum, Spencer Davis, John Mayall and even the Shadows. "He's very wary of change - he thinks he's having a good time where he is and never wants to move. Russ, who's written some of the songs on the album, had something to do with writing "Concrete and clay" and played on the record when he was a session player. Both were studio musicians, and have been on a couple of No. 1s."

"Before we made the record, we'd been together for a few months, but the first time we'd been on stage was only a couple of weeks before. We did 2 weeks in a Munich club, and the only subsequent gig we've done was a week in Rome".

Since they started, Rod has been paying the others out of the vast fortune (?) he amassed as a Zombie: "Normally the management and agency press a group into doing things - you have to do things their way all the time. When we split the Zombies, I wanted to do everything entirely my own way, and take my own time about it. I knew it would cost a lot of money".

The £4,000 advance they got from Columbia (it was an American orientated deal) disappeared pretty quickly. They got a van and modified their existing gear to optimum specification ("We wanted the best equipment possible - not for blasting, but for quality".):

A Hammond C3 organ with 3 Leslie's, and a 200 watt amp with 4 speakers, plus a 100 watt amp with 2 speakers.

An 'incredibly heavy' (weight not sound) P.A. made specially from 6 50 watt Quad amps (cost-

ing over £1,000) with 4 big Beattie cabinets.

A 200 watt and a 50 watt amplifier and 6 speakers for Jim.

A 200 watt amp and 4 speakers for Russ.
2 Electric pianos (for Rod and Russ)
Drums.

The Album (called 'Argent') was made last July, and was produced by Rod and Chris. "The only previous experience we'd had in producing was 'Odyssey and Oracle', but apart from "Freefall" which was the first track we did at EMI, the whole album, which was done on an 8-track machine they'd taken in for the purpose, was completed in 3 weeks - the studio (Sound Techniques) was to be modernised and they held back the alterations to facilitate us - but we were writing at the same time. One or two of the songs were written in the studio".

"Since the album we've obviously developed. We've got to know each other much better now, and, whereas the record is just a collection of songs, we're now much deeper into music. Of the songs on the album, the only ones we are still doing are "Stepping Stone" which has changed considerably, "Liar" which is a lot longer, and "Schoolgirl" which we've kept on because it's been released as a single in the States and we'll probably be required to play it there. But that song's not really what we're into now ... we didn't want it as a single but Epic put it out because they thought it had some sort of instant commercial appeal".

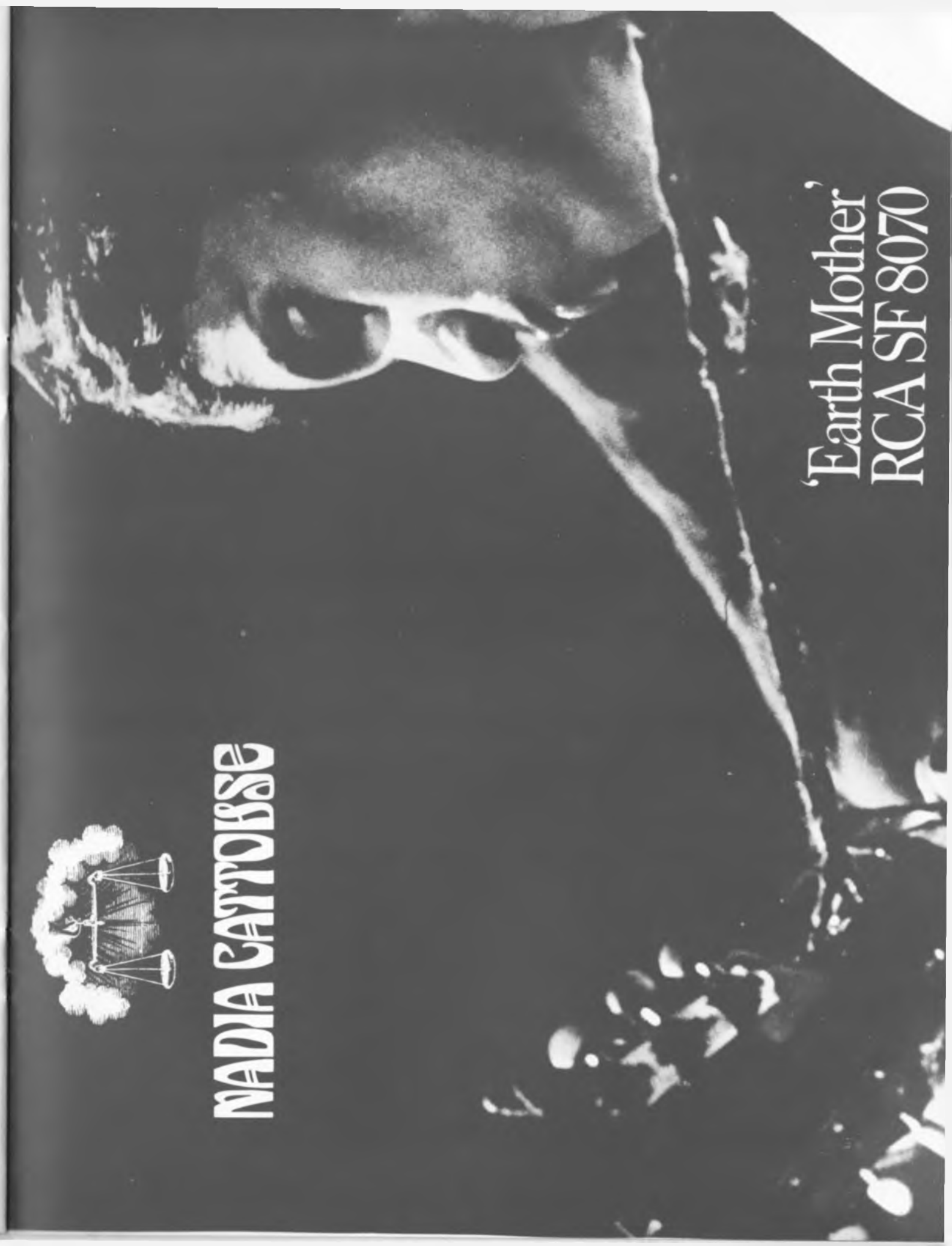
"For the next album, we've already got one track ready - it's called "Proud" and lasts about 10 minutes. I suppose it exemplifies the much more arranged stuff we're getting into now - quite complicated in places, but retaining free improvisation in others".

In March, Argent start an 8 week tour of America, the thought of which arouses apprehension in their minds. Rod knows of the parochial differences in justice, the crosscurrents and the violence from Zombie tours. But the intention is to gain a reputation from discerning American audiences, which will dictate the scale on which they'll operate on their return. At present their album is beginning to move, having been nominated album of the month by several FM stations.

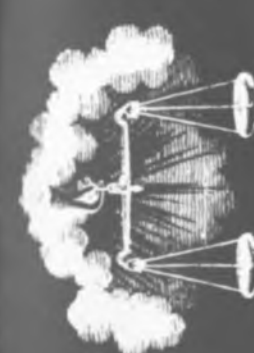
The only gig they intend doing before their departure will be in front of an invited audience - possibly at the Mermaid Theatre - the idea being to try and make an impression without reverting to the use of any hype campaign.

How well the album does here will be interesting to see. What I find particularly impressive is the development of the Zombies swirling vocal harmonies (something very few English groups can handle with taste), the group unity, and most of all the thought/care behind each song. Another pleasing aspect is the total competence of the musicians - for instance, in their occasional fusions of classical figures and rock I hear none of the chaotic disturbances that I do in many other band's similar attempts.

Altogether it's one of the most uniformly professional records I've heard lately - certainly better than any of the rubbish churned out by the 'super group' hypes. The only noticeable variances are simply due to various levels of excellence. Jim is a bit dubious about the record in view of their development since it was made. Me, I don't see what he's worried about.



'Earth Mother'
RCA SF 8070



NADIA CAYTON

HAWKWIND LIVES!

Once upon a time there was Dave Brock. Then one day, upon the scene in Holland, there appeared Mick Slattery, and upon their scene appeared John Harrison. A chance meeting with Nick Turner added yet another, and Terry Ollis, a scrappyard pig of devious character, completed the quintet. Lo and behold... a group! Dick-Mick Davies became their roadie, but proving his worth as a fuse and valve changer, became their electronics wizard, adding sounds without conscience to the music.

Now... although very confusing, this was obviously the beginning of something very exciting... but they were totally uninterested in management, contracts, records or even a name, and just played where anyone would let them. It just so happened that one day they came upon All Saints Hall, and, after a short confrontation, played a ten minute spot under the commanding name of 'Group X'. This action-packed, fast-moving, star-studded 10 minute spectacular aroused a great deal of interest within the ranks of Clearwater (those enterprising entrepreneurs of W2), but they, at this early stage, were unable to impress Group X. Undeterred, they exerted all their guile and after a few weeks of, shall we say, friendly coercion, Group X returned the interest and recognized Clearwater's determination and faith (or words to that effect).

The first step was a name. Nick Turner, saxophonist of incredible versatility, is also the proud owner of a striking nasal organ, and this combination of physique and talent earned him the name of Hawkwind. Terry Ollis's strange rapport with pigs resulted in the name Hawkwind Zoo, which, on the advice of a 'disc jockey of repute' was abbreviated to Hawkwind.

Since the group hasn't been featured in the 'Life Lines' page of the NME yet (next week maybe?), I shall now provide the briefest of historical information. Dave Brock (guitar) has been a busker all his life and has suffered the inevitable consequences many times. He started playing way back in 1958 in the New Orleans Jazz Band (there's an original name for you) and between then and now has been busking around Europe, eventually getting to Holland where he was part of a chart-topping group called 'Famous Cure'. Mick Slattery (lead guitar)

was also a busker and an integral part of 'Famous Cure' and their partnership was the beginning of Hawkwind. Mick, however, recently decided to pack his bags and, clad only in a surgical appliance, headed off in the general direction of the East Anglian cannabis farms, never to be seen again. His place is temporarily being taken by Dick Taylor (not pictured opposite).

Nick Turner (sax) was with 'Mobile Freakout' (he really was), another Dutch band, and has been playing for many years, having originally been turned on to modern jazz via Mulligan and Parker. John Harrison (bass) is understandably very proud of the fact that he played with Joe Loss, and he fell in with Dave when they realised they shared an interest in electronic music. Terry Ollis, scrappyard dealer, took the next logical step and became a drummer, whilst Dick-Mick Davies suddenly discovered that he had black, red and green fingers, and took up his true vocation as dial manipulator (though he seems a little more interested in having a wee smoke in the picture opposite).

Hawkwind, whose music, according to a panel of distinguished and impartial arbiters, can only be described as falling into the 'Hawkwindy or Hawkwindish bag', must surely achieve some kind of national adulation this year, using, as they do, electronic devices to give their music a strange and fresh flavour.

The group is now signed to Liberty Records, who, after their American successes in this country, are now attacking the contemporary scene with a number of new bands. They have arranged for the aforementioned Dick Taylor, founder Pretty Thing and now a very successful independent producer, to produce what should be a very interesting first album from Hawkwind, who are at the moment playing a great many venues around the country to amazed audiences.

Lastly, to confirm my belief that Hawkwind will zoom to success this year, John Gee described them, in a recent unsolicited testimonial, as being 'a load of pretentious rubbish'.

Arthur Davies.
Photos by Pete Sanders.





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POP, ROCK, AND PROTEST

When you get down to writing a book about pop you're on a safe bet that, by the time your masterpiece gets out, your commentary, if not your criticism, is as out of date as those sad remaindered paperbacks in Woolworths - ghosted autobiographies of long forgotten one shot wizards; accounts of short lived dance crazes, pop films and TV programmes; "Twisting to the Top" by Fatty Chessman; "My life and hard times" by Ellen Hashpiro; "It's Trad Dad - the truth behind the myth"; "I was Lord Sutch's Valet" and so on. Incredible tatty photos of girls in hoop skirts dancing sinful steps to elderly gentlemen in tartan jackets playing string basses. But at least those books were in paperback - a swift printing while the market lasts and built-in-obsolescence identical to the pop records listed in the index - an acceptance of the ephemeral nature of pop. But POP FROM THE BEGINNING by Nik Cohn and THE POP PROCESS by Dick Mabey are both in hard-back and invite comment on the staying power of their content. The dust covers make different claims for these books - "A lively and honest attempt to explore critically the nature of the pop music world in the 60's", says The Pop Process. "Pop from the beginning is a complete (my emphasis) history of the music itself and of what produced it" says Cohn's puff writer. In the event, the authors cover similar ground and surprisingly often arrive at the same conclusions.

However, they approach their material in very different ways. Dick's book is serious and earnest, ironic, almost desperately fair and objective. Nik's book is partisan, cynical, often very shallow, occasionally very funny and entirely subjective. Dick acknowledges extracts from Encounter, New Society, New Statesman, Observer, Peace News etc. Nik dedicates his book to "Jet Powers, Dean Angel, Johnny Ace" alias P. J. Proby, and in many ways that sums up the differences. Dick writes of pop from the outside; from the standpoint of the middleclass/grammar-school/university/1960's protest movement. In 1960 he sensed what was going on in pop, was excited and stimulated by it, desperately wanted to be part of it, Nik, however, has grown up right in the middle of it - it is naturally part of himself. As he says: "Myself, I was ten when it started, I'm twenty-two now and it has bossed my life. It has surrounded me always, cut me off, and it has given me my heroes, it has

made my myths. Almost it has done my living for me. Six hours of trash every day, and it's meant more to me than anything else". I love that bit of owning-up - He takes pop on it's own terms, he's too cynical to be conned but he doesn't mind the conartists and enjoys the hype. His heroes are Chuck Berry and P. J. Proby - his idea of heaven, I suspect, is to be battling to a high-school hop with the Queen of the Teens, white sports coat, pink carnation, beat-up Edsel - Ford, Chuck Berry on the car radio. Yeah! His book is gritty and ideosyncratic, full of affectionate and perceptive pen-portraits of fallen idols - marvelous pieces on Proby and Johnny Ray.

On the other hand Dick is a moralist, (by that I don't mean he's a prig), he's beady-eyed and merciless on the pushers and chancers of the business and unlike Nik he has no grudging admiration for them. His piece on "Protest Music" is a tour de force, a sure journey through a mine-field of hype. Typically, in writing about Barry McGuire's record "Eve of Destruction" he digs out this marvellous fragment from Radio One's "Marquee Show":
D. J. Are you as rebellious as you sound on your records?
B.M. Yes, I'm very rebellious.
D. J. Will you growl for me?
Barry McGuire obliged.

I wish Dick had included much more of his own opinion instead of including so many extracts from other people's writing - although this has the effect of paying belated respects to the small band of pioneers, outside the music press, who wrote informed and sympathetic pieces on pop - people like Colin McInnes, George Melly, Kenneth Allsop and Adrian Mitchell. Dick's heroes, predictably, are The Beatles and Dylan - and I'm with him there. I'm with Nik too - on Chuck Berry - not with Proby though. Both books agree that pop at the moment has reached a point of impasse and I agree there too. Between them Berry, Dylan and The Beatles triangulated pop of the sixties - Q.E.D. On to the next theorem.

I'm still not sure about hard-backs on pop though. I enjoyed both these books - I'm sure anyone interested in the phenomena would - they are expert, accurate and aware, but who's going to shell out thirty bob or so for them? At 5/- or 6/- in paperback they would be attractive buys and could get across to a big readership.

Richard Goldstein's book THE POETRY OF ROCK, strangely is a paperback even though I fancy it might well survive even if it were a hardback. It is a collection of lyrics ranging from Chuck Berry (that man again) in the middle fifties to The Doors at the end of the sixties. There are predictable figures like Dylan, Donovan, The Beatles, Paul Simon and unexpected ones like Chip Taylor's "Wild Thing" "Get a Job" by the Silhouettes - looks like a "concrete" poem written on the page, "Be-Bop-A-Lula" by Gene Vincent and Sheriff Tex Davis, and Pete Townsend's "Substitute". Almost without exception the lyrics stand up surprisingly well on the page and there is an excellent introduction and comment on the various writers by Goldstein, who rarely gets too fanciful and has made a fine selection of songs. It's published by Corgi, and is worth looking out for in specialist record and bookshops - highly recommended.

It's interesting that Goldstein uses the term "rock" while Nik and Dick use "Pop" - I guess Nik will always feel more at home with "Pop", while I suspect that Dick is really a "Rock" man at heart. There probably is a genuine distinction in meaning between these two terms now and I guess that most Zigzag readers would recognize it. But as Dick demonstrates in his book, "Protest", in terms of music finally meant nothing. Outside of music, though, people are still protesting and a couple of films I've seen lately have given individuals a chance to sound off a bit. Both films, I think, would interest Zigzag readers.

Readers, particularly those who live in Hertfordshire, will be well aware of Snorbens' own wildman and Zigzag's own talisman, Ginger Mills. Ginger, never particularly noted for his modesty, is now the star of "THE GINGER MILLS FILM" and you may well see him floating by in his fur-covered-Cadillac any day now. There is a smashing pre-credit sequence of him striding round the country-side, with his own voice on the soundtrack, indulging in his usual breast-beating and bragging. Finally Ginge, nose almost against the lens and famed evil grin says "betcha wanna see a picher 'bout me, doncher?" and POW! up comes the title. The film runs about 15 minutes and Ginge sounds off about his life and times and catches a pheasant. It's not the whole truth about him - but nice. It would be a

good thing to put on with rock, lights and the rest of your trendy media. The Director is Trevor Peters and he's willing to show it as long as the promoters indemnify him against damage to the film.

TERRY WHITMORE, FOR EXAMPLE is a film directed by Bill Brodie about a Memphis negro deserter from the American Army in Vietnam, who now lives in Sweden. It is a sinuous and witty monologue from Terry, delivered to a mostly static camera, with several strands of narrative and autobiography skillfully cut up and folded in to one another so that the film proceeds on several levels at once. Terry went to Vietnam at 19, was decorated for dragging a wounded white lieutenant out of the line of fire, was wounded himself and vacated to Japan. There he decided he wasn't going back and made contact with an organisation which finally got

him to Sweden. He's now 21.

Terry holds on to the belief that someday he's going to be able to get back to the U.S.A. and be accepted. I think he's on a loser there - short of a revolution or a miracle or both I can't see it happening. He obviously misses and loves his country and I hope he doesn't become that classic tragic figure, the enforced exile. It's strange that a film about a tragic war and a potentially tragic figure should be so gay and uplifting but it's because of the man himself. Terry is a real hustling hipster with a fast line in jive talk, chain smoking, black beret, flickering fingers, a natural actor hamming it up for the camera, ducking imaginary bullets, endlessly shaking hands with a pretended L.B.J. - "a sad old man", recalling living on the "block", describing how to drive a car slouched in the seat, "really groovy", teenage

sex - "open your legs Sharon baby", optimistic, raring to go despite appalling experiences in the war. No thought-out political opposition to the war, he just reached the point where he wasn't prepared to kill anymore. When the Terrys of this world stop fighting out of instinctive humanity, perhaps there is hope after all.

I hope he makes out in Sweden. Good luck Terry - take it easy baby.

JEFF CLOVES

Pop from the beginning by Nik Cohn. Weidenfeld & Nicholson 36/- The pop process by Richard Maybey. Hutchinson 30/-

The poetry of rock, Corgi Paperback The Ginger Mills film, try the director, Trevor Peters, BBC TV SHE 8000 ext 358

Terry Whitmore, for example, try The Angry Arts 01-263-0613

NOTES FROM AMERICA

The Holy Modal Rounders (Peter's group) have signed a nifty bunch of contracts with United Artists. They're going to make us famous, and we're going to make them hip. The contract signings have been a contract freak's wet dream - whole battalions of lawyers sending reams of paper back and forth, and principals disappearing to Europe and California and getting sick. 'But it's real' says our manager, who is a good man, 'the president called to apologise instead of having his secretary do it'.

45s... current and choice. 'I want you back' - the Jackson Five. This should be there by now. 'Venus' - Shocking Blue. We know you know, but it's such a neat record. 'Wonderful World' - Jimmy Cliff. 'Walk a mile in my shoes' - Joe South. 'Hey there lonely girl' - Eddie Holman. He's an R&B singer in the order of Smokey Robinson, but perhaps better. His voice is almost beautiful beyond belief. 'Lady-o' - The Turtles. Best record they ever made. 'Fancy' - Bobbie Gentry. Along with Dionne Warwick, one of the most underrated people in pop. 'Let's work together' - Wilbert Harrison. What a great record. Damn! 'Blowing away' - Fifth Dimension. We used not to like them, but this is their best yet.

'She lets her hair down' - the Tokens. Bubblegummy in the best possible way. 'Rainy night in Georgia' - Brook Benton. A perfect song, perfectly sung.

LPs.....

'The Cajun Way' - Doug Kershaw. A totally unique voice, one of the best fiddlers ever, and one of the most interesting rhythm heads on the planet. Country music of the highest order. Creedence Clearwater have 4 LPs in the top 100, and none have sold a million yet. They will. Dan Hicks & his Hot Licks. Pre bop 30s and 40s jazz and 2 ladies who sing Mamas & Papas vocal riffs. Excellent violinist, and Dan Hicks, whose licks are hot. These people are really good. Jerry Yester & Judy Henske 'Farewell Aldebaran'. This is what folk-rock was supposed to have been. First rate words & plenty balls. Good combination.

R&B has been relatively chickenshit and static since 1967. Used to be more interesting and innovative before that. Only new direction since then just about was Sly & the family Stone. Till now... Black pop is getting more, um, together. Lots fine stuff now, and it shows every sign of staying around. Right on!

Hotcha gang, it's Captain Badmouth here to tell you which of the new groups suck dogs.

Santana - there is no reason why this bunch of greasers has to be so rhythmically dull.

Isaac Hayes - when will spades stop confusing self pity with soul. Smith - South California lame. Most heavy.

Cold Blood - North California lame, real heavy.

Crow - Whiny righteous heavy twerps. Zephyr - A friend says they're much better live. Record a bomb.

Ten Wheel Drive - one cut is exquisite, the rest is murky phlegm.

Lighthouse - 11 or so piece band (FAR OUT) that plays heavy music (How about that!). Like most of the above, long on pretension and short on taste.

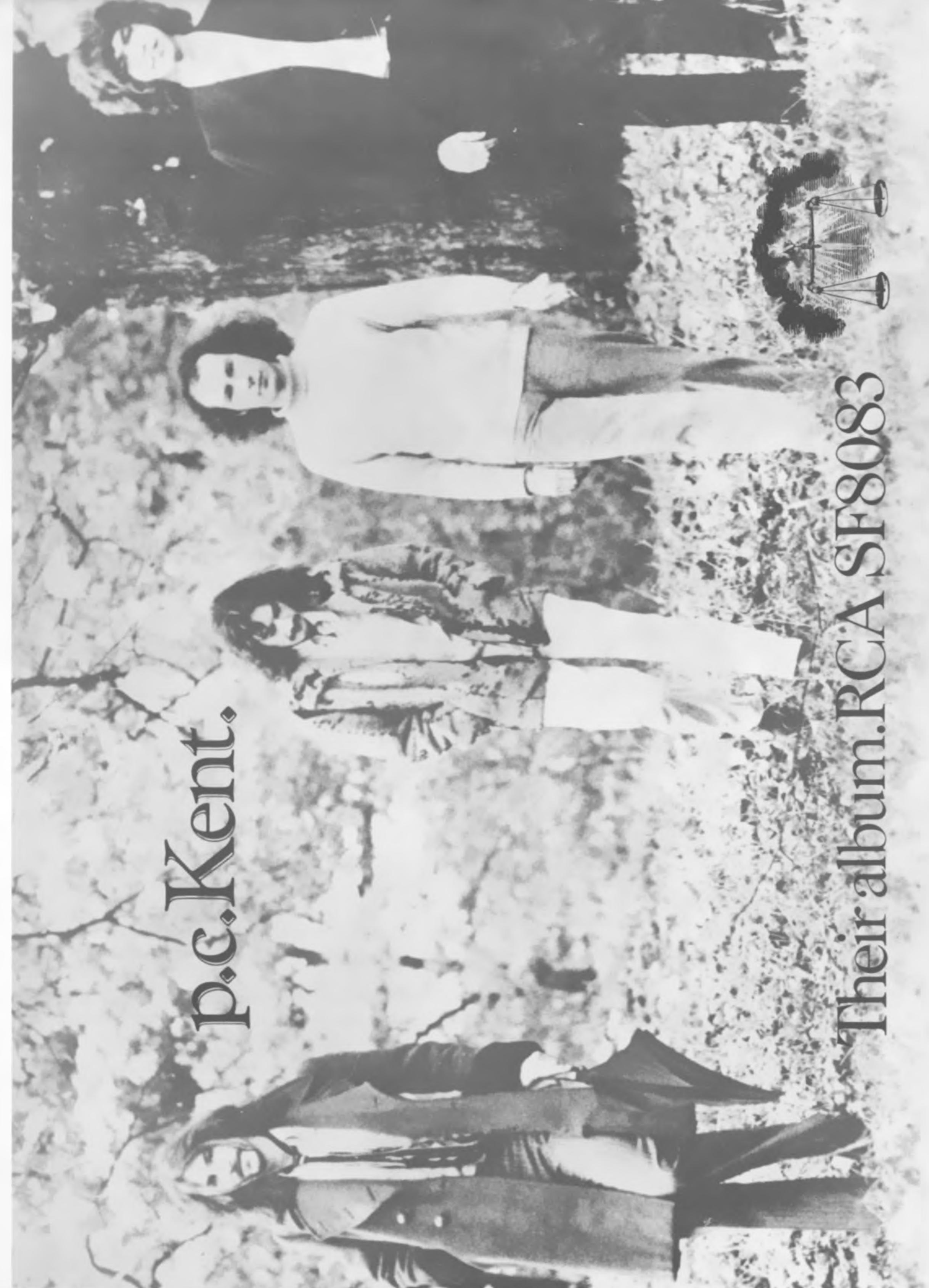
A peek into our seamy existence. This is a list of records we want and have got recently, for what it's worth. The Band, Stand Up, Melanie, Arthur, Doug Kershaw, Let it bleed, Creedence, Airplane, and Karen Dalton (she makes Janis Joplin look like Betty Boop).

Final note - we don't like Iron Butterfly, 3 Dog Night or Vanilla Fudge. If you like these people, the Captain Badmouth list probably holds no meaning for you, in which case, ignore it, of course. Whatever moves you, power to both of you.

peter stamps! & antonia

Andy Dunkley

living legend of the whirling turntables... 01 385 3925





Leonard Cohen, interviewed by Rainer Blome of the German 'Sounds' magazine.

Leonard Cohen is a man who tries to be free. He lets himself be carried by the wind, like a cloud. He does what the air tells him to. Leonard Cohen embodies what the years have given him; his years at McGill University in Canada, his trips abroad, his ten year stay in Greece, his home on the Isle of Hydra, his lucid and confused moments, his love for Marianne and her son, his drugs, his sympathy for the Cuban revolution, his books, his records, his wishes, his writing, his wandering around.

A short time ago he moved to Nashville, where he was trying to get a group together to give concerts. He is 34 years old, and would like to own and live on a farm.

Z: What developed your use of song and lyric?

LC: Actually, it was already there... It was only by accident that the literary half of my work became known first. I've always played the guitar - when I was 15 I was already playing guitar with a group called The Buckskin Boys, doing country music.

Z: In Montreal?

LC: Yes.

Z: Country music in Montreal sounds a little bit strange... but then where does the personal music of the Canadian come from?

LC: There are a lot of cross connections and sources. Down in Nashville, it is said that many of the local stars originally came from Canada. The French Canadians have a particularly strong interest in country music and I think that the fiddle, and the guitar, plays a role in that. The music of the French Canadian people is mainly country music.

Z: How did you first gain popularity?

LC: It's difficult to explain just what the public finds attractive in one's work, or how one's work finds favour in the world. I really don't know what factors my current popularity is attributable to.

Z: Did you want fame?

LC: A certain part of me was probably very ambitious.

Z: So how did you go about realising this ambition?

LC: Very, very gradually. I never intended to become a poet. I had no idea about special techniques and putting one's personality into the work, so that it was representative and created an image for the public. Any ideas about that sort of thing were entirely alien to me - even today I don't know. So I simply just kept writing.

Z: Was it difficult to find a publisher?

LC: Well, in Canada we published our poetry ourselves mostly. We never waited for the conventional press to become interested. (It's only recently

that commercial publishers have become interested in our poetry). People like Irving Leighton and Louis Duda - both Canadian poets - always published their own work and we paid all the printing costs ourselves.

Z: How did you organise distribution?

LC: On street corners... everywhere. To friends by post and so on. There was a small faithful group of readers in Canada, which was continually growing - and indeed exists even today. We were all part of 'The Montreal Poets', simply a group of people who looked after our traditions. There were never any prizes, and naturally no money. And no women.

Z: What kept you going?

LC: A few of us were studying. I was still going to school when I first met these poets, then I went to McGill University. That was before the Sputnik era, before education and teaching were taken seriously. I never attended classes or anything like that, even though I was supposed to be a student. I simply lived the life of a Chinese Mandarin's lap dog.

Z: How did you come to make a record in the first place?

LC: Well, I didn't know the first thing about the current music scene because I had been living in Greece for the past ten years. I never met up with any musicians, and I never heard any records. But when I was writing, I sometimes used to listen to the American Forces radio in Athens, which played a lot of country music. And I always had my guitar beside me, and wrote and played songs. After I'd finished 'Beautiful Losers', I realised that my head was full of music (because I'd written the book to the accompaniment of the radio), and that I'd had enough of writing, of black print. So I made up my mind to go to Nashville and sing, find a record producer, and start a new thing. It was part of my plan to begin a new life - I was no longer content just to sit at a writing desk. When I got to New York, I found a very good musical scene there, and when I heard Dylan, I felt that I didn't need to go any further. That was 3 or 4 years ago.

Z: Were you discouraged when you heard Dylan?

LC: No... on the contrary. When one listens to Dylan's music or that of another good writer, or one reads the work of a good poet, one derives certain energies from it. So it gives energy for one's own work.

Z: Have you ever met Dylan?

LC: I met him yes, but only for a short while. We just had a drink together.

Z: That was when you were in New York?

LC: Yes... I was in New York, en route for Nashville. But I hung around in New York... it was a nice scene. Do you know that when I started with a band, back in Montreal in 1957, I was working in nightclubs, improvising lyrics and singing poems, and it was regarded as being a very eccentric thing to do. But we were quite successful, and I liked working in nightclubs.

Z: Was that like the old New York beatnik scene?

LC: Not quite. I think that the people who came to see us were old fashioned jazz fans - many people liked the music of Morrie Kay, a young pianist from Montreal, and one of the first musicians of my generation to get arrested. He was forced to stay in Canada, though he had invitations to play in USA.

Z: Why was he arrested?

LC: I think it was pot. At that time, they called him a 'Drug Pusher', and for that reason they wouldn't let him leave the country.

Z: In the end, you made your first album in New York, didn't you?

LC: Yes. One day, whilst drifting around New York, I met Mary Martin, who had worked with Al Grossman. I told her my plans to get to Nashville and make a record there, but unfortunately, I let myself get talked over and went into a New York studio instead. That gave me a lot of worries, because I couldn't get used to the hectic life there after living on a small island.

Z: Were you happy with the record?

LC: I wasn't all that happy about the record. But I haven't any real feelings about it... I never know what feelings I have towards my work. When someone asks me to describe what feelings I have towards my work, I'm always a little confused, because normally I just don't think about it.

Z: Did you feel a conflict between the arrangements and your lyrics?



LC: Oh yes, very much so.

Z: Who did the arrangements?

LC: John Simon. I think that they were quite good, but it wasn't exactly what I had envisaged. I think a lot more thought should have gone into it, but I don't want to criticise.

Z: Did you work with New York musicians?

LC: Yes, and I had a bit of trouble making it clear how I wanted it to sound. In Nashville, I only had to play a song once or twice and the musicians would pick it up. But the situations in Nashville and New York are so different. For one thing, it's much quieter in Nashville, but there's a small war going on in New York - there are bad scenes between white and black musicians who don't get on well together, and there is so much tension in the air... but I don't want to make a big thing out of it. Apart from that, I had no idea how to deal with a big company like Columbia - I'd had no experience whatsoever, and consequently it was difficult for me to do as I pleased. So my main ignorance was mainly to blame for any dissatisfaction I had with the record.

Z: How did you come to make the second album, the one you did in Nashville?

LC: Well, personally I had no plans to make another record.... I didn't think it was necessary. But somehow I gave way to various pressures - Columbia wanted another, my manager did, and I suppose in some ways I wanted to do another myself; if only to show that I hadn't run out of ideas. So I tried to get some songs together and, as I had none, I let things come as they came. I travelled to Greece again and lived there for awhile, and then I travelled around the States. I started to feel that one was enough again, and that I should return to normal life, but even so, I got down to it and tried to write some more songs. I stayed in a California hotel room for several months and more or less forced myself to write, which was unusual for me because experience told me that I hardly ever got anything together under such circumstances, and it wasn't worth the effort, but I wrote on. Then one day, I met Bob Johnson, and I liked the way he talked, and how he understood my first album. He told me exactly what was good and what was bad about it, and



on the basis of this talk, I decided to go to Nashville and try to make a record with him. So I went down there and played with a group of musicians - some really good musicians - but listening to the playbacks, I thought my voice sounded false... there was no honesty in it and it really pained me to hear it. I asked the musicians to go home, and told Bob that I was finished; one couldn't squeeze another record out of me just because people had liked my first one. Bob said OK, let's forget it, and I went back to my hotel to think matters over, but got more and more depressed. The next morning I woke up, altered a few of the lyrics of my new songs, wrote some more, revised some of my older ones, and after a few days things started taking shape in my mind. We went into the studio again and it all just seemed to work itself out, and so, with the help of Bob, Charlie McCoy, Charlie Daniels and various others, I finally succeeded in making my second record. One other thing that helped me was the assistance my friend, a Jewish mouth organ player, gave me.

Z: Why didn't the names of this group of musicians appear on the sleeve?

LC: That was a decision made by Bob and me, with their agreement. We wanted as few words as possible on the cover. That's why I mention their names at every opportunity I get.

Z: From where do you derive the inspiration for your songs?

LC: It's difficult to find the source of a song. I believe that everything one knows and experiences is retained, and sometimes some of it comes out.

Z: Are your lyrics completely honest, or do you make alterations for the sake of poetry?

LC: I never regard my writing as beautiful. One tries to learn control, but control is always passive and receptive, more discriminating than commanding. One keeps searching, and the mind wonders where the thoughts come from, but that inevitably leads on to discussions about theology. I just can't say for certain where I get the inspiration for a song from. Usually my thoughts are more confused than my songs - I can't write on command. They just happen in happy moments when confusion becomes articulate.

Z: Have you ever had difficulty writing?

LC: I always have trouble writing, but there are those moments when a poem or even the idea for a whole book come into your mind. And then when you get down to putting those ideas and thoughts into words, most of the hardships return.

Z: Do you think you'll ever make another record?

LC: If and when the songs come. If they don't, the most important thing to me is not whether or not I can produce songs, but to be able to live my life.

Translated by Nick Townsend.



Hear it! — EKS 74063



Distributed by Polydor Records Ltd.

Rooting for Ackles

Since Dylan went electric and the first Byrds records appeared the "back to roots", countryrock feel to contemporary American music has gained momentum, and produced some good new artists, records and writers. It has also gained recognition for many artists whose style has eventually come into its own. Jim Webb's songs and records by The Band and Area Code 615, for example, have really influenced the current rock sound. Jack Elliott's outstanding L.P. "Young Brigham", released in 1968, made little impact in terms of sales but I'm sure must have influenced many musicians. On "Tennessee Stud" and the Richard/Jagger song "Connection" he produced the classic countryrock sound, with wailing violin and electric organ too! (If you can get hold of this record it's really worth buying - old Ramblin' Jack at his very best).

What I really dread about the countryrock thing is English bands jumping on the chuckwagon - "The Grits and Pones" from Ponders End clad in two-tone fringed shirts, all singing down their noses about freight-hopping to Shinbone. I find that just as phoney as all the white negroes trying to sound like Wilson Pickett - all grunt, scream and Huh! Still there are other things happening which may get overlooked while the current obsession with country music rages. Three years ago, when Judy Collins' beautiful record "In My Life" was released - despite good reviews - it didn't quite get the reception I thought it deserved. Maybe it was too catholic, too diverse for the folkies, and too esoteric for the more pop orientated audience. It's become one of my favourite records, as much for the beautiful collection of songs as her own fine singing and interpretation of them. The songs range from Stan Kelly's "Liverpool Lullaby" to Brecht/Weill's "Pirate Jenny" to Peaslee's revolutionary song "Marat Sade" and the backings from countryrock, to orchestral, to chansonier/cabaret. For a singer, previously classified as "folk", to come on with songs by Randy Newman, Jacques Brel, Lennon and McCartney, Leonard Cohen, Dick Farina, Donovan, Dylan etc., was a bit much, I suspect, for those who like their music neatly pigeon holed. Perhaps she was just a bit ahead of her time or possibly, with the growing numbers of good singer/writers about, she suffered by being essentially an interpreter of other peoples songs. But what was really influential about the record, I think, was the way she sang those songs and the way they were arranged - she was the first American singer I'd heard who had overlaid her style with an awareness of the French cabaret singers or chansoniers and on the

Marat song and Pirate Jenny, in particular, she managed to get right outside the current folk-rock sound. The influence is felt on other tracks too - obviously on the Brel song "The Dove" but also on "Sunny Goodge Street" and "Dress Rehearsal Rag" and when the Leonard Cohen records came out last year I heard the same thing in many of his songs too.

I really think that even in the last three years audiences have become generally more open and probably the Cohen records have helped to open peoples ears to Judy Collins and his fellow Canadian Joni Mitchell. The two Joni Mitchell L.P.'s have obvious links with Cohen and Collins and again the cabaret style of song is apparent. This may not be pure coincidence, since French culture in Canada is likely to affect the work of both writers. But it is this European influence laid on top of their unmistakable North American roots which has sharpened the differences between their work and the mainstream of American song. Even where Dylan, for example, uses a traditional Scottish tune I can only hear an American song when he performs it. When Judy Collins sings "Just like Tom Thumb's blues", though, she gives it a totally different "feel" in which all sorts of influences are fleetingly heard. And the same can be said of Joni Mitchell singing "Night in the City" or "Nathan La Freniere" and Leonard Cohen singing "It seems so long ago". As I write this I'm aware that, while feeling uncomfortable about British Country and Western groups, I'm applauding North American singers who are making use of other musical traditions. I think the difference is this: they are from a culture which is an amalgam of mainly European influences; when they draw on the Berlin Cabarets of the 30's or on the cafe songs of Paris of the 40's, they are, in a sense, returning to their roots, just as the rock bands rediscovering country music are. But in England, C & W has less to do with roots than the folk music of North India and I shall never feel happy about British bands exclusively devoted to country music.

The Fairport Convention on their LP 'Liege and Lief' triumphantly return to roots and even their own songs sound as though they are "trad". But they have overlaid their material with all sorts of influences - not the least of them, American country music. The traditional ballads, Tam Lin and Matty Groves - songs I used to hear sung unaccompanied in folk clubs, seem to blossom and become immediately part of our world, when the Fairports lay into them with electric guitars, drums and organ. Because they treat their material

with respect and understanding they have elevated these ballads from historical relics to living poems. Somehow, when the Fairports sing a travelling song, it seems absolutely natural that you can sense something of that joggrotting Byrds sound in their music.

Perhaps because of the influence and already established reputation of Collins, Cohen and Mitchell, David Ackles may be going to have a bit more luck than Judy Collins had at first. Last year I remember many people rushing to record a song called "Road to Cairo" and imagined, for some reason, that it was a Dylan song. Later a David Ackles single with "Down River" on the other side came out and the record went up like a lead balloon. When I heard the record it made me sit up and listen and I really liked both songs and Ackles' manner of singing them. Straight away I wanted to hear more of him but I was totally unprepared for his first L.P. "David Ackles". Both songs are on the L.P. together with eight others all written by him - Ackles plays piano and is backed by an electric guitar and organ band. Let me say straight away on the evidence of this record alone, I think he is the most important singer/writer to emerge post Dylan - I've now heard his second album and this only reinforces my opinion. However, I must immediately qualify this by saying that I haven't heard all the new singers and I haven't found anyone to agree with me about Ackles yet - I've never heard a single track by Tim Buckley, for example, and I know he's highly rated by many people whose opinions I respect.

Both "Road to Cairo" and "Down River" are rambling, discursive, "hard times" songs right in the mainstream of American narrative music, with an underlying blues feel to "Cairo" and a decided country influence in "Down River". What attracted me to these songs was the unexpected twists in their structure and Ackles' rather mature and wordly voice, free of both white negro and white stetson inflections. Musically both these tracks are perfectly arranged - Ackles characteristic quirky chorded piano with excellent romping "Dylan-type" organ riding over the top and occasional licks and runs from a very good guitar player called Douglas Hastings. Both tracks ride out on a really punchy rock sound with Hastings wailing away like a nut. With a bit of promotion I would have thought this record had an outside chance of scoring but it seemed to disappear without trace and the same thing happened to his L.P. The remainder of the songs on the L.P. are very dissimilar to the single and have this distinctly European flavour I've been talking about and the underlying piano (rather than guitar) sound of his songs tends to steer them towards Brecht, Jacques Prevert, Brel and even, perhaps, Leonard Cohen. It maybe that the distinctive flavour of his songs is to do with his being a pianist, for many of his songs are written in parts, with abrupt changes of tempo and time screwing the song off in a new direction, just as you think you have caught hold of an already elusive tune.

The second L.P. "Subway to the Country" is just as good as the first with perhaps even more subtlety in the tunes and backed up by a very large band. His songs are concerned with travelling, lost loves, returning home (back to roots), the pleasures of drugs in "Lotus Man" and their perils in "Mainline Saloon". They are often disillusioned and sad but never anchored in the downright pessimism of Cohen's songs. In a little hobo song called "Laissez-Faire" on the first L.P. the words could have been written by Woody Guthrie but the circus saw-dust tune and

Ackles' strident delivery is totally different from the wry and understated treatment Woody would have used. "Welcome to the Mainline Saloon" is about what it sounds like, and again has the same strident note and a sense of desperate gaiety - the sort of song Sally Bowles might have sung in "Goodbye to Berlin" - there really is very little of this in American music, offhand I can only think of Deltrich singing "Falling in love again", Sinatra singing "One for my baby and one for the road" and Ruth Etting's famous song "Ten cents a dance".

Ackles writes very subtle tunes, and occasionally his voice is inadequate and his pitch uneasy. This is true of a long song on his first LP called "His name is Andrew" - the story of lonely Andrew who loved singing hymns but lost his faith when he grew up. This song, I suppose, is an honourable failure - the song just doesn't come off, but it's such a beautiful tune that I find it doesn't bother me now. And wherever his singing gives me a moment of unease, it's because he's taking some unexpected path through his song instead of opting for the obvious route. He really tries, and for me, succeeds. On "Subway to the country", Fred Myrow has done the arrangements and no singer could ask for a better complement to his songs - there are all sorts of things in them, but all the major cliches have been avoided. Occasionally the band sweeps in with a bit of pure 'pop' and the songs take off in a new direction, rocking along with Doug Hastings' very spare guitar runs, again, just pushing the thing along at the right moment. There is a slow gospel based rocker called "Out on the road" which works up to a pounding series of false climaxes with Hastings rounding it off with a neat coda, which shows that, for all his other influences, Ackles can rock'n'roll with the best of 'em. His roots seem to lie in a variety of musical influences which he has managed to bind together, often in the same song, with utter conviction and I think this is the real strength of his work. The title song "Subway to the country" is a wistful little tune which seems to change direction several times, and then sweeps breathtakingly into pure pop in the middle of each verse. It's now been released as a single and with any sort of promotion it could even make the charts by the time this piece is published. If it does, then I'm right in claiming him to be the most important singer/writer since Dylan - anyone who can write songs like these and make the charts must be. And even if he doesn't, I'm still right.

Jeff Cloves.



COME TOGETHER

Implosion started again for a long run on Thursdays at the 100 club in Oxford Street. It will also run on alternate Sundays at the Roundhouse again. As well as being a good place to see groups, you can feel a glow when you pay your money because the profits from every other Implosion are given to some worthy cause; e.g. Playspace for children, The Black House, Shelter, BIT, IT bust fund etc. If you know of a worthy cause which could use some financial aid, or want to know more about Implosion write to them c/o 50a Princedale Road, W.11.

Grass Eye the Manchester u/g paper is having all kinds of disastrous hang-ups, but is managing to run concerts every Sunday night at Mr. Smiths in Brazil Street, Manchester.

Two dances at Kingston Poly (that's in Penrhyn Road) that we've been asked to mention. On Feb. 28th they've got Formerly Fat Harry and Cold Storage. And on March 14th they've got the Edgar Broughton Band, Quintessence and Jan Dukes de Gray.

If you go to the Watford Town Hall on April 14th you can see the Keef Hartley Big Band. God only knows how it manages to support itself financially, but it's good to see people interested in progress rather than bread. 13 musicians.

The National Blues Federation, having recently brought in Arthur Big Boy Crudup for a tour, are shortly bringing in Fred McDowell for a return tour. We're not too hot on blues, so if you want to discover more in this field here are some magazines to write to:-

Blues Unlimited 38a Sackville Rd, Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex.

Blues World 22 Manor Crescent, Knutsford, Cheshire.

Blues News c/o Eddie Cousins, 68 Glenwood Drive, Irby, Wirral, Cheshire.

SOUTH SEA BUBBLE

Down in the south east it is finally being got together. At least, for new activities in the arts. The New Activities Committee - set up in an interesting moment of semi-enlightenment by the Arts Council - decided last year to distribute £1,500 to each of eight regions throughout the country. The money was given on the understanding that it would be administered by regional arts co-operatives and would in the main be used to finance 'gatherings'.

These 'gatherings' were intended as focal points, where people involved in new activities

in any particular region (agreed that no-one has yet been able to define what a new activity really is. Anything the Arts Council, that bastion of the establishment, doesn't regard as established art, I guess. Which gives you a lot of scope ...) could meet, exchange ideas, perform, exhibit or just discuss their work or do whatever it was they did, and be subsidised for coming along to do it.

Which is a pretty nice idea, especially when you reckon that £1,500 doesn't go very far - if anywhere - if you try to spread it around in any other way. At the same time, the gatherings were intended to concentrate public attention on what was happening in the field of new activities and to give the new activities people themselves and not just some faceless administrator the opportunity to discuss publicly their need for subsidy and how they think it should be distributed and to point out just how many of them there were and how little money there was to go round. Meanwhile, back at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden ...

They've already gathered in the Midlands; it's the turn of the East Anglians in February; the South West in March; and Yorkshire in May. Now it's planned to hold a similar scene in the South East - that woolly area of commuter-land comprising Surrey, Sussex, Berkshire, Kent, Hampshire even bits of Middlesex, Wiltshire and Dorset, which has, not surprisingly, never before seemed to be much together.

The cometogethering - to be known as the SOUTH SEA BUBBLE - will take place in Brighton over Whit weekend - May 22-25. Plans are on the move and it looks like it'll be a really nice time; it should also make a lot of people interested, and attract a good deal of publicity. Gathering features to date include a big promotion of rock/pop music (what's rock if not a new activity ...), facilities for theatre, film, music etc. and the publication of a box containing samples of work by non-performing artists.

People interested in new activities in the South East should get in touch with Ruth Marks, the regional co-ordinator. She wants as much information as she can get about what's going on in new activities in the south east and who needs what money; she'd also like to hear from everybody who wants to know more about the SOUTH SEA BUBBLE. Write to:- Ruth Marks, South East Regional Arts Co-operative, 7a St. Aubyn's Mansions, King's Esplanade, HOVE, Sussex. (tel: 02 73-735331).

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OTHER SCENES

ZIGZAG WANDERINGS



Yes, it's the only monthly magazine which comes out once every five weeks.

Pye, winners of the Zigzag prize for the most unaware record company on earth, are about to release an album called 'Vintage Canned Heat'. Bob Hite says "If you're thinking of buying the record, don't bother. It's made up from demo tapes which we made for fun, and they are shamefully bad. It's being put out very much against our wishes by someone who wants to make a fast couple of bucks out of our reputation." The first track isn't even Canned Heat apparently, but Pye are calling it a new Canned Heat album. They probably think it is too.

If anyone can tell me the name of the folk singer who used to go around the clubs singing and flat picking "Leaving" (Peter, Paul and Mary hit) a few years ago, I'd be most glad.

In the days when you had to be either famous or mysterious to have an article published in IT, I succeeded in getting one in (about IT No. 32) under the name Per Frøem, purporting to be a Dane. It was about a Danish group called Hurdy Gurdy, who played two Middle Earth gigs in Summer 1968. The reason I mention this is that Hurdy Gurdy are back playing English clubs, but unfortunately their music is still 1968 vintage.

One of Her Majesties compulsory skinheads was nearly charged for sticking our December pig poster on his barrack wall. It was 'liable to corrupt young soldiers' they said. Maybe he should put up good traditional, pictures out of Playboy, to encourage and preserve healthy normality and mindless morale.

It's nice to see topline groups like the Fairport, Edgar Broughton, Tyrannosaurus Rex and so on, playing at relatively small clubs now and then. It makes a change from all the bullshit you hear from bighead stars who come on with stuff about claustrophobia and feeling scared in small clubs, when what they mean is that they're more interested in bread than the audiences who helped make them big.

A nice poetry magazine is 'Leaves' which is published by Christine Cook of 9 Oxford Drive, Woodbridge, Suffolk. Send a stamped envelope for a copy, or else send some poems.

Release, who need £7,500 a year to continue running at their present capacity, helping 110 people a month with court cases, recently had an application to hire the Albert Hall for the purpose of a benefit concert turned down. One of the reasons given by the lettings manager for the refusal was that "Release was an organisation which helps people to escape from the police". Quite amazing! As Andy Dunkley says "Please support Release before Release supports me".

Lol Coxhill, clarinetist extraordinaire and Friars celebrity, has been offered a place in Kevin Ayers' new band. Should he accept the of-

fer, this will be a truly magnificent group, but with Lol's present group (Delivery) beginning to make headway, he's still not sure which way to go. Anyway look out for both bands.

Haven't heard their LP, but I was very impressed by Matthew's Southern Comfort when I saw them on Disco 2 the other week. A refreshing sound indeed. And it seems that everyone is thinking the same thing. Their reputation as purveyors of ace music is spreading like the proverbial wild fire.

Talking of Disco 2 ... the programme despite its title, has one or two good ideas, and an occasionally good choice of performer. (Joe Cocker was superb on the first programme). But what the hell is Tommy Vance on it for? They could at least find a disc jockey who is interested in what he's talking about.

Alan Lord, sporadic contributor to our pages, has gone to America for a month. Hopefully he'll return with armfuls of interviews with Quicksilver, the Dead etc.

Creep of the month: Lou Christie. (He won the award last month too).

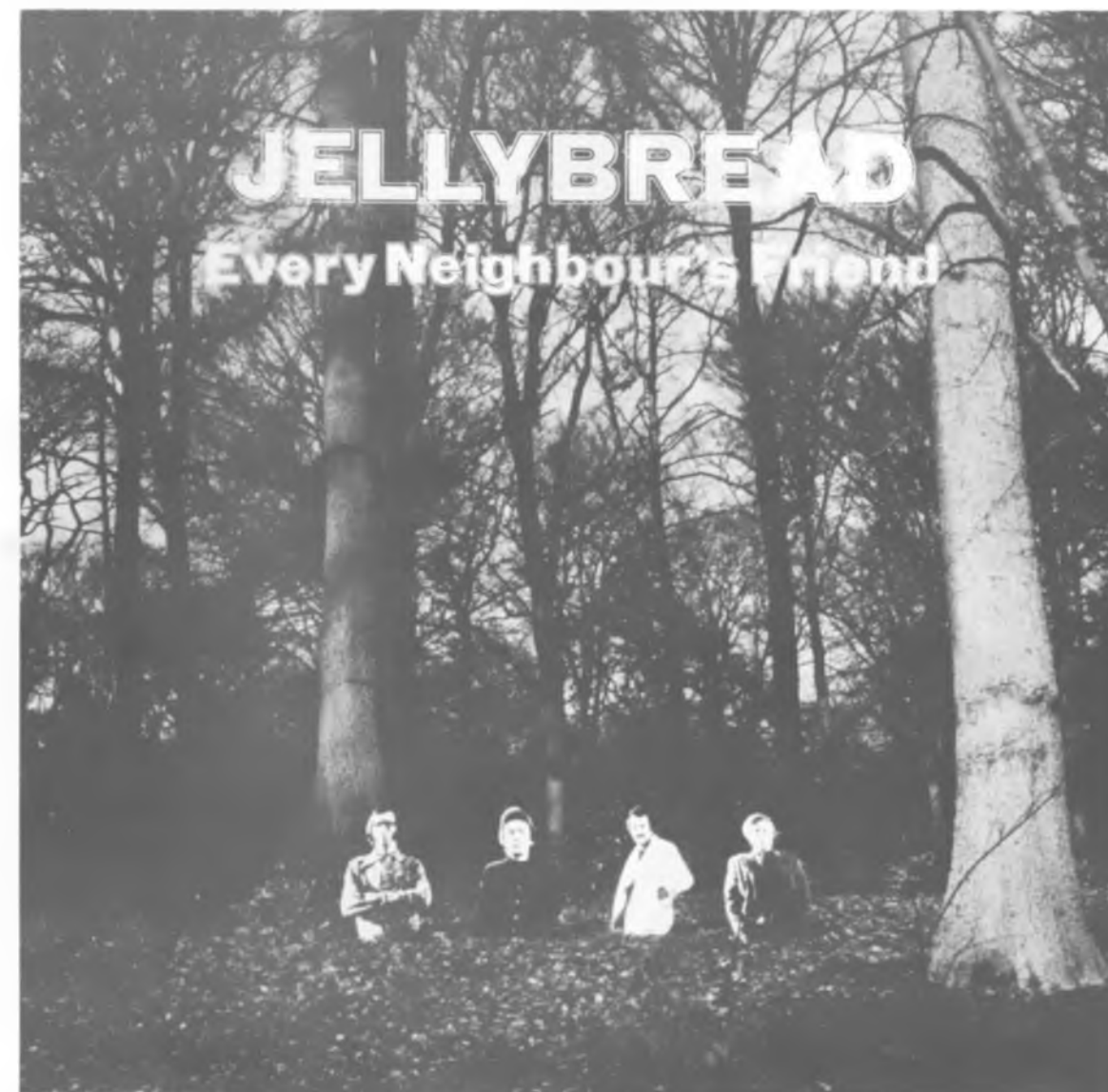
Meanwhile, here are some good things to subscribe to: Broadside Magazine, \$4.50 for 26 issues, from PO Box 65, Cambridge, Mass 02139. and Creem Magazine, \$5 for 24 issues, from 3729, Cass Ave, Detroit, Mich 48201.

One of the things that pleased me this month was someone (Marc Bolan) having a good word for Bob Krasnow of Blue Thumb Records. This label seems to me to be about the most enthusiastic in the States. They send out an amazing newsletter full of interesting stuff about America in general. For instance, they recently printed an excerpt from an interview with Beach Boy Dennis Wilson who said "Charlie Manson, a friend of mine who says he is God and the devil, sings, plays, and writes poetry. We may sign him for our record label".

Mick Softley, referred to in the God rock article, is back singing again, and he leaves any other contemporary folksinger standing. I can't remember the last time a song had as much impact on me as his 'Ship'. Amazing!

We often think that we should make detailed record reviews a regular feature, but then we always sling the idea out on the basis that lots of other periodicals cater adequately in this field. (For instance, IT are expanding their review section). Some of the records we've heard lately and would like to recommend are: Boz Scaggs, Family, Lothar & the Hand People, Clark Hutchinson, Syd Barrett, Argent, Canned Heat, Ronnie Hawkins, Little Richard... and loads more that we haven't heard, no doubt.

Down on the corner, out in the street, Willie and the Poor Boys are playing.



We have never been too keen on the idea of 'purchasing' so-called name-groups or solo artists for recording purposes. We get much more excited about finding artists and 'building' their reputations. This we did and will continue to do so with F.M., C.S., C.P. and D.B.

So now we've found another act that will take its place alongside those others.

We find it very difficult to define Jellybread's music; this is just one of the things that they have going for themselves. It's not strictly soul or blues or R & B, but yet it's a combination of all three.

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