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THE SECOND COMING

King Crimson arrived with an amazingly powerful surge during the summer of last year; then, returning from America, they split up and fell silent. Preparations are being made for their return. We spoke to guitarist Bob Fripp.

Z: I think we're going to start off on the wrong foot as far as you're concerned, because I want to ask you about Giles Giles & Fripp, which I think you want to forget as rapidly as possible don't you?

B: Well, I take the beginning of my life largely as January 1969, which was the birth of Crimso. But I think about Giles Giles & Fripp quite a lot, if only that they were the rhythm section on the first album and form the main prop on the second one - Mike and Pete Giles are doing all the rhythm section work... it's the old firm, but with a different emphasis.

Z: Why did you split GG&F... I suppose you had trouble getting gigs with that kind of material?

B: Yes; we didn't do one gig. We did the occasional thing like 'Colour Me Pop!'; but we were really rather naive. We're a lot more sophistic-

ated nowadays, in that we assume that people are going to try and fiddle us... previously we'd imagined that people who tried to fiddle us were the exception. But Giles Giles and Fripp wasn't what you'd call a commercial venture - it was just 3 guys who lived in a house and thought their attitudes had something in common. It was an approach which didn't really work... but nevertheless, there was something there.

Z: Why didn't Pete Giles go with you into King Crimson?

B: What Pete wanted at that stage was a long way from what the rest of us wanted - so I gave the others the choice of going with Pete or me, without any rancour or bitterness. I just felt that where I wanted to go was in the opposite direction to Pete. Mind you, now that Pete has seen what King Crimson is doing, he's got a lot of sympathy with it.

Z: So how did Greg come into the group? I mean, he was with the Gods or someone wasn't he?

B: Yes, but he's been a personal friend of mine for about 7 years.

Z. I thought the Gods were from out our way - Hatfield or somewhere like that.

B. No, they came from Andover. Mick Taylor was with them and when he left, a dreadful guitarist joined and they got rid of him. I did a gig with them actually in a dreadful thing called Cremation, which was a sort of nervous reaction to unhappy love affairs and college life. It was just a kind of hobby; the band itself was quite dreadful ... Clapton/Hendrix material. But it was an embarrassment, which in the end I couldn't stand. We treated it as a joke - but you can't get up on the stage and say "Look, we don't take this very seriously; it's just a chuckle to get rid of all our hang-ups". People just aren't interested in the music's dreadful. I suppose the music of Crimso is the same sort of thing - it's a way of releasing hang-ups, but it's taken more seriously.

Z. So, having formed King Crimson, how did you come to choose your present management? I mean, it's an acknowledged fact that no matter how good a band is, it won't get anywhere without competent steering.

B. Well David and John (managers) used to work at Noel Gay, who previously managed us as GG & F. We didn't have any dealings with them except bumping into them in the office, but they were going to leave Noel Gay, and since the fellow handling us there didn't think that we were quite his cup of tea - for example, he got us no work - he suggested that we get in touch with them, and that's how it started. But having got to know them, we realise how good they are. Just as music is a release of feelings for us, hurling about and working for a group is their kind of release, and although Crimso is far from inactive at the moment (I'm personally busier than I've ever been) there is a lull for them until the record comes out, and they have all the signs of a musician that isn't able to get a gig - they're just pent up and waiting to get on with it. But they're very into what the musician wants - they realise that the musician has to be happy. They advise us from the business side because they can feel that particular vibe which we can't so well. But they want the product to be a good one rather than one which is instant, goes round and makes a fortune, and is knocked on the head.

Z. Practically every article I've ever seen about you goes on about "hype" in some way or another. Some say that you were hyped, others say that you were managed well, etc ... but how was it that you had all that publicity before the record? I mean, look at all the thousands of new groups trying to get started.

B. I suppose it was just that the group attracted attention. The nice thing about the articles was that the only motive for people doing them was that they saw the group and really dug it. Simon Stable was the first to mention us, and you (Andy) were in at the early days and gave us a lot of helpful encouragement. We didn't have any official or paid-for publicity until the album was released. It was a nice buzz. As regards the hype idea, I think that stems from the fact that it seemed as though there was a tremendous publicity machine, and when they got in touch with the management they found efficiency, so it was an obvious conclusion that there must be lots of publicity, it must be a hype. Personally, I laughed about it at first, because I knew it was an absurd suggestion, but then I began to take it seriously because others seemed to, and now it doesn't really worry me because if you're reasonably successful, people will try and

put you down, and calling you a "hype" is an easy way to do that. I have sufficient faith in the music.

Z. There were stories about you getting offers of £150,000 from American Mercury Records, and things like that. Why did you go with Island and Atlantic?

B. We could have got a lot more money, both in America and over here, but we thought that Island and Atlantic were the best record companies, so went for them. We had offers considerably in advance of the Mercury one ... we could have gone over a quarter of a million pounds. A lot of money. And at that point, it's no use being naive about the business side ... you've got to be aware of your worth.

Z. Let's get on to the sleeve of the record. Obviously that nostril laden face had a lot of selling impact, and some people say it represented the 21st century schizoid man. But I heard it was designed for another group but wasn't used - is that true?

B. No, it was designed expressly for King Crimson by Pete Sinfield's friend Barry Godber. It's interesting to hear about these rumours about us. A friend of mine told me that Chris Wood was joining the group the other day. Very interesting. I'll tell you something that did happen with the sleeve: there's this paper called Competitors Journal and they had a series where you had to put a caption to a picture, and the other week they used the sleeve. The winner had "Get off my blue suede shoes", so God knows what the rest of the entries were like.

Z. You recorded the record itself independently didn't you, and then re-recorded it because you weren't satisfied. Did you have a lot of bread to play around with?

B. No, the early days of Crimso were not exactly overflowing with honey. We borrowed a sum of money to pay wages and buy equipment, because you just can't make enough out of gigs to keep you going. It's interesting to read about these small clubs closing down because the groups prices are too high. We never played Klooks Kleeek because the bloke said we'd have to play the first gig for nothing. Now we didn't want to be greedy - we'd have been quite happy with a percentage. This was when Crimso had attracted a bit of publicity too ... but we said no. But we played the Country Club for £5. So if you're getting that kind of money, you're not going to make a fortune, and at times it was very shaky financially.

Z. How satisfied were you with the finished album?

B. Well, the point was, the timetable went back because we weren't satisfied with results, and we were leaping around the country doing gigs at the same time as well as doing really long, heavy, grueling recording sessions. It was too much really, which is why the album was only 60% what it could have been.

Z. You're as dissatisfied as that?

B. Yes. The mixes particularly aren't what they should be - I'd like to remix the album entirely for the continent, but Island and Atlantic wouldn't swallow it because it would be so much better. To a degree we have to live with it.

Z. Had you had any production experience or were you just feeling your way?

B. Well that's another reason - it's the first we'd done.

Z. But you succeeded to a great extent

didn't you? For example, I thought that fullness at the beginning of "Epitaph" was very impressive.

B. Yes I liked that. But when we realised we'd have to produce it ourselves, we knew there'd be mistakes, but we thought "well at least it'll be King Crimson, mistakes and all". I mean when people buy a record, they don't want to know that you were exhausted or on the point of breaking down when you made it - they just want sounds.

Z. If you'd produced the album alone, rather than with Ian, would you have done it differently?

B. Yes - I think the approach to some numbers would have been different. "Schizoid", "Epitaph" and "Crimso" would all have been heavier. There's odd things - like the guitar part which isn't on "Talk to the Wind" - it disappeared in the mix. You have one chord instead of a whole verse of chords. "Crimso" sounded heavier than "Schizoid" because you had the contrast with the quick flute, the acoustic guitar and then the mellotrons, whereas on "Schizoid" we found it difficult to create a heavy sound with everything going - there's no quiet thing to compare it with. On "Mars" in the next album, we've got a harpsichord playing something like a nursery rhyme right at the climax. I think it's called symbiosis - things which don't relate but which do complement each other. I mean, how absurd when the whole world's exploding, to have this nursery rhyme - but because this sounds insanely pretty, it throws everything else into a different light and makes it sound heavier.

Z. I always remember reading things about how Conway Twitty or someone used to write his hits in about 7 minutes. How long did it take to evolve say, "21st Century Schizoid Man", with all those rests and the precision of the guitar and drums?

B. About 3 months ... whereas "Epitaph" was written and arranged in 2 hours.

Z. Do you think the songs themselves are very strong or is it the arrangements that make them - because the actual melody of some of the songs is difficult to find?

B. The melody in "Schizoid" is non-existent, the melody in "Talk to the Wind" is strong, but done nowhere near as well as it should be. "Schizoid" is a performance number which depends on the zest you put into it.

Z. Everybody seemed to think of Moonchild as the weakness in the record.

B. I think "Moonchild" will be viewed more favourably in say 3 years time than it is now ... it's not right, but it's one part of Crimso which we felt had to come across even though it wasn't done as well as it could have been. But we left it down partly as a warning against being too self-indulgent and we made all the criticisms that we saw in print, long before the record came out even.

Z. You must have got very pissed off with that constant comparison drawn between King Crimson and the Moody Blues.

B. Yes, there's been a lot of suggestion that we were influenced by the Moody Blues. The influence is practically non-existent. If you use a mellotron there is bound to be certain similarities, but apart from that, it's a completely different approach. Any resemblance is entirely superficial.

Z. Most of the critics reviewed it very

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favourably - Mark in IT called it "the ultimate album" for instance, but the Village Voice called it "ersatz shit" and gave it a D+. Did you think the reviews were fair?

B. Jonathan Green in Rolling Stone didn't like it, but he came round to see us the other night and he was telling us how different it was to review records. We got on very well with him and I agree that everything must be based on comparison. For example, you read some Shakespeare and you think "Yes, it's fairly good" - then you try writing yourself, see how putrid it turns out and you go back to Shakespeare. Paul Simon said that he wasn't a poet - it's just that the others writing lyrics are so bad, and it made him look good. It was the same with Crimso... Crimso was a pretty dreadful band - it had so many faults in it.

Z. So what you're saying is that all the rest were even worse?

B. I suppose so, yes. But I think it's all down to attitudes. You get bands that play really tight, well done stuff, like the Tamla Motown rhythm sections, but it's all the same. For all the mistakes in Crimso, I think the attitudes were right... we were trying... and this brings in the thing about "Oh you're pretentious"... Yes - pretentious, sure... what does the word mean. You can't get too hung up on what critics think.

Z. I read before that you play according to moods or colours - where does that spring from?

B. I suppose Pete Sinfield is directly responsible for it in that his words paint so many pictures that if you play something that doesn't go along in terms of what he's created in words, there's an obvious clash. We found it with the lights - if he flashed a blue, you couldn't play heavy red chords - it was just a bad contrast. In the same way you could use something which is a direct opposite; you could use a light word against a heavy chord to give emphasis. But it's far easier to talk in terms of pictures rather than say "We want you to base your improvisation around the tritone... use lots of flattened fifths and flattened ninths"... I mean, then what happens, he plays lots of corny bop phrases, which just isn't what's wanted. Mel Collins from Circus is doing the sax work on the new album, and we said to him, "Right - here's a fellow walking to town from the country, then he's walking around the city." So the first time, when the fellow's walking to the city he's not aware of it, he's a little more naive - then when he's in the city, he's a little more neurotic, the notes are harder. Far better than saying "On the second riff there's got to be more staccato". That's on "Pictures of a City". On "Mars" we said to Keith Tippett who played piano "people are running away from the army", which is better than saying "Well we want some heavy chords

etc. etc." If the lyrics you work with don't conjure up pictures, you can't do that... I mean, I wouldn't know what to play against a lyric like "My baby's left me", or "The train I ride is 21 coaches long", except maybe some chuggy rhythms to suggest trains.

Z. Did you have musical training or have you just had a lot of experience... I mean, on say, "Mars" you play some very obscure chords, to me anyway?

B. I suppose I have what you'd call a working knowledge of harmony: my theory is nowhere near Ian's, for example. I had guitar lessons for a number of years, which led me through a phase of my being hung up by my faults.

Z. I won't ask about your American tour, because I've read plenty about it.

B. How much of it was accurate I wonder?

Z. Alright, I'll ask about it, but it's such a vast subject we'll be all day.

B. I suppose the main impression is that it's big. It's huge. It's an obvious thing to say, but that doesn't mean it's worthless to say it again. It's a country of extremes too - the good things are great, the bad things are really bad... for example the hippies that like you really dig you, because it's a way of life, but the people who dislike longhairs want to shoot them! The drug scene there's gone a bit

Please turn to page 43.

PETE BROWN & PIBLOKTO!

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"BEAUTIFUL BOYS WITH BRIGHT RED GUITARS IN THE SPACES BETWEEN THE STARS"

The Daughters of Albion, in Adrian Henri's poem - nubile schoolgirls in navyblue drawers - were in love with all beautiful boys with bright red guitars; strange that Adrian Henri is now up on the stage with them, reading his poems and singing with the highly successful Liverpool Scene. Not that he is a typical example of your 60's type popstar. He's hardly a boy in either age or stature, nor does he play the guitar and the scene now, is very different from the Merseybeat boom he was writing about. The Liverpool Scene, nevertheless, were born out of the Merseybeat explosion and retain that unmistakable Liverpoolian collectivism and style which gave us such a jolt in the mid-sixties.

The Liverpool Scene have just come back from America where they did the club circuit playing with big name rock bands and, as Mike Evans, the other poet and sax player in the band, points out, the Americans came to hear them, expecting a typical Liverpool rock band. Often the second and third nights they played, business really picked up as the word went round that The Liverpool Scene were something else. In fact, they came off very well against the straight rock bands because there is no basis for comparison between Adrian's poems, Andy Roberts' folk songs, Mike Evans' poems and sax playing (which is often a pastiche of half a dozen musical styles) and a rhythm section at home on jazz, rock or very free musical settings for poems. In an earlier article about poets working with music (Zigzag 3) I wrote about their LP "Amazing Adventures of", a second LP "Bread on the night" is out now and a new record, "St. Adrian Co, Broadway and 3rd" is due; they've just completed a series for BBC Radio, they are currently doing the British college circuit and go back to America later in the year. It's obvious from this, that above all, the Liverpool Scene are successful and everything looks very rosy for them. I think their versatility is a great asset to them, as is their spontaneity and their respect for their material and for their audience. Adrian is vehement about the gap between art and entertainment and all the band state quite flatly that what they are on about, is entertaining people.

Since "Amazing Adventures of", Mike Hart has left for a solo career and the drummer Bryan Dobson has been replaced by Peter Clarke, and the present line up is completed by Percy Jones on bass. Personally, I find the "Bread on the night" LP less satisfying than "Adventures of"; it suffers from some sloppy production, every sign of being hastily put together and something indefinable - a sort of lack of conviction in what they are doing. This is very odd, because it would be difficult to find a group of musicians more committed to what they are doing;

their broadcasts have been great, and their stage act is a real show with a terrific extrovert warmth and ability to involve the audience. Without in ANY way suggesting that the Liverpool Scene is really Adrian Henri and supporting group, I think that his mere presence is a great deal to do with this appeal. Adrian has a vast benign geniality which presides over all their work and brings a terrific response from the rest of the band. He is much older, has done so many things, knocked around so much that he has acquired a deceptively casual professionalism which is the bed rock of their work.

He was born in Birkenhead, went to Durham University, worked in fairgrounds, did a bit of art teaching, painted, worked in a theatre in Liverpool in the early sixties, met Brian Patten, Roger McGough and emerged from provincial obscurity when the collection of poems "The Liverpool Scene" was published in the aftermath of Beatle mania. He hasn't got over the fact that provincial art is now established and that people still approach him in pubs, apologising for being Londoners, and trying to catch what's happening up in swinging Liverpool. He started writing poems in his student days, what he calls "clever sixth form poetry", influenced by Pound and Eliot, but was really turned on by the Beats, "Howl" and "On the Road" - he retains a great admiration for Allen Ginsberg, as a bloke and as a poet. He sang with a trad band in the fifties and in the early sixties was into poetry and jazz, listening to Mingus and Patchen on record, and Pete Brown and Mike Horovitz live. When he returned to Liverpool he began writing poetry again but didn't take it seriously - he credits Roger McGough with encouraging him to start doing public readings of his work. From the onset he, and all the other Liverpool poets, worked with musicians and Henri, McGough, Andy Roberts and Mike Evans, who had been working with a rock band called The Clayton Squares, all worked together long before Scaffold and Liverpool Scene became realities. At that time they were heavily involved in mixed media shows which they called "events" and which we, in the trendy south, called "Happenings". At that time Andy was singing folk and the poets were mainly reading to jazz - again, Adrian credits Roger McGough for urging them to work with Liverpool beat musicians as a more honest expression of their own scene, and so, parallel to the Merseybeat boom, the fusion of poetry and rock, which is the basis of Liverpool Scene's approach, was born.

Adrian is still painting, when ever he is not working with the Liverpool Scene, and is also writing poetry for the page rather than for the micro-

phone. He makes no separation between these activities and regards his contributions to the Liverpool Scene as equally important - I'd wondered if he thought of his public poetry as a sort of throw away, which provided him with the financial independence to work at ART. Nothing could be further from the truth - he seems completely devoid of arty-fartiness and I think would find it genetically impossible to talk down to his audience - and that goes for the rest of the band. Their Liverpool solidarity is quite incredible, with a sort of spontaneous free-masonry operating to keep them in touch with other Liverpool musicians and friends. Adrian, Mike and Andy obviously remain in close contact with The Scaffold and all the band were anxious for Mike Hart to make it with his new LP "Mike Hart Bleeds". Andy Roberts also has a solo LP out "Home Grown" and

between the two records I think I can detect lots of shared experiences and influences - neither LP quite comes off, I think, but Mike Hart's song "Almost Liverpool 8" and Andy's "Moths and Lizard's in Detroit", (which Liverpool Scene do) are good by any standard.

Maybe Liverpool Scene's strength is that their work is greater than the sum of the parts and they've come through a lot of things together. I can't think of many more difficult tasks than trying to get poetry over to beat-crazed audiences who are really not used to listening to words. That they succeed, is a great credit to their integrity and professionalism. The band are very happy with their new LP and maybe this time the record will really capture the spirit and warmth of their work. I hope so. Jeff Cloves.



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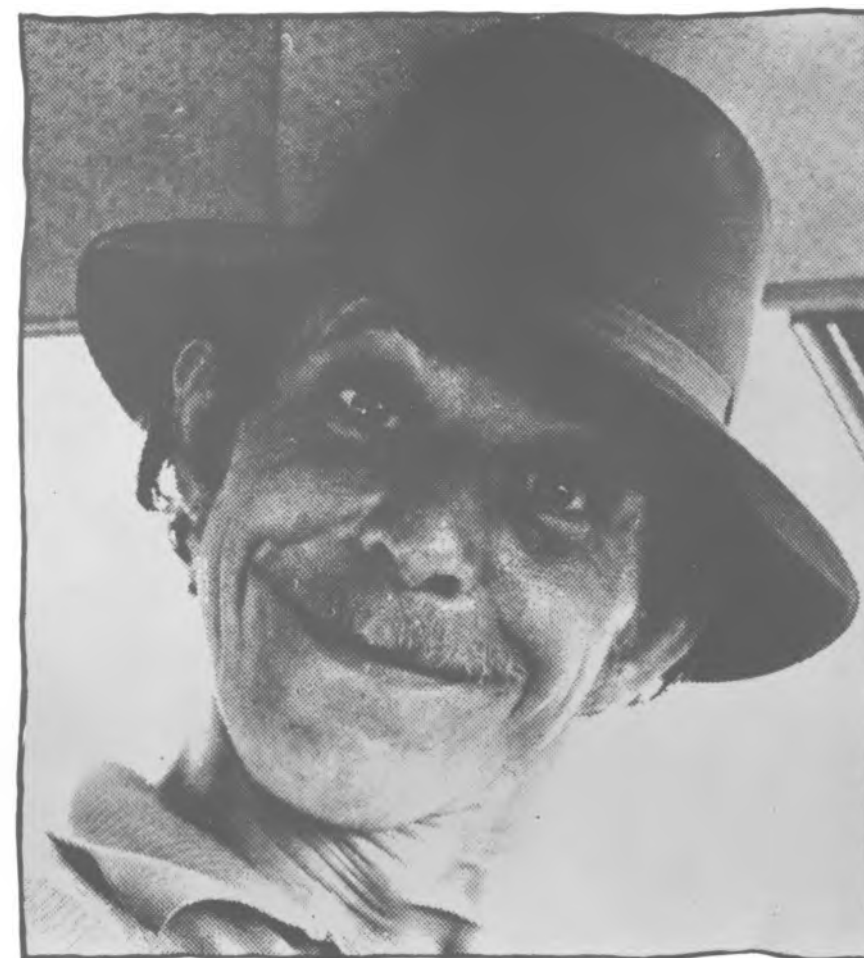
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BEAUTY IS IN THE EAR OF THE BEARER

If you are interested in graphology, take a look at Art Garfunkel's signature on the sleeve of "Wednesday Morning, 3 am", the second Simon and Garfunkel LP, (if you count the dreadful thing they made as Tom and Jerry when they were 13 as their first). The general characteristics of the writing are a careful regularity and precision. The lower case letters are all more or less the same size and evenly spaced. The capitals are proportionate and the G is quite a complex piece of twirling starting down in the zone of the 'biological imperatives', rising smoothly and reaching upward into the spheres of the intellect then looping down through the ego region with a final introspective retreat before launching back into lower case conformity. If you go for this sort of flannel, you might conclude that Garfunkel is a normal sort of bloke, not particularly rebellious (except for his untamed hair), fairly pensive and quiet, someone who pays attention to detail and has a strong desire to make himself understood.

In spite of diligent searching, I can't get my eyes on a Paul Simon signature, but that is of no import. I have my authentic personnel officer's closest ally, a book instructing how to tell a person's character from his facial features. Simon's jawline is steady and purposeful, his eyes calm, honest and brimming with perspicacity, there is slight cynicism in the set of his mouth, intellectual force in his high forehead.

For a full phrenological analysis, I would need pictures of their naked heads from all angles, and the ideal would be to get my hands on their skulls and interpret every bump.

Unaware of the exact dates and places of their birth, I am unable to dig out my 'Teach yourself astrology' to any fruitful purpose and their fan club (have they got one) is unlikely to supply magnified photographs of their palms and digital joints. The tealeaf formations in their willow pattern mugs would be distorted by the jostling of airfreight handling and the shipment would probably end up in Cuba, wherever it was addressed.

The obvious solution is to listen to their music ... but ... If you spray your apple trees with an ixodicide intended for keeping cattle free of ticks, you are fairly likely to be a bit disappointed with your apple crop. And you are unlikely to pluck many gooseberries from a rosebush by that or any other name. So when you listen to Simon-Garfunkelian sounds, it is better to concentrate on what you hear rather than on what you don't hear, and to ask yourself what you feel rather than what you don't feel.

I have read several articles by people who wrote about what they found to be missing from Simon and Garfunkel music, the main grumble being that they were unable to involve the audience in the song situations they created - or were the articles, as I suspect, really concerned with the inabilities and hang-ups of the people who wrote them? At what point in the process of emotional involvement should the listener's own personality take over from that of the singer? God knows, but I feel that Simon and Garfunkel involve me when I listen to them - and that's what it boils down to, a matter of personal reaction. And the polemic of whether or not what Simon writes can be considered poetry is as important as the problem of whether your favourite strawberry creation should be called tart or flan.

Simon and Garfunkel's pre-fame background is fairly conventional, within the pattern of folk-orientated singers, though Garfunkel has always stayed more or less in the shadows (but he should emerge when the film of "Catch 22" appears). Simon came to England in 1965 after graduating in English and dropping out of law-school. He wandered around Europe a little, earning the occasional bit of bread in folk-clubs and on TV. By this time, he and Art had already put out two albums, the first under the nom de voix Tom and Jerry and the second under their own names, entitled "Wednesday Morning 3 am". The sleeve photograph of the second one, the two of them leaning against a column in the New York subway looks simple enough, but, as Simon loved recounting to London folk-club audiences, it took two sessions because all the pictures on the first take included a section of the wall covered with 'obscene' four letter graffiti, a product of New Yorkers' stifled but unceasingly titillated libido. 'The words of the prophet are written on the subway walls', a phrase from "The Sounds of Silence" and "A Poem on the Underground Wall" (Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme) may or may not relate to the incident.

P. J. Proby was the big name on the bill of Rediffusion's 'Ready Steady Go' when Simon first appeared as an up and coming folk-singer. He was instructed to cut two verses out of his song "I am a Rock", in order to give sufficient time to Proby who was to round off the programme. Simon agreed, but decided half-way through that his song had more social validity than P. J.'s "Let the water run down" so he sang it all through. Consequently, an enraged Proby had to be faded out in mid-song to make way for a fixed time advertising break, ho ho ho! Those were the days of unbothered, no hang-ups folkiedom, and it is pleasing that it was a Paul



Simon song, "Feelin' Groovy", which Richard Goldstein later chose for inclusion in his book to typify the 'head-free' period which was soon to follow.

Simon, in his protest period of performances of "A church is burning", "He was my brother", etc. was a contemporary of Paxton, Ochs and others, but his transition to a wider field, both musically and lyrically, was more effective and faster than Paxton's, and left Ochs still the singing journalist he always was. The first big step forward took place while Simon was still in England. A CBS distributor in Miami liked "Sounds of Silence" enough to persuade CBS to add an extra backing track and put it out as a single, so that when Simon returned to the States, he was welcomed as the writer/co-performer of a million seller.

With mass acceptance came greater confidence in them by their label and by themselves and more attention was given to production. Simon has never been a prolific writer, but the quality of each album has bettered the previous one, amply making up for any lack of quantity. Particularly excellent are "Dangling Conversation", "For Emily whenever I may find her" and "Scarborough Fair" (PSR & T), "America" (careful listeners will have heard the lighting up of a joint at the end of this track) and "Mrs. Robinson" (Bookends), "Homeward Bound" and "He was a most peculiar man" (Homeward Bound), among others, depending upon the bias of your ears.

(An interesting and mysterious detail in "Fakin' it" (Bookends) is the question "Good morning, Mr. Leitch, have you had a busy day?" spoken by Beverley, formerly of the Levee Breakers, who

is pictured on the sleeve of Bert Jansch's "It don't bother me", and has just released an Island album called "Stormbringer", which is very good).

The record-breaking popularity of "The Graduate", soundtracked with a selection of S & G songs, had the effect of putting them into that mysterious area of public acclaim also occupied by figures like Judy Collins and Peter, Paul and Mary, mid-way between hip and straight, depending which side of the mirror you view them from. The first news of them in 1970 concerned a film they made for the American Telegraph and Telephone Co. for TV - it was considered too controversial and the company sold it at a loss, fearing involvement in politics (see Rolling Stone, 30th Jan.) This film in parts shows the extreme forces of cruelty and social injustice of America, adding to the voices of Easy Rider and Midnight Cowboy. You'd think that with these and other mounting pressures of moderation, America would come out front and plead guilty to being as corrupt as the LA exhaust fume cloud, but progress is slow.

"Bridge over troubled water" is subtly better than anything S & G have done to date. Their session men are admirable, and their coordination is worthy of the same respect given to Kenny Buttrey and friends for their music on Dylan albums, notably "Blonde on Blonde". Larry Knechtel's piano has really come on since the days when he was with Duane Eddy on "The twang's the thang". Hal Blaine (drums) and Joe Osborne (bass) have played together for years and their experience really shows through, especially on "Only living boy in N. Y."

And the three of them should be remembered by anyone who fully appreciated their contributions to the Mamas & Papas, and Jackie Lomax albums, among others.

S & G seem to have the same attitude to rock as some people have towards old Elvis films which they enjoy now for different reasons than when they first saw them in the late fifties and early sixties. Short term history has given a sociological appeal to films and songs of the Elvis-Haley period, adding the interest of hindsight and inviting comparisons between now and then in terms of the progress that has been made.

Judging from a comparison between the rock style of the Tom and Jerry album and the rock songs of "Bridge over troubled water", S & G have come a long way. But this is where they come in for a lot of criticism from some quarters. They are thought to have progressed so far that all feeling has been distilled out of them - perfection hides passion in music as efficiently as impeccably neat clothes and hair take the immediacy out of feminine sex appeal. This may be true of some of their less inspired tracks, but on the "Bridge" album, they have taken a rock and roll style and treated it in a way that at first seems intended as a satire, but it's as if they liked it too much and almost against their own wishes made it a lot better than the original genre, adding to it. The Everlys' "Bye Bye Love" ploughed along solidly and was a leader in its time, but it is so nice to hear the musical intricacies added by S & G and their sidemen.

As you listen to the other rockity numbers - like "Cecilia", "Baby Driver", "Why don't you write me" etc. - you find yourself trying to hum old

Beatles and not-so-old Hollies tunes in harmony, but you don't quite succeed; you hear Coaster-type blasts of sax, and snatches of skiffle and Crickets noises, all of which jangle pleasantly in the supra-conscious and the sonic regions of the belly. All the old noises are there but have been nicely kicked around.

The sadness of Simon and his introspection are still present. All the songs are written in the first person, most of them lonely or sad in some way, and even when happiness occurs, it's more in the music than in the thoughts expressed, except in "Song for the asking", which a parliamentary candidate trying to catch 18 year old voters by "digging hep music" could be excused for taking as a Paul McCartney written and performed song.

The sadness of some songs set in New York remind me in a vague way of Midnight Cowboy - just odd phrases like

"going home
where the New York city winters
aren't bleeding me"

and

"I'm one step ahead of the shoeshine"
(Ratso's pa was a bootblack). Maybe it's all in my mind's ear or my ear's mind but I always associate Hoffman, whether hopping or not, with strains of "Mrs. Robinson".

The two tracks I like best are "Bridge over troubled water" and "The only living boy in New York"; but according to the personnel officer's facial features guide, the position and shape of my ears show 'a tendency towards associative deafness' and 'a genuine affection for dogs'.

Where are your ears?

Ian.

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LEONARD COHEN
SONGS FROM A ROOM

CHILDREN OF THE FUTURE • THE STEVE MILLER BAND

No noisy fanfares proclaim the Steve Miller Band... but if you're lucky you can catch the odd track on the radio. And if you go out and about, you can hear their records being played at clubs by the Dexters, Dunkleys and Floyds of the nation. And their albums get favourable reviews in various publications. And they get bought by connoisseurs of good music. So... it follows that people are going to be wandering around asking "What about the Steve Miller Band"? They're going to look up from their cornflakes and wonder what sign they were born under. As an album finishes, they'll emerge from their phones thinking "I wonder if they prefer blondes or motorbikes? Are they single? Where do they come from? What pets do they own? What are the christian names of their parents? What are their favourite foods and colours?" And so on.

So... what about the Steve Miller Band? Their first record was as Chuck Berry's temporary backing group on "Chuck Berry live at the Fillmore", which, although described by Mercury Records as "the turn-on live album of the year (67)", was about as mediocre as all the rest of the stuff that Berry recorded for that label. At that time The Miller Band, as they were known then, was still without a permanent record contract and were five: Steve Miller (guitar and vocals), Tim Davis (drums), Lonnie Turner (bass), Jim Peterman (keyboards) and Jim Cooke (guitar).

Organist Barry Goldberg had been involved in an earlier Miller venture, the Goldberg-Miller Blues Band, but he left, and the band, re-named the Miller Blues Band had moved from Chicago to San Francisco in November 1966 and worked from there throughout the San Franciscan rock era, playing all the usual places - the Fillmore, the Avalon and the 1967 Monterey Festival.

Capitol Records were just about the last major label to grab hold of any aspects of the San Francisco sound, but when they struck, they signed two of the finest bands the area had produced - Quicksilver Messenger Service and the Steve Miller Band (as they finally called themselves), who they signed in October 1967. Capitol were generous; RCA had been considered outrageous two years earlier when they gave the Airplane \$25,000 advance, but Capitol committed themselves to sinking over half a million into their two new bands. The Miller Band got a \$50,000 advance, \$10,000 bonus, and four-year options, besides being guaran-

teed artistic control, production rights, clearance of all promotional material, publishing rights and better than average artistes percentages.

Just before they made their first album, Jim Cooke left to form his own band - Curly Cooke's Hurdy Gurdy Band, who were supposed to be getting a record together in 1968 but it hasn't come to fruition yet - and another guitarist/singer called Boz Scaggs replaced him.

On on to 1968, when I remember travelling home and seeing Evening Standard hoardings pulling custom with the usual POP GROUP IN DRUGS RAID thing. It turned out to be The Steve Miller Band - I can't remember the details, but they'd been busted in Kensington or somewhere round there, but I was interested in as much as I'd only seen their names and picture on SF dance posters, and I didn't know they were in England. What had happened was that they'd dug Glyn Johns's engineering on Sgt. Pepper and they'd got him to work on their first album. According to the aged Capitol press release, they found in Europe "a musically stimulating atmosphere, which offered them a refreshing new outlook". That sounds like a load of old press handout tripe, but in fact that was the reason that they made the album in England - at Olympic Studios.

CHILDREN OF THE FUTURE caught them in their transition from blues to rock band, hence the predominant blues feel, especially on side two. It was a nice LP, especially the first side, which was in effect one long track, but not one to send you screaming its praises. The children peered tentatively off the sleeve front, through the threats of the straight world, to the promise of tomorrow. (Or maybe they were just obeying the photographer's instruction to look at the lens). And EMI goofed up the lettering on the cover, but that's another story.

Far better was SAILOR, which was released in early 69. I thought while preparing this article that I'd be able to capsule reviews of all the albums but re-listening to Sailor, I wanted to go on at length about Lonnie Turner's biting bass in "Living in the USA", the organ lightly surging in on different levels between the staccato foghorn blasts, building with such control, stealing across

THE PRESENT STEVE MILLER BAND, AS THEY WERE IN 1969. (left to right) LONNIE TURNER, STEVE MILLER, and TIM DAVIS.



the sound montage of "Song for our Ancestors", the huge gnashing of "Dime a dance romance", and so on. It's a most impressive LP and really out-classed the lacklustre passages on the first LP, which had seemed quite satisfactory at the time.

"They are one of the two or three San Francisco bands which really deserve the praise which SF bands seem to receive in such bulk" said Rolling Stone, and over here too people began to give attention to them. John Peel played tracks like "Quicksilver Girl" and "Living in the USA", and Geoffrey Cannon wrote a very fine piece in the Guardian comparing the quality of Sailor and Creedence's Bayou Country with the mediocrity being pumped out by the British blues boom bands.

But by the time Sailor was released in the States (late 68), the group was breaking up. Peterman, who's piano had made "Dear Mary", and Boz Scaggs left - and for a time it looked as if they would grind to a halt.

Then in late 1969, BRAVE NEW WORLD was released here. The band were continuing as a trio (Miller, Davis, Turner), using session men to fill out their recorded sounds - Glyn Johns on guitar, Ben Sidran on organ and Nicky Hopkins on piano. Perhaps because I never got into the record as much as I could have, I never really rated Brave New World... it seemed to me that Miller, still a child of the future with ideas on rebirth of worlds and "travelling fast from a dream of the past to the brave new world", got seemingly too absorbed with the conventional loud rock of the rest of the rest of the guitar trios to dabble with the softer lighter pieces; like Dear Mary and Quicksilver Girl on Sailor. It just didn't succeed as an entity - it seemed that somehow Miller had been divested of his subtlety, and without the total magnificence of Kow, Kow, with Hopkins piano and those giant descending steps and its swirling churning arrangement and intensity, it would have been the proverbial bummer. But the title track and Space Cowboy were excellent too, so I really don't know. Lets say that I don't feel qualified to criticise Brave New World.

YOUR SAVING GRACE, released here last month is just beautiful, especially the title track, and stuffed with the sort of music that just seeps into your head. Like the American ads say, most albums get lost in the heap or your head, but this is one which gets better as time goes by. As Dick Lawson says in Friends, "It's about time that Steve Miller got the recognition in Britain that he deserves" - our oft used sentence, but true nevertheless. When the band comes over later in the year, maybe EMI will place full page ads in the entire musical press, and Tony Blackburn will play his latest

release. Maybe. Your Saving Grace has most things I look for in a record, but again I can't help wondering where they would have been without the majestic work of the aforementioned Sidran and Hopkins, especially on "Baby's House".

Miller has obviously benefited from his astute choice of friends and advisers; Ben Sidran and Nicky Hopkins to play on his records, and Glyn Johns to produce them, which he has done extraordinarily well; the sound is clear and the music's superbly elegant.

And what happened to the ex-Miller Band people? Jim Peterman is now a producer for Elektra (his next album may be the Stooges follow up), Curly Cooke has seemingly vanished, and Boz Scaggs is alive and well and living in San Francisco.

Before joining Miller's band he was busking around Europe, particularly Sweden, (from Jan 1965 until mid 67), playing folk and a bit of R & B. He'd learnt the guitar from Steve Miller who he'd met in 1960 and had played in groups with him before he sailed east. An LP, called 'Boz', which he recorded in Sept 1965 includes a couple of Dylan songs, a Coasters number, pop songs, blues, and "Gangster of Love" and "You're so fine", both of which he re-recorded on Sailor. The album, the sleeve notes of which mention Miller innumerable times, was on Polydor International and has long been deleted, but a new solo album has just been released here.

Called 'Boz Scaggs', it was produced by Rolling Stone editor Jan Wenner who got friendly with Scaggs when he moved into a house across the road. The album was made a Muscle Shoals, and the studio musicians, especially Duane Allman and Eddy Hinton are the stars. Particularly fine is the 13 minute track "Loan me a dime" which is one of the few blues tracks I've enjoyed this year. It's a good record.

Well there you go. As I said, the rumours (strong ones) indicate that the band is coming to England very soon. Reports say that they're as good live performing as a trio, as they are on record, though there is sometimes lack of instrumentation (Miller's guitar has to do all the work) to fill in the rhythm. Anyway we shall see.

Chuck Berry live at the Fillmore
Revolution (3 tracks)
Children of the future
Sailor
Brave New World
Your Saving Grace
Boz
Boz Scaggs

SR 61138
UAS 29069
ST 2920
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The Miller Band in 1967: l to r, SCAGGS, PETERMAN, MILLER, TURNER, and DAVIS.

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THE LOVE AFFAIR

Well, Arthur Lee and Love have been and gone, leaving, I suppose, mixed feelings ranging from wild enthusiasm for their performances to just plain disappointment. It must be pretty difficult for some of these American bands, who come over here preceded by inflated reputations and excellent albums, to meet people's expectations – and, whereas Spirit were as magnificent as their albums, Love didn't quite bring it off I feel.

The audiences at the four gigs I saw were all enthusiastic... they recognized and clapped introductions (and some clapped the spade roadie, mistaking him for Lee), and went mad after each song, but Lee, rather than Love, made the evenings. Without him, they would have been, despite the brilliant drummer, a very mediocre rock band. (Lee contends that they are his perfect group, but they certainly don't hold a candle to the old Love). Yet sometimes they really hit it off together.

Whilst they were here they recorded a live album for Blue Thumb, the tracks of which will be selected from the following: Stand Out, Andmore again, Doggone, Nothing, My Flash on You, Singing Cowboy, Love is more than words, August, Orange Skies, Good Times, Little Red Book, Dream, Gather Round, Signed DC, Feel Dandy Feel Good, and Ride That Vibration Down. Of these, Singing Cowboy and Signed DC were particularly excellent.

As we said last month, we didn't approach Lee for an interview, but one of our sporadic contributors, Martin Kirkup, spoke to him at Birmingham, and here is part of his interview:

Love arrived at Birmingham Town Hall on March 10th with about half an hour spare before playing. They had spent three hours in a car, driving from their London flat, and were tired and cold. All four huddled around heaters, Lee so close that he set his expensive fur jacket alight at one point. On stage, Colosseum were doing the last half of their act, and the dressing room was very noisy. Relatively undisturbed, Gary Rowles sat tuning his guitar, Frank Fayad, tall and humorous, chatted amiably, and George Suranovich came and went every five minutes with beers and sandwiches. Arthur sat by the fire, knees pulled up to his chin. All four were smoking and drinking, Arthur seemed rather stoned, but sipped slowly from a very large whisky. He was relaxed and distant, aloof but quite willing to talk for a while.

Z: How and when did you get this group together?

Arthur: About 18 months ago now, August 1968. I'd

known Frank for about 7 years, and he was playing with George and Gary. I saw them a few times and knew that I wanted all three of them.

Frank: We'd played together for a couple of years then.

Z: What was the group called? Had you recorded anything?

Frank: No, we didn't record. We worked places like Las Vegas, and the music was rather bad. We had a terrible name, I won't tell you, I'm not going to say it, it's too embarrassing, but it was a terrible name! (laughs)

Z: Why didn't Gary join when Frank and George did?

Arthur: Well, he wasn't too keen at first, I think. I wanted him to.

Z: So Jay Donnellan joined instead.

Arthur: Yeah, (laughing) Jay! Jay Lewis, or Donnellan, or whatever his name was; just Jay. I looked for a guitar for a long time, and we got Jay, but I guess we knew it wouldn't work out.

Z: What's he doing now?

Frank: Probably working in a garage somewhere!

Arthur: So then we got Gary (smiles at Gary), eventually! He's our so-called lead-guitarist; I mean, I stick bits in too, it's deceptive. Yeah, "so-called".

Z: How long was it from the old Love splitting, to forming the new band?

Arthur: Well really it was only a week or so, maybe two weeks. They just went one by one, they went their individual ways.

Z: Are they still in groups?

Arthur: One of them, maybe two. An article I read said that Bryan's studying classical music, but really I don't know.

Z: There were changes in that group though, like 'Snoopy'.

Arthur: Well, you know he was a terrible, terrible drummer, and Michael Stuart was, well good but very mechanical. Tjay (Cantrelli) was like an experiment, I've changed the band to get what I wanted, and I'm happy with what I've got now.

Z: That pile of stone on the first two covers, what is it?

Arthur: That's Dracula's fireplace. Up in Laurel Canyon there's Dracula's house, where we were for a while, and just by it there's this fireplace. The house belonged to Bela Lugosi, you know him? great actor, very sad eyes. So, Dracula's fireplace was by his house. (points at gas-fire, which he is ten inches away from). This is a funny ash-tray.

Z: When did you cut "Forever Changes"?

Arthur: Early 1967. I wrote everything for that, worked it all out, except for Bryan's two tracks. I arranged the orchestra on them all except his, and I produced 'Alone Again Or' for him. It needed the orchestra you know, so I did that, wrote the charts. Bryan was the first to split, yes, the first to get the bright idea.

Z: Who plays lead on that album? him?

Arthur: John. He plays lead on them all, I play acoustic guitar but it's amplified. I wanted John to stay with me, he's a good guitarist; he was going to, but he, uh, 'freaked-out'.

Z: Was he fixing?

Arthur: What?

Z: Fixing?

Arthur: I thought that's what you said (laughs loudly). He was getting it together somehow.

Frank: Maybe he was fast-lining or something! (collapses laughing), you kinda sneaked that one in.

Z: You never did much touring with that band, why did you change?

Arthur: We didn't do any touring, we stayed in LA. (look round room) It's not... well, I didn't want to, not for me, I didn't feel like touring, but I changed my trip. I don't know if I can explain it to you really. I had a big hang-up about my appearance, used to wear fifty pounds of beads round my neck, and I had to straighten my hair. Once, I put this hair-straightener on my hair, and you're supposed to leave it on for five to ten minutes, but I was loaded, I collapsed and was out for fifty minutes. I woke up and went to wash the stuff out of my hair, and I washed my hair, and all of my hair was in the bowl... now, I didn't want to let a little thing like that get me down, so I did some work. Really! if freaked my folks out, but I took the fifty pounds of beads off, and decided to get down to work. It changed my trip, that's all, changed it. I wanted to come over here then, but we sat around for a while, working it out. The visit was overdue, but I'm glad we came; there are good vibrations over here really, and I want to come back late this year.



Z: Have you recorded since "Out Here"?

Arthur: We've recorded a live album over here, like tonight, but I want to hear all that. If it's released, it'll be on Blue Thumb, but maybe we'll keep it for ourselves. George and Frank have written a couple of things too, and we'd liked to have gone into the studios here, but there isn't time.

Z: Hey, you're on fire!

Arthur: I'm burning (beats out smoke from his coat), look at this fur! it's lost a lot of hair, well, maybe it needed a haircut, you know what they say about these longhairs! (grins at George) Freaks! So maybe I'll get my own hair cut too. Where've you been now?

George: Watching Colisseum, they really are good, that horn player and drummer, wow!

Z: Have you seen many other groups here?

George: Yes, I've been watching a lot, it's good to see new bands, and some of them really are good. We've played with Mighty Baby a few times, and I like them, and Cochise too. We've really enjoyed the tour you know, and we'll be back.

Arthur: All right, we got to go on in two minutes, everybody ready? Have the spare guitar on stage. Now, we're going straight through this one, straight trip, no bummers. Listen for the introductions, and make it. All right?

A fuller version of that interview will be published in the April 17th edition of Ripple, which can be obtained for 1/- (including post) from Martin Kirkup, Ripple, University of Leicester, Leicester LE1 7RH.

Another really good interview is by Pete Senoff, and appeared in a recent edition of Fusion, obtainable for 2/6 from Ratner Distributors.

Lee read our article last month, laughed in places, grinned in places, and was generally pleased with it – despite sarcastic on-stage references to Drachen Theaker's remarks about the band. Their manager, on the other hand, wasn't too amused and wanted us to interview Lee to get the facts a bit clearer. We'll do that on his next trip.

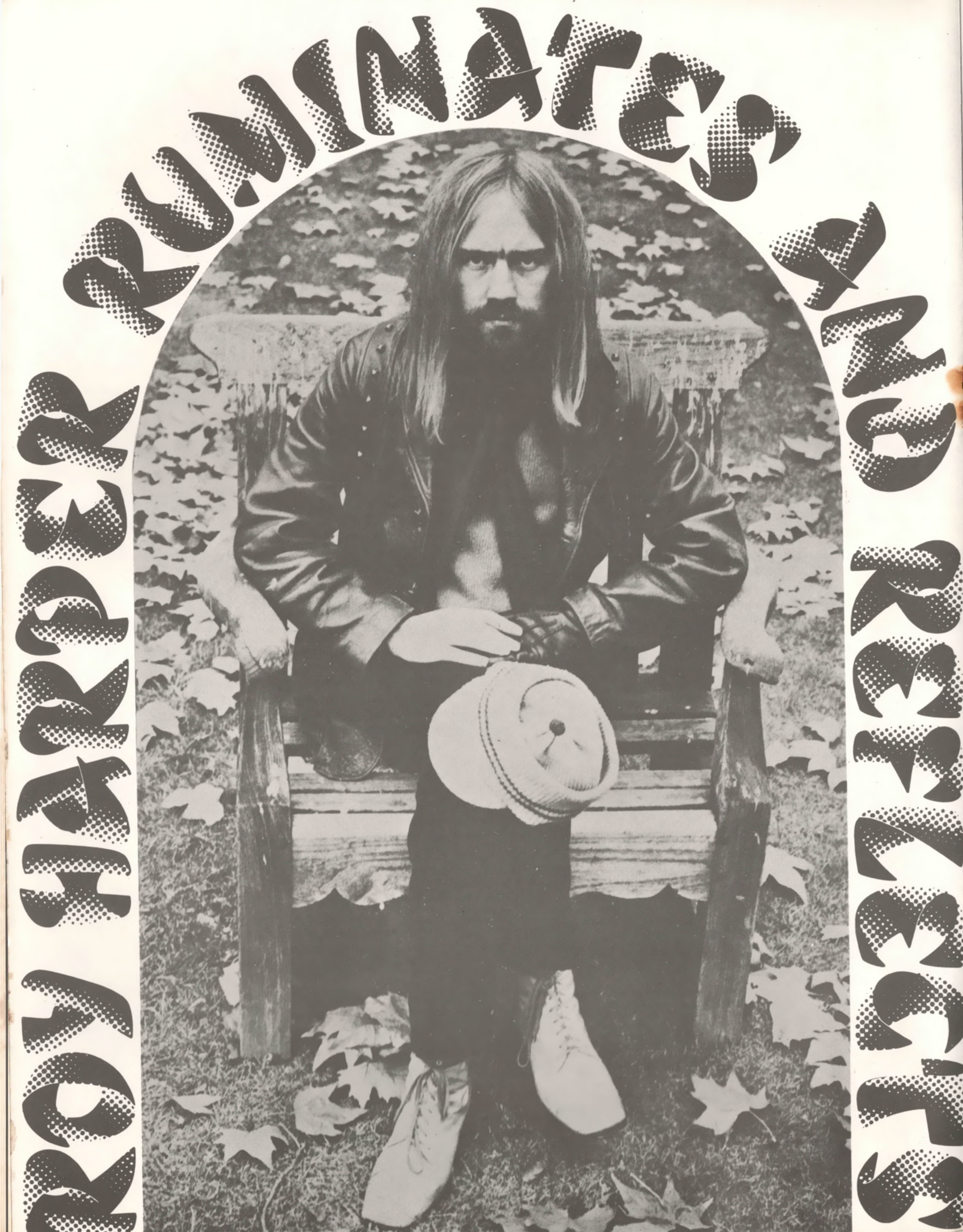
Blue Thumb Records dug the issue (it also featured T. Rex, another of their groups) and ordered 500 copies for publicity.

Meanwhile, we are coping with orders for Da Capo – we've received over 240 requests for it, and they should arrive within a couple of weeks or so.

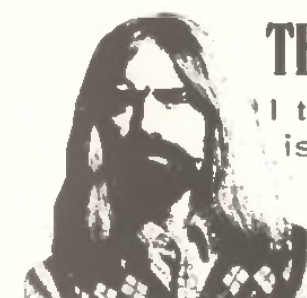
We missed the photo credits off last month – the pictures were mostly taken by David Hancock.

Centrefold: Arthur Lee at the Roundhouse on Feb 28th. Copyright Pete Sanders. Mac.





THIS GENERATION



I think that this generation is going in exactly the same way as the last one went; and it's lamentable. All sorts of mass neurotic diseases are breaking out all over the place, and it's amongst us as well... and we've got to do something about it now, because tomorrow's too late. And I think that's just about the sum total of what I need to say, though I could hear the sound of my voice elaborating on that for the next three days before I got fed up... but I think that's the most important thing. Bertrand Russell said this in 1935, and he thought the hour was getting late then; I think it's got late now.

Belief is a very important factor in the conditions we're living under in this century because into that area comes belief in your leaders... and your leaders are not known to you. You don't know them as people - they're very removed from you - and therefore your belief in them can under no circumstances be called rational. If you do believe in them, it's got to be an irrational belief - and that, for me, is not good enough. If I wanted to vote for Harold Wilson, or any of that crew, and give them any power at all, I would have to be in close contact with the guy and know what he was doing and why he was doing it. And since I can't know that, I just put my scepticism in my rucksack and walk on down the road apiece.

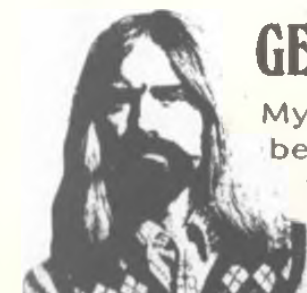
BERTRAND RUSSELL



I'm in the middle of a book called "The History of Western Philosophy" by Bertrand Russell - and he is one of the biggest comics of all time... it really is a very, very funny book. A lot of his books tend to be like that - 'Sceptical Essays' is a good one, 'Political Ideals' is very funny too - and they are funny to read if you can just be bothered to take the time to read what he's saying... he's really taking the piss out of the whole scene, and he has been now for 98 years; he's a great old guy.

Have you seen a book called "The International War Crimes Tribunal" about the Vietnam war, which has testimonies from various people? In the back there's a letter which he wrote to Harold Wilson, asking why he's siding with America, and Wilson's imbecile reply follows it. Then you've got another letter from Russell to Wilson, pointing out the mistakes in his reply. And then there's a short sharp letter from Wilson reminding Russell that his International War Crimes Tribunal is illegal! How much faith can you have in a leader like that? Really, that's too much!

GETTING TOGETHER

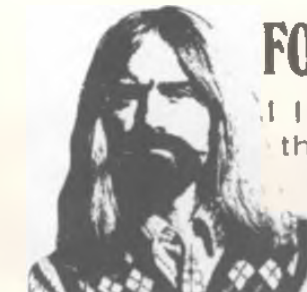


My next LP is not just going to be me as usual; I'm going to try and form the first European group, because the agents, promoters and managers in this country are a complete drag. They're the type of guys who believe that anything that's not British is not good, and I've seen plenty of people in other countries who are getting things together. The situation is this: in London, the whole thing is dead, but in the provinces it's not bad... there are

still people coming up with quite nice stuff, doing a nice gig. But on the continent, you have the people who are created by artistic starvation, and I'm in touch with one of the best groups in Sweden, and I think one of the best groups in the world - they're called the Maquis Markmen, and they're really brilliant musicians, and I want to get them together with me and a girl singer and write a very long piece, and commit ourselves to Europe. Then we could start to build something in Europe instead of building it all in Britain and saying "Actually we're cleverer than you are, so shut up", because that's not the way it should be at all... we should be together in this generation, at this time.

Actually John Lennon is no... oh well, let's leave him out of it, but guys who lie in bed under union jack bedspreads are actually a drag because they're just doing the same old Bing Crosby, and it's not making for anybody to get together. That's why I'm trying, on my own level, in my own little time and space, to start something European rather than just fester here and talk about getting together and not do anything.

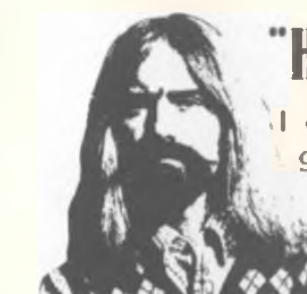
FOLKJOKEOPUS



I like a lot of the songs on there - I mean, I like all of them really, but there are some I like better than others. I think that I've done something at last in the way of preserving something of me. You get so much plastic on plastic these days, but I think that that's not plastic... whereas parts of Genhis Smith tended to get a bit plastic in one or two places.

The album was actually made around McGoohan's Blues, which is 20 minutes long. Therefore, we couldn't do it twice, hoping the second take would be better, because there would have been as many mistakes or alterations in the second one as there were in the first; and it's highly unlikely that I'd have had enough voice left for a third take. So we took it first take, which made it stand out from the tracks we'd already done, some of which were quite polished things. So I took it down so that all the songs were first takes, and we got the feel of a live record. I believe that it worked out, and I think I'll enjoy listening to it when I'm about 50 say.

"HELLS ANGELS"

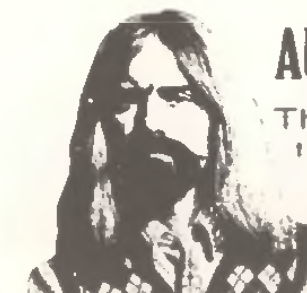


I don't like playing 'Hells Angels' really, because it's an electric thing which has grown into like Roy Harper's little piece of electricity - and it's got bad connotations that way because it's something like a pop star... it's like a bloody pop star, that song. I think it's still valid as a song, but I'm thinking of taking it down to an acoustic level completely, I mean, it's just a piece of venom, and I'm not actually fully satisfied with it... I've been much more successful over a period of time with McGoohan's Blues, which virtually says the same thing. You see, there was a guy who wrote in a Birmingham paper that he liked most of what I did, but he didn't like my attitude - and I'm just not willing to separate what I'm doing, from my attitude towards it - but I feel that 'Hells Angels' does, to an extent, separate what I'm doing from my attitude, and I don't want that at all.

They wanted to put it out as a single, but I don't want to put a single out - I don't want to have anything to do with singles, or charts or anything like that. I mean, if it had been a big single, then I would have had to keep playing it or been the subject of everyone's displeasure. So I really don't want to get into a position where 'Hells Angels' is racing up the singles charts, and I'm racing out the back door.

But it was a funny track. We did it with the Nice, and that was the second take... but we had a lot of trouble getting down to it because Keith Emerson's girl was in tears because Chick Churchill of Ten Years After had been taking the piss out of the Nice. It wasn't anything to constitute a war, but it was quite a frantic session, really very wild. You can hear Blinky stop - he made a boob - and when he stopped I covered it up with a big shout and motioned to Lee to carry on, because I knew it was a good take. So I brought Blinky back in, and the whole thing sounded quite live... I didn't want another go at it, because something happened to make it good, and that was worth more to me than all the plastic in China.

AUDIENCES



There are some songs on the 'Flat Baroque and Busted' album that I really like... I like 'Franchesca' - that's a true story, and 'Good-bye' which is a nice song... it's got a lot of dynamics. Most of the things I do depend on dynamics - the dynamics which exist between me and the audience. The performance depends a lot on the audience... if the audience are really good, the performance is, but then I'm confusing the issue a bit there, because I regard myself as a thinker rather than a performer.

I've just played to two very interesting audiences; one was at the Opera House in Oslo, which was packed solid, and that was really a fantastic audience. I played for 2 1/2 hours and it was incredible, and I know for a fact that they all understood everything I said. I've never ever actually had those conditions here yet... I've come pretty near to it at places like Mothers, but then Birmingham's my best city. London's a long, long way down the list now; I've really sacrificed London, because I don't believe in it that much - it's the place where all the con-men are gathered en masse, and even the audience on occasions resembles a gigantic con-man. It's no good trying to play under those conditions... either we all get our fingers out and really think about what we're doing, or why bother? I've actually ruined the last 6 or 7 audiences I've had in London because I can always feel a reaction from an audience in my head, and if you're in that position, and you feel some of those London audiences... wow! That's all I can say "Wow!"

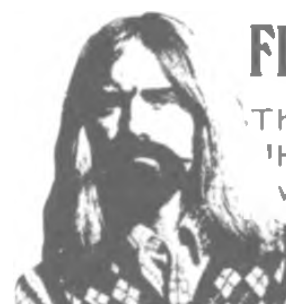
Anyway, the day after the Oslo concert, I played at the University at Stockholm. I had no idea what to expect at all, before I did it, but the guys who were running it told me that there were going to be 3 or 4 groups on before me, and I immediately knew what the situation was... it was just a booze up. I wasn't prepared to treat it seriously at all, which usually ends up with me treating it very seriously. I got on stage at about 11 o'clock and the audience was grouped into 4 distinct categories: those at the front were really intent on listening, those just behind them knew something was going on,

those just behind them who were going in and out of the bars between listening, and then right at the back the boozers and bottle throwers. And this was a University in one of the capital cities of the world.

It was an incredible performance – I didn't come down of the high handed stuff at all ... no instrumentals, no love songs ... just the very sharp stuff. But the best bits were in between the songs, when I just harangued the whole mob. A lot of boozers got tired of me shouting at them, but I did take time out to speak to each section of the audience. The dynamics of the whole situation were governed by the audience – there was a limitation in what I could do, and I knew that before I started. So it really does depend on an audience ... it depends on US, rather than me. We should all shoulder the responsibility, but we don't ... we're so bloody far apart all the time.

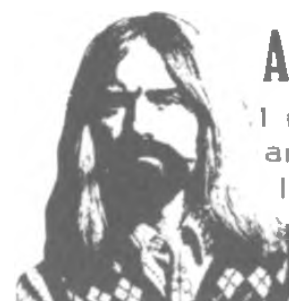
My forum, as it were, is more of a concert situation than anything else. I'm a folksinger, but not the sort you can booze to, or who you can actually have a belly laugh to. If there was a philosopher, like Freud, sitting in the audience, he could have a good time. But the sort of

thing I'm saying is more acceptable if everybody can sit down and have a think ... I don't like the thought of people standing up, or packed into places like sheep ... I can do a lot more in concerts than I can in clubs, and I think that's what I'm going to do in future.



FLAT BAROQUE

The one difficult track was "How does it feel", because we tried it with a group, we tried it with a bass and drums, tried it with everything, and I finally came down to the firm belief that it would be much better if I just did it myself ... but we still didn't get the kind of take we wanted, though I believe it's good. The only other track that didn't come out was Tom Tiddlers Ground, which came out a little harsher than I usually sing it ... maybe it was the presence of Tony Visconti ... I'm not sure about that. But most of the tracks, I'm very pleased with.



AMERICA



I really want to go to the USA, and I think I'm going to do a lot better over there than I do here, because actually, we're living in the middle of the 51st state – and everything I write is for the other fifty states as well. . . . and I haven't played in any of them yet. My stuff is written for the other 50 states more than this one, because here the apathy is apathetic, and that's getting pretty bad. But I'll probably find a female singer over there – see, I've got something long to write, and I'll need to rest in a song that's over an hour long, so I really need her. But she's got to get on with me, and got to be able to live with me, and we've got to be able to fuck nicely, to put it into blunt terms – I don't want to get away from the truth. I'm on the road, and I suppose I'm always going to be on the road, so any female's got to take that, and all the conditions entailed, if she's going to come with me.

Johnny Floyd

JO ANN KELLY

Jo Ann Kelly has been part of the British blues scene for several years now, although it was only recently that she signed an Epic contract which led to the release of her first complete album last month. Here's what we talked about in a recent mini-chat:

JOHNNY WINTER:

"Well, a lot of people are unaware that Johnny came to England about three years ago, when he was virtually unknown. He'd heard that there was a blues boom in progress, and wanted to see what was happening – he slept in a store room in a record shop in New Cross because he was broke. But apparently he went to Colyer's club and saw me, liked my music. I didn't know him, so it was a bit of a surprise to learn that Steve Paul, Johnny's manager, had enquired a few weeks ago whether I would like to spend a short time at Johnny's retreat in the hills of New York State. My record company said that they would pay – so off I went for four days. It was like a little holiday, because Johnny's cottage in the country is equipped with a swimming pool and several Cadillacs.

Johnny and his brother Edgar, who is not an identical twin, were really nice... we got on well musically, and the way may be open for some performances together if all the hassles about who pays the fare to the States are resolved. I would enjoy it anyway, because we were able to do nice versions of things like 'Bullfrog Blues' and 'I'll be satisfied'.

Johnny is a very fast guitarist, though possibly not as tasteful with bottle-neck as Tony McPhee... but his accuracy is phenomenal - hardly ever a bum note. Funnily enough Edgar is a better singer, although on 'Second Winter' Johnny does seem to have improved.

Steve Paul, who's only been Johnny's manager for a year, wanted me to dye my hair platinum before I did any appearances with him. . . . I told him what he could do with the idea. But if we did appear on stage together, we could do a lot of good old rave-ups like 'The night time is the right time', and would you be-

lieve 'You are my sunshine', which we did at his cottage!

THE EPIC/CBS ALBUM:

"Well, the credits were, of course, wrong. I didn't write all those songs – and any blues follower would obviously know that. But I was told that if I didn't put any composer credits on, all that side of the royalties would go to the record company, and I didn't want that. In fact, I was advised wrongly, and on the next album any dubious ones will say the usual "Trad, arr Kelly". The long sleeve note about how long it took before I signed any sort of contract was quite true, but the reasons weren't stated.

My first attempt at recording was with Tony McPhee – but that was an EP which we only pressed a few copies of. Then, four years ago, Mike Vernon approached me to do a couple of tracks on his Purdah label, which have since come out on the Immediate 'Anthology of British Blues' albums – the peevish thing about that is that I haven't had any royalties despite them selling 99000 in the States ... they must owe me about £500.

Anyway, I did two tracks for Vernon, and he put me off recording for a long time. The atmosphere was all wrong, and he was very unhelpful. . . . I wasn't used to studios at all, and I hated the whole thing.

Then there was a Liberty album called 'Me & the Devil' with The Groundhogs and Andy Fernbach. If that had been produced by Tony McPhee, like it says on the sleeve, it would have been very good, but it was in fact done by a bloke who worked for Liberty, and he wasn't very good. I was also on the first Dummer Band album, in a sort of guest appearance

The first album I really enjoyed making was 'Tramp' with Danny Kirwan, Mick Fleetwood and my brother Dave. My own album didn't come up to my hopes - in fact I think it's pretty boring. I hope the next one will be a bit different... I want a more electric backing, and may have Brett Marvin & the Thunderbolts on perhaps a couple of tracks.

The CBS album hasn't sold well, but they didn't advertise it. When I approached them to do a poster incorporating the album to display at clubs, they said they didn't do posters; and when I asked about ads in the music papers, they said they didn't advertise until they had seen some sales figures. Very strange¹¹.

EARLY INFLUENCES

"My first like, and still a distinct influence on me, is rock'n'roll and skiffle. Lonnie Donegan, the Everlys, Little Richard, Buddy Holly and Jerry Lee are all fantastic. In fact I started off in a skiffle group with Dave, doing Everly Brothers duets in harmony. But I like all sorts of things - for instance, I do 'Lay Lady Lay' in the clubs... once somebody at the back hissed and shouted "Rubbish", but most people don't seem to mind - in fact, folk club audiences are definitely getting more open in their tastes,

Of course, I also like traditional blues – I got interested in that from hanging around the Streatham Swing Shop, where I used to go with Dave at the time he was into trad jazz. I met Tony McPhee there, and it was he who first introduced me to the work of Memphis Minnie, who I have always thought was fantastic. Those old records suffer from surface noise, but I don't seem to hear it. I suppose a good analogy is meditation, where you have a mantra to repeat, and you don't hear any other things going on around you. With those records, I only hear the bits I want to hear – the scratches aren't noticeable.

I first went to watch the music in the Stones/Yardbirds era, and in fact I occasionally sat in and sang with the Yardbirds."

THE FUTURE:

"As I say, I hope the next record will be more electric, which gives a far wider scope. Perhaps I'll do a bit of singing with my brother, as a duo - maybe even doing those Everly things I mentioned. Really, I'm only interested in the music; the business side of it just does not worry me. I'll only do the things I want to do". John.

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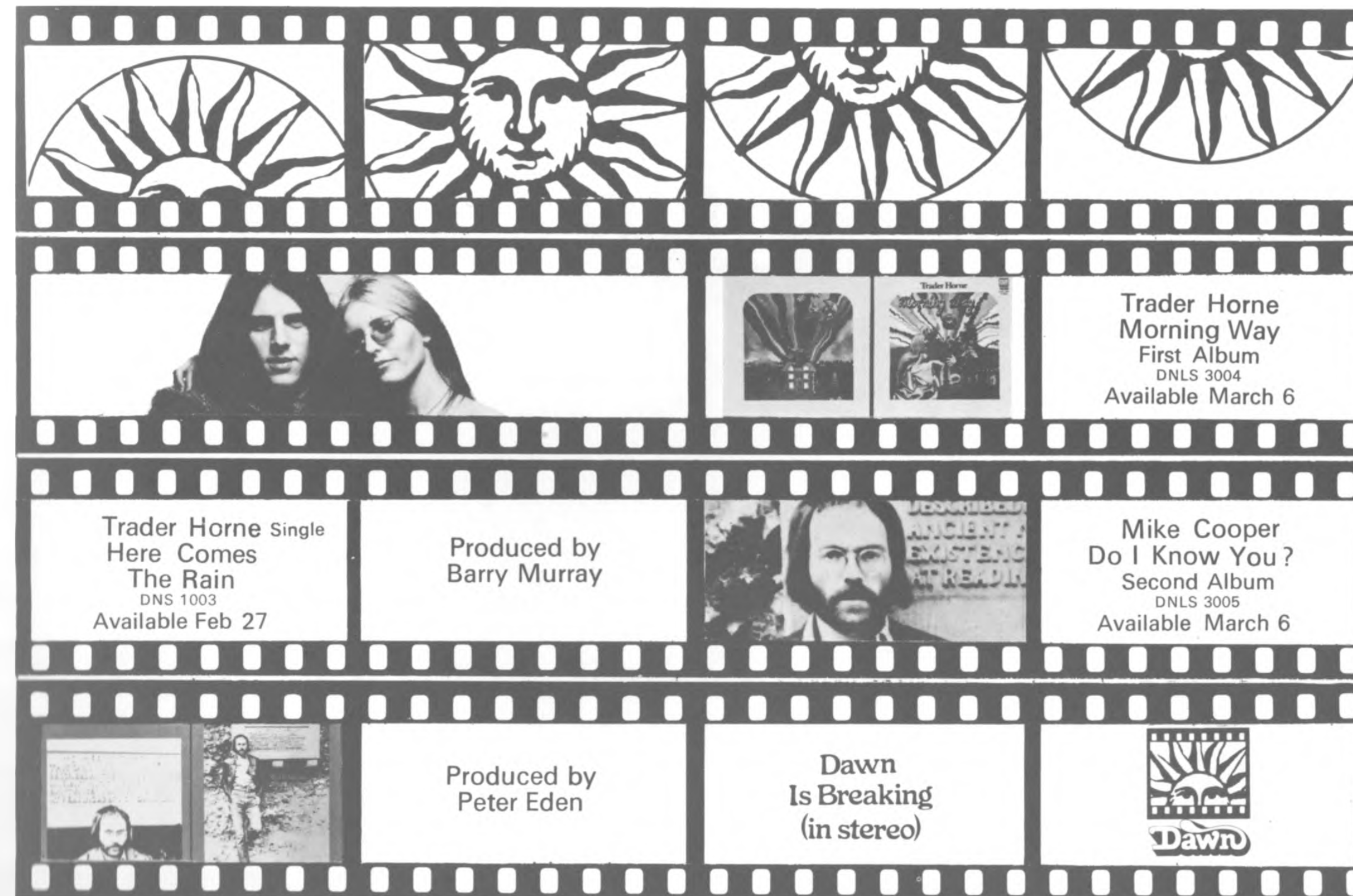
RUS



ON CBS



THE SOUND OF THE SEVENTIES



SKIN ALLEY



CLEARWATER
PRODUCTIONS



The Flock

JAZZ ROCK!?

It doesn't seem long ago that John Lennon was putting down jazz as being boring and of no account, and pop musicians generally (in their more articulate moments) were claiming "jazz is dead". This sort of shouting went on a great deal in 1968/1969, and yet at the Charles Lloyd, Archie Shepp, Ornette Coleman and Roland Kirk appearances, I noticed a great many well known pop figures, including the odd Beatle, apparently enjoying the wake. Strange, therefore, to notice how everybody is rushing to get on the jazz/rock scene; and the presence of one or two jazz musicians on an album is now regarded by many as a proof of a progressive and open attitude to music. All of a sudden jazz is alive again and has a positive commercial value; but with that recurring and disastrous tendency to flog any new thing to death, the pop music world has seized on jazz as the latest magic ingredient to titillate the jaded palate of your pop consumer. And when the possibilities of jazz have been exhausted by every one shot wonder teeny bopper group in the country, someone will discover that John Wesley's hymns have a good sound and we'll be in for a double dose of what Ian (in ZZ 10) is like to call 'Godrock'.

The hard fact is that jazz didn't die, nor has it been revived by its recent discovery by rock musicians. Of course, many jazz musicians are now finding themselves even more in demand as session men (and good luck to them)...but this isn't new; Ronnie Scott and Tony Crombie were among the orig-

inal 'Steelemen' supporting Tommy Steele, and gawd knows how many jazzmen have ghosted for pop groups in recording studios. No. Jazz can survive without rock...it's a minority taste, and, while musical divisions remain, it will always be so, I believe.

The current interest in a fusion of jazz and rock was, I suppose, sparked off mainly by the first Blood Sweat & Tears LP, and then followed Chicago, with Chapter Three and Keef Hartley heading the British new wave. But pop music has always been eclectic and has used (and simplified) any suitable musical influence available. After all, Fats Domino had a minor reputation as a jazz/blues pianist long before he struck oil with his simple and repetitive R&B piano style, and who could blame him for forsaking a bum living as a jazz musician for the shark-skin suit and hairstraightener life of a 50s pop star. And if pop as we now know it started in the mid fifties with rock'n'roll, then its roots are similar to those of jazz. For, particularly at this moment, with an evident and genuine rock revival going on, the gospel and blues basis of Western pop music has rarely been more obvious. Since gospel music and blues are also at the root of jazz, it's hardly surprising that there appears to be a coming together of the two forms. There is another factor at work though, and that has come about because of the dedication and skill of many musicians working in rock music - these musicians are no longer content to prop up an outfront singer, and now demand the time and space for extended and im-

provised solos. A pronounced beat, improvised solos, gospel and blues roots - isn't this music essentially jazz? And if it isn't, what's the difference?

Well, one difference is in instrumentation - but this is becoming less, as more jazz musicians use electric bass and electric guitar (Miles Davis' current band for example), and anyway, it was a jazz musician, Charlie Christian, who's electric guitar work in the early 40s is the root of all electric guitar style. Now that bands like Blood Sweat & Tears are using brass, there is effectively no difference in instrumentation either. But there IS a difference as far as I am concerned - I can still hear Miles Davis and recognise, for all his current obvious rock influences, that what I'm listening to is jazz. Just as I can listen to BS&T or any of the other jazz/rock combinations, and hear a rock band with a bit of jazz influenced brass section work laid on over the top of what is predominantly and monotonously a rock beat.

The other contributory difference is a cultural one and it's to do with the packaging, presentation and milieu surrounding rock music, which is completely different from that surrounding jazz. I can't help feeling that most jazz tinged rock bands are still wedded to their large and lucrative audiences, and will never jettison the rock beat which allows them to keep at least one foot in the pop music camp. Jazz chucked out that sort of beat in the 1939/40 Bop revolution, and since then the music has become freer and freer - discarding in turn the melody, and then the chord sequence, until the music is either modal (based on one or two chords and a row of notes, which was John Coltrane's great contribution), or completely free of apparent structure (as in bands like Archie Shepp's and Ornette Coleman's). Jazz isn't submerged in a great vat of publicity and sensationalism as is rock, and is less subject to the whims of fashion. Currently jazz is going through a marvellous regenerative period with lots of fine new musicians coming up, whose ears are open to ALL that's happening on the music scene. Musicians like Gary Burton, Mike Westbrook, John Surman and the ageless Miles Davis are recording and playing beautiful free music which I'm sure would be a revelation to many rock fans if they could only be persuaded to open out a bit.

Already many musicians are refusing to

categorize their music, but while some record sleeves and publicists continue to eulogise their artist's 'successful fusion of jazz/rock', they must expect a critical response to what they're doing. To my ears, Blood Sweat & Tears, Chicago, Ten Wheel Drive, Keef Hartley, etc, are among the greatest bores on the scene - drop the needle on any track on any record, and you can be forgiven for believing it's still the same band playing. Stodgy drumming and bass playing, interjecting chords from the brass section, lead guitarists playing their currently fashionable licks, and a screaming singer doing his best to sound 'coloured' - if musical labels still have any meaning then this sort of music has got nothing to do with anything that's happening in jazz at the moment. The praise that has been heaped on such bands seems entirely mindless to me - it's as though the fact that a few young jazz musicians can actually play brass instruments has deafened the critics to how little the musicians have to say. The music is so unadventurous; it's as much formula music as a Ray Conniff album... even the latest Butterfield Blues Band LP seems to have dropped into the formula; and some of the tracks are indescribably bad on practically every count. To some extent then, these bands are victims of their own publicity; the most one can say for them is that they are musically competent and they can play their own instruments.

Another mannerism that is being done to death, is the addition of Latin/Afro/Cuban percussion instruments to produce a sort of jazz samba beat. Santana, a much vaunted American band, have produced an LP of this sort of music, and after two or three tracks the whole thing becomes a formula - it's a shame because they are nice to listen to in small doses. In fact, listening to the vast number of records that Pete has obtained to help me with this piece, it strikes me that very few bands are good enough to sustain a whole LP. All the bands I've been playing to death here, have produced individually rewarding tracks but too often fall back on blues structures which are so familiar that you know exactly what every musician is going to say before he does it.

I know, of course, that the above criticisms could be applied to many jazz groups, and if I were doing a piece on jazz I would be equally harsh. What I'm getting down to is that if the current breach of

the barricades between jazz and rock is to add up to anything more than a passing phase, then it is worthy of some realistic criticism. And, despite all that I've said, I can visualise a time when jazz musician and rock musician are outdated terms and a mainstream modern music emerges, which is entirely free and open to all influences. At the moment we are a long way off, but there are some nice things happening.

Manfred Mann's Chapter Three LP, about which I have strong reservations, nevertheless is both ambitious and adventurous and Manfred's own compositions are good. It's spoilt for me by Mike Hugg's singing and just being plain dull in parts. East Of Eden's 'Snafu' has already been widely praised and it's miles more adventurous than the American jazz/rock bands. It's got some excellent things on it, but I've never been gone too much on filling out an LP with previous tracks run backwards and given a different title - in my old fashioned way I think it's a bit of a con. Even so, the band is full of ideas and remarkably free at times, with some nice flutes and violin.

The best American record I've heard is by Flock, and they really are something. A seven piece band who have achieved complete unity of sound and intent, and must have listened to so much music. 'Introduction' is a standout and features some wild violin from Fred Glickstein and on all tracks they have managed to use tenors and trumpet in a completely integrated way. Their music is occasionally quite beautiful and has managed to fuse many more influences than just jazz and rock.

But of all the bands I've been listening to, my favourite is a quite outstanding LP by Taste, 'On

the boards'. This little Irish band consisting of bass, drums and lead guitar doubling alto and harmonica is really so good that I can hardly believe it. They have a strong, unfashionable, British R&B sound at the root of their work, but on top of this they have a most amazing jazz sense and a very tight sound. The drummer, John Wilson, has the ability to break out of the confines of rock drumming at will, and with bassist Richard McCracken, lays down a most beautiful smooth rhythm for Rory Gallagher to improvise over. Gallagher seems to me a most exciting musician - equally at home on alto or guitar, he is never flashy but always confident and musically adventurous. They seem one of the few bands around able to improvise at length around one chord, and they really know how to use volume. There are faults - Gallagher sometimes tends to meander and lose himself a bit, and the bass patterns could be more adventurous - but overall the band really achieves a successful fusion between R&B and jazz influences, and some of the tunes they play are great. It's fine to see that the record is selling well, and this suggests that the desertion of the predominating rock beat does not necessarily precipitate a desertion of fans.

It should be obvious from this article that my own taste in music lies much more in the direction of jazz than rock, and it's worth stating that many jazz musicians are lending an ear to rock. If you are interested in the possibilities of jazz/rock fusions then it's worth listening to the two most recent Miles Davis albums, Dreamweaver by Charles Lloyd, anything by the Gary Burton Quartet, and the recent recordings of Roland Kirk - these should bend your ears a bit. Jeff Cloves.



TASTE

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Yes folks, it's competition time!
 We had originally planned to have an article on Steve Stills, who is currently in the country recording up to 12 hours a day. However, we could not get to him in time, so instead we've got this veritabily amazing Crosby Stills Nash & Young quiz!
 Send your entries in, and we'll give a copy of their new album to the 3 people who answer most questions correctly - so put your name and address in the margin somewhere. The answers, the winners, and an article will appear next month.

- 1 Which group was Dallas Taylor previously in?

- 2 What was the name of the bass player in the same group?

- 3 Which studio was Greg Reeves a session man for?

- 4 Who is peering through the door on the back of the Crosby Stills & Nash LP?

- 5 What term do they use to describe their acoustic music?

- 6 Who played bass on the first CS&N album?

- 7 Why wasn't Nash credited with any contribution to the LP?

- 8 Which of them is called Willie by the other?

- 9 What is Joni Mitchell's connection with the group?

- 10 Which studio was CS&N recorded in?

- 11 What does Harvey Brooks have to do with CS&N?

- 12 Which member played in The Beefeaters long ago?

- 13 What is the name of Neil Young's own backing group?

- 14 In which group did this backing group previously play?

- 15 Who is Stills' song 'Sulte: Judy Blue Eyes' about?

- 16 Which member of the Grateful Dead guests on the new CSN&Y LP?

- 17 Who produced the first Springfield LP?

- 18 Who produced the last Springfield LP?

CROSBY, STILLS, NASH & YOUNG

- 19 What was the first Buffalo Springfield single?

- 20 Who wrote it?

- 21 Where were the Springfield based?

- 22 When the Springfield broke up, who kept on with the same name for his new band?

- 23 Which Springfielders went into Pogo?

- 24 How many numbers on Last Time Around did Stills write?

- 25 How many did Young write on B S Again?

- 26 In which Canyon does Young live?

- 27 Apart from BS, and CS&N LPs, which other albums has Stills been on?

- 28 Who replaced Crosby in the Byrds?

- 29 Which Crosby songs has the Airplane recorded?

- 30 Why did Crosby leave the Byrds?

- 31 What was the last Byrds LP he was on?

- 32 How is Crosby connected with Joni Mitchell?

- 33 Which of the others did Nash meet first?

- 34 What was the last Hollies single Nash was on?

- 35 Was Nash on 'Hollies sing Dylan'?

- 36 Where does Nash come from? (banal question)

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San Francisco Today

Our San Franciscan sound fanatic, Alan Lord, wrote this just before he left to visit the city last month.

Anyone who has recently visited the West Coast assures me that San Francisco will be an anti-climax. It's true that on the face of it, the ingredients which made the city such a powerful musical force have become somewhat added by time, but it does seem that the recent depressed situation is coming to an end.

When the 'boom' started in 1966, San Francisco had one record company of any importance. This was Fantasy Records, with its subsidiary Galaxy (for R&B) and its pop label Scorpio. The company was best known for its jazz recordings (Dave Brubeck, for example) and albums by Lenny Bruce. On the pop side, they had a group called The Goliwogs, which time and John Fogerty were to change to Creedence Clearwater Revival.

Arhoolie, a blues and folk label, were (and still are) based in Berkeley, but it never ventured into rock. Similarly, Takoma Records, also in Berkeley, kept to blues and guitar albums - especially by Robbie Basho and John Fahey, who, with Ed Denson (Country Joe & the Fish's manager) also owned the label.

Apart from a shortage of recording companies there was also a shortage of independent producers and studios. During the peak of the San Francisco madness, Frank Werber (who produced the Kingston Trio) was operating from Columbus Towers and producing a large amount of unreleased material by the original 'Frisco bands. He produced The Sons of Champlin for Verve which resulted in one single release and an unissued album, a duo called Blackburn and Snow and a jazz-rock group called The Mystery Trend who also had singles released on Verve. Werber's Trident productions were paying retainers to most of the bands including an improvisational comedy trio called the Congress of Wonders (who have not yet had any kind of record released), who are now signed to Fantasy.

Golden State Recorders, helmed by engineer Leo de Gar Kulka was one of the most utilised studios in the bay area with such notables as Quicksilver Messenger Service, Sons of Champlin and Mad River using their facilities. Their most successful foray into production was an album by The Other Half on Acta (a division of Dot Records). The Other Half album is due to disappear from America's record stores any day now and is currently getting harder to find. If good, unsuited rock-band music is your bag this album is worth a listen.

As we enter the 1970's the business side of the San Francisco rock scene is a great deal more healthy. Every facility for recording and releasing an album is now available in the city. The studio situation is constantly improving and sixteen track facilities are available at Wally Heider's and Pacific High Recording. The latter is managed by ex-Charlatan bassist Richard Olsen.

There are now three important labels based in San Francisco. Fantasy, the longest established, has now added a four piece country rock group to

their small roster of artistes who rejoice in the name of Clover. Their first album (Clover - Fantasy 8395) has recently been released in the States and is an extremely enjoyable album. Also due soon is the first album by The Congress of Wonders, and the fifth album by the prolific Creedence Clearwater Revival. Fantasy has also signed an out-of-town group called Parrish Hall. The label has been taking a great deal of care over its signings and have even gone as far as recording an album by Berkeley's notorious Frumius Bandersnatch before deciding that they did not want the group.

In any story or report on San Francisco music the name of Bill Graham is never very far away and even though the fate of Fillmore West is currently in the balance, Bill Graham still has many projects underway. He, along with record producer David Robinson, has started two record labels and a publishing company to run alongside the Millard agency division of the Fillmore operation. Robinson has been involved almost as long as Graham in the bay area music scene, producing the first three albums of Moby Grape and albums by Taj Mahal.

Graham's record labels have been kept separate by distribution deals with the two major companies involved in contemporary music in the States today. The Fillmore label was attached to Columbia (CBS here) and the San Francisco label is distributed by Atlantic. So far three local acts have been released - two on Fillmore and one on San Francisco. On purely commercial terms the San Francisco release has been the most successful featuring a nine-piece soul rock group Cold Blood with girl singer Lydia Pense. The group is currently on the charts with a revival of the Stax classic "You Got Me Hummin'" from their first album (Cold Blood - San Francisco SD 200). The two Fillmore releases have been interesting if not very memorable featuring recordings by the ex-Butterfield Band guitarist Elvin Bishop (Pigboy Crabshaw) and his band and the very much improved Aum trio with their second album "Resurrection". The first album by Aum (Blues-vibes, on the London distributed Sire label) was by all standards a disaster and some months ago was available in certain US record stores marked down to \$1.99.

The Fillmore operation has spent some \$140,000.00 on recording and auditioning local talent and according to Robinson, have come up with "amazingly diverse results". Some of the results of the many hours of recording time are going to be issued as a cut-price sampler on a label tentatively called Guerilla. This is a non profit-making venture and any proceeds from the album are ploughed back into their recording activities.

Through their efforts the two labels have signed other new groups who have recordings available in the near future; among these are Lamb, an acoustic group, Joy of Cooking, a four-piece from Berkeley, and the amazing Commander Cody and his Lost Planet Airmen, who are leading the current country boom in the bay area.

The Millard agency too is going

from strength to strength, and now has some powerful bands on their books, the best known of which is Santana, who have just received a gold disc for sales of over a million on their first album on Columbia. In addition to Santana, Millard handles It's a Beautiful Day (Columbia), The Sons (of Champlin) (Capitol), The Elvin Bishop Group (Fillmore), Joy of Cooking (Fillmore), Catfish (a New York Group) (Epic), Aum (Fillmore), Cold Blood (San Francisco) and Country Weather, a country-jazz-rock band who are currently unsigned. Bill Graham has been good for the San Francisco scene and it seems that this situation will continue for some time to come.

Recently, one of the pioneers of San Francisco rock recording has returned to record production. It was during 1966 that Tom Donahue, who was and still is an important force in FM radio, started the Autumn label with hits by the Beau Brummels, Bobby Freeman, the Tikis and the Vegetables, plus the very first recording by Grace Slick and the Great Society. Unfortunately, the company's recording costs proved to be greater than its revenue, and when it became bankrupt the contracts were taken over by Warner/Reprise. The early Autumn recordings can now be found on an album called 'San Francisco Roots' on the LA based Vault label. Donahue is currently recording a new rock band called the Fast Bucks for Kama Sutra, and is also involved with the London/San Francisco conglomeration Silver Metre (on the same label).

A newcomer to the Golden Gate recording scene is Studio 10 Productions who have their own label with the same name. The label has so far released three albums by local talent; the most interesting of which is a trio called Day Blindness. The company president and producer is thirty year old Tom Preuss, who in the past has managed Quicksilver Messenger Service, and he is currently running the label on a co-operative basis doing 50-50 deals with the artistes signed to the label. The Day Blindness album is not a great success but does show promise for the future. It is vital for the local music scene that enterprises such as Studio 10 succeed, but they do need support.

This then is the San Francisco scene as it stands today, with new bands emerging every month. My forthcoming foray into the great city should be something of an eyeopener but at the moment we can assume that the following bands are working solidly in the city: Children of Mu; Country Kin; Grand Canyon; Mendelbaum, who are handled by the owners of the Matrix club; Sherwood, recently signed to Philips; Commander Cody & his Lost Planet Airmen; The New Riders of the Purple Sage (Jerry Garcia and Phil Lesh's country band); DeLuxe Shag; Bronze Hog; Fast Bucks, signed to Kama Sutra; Rhythm Dukes, an offshoot of Moby Grape; Joy of Cooking; Clover; South Bay Experimental Flash; Linn County; Pyewacket; Maggie's Farm; Littlejohn, formerly Littlejohn's Blues Band; Lazarus; A.B. Skhy; Flamin' Groovies; Devil's Kitchen; The Cleveland Wrecking Company; and the jazz based Fourth Way.

Alan Lord.



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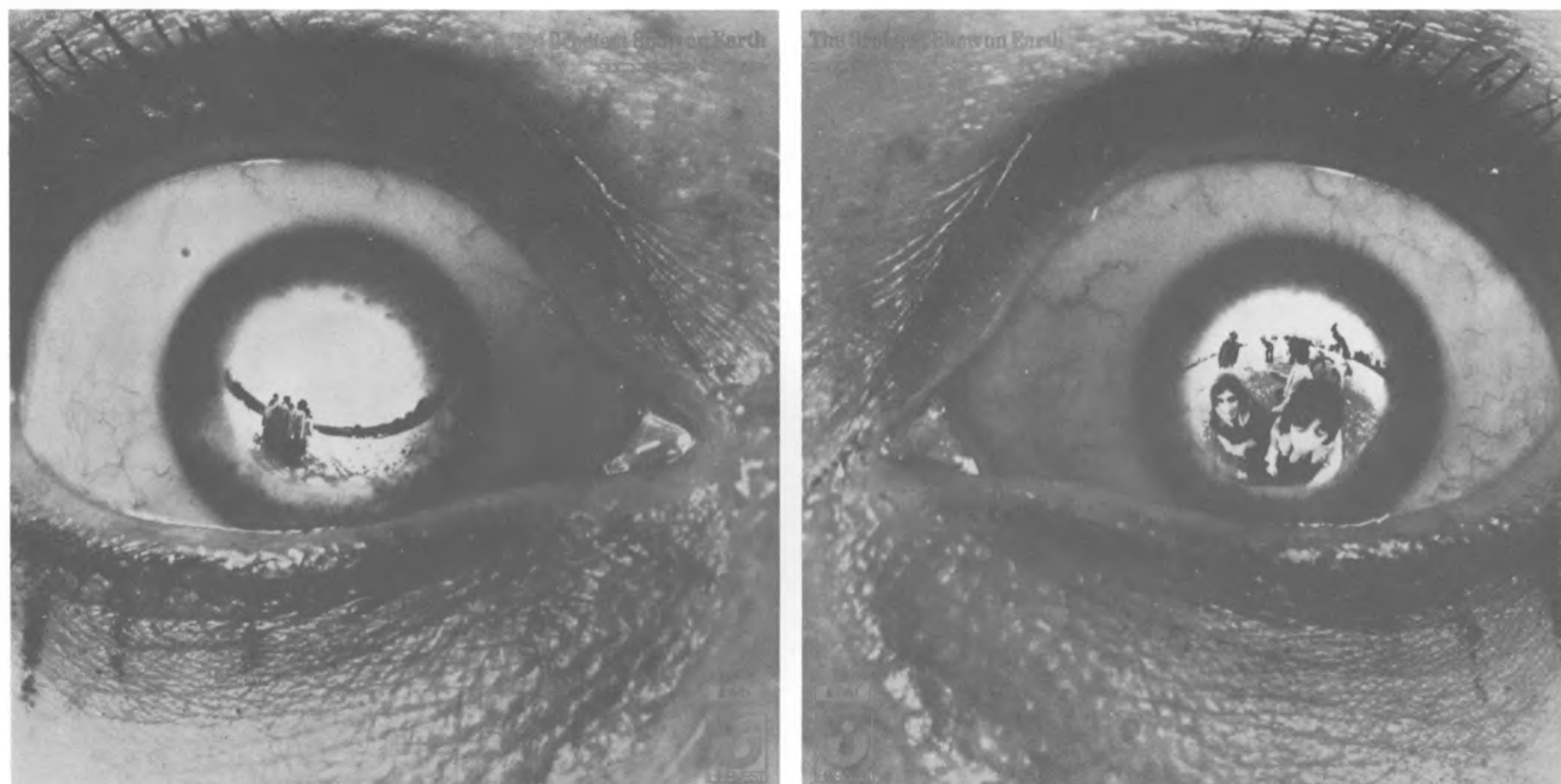
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It's Alright Ma, It's Only Changin'



Some years ago, wishing to contact John Renbourn, I rang Cecil Sharp House, the bastion of British folk music, and asked if someone could give me his phone number.

"John who?"

"Renbourn".

"No sorry, I've never heard of him but it's club night tonight - I'll ask if anyone else knows him".

No-one did. Even then the folk world was in splinters - the traditionalists viewed the newcomers with more than a little distrust and distaste... folk music was 'of the people' - but that didn't mean that conventions could be stretched to allow you to write your own songs. Compared with today though, things were simple; we knew what folk was. Folk was being down and out, mine disasters, sheep shearing in Australia, jumping freights, and not getting work because you were of the wrong racial category. Folk was.

Folk was also roll necks, and college scarves, singing choruses, and spilling beer over your neighbour. Folk was.

Today, things are a little different. Folk is Buddha, Nietzsche, Marx, Kerouac, Cm7 instead of just C, key and time changes, and if Cecil Sharp House used to frown at 6 string banjos - and it did - then how must they feel about sitars, celestes, organs, flutes, drums, pianos, and the greatest blasphemy of them all... the electric guitar??? Things have certainly changed. My purpose is not to discuss how these changes came about (some thing to do with Mr Zimmerman perhaps?), but rather to see how various 'folk' art- lates have been edging along the branches

of a fast growing tree and have made use of this greater freedom in their current albums. The word 'folk', of course, has little or no validity since it's a term used today to categorize the uncategorizable - anyone wishing to define the term is more than welcome to the task.

The solo singer is in a difficult predicament - he cannot live by recording - his bread and butter comes from gigs - thus, how is he going to make use of his new found freedom... he can hardly afford to take a backing group around with him from town to town. The result of this anomalous situation is that the electric guitar, the drums, the organ, etc appear in the recording studio and not in the club. Thus the songs have to be able to stand on their own for solo performances and, as a result, the extra instrumentation merely becomes embellishment. The real tragedy of this is that the singer may, for a variety of reasons, be shoved into a limited number of studio sessions (it happens all the time) and simply not have enough hours or experience to make as much use of extra musicians as he perhaps could do.

Ralph McTell is a folksinger. He sings about factory girls sometimes, and poverty, and injustice and loneliness. He is a folksinger. His second LP, 'Spiral Staircase', had two tracks with a string section arranged by Mike Vicars, and both are very nice, but hardly typical of the album. Time passes and more ideas... and now we have a third McTell album - 'My side of your window' - and again we have strings, this time arranged by the omnipresent Tony Visconti. But we also have other instruments - flutes, pianos, etc - on every track, thanks to, among others,

Formerly Fat Harry. This is a much better album altogether - the songs are better and the sound is better... but one is still aware of the music coming through the instrumentation rather than of one compact sound.

If such augmentation gives the impression of being an addition to Ralph McTell's music, then it most certainly seems to be an extension of Mike Chapman's sound on his new album 'Fully Qualified Survivor'. Chapman uses percussion, bass, piano, and electric guitar - no wind instruments - plus cello and violin on the incredible 'Aviator'... a track which must not be missed. The whole album gives an impression of entirety - of a one-ness that few albums of this kind are able to provide. The 'Aviator' track is very intricately instrumented in such a way as to enhance rather than embellish. Altogether, the album is the kind of thing you just keep on playing - turning it over and over and over. I think Mike Chapman has made much better use of his freedom than Ralph McTell has - but both albums most certainly have their merits.

Merit is something which Tim Buckley's new album 'Blue Afternoon' just doesn't have. Certainly it is good, but it could have been so much better - the songs, the arrangements, the singing, everything. Any one of the songs would stand up well on its own, but an album made up entirely of such tragic songs as these is bound to give one an impression of absolute melancholy and nothing else... he's been wallowing in a well of self-pity for so long that he seems unable to crawl out even for one song. The sleeve design (which is good) includes 6 photographs of Buckley

vaguely smiling, but going by the songs, the photographer must have been hanging around for a hell of a long time to get them.

Buckley's instrumentation is similar to the Mike Chapman album, but there the similarity ends. Though the instruments may be the same, the use made of them is very different - whereas 'Fully Qualified Survivor' has a nice controlled feel to it, Buckley's musicians are sloppy and, at times, very insensitive. This is not to say that the LP doesn't provide some very interesting sounds, but rather that these rare moments tend to emphasise what the rest of the album could have been.

The most underrated singer of them all is surely Tom Rush. For some years his work has been available on various Elektra albums, singing songs like 'Jelly Roll Baker', 'The Cuckoo', and 'On the road again'. Then came his association with Joni Mitchell's work, his incredible performances at the Cambridge Folk Festivals, and the 'Circle Game' LP. His reputation was made - but only within a very small field. Elektra, feeling they couldn't do enough for him, let him go to CBS, who release his new album shortly. I haven't heard this record yet, but one song from it is available on their new double album sampler. This track, called 'Driving Wheel' is certainly the best thing I have heard since 'Lay Lady Lay'. It starts very simply with 4/4 arpeggio guitar and piping organ and ends with brass, electric guitar, slide guitar etc. etc., owing more to 'Hey Jude' than any folk song (or is 'Hey Jude' a folk song?). I could enthuse about this track for several hours (and pray that it exemplifies the quality of the entire album) but the best thing for you to do would be to listen to it for yourself. The Sampler is called 'Fill your head with Rock' and includes work by many CBS artists (except the amazing Ray Conniff and Tony Bennett) ... there is a very pleasing song by Trees, and an amusing little song by Al Stewart, complete with double speed guitar accompaniment. (I would have thought that CBS could have found a more representative example of Stewart's work than this - it is very reminiscent of what happened to Roy Harper on the Rock Machine LP).

While it may be difficult for the solo singer to make use of other instru-



ments the folk group has very few problems. If you want a flute on a particular song then it's just a question of learning to play the thing. (Remember what happened to that Jugband/Bluegrass Group The Incredible String Band?) The Strawbs are an example of this kind of group. I remember seeing them as the Strawberry Hill Boys as long ago as 1964 - they sang real folk songs then - wild rovers, jugs of punch and the union forever - the kind of songs you sung the choruses of and stamped your feet to. Times have changed - on their new album 'Dragonfly' they use electric guitars, wind instruments and piano. So do Jan Dukes de Grey on their new album 'Sorcerers'. In spite of this, and the fact that both bands owe something to Tyrannosaurus Rex and the String Band, they have very little in common. The Strawbs seem to concentrate on vocal harmonies while Jan Dukes de Grey are more involved in their instrumentation. Their management thinks that 'they will eventually reach the same heights as Donovan/Moody Blues' etc. etc., and they have now been augmented by a third musician - Denis Conlon - and so their sound should be even more complete than the album which is already beautifully polished without being too precise, and sincere without being over intense. I was a little disappointed by the Strawbs offering - the vocal lines were very interesting, the instrumentation, though not as adventurous as the 'Sorcerers' was certainly most pleasing to the ear, and yet, for me, the whole thing was rather spoilt by one song - the 10 minute long 'The vision of the lady of the lake'. I didn't like the tune, and I

most certainly didn't like the poetry. It may be alright to change the length of lines from stanza to stanza - the String Band do it all the time - but one should also change the length of the melody lines rather than try to cram all the words into too small a space. I can quite well imagine that this song could be very impressive when sung in concert - it has some very interesting ideas behind it - but on record it just doesn't work. This isn't to say that the album doesn't have some very enjoyable sounds - 'Josephine for better or for worse' is quite excellent. Pleasant acoustic guitar interlaced with strings and electric guitar around some very pleasing lyrics. The whole album is well arranged and the performance seems well polished. Whether or not you like this album, it is certainly well done.

The 'Sorcerer' LP consists of 18 songs - consequently they are all rather short. All have a pleasing vitality and because Jan Dukes de Grey are used to playing with such a vast selection of instruments they are able to produce a variety of different moods.

So the field of folk music is widening - most kinds of instruments and most kinds of songs are accepted by most kinds of audiences, but it will be a long time before Dylan and Donovan concerts are listed in the English Folk Song and Dance Society diary of events along side the Pace Egging and Well Dressing.



Mike Simmons.

- 'Sorcerers'... by Jan Dukes de Grey
Nova SDN 8
- 'Dragonfly'... by The Strawbs
A&M AMLS 970
- 'Fully Qualified Survivor'... Mike Chapman
Harvest SHVL 764
- 'Fill Your Head With Rock'... by various
CBS SPR 39/40
- 'Blue Afternoon'... by Tim Buckley
Straight STS 1060
- 'My Side Of Your Window'... Ralph McTell
Transatlantic TRA 209.



TRADER HORNE

When I first heard about it, the idea of two artistes with such varying backgrounds as Judy Dyble and Jackie McAuley combining to form a successful musical partnership stretched my credulity. Judy I remembered as being sort of small and frail and, well, feminine, I suppose. (The arrogant haughtiness with which she looks off the sleeve of the old Polydor Fairport LP doesn't sum her up at all). Meanwhile, Jackie used to be with Them.... terrifying bunch of wild Celts, rough and ready, with music to match. (But, there again, look how Van Morrison has calmed down). Now, seeing and hearing them as Trader Horne takes the strain off the imagination, and leaves you comparing their performance with a placid film - something like Le Bonheur or Elvira Madigan, where the camerawork is graceful and subdued. Their magnificent album sleeve, by Paul Winter, gets hold of the fairy tale forms and gentle magic of their music.

It was Tyger Hutchings, former Fairport bassist and now with Steel Eye Span, who first introduced Judy to 'bombing up and down the M1 in freezing vans'.

"One evening, when I was sitting in Alexandra Palace, a little man called Tyger Hutchings came along, and I told him I didn't like Eric Clapton. And he said, 'Oh really?... you're mad. Would you like to join a group?' So I joined what became the Fairport... after we'd been an electric folk band, a jug band, a folk group, a blues group, and so on; with names to go with them - like the Electric Dystentary, etc".

"When I left Fairport in May 1968, I worked in a London night club, writing membership cards and things for a few years, and then I met Jackie... and here we are".

If you listen to Top Gear, you'll know who the original Trader Horne is (and if you don't listen to Top Gear, you bloody well ought to), but meanwhile, I was anxious to discover how Jackie McAuley had left the raucous volume of Them behind, and transformed himself into this thing of tenderness and gentility.

He'd originally stopped burning down hay stacks in favour of appreciating music when he was old enough to accept a bit of parental guidance. His mother instilled in him the desire to play the piano, and his old man, who had a travelling show called Mac's Arcadian - the high point of the act occurred when his trousers fell down - gave him a varied education in stringed instruments.

Leaping through stints with skiffle groups and minor rock bands, he joined the new Belfast group Them as organist, backing Van Morrison's voice on all the hits - 'Baby Please Don't Go', 'Here comes the night', 'Gloria' and so on. But in those days, there were even more undesirable elements involved in running music than there are now, and the group ended in disaster... "the total death of everything I'd ever dreamed of. Managers, agents, promoters and super-heavies destroyed a great group".

Penniless, he began to wander through Europe, through North Africa, and through a wide range of stimulants and euphorants, but succeeded only in getting more and more screwed up. When he went on the dole, they refused to register him as a musician and classified him as a labourer.





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"Eventually, I went to Dublin, messed around, wrote some poetry, wrote generally just for the sake of writing ... there was nothing else I could do. I tried various jobs, but couldn't fit in, because I'd always been on the road - ever since I'd been born. I tried playing in various groups, but I just couldn't take that scene anymore ... All the hassles - the drummer leaves and you've got to find another - the 3cwt van full of 3,000 tons of equipment breaks down on the M1 and you have to push it for 10 miles. All I wanted to do was play my music, and meeting Judy, gave me the opportunity to do so."

Last month, Dawn Records released their album, which they recorded last year.

"The songs are those which we were writing before we met each other, and since then we've obviously changed and developed. That was just a little tiny bit of time in our lives, and the LP is just a sort of reminder".

"Morning Way is all about a little man who used to sit on the end of my bed in the morning and bring me cups of tea and sparrows to heal", said Judy, describing one of the two songs she wrote. "Velvet to Atone is about people I've known who were a bit nasty".

Jackie's songs weave through children's fantasies and personal feelings, but he has reservations about the album. As opposed to the simplicity of their stage act, "everybody went crazy when it came to the record ... They got a 100,000 violins, harpsichords, organs, conga drums and everything else. The album's a commercial one, and we hope it'll help to establish our name, but the next one should be so much better".

In his group days, Jackie found that mistakes were lost in the volume and playing was relatively easy when you had the electricity board behind you, but now, playing as they do on an acoustic level, he is much more aware of his nervous tension when they begin each set. Their reception by the audience is much more important to them. "They're generally sympathetic, but it's still a psychological thing - there are just two of us in front of a huge audience, but by the end of the set it's generally

OK. But we really are often very scared - it's just like meeting people really ... you can't just get talking to someone you've only met two minutes ago; you can't often build an immediate rapport".

When I saw them at ICA earlier in March, the small auditorium was helpful, creating the intimate environment that their unloud music needs, and it succeeded. A broken guitar lead had caused half an hour's delay and the audience was getting vaguely restless, but as soon as the music got under way, any hostility caused by the wait was turned into respect for their musical competence. And the genuineness of their shy uncertainty as they began made people listen hard, hoping that their obvious attentiveness would contribute to a good atmosphere.

After listening to the album it was pleasant to see each instrument while you heard it. Besides the autoharp and piano, Judy plays the recorder, two recorders at once in one number. Only two musicians back them, a double bassist who is also vibes player when called upon, and a guitarist who pads softly across the stage to alternate recorder with guitar. Jackie's twelve stringer in combination with Judy's autoharp produces a Richard Farina type sound at times, but before you know where you are he had a tambourine in one hand and a flute in the other.

To describe their music as "contemporary folk" is inadequate - though their lyrics are often rooted in the present, their sound owes as much to the period between the reign of Richard the Lionheart and the Italian renaissance as it does to the 50's and beyond. And a suitably versed enthusiast could no doubt give a long exposition of the 20th century jazz influences. The blend of Jackie's flute the recorder, and Judy's voice humming along as a third instrument would be as at home in Robin Hood's greenwood valley as in Ronnie Scott's, yet they never become completely jazz, or anything completely specific. The selection of influences acquires its own character in their hands, with their treatment and their inventiveness.

Their public success will depend largely on how much public ear-time they get. They are a private and personal success already.

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over the top - there's this school of thought which says "Turn everyone on by spiking their drink", but if you're in an environment not conducive to happy thinking it's obvious that you're going to freak. Greg and David Enthoven both had drinks spiked at the Fillmore East. I'd rather everyone was left to what they want to do. But maybe they've got more to get away from. When we were in Detroit, the FBI grabbed a deserter, and the truncheons and guns scared me to death. Almost to death. To see a couple of policemen walking down the street lovingly fondling their truncheons.

Z. But the establishment over there are really getting so shit scared, because the youth revolution is obviously happening before their eyes.

B. Yes, whereas it's more a case of infiltration. You tolerate things and put up with them and work on them slowly over here; you don't have to go so far out. But over there, let's face it, some of the trials are a joke.

Z. It's still just more of an atmosphere over here.

B. Yes, I think the importance of the flower power hippie thing here in England, which is dying in terms of attention to it, and "We are Underground - Up against the wall Motherfuckers" kind of thing, is that a lot of people have adopted the attitudes and aspirations of it, but all doing their thing in a straight environment. I don't really see that anything can be achieved by violent demonstration. But no-one would class Crimso as an Underground group anymore, though the attitudes haven't changed.

Z. What was the reason for the split-up, in a nutshell?

B. Mike and Ian weren't happy with the way things were. America was the catalyst - the pressures were so strong that everything was brought out ... not in an unpleasant or vitriolic way, but you have so much time together in a concentrated way. Mike and Ian didn't like touring and they weren't that happy with the way the music of Crimso was going - I think they enjoyed it, but Ian wanted to get into good-vibe music, whilst Crimso has always been heavy-vibe music. He's more interested in friendly happy music, wouldn't you say Sinfield?

(Pete Sinfield, having appeared, now speaks)

PS. Yes ... it's like Lennon and McCartney. Ian is McCartney, and we're Lennon, whereby Lennon always included that nasty vicious lyric, and McCartney was always sweeter. Ian, for instance, really digs the new Taj Mahal record, because it grooves along and it's sunshiny.

B. Mike is still into Crimso's music, but with him it's the touring thing. He's happier at home. He was on the road for four



years before I met him and I think he's just fed up with it.

Z. But having been managed in this way, and having achieved this success, you could do a Jethro Tull and just play at big halls. Are you still going to do the clubs?

B. Well maybe not the ultra small ones, but we'll do places like the Van Dyke. There are clubs which are good to you, and others which fiddled us first time around, and we won't go back to them. I mean, at one club we were working for a percentage of the door, and the promoter said there were 300 in the place. There must have been over 600 ... a friend of ours turned up and was counting people as they went in and they locked him up.

Z. Right, could you just tell us all about the new album in not more than 50 words?

B. It's going to be a heavy album, a light album, some of it'll take time to get into, it's a lot better than the last one and I dig it all. It's very much King Crimson, a development of the last album, but a little more extreme.

Z. And who's doing what on it?

B. Greg's doing vocals, I'm doing guitars and mellotrons, Mike's on drums, Pete Giles is on bass, Mel Collins is doing the sax, flute and so on, and Keith Tippett is on piano. And the sleeve will be another painting, less horrendous than the other, Tammo de John. It's got 12 faces on it supposedly representing the 12 facets of human behaviour. But if anyone thought the last LP was pretentious, this one will stink!

Andy Dunkley/Pete
Photographs by Richard Di Lello

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A year old!

A year ago, I was still working for a very large Insurance company. Supposedly. In actual fact I was spending a lot of time starting Zigzag, writing articles for American papers, and sniffing around Indica Bookshop, Musicland and other places of interest. I sat on the fence between outrage and normality at work, leaning, so the bosses said, the wrong way. My handing in my notice, to work full time on Zigzag, I suspect preceded my being kicked out by only a few days. The corruption was amazing - don't believe that big companies aren't run on the old school tie/free mason level. Tripe. Say "yes" long enough and you'll succeed in losing your integrity but getting promotion. Say "no" once, and you've had it.

Zigzag No.1, which came out in April last year, was very experimental. A small group of us, Ian, Danny, Rod and I, thought that there might be a demand in England for a rock magazine (Rolling Stone wasn't being printed here at that time), and we thought it might be interesting to try getting one together. We arranged to borrow what seemed to us to be a small fortune, and produced the first issue, which looking back seems pretty dire, but really excited us at the time.

Around issue 4, we ran out of money. We had very few overheads, but advertisers were very dubious about risking their bread, and it was taking longer than we had anticipated to get the income from sales. Several groups - Edgar Broughton Band, the Groundhogs, High Tide and Sweet Slag - offered to play a benefit for us, which was very successful and a wonderfully atmospheric evening. Unfortunately, someone broke a row of wash basins and we had to pay for that, and the Evening Post (which has a fantastic circulation around here) misread Edgar's name off the ad, which deterred a lot of people from coming. So, financially, we made little ... just enough to appease our printers to a small degree.

In October, we had another benefit. The Fairport Convention played the most beautiful set I've ever experienced in my life. It was total magic. Mighty Baby and Soft Cloud were also magnificent and it was another incredible evening.

In December, we put out an issue of 64 pages, plus a big poster. It was a mistake - our ad rates were too low and each copy cost much more than the percentage we were getting from distributors, but by the end of February, we thought that we might be able to start making ends meet. We were wrong. Transmutation, one of our main distributors, went into liquidation owing us over £450. Immediate Records also folded owing us money.

So here we are at the end of our first year, in the same financial plight as we were in at the beginning. But, to introduce a note of optimism, the future looks good. Tomorrow, we hope,

will be our saving grace.

When I packed up working in London, my whole life style changed. I used to read about 3 books a week (I've only read one - "Electric Cool Aid Acid Test", which is a gas - in the last year) in 60 miles a day of stinking commuter deisels, late, cold and stuffed with dead clods. But if I met strange people in those days, I met some stranger ones during the last 12 months. Like the time I visited this very staid record company, and the straight cat pushing their records said to me "We've got some very heavy gear coming out". My brain winced but my head nodded as if to approve his use of 'hip' jargon. He smirked to himself, as if he'd just bridged the generation gap. A while later, I saw the same guy at a press reception, and he was asking someone what sort of music they played. A category monger too! Next time someone asks what sort of music a certain number is, tell him it's 'Tasmanian Plaid Rock' or something... if you tell him with enough conviction and bogus sincerity, he's bound to go away happily.

There are lots of people in progressive pop who don't know what they're talking about. As Zigzag's circulation rises, more and more hypers and hustlers come on the phone to tout their stuff; bogus bonhomie flows from the earpiece like treacle, but faster. (Fortunately, we're too far for them to inflict their persons on us). I mean, we really don't want to do articles on people just because they can afford publicists to pester us. For instance, someone said that we should do an article on this cat, because he knew "all the in people and went to all the in clubs". I couldn't think of a better reason not to bother with the bloke.

On the other hand, I'm not condemning publicists generally. Some are really interested in what they're doing, and I always like to speak to them. Usually, the interested publicists have interesting clients, and the 9-5 bread and butter publicists have rubbish.

Generally, we steer clear of promotion men who threaten to fill our noon stomachs with lavish expenditure. These sort of people can't answer any questions on their artistes, but rely on "fact sheets" which list birthplaces, favourite colours, drinks, parents names etc. but fail to mention any unwholesome relationships with animals, penchants for young boys, complexes, and ugly idiosyncrasies. Which reminds me, my greatest delight would be to publish a magazine devoted solely to things people have told me, but prefaced their words with "for God's sake don't print any of this but ..." That would open a few minds.

Some other observations:.

A lot of companies expect us to review their records, but have never, ever sent us one.

There are a lot of gangsters, crooks, liars and sponging creeps in "the pop biz". We keep away from them.



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