zigzag

2/6 USA 60c MAY No.12

Through a window
Yesterday, today, tomorrow
Space between
Time shows no face

Run shaker life
Universal joint
Most likely you'll go
your way, I'll go mine

Stephen Dolan—
accoustic string bass & electric bass guitar

Mike Carless—
drums, conga & other percussion

Michael Dolan—
various accoustic & electric guitars

Together for their first album
they've made a special record,
seven songs for you to listen to.

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ON WARNER BROS.
WS 1825 STEREO

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it's on A&M...
AMLS 982

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RELEASED MAY 1st

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The importance of not being earnest

The people now using the phrase 'law and order' are people trying to solve a mystery, trying to impose order on a chaos they don't understand. Law and order is a cure, and if you have a specific cure, then logically (they think) there must be a specific malady to apply it to. Some have gone a little further than naming the cure, they have tried to name the malady ... The New Left, Students, Anarchists, Young Revolutionaries, etc, the theory being that once you have found a name for something, that something can then be identified and if it can be identified, then an appropriate remedy can be applied. Nobody is afraid of peaceful demonstrators who walk down the street behind leaders, guided by the police, not disturbing the traffic ... all very predictable, a ready-made sympton hardly even needing a cure, a sympton that fits into an existing channel of behaviour of protest. Nothing to be afraid of.

But things are different now. Attitudes have changed. People have realised how futile it is to use existing channels of protest or action. If you do, you lose your breadth of audience and preach only to the converted. The most ludicrous example of this was one of the anti Springbok protests where the demonstrators were actually diverted into a field, nicely marked "Demonstration Area" where they could march about telling each other what a nasty little regime there was down there in South Africa, stuck in a field like exhibits at an agricultural show.

And this is Law and Order, the right to demonstrate as long as it's unobtrusive, in a quiet corner. This is Law and Order because it all fits, it is all predictable, and it's all more or less miserable and drab. But from the straight point of view, everything is OK if it's predictable; students can do what they like as long as they follow a known pattern, pornography can be acceptable as long as

it's inside the correct binding with the correct captions, violence is OK within the right patterns, always within patterns.

The Edgar Broughton Band don't fit into a convenient pattern, they don't profess a ready-made ideology. That would make them predictable, what they represent would have been 'named' and therefore someone could have 'named' an antidote and they would cease to exist. Edgar's band does not fit into the context of the New Left, or to the left or right of the new or the old left or right ... 'We want to involve people in what we stand for - whatever that is' said Edgar at the Roundhouse. Which, in its paradox, makes more sense than Lennon's words: 'We all want to see the plans'. If you reveal your plans, then someone will sit down and begin to work out a counter plan, and the exercise becomes futile. The Broughton Band hasn't got any consistent and precisely defined plans, except to have an effect, to take those people who come into contact with them through an experience so that when they come out the other side they will feel or think a little different. They want to involve people, if only for a while, involve them in anything, especially confusion, because to struggle out of confusion you have to go by way of thought, and thought is therapeutic. And the experience should be happy.

Norman Mailer gave a fine example of how to avoid getting stuck in existing channels when he ran for nomination for New York Mayor. At an electioneering meeting someone asked him what he, as Mayor, would do if there was another block up of the city because of snow. He answered simply 'I'd piss on it'. He was standing as a politician, but if he had expressed himself predictably, talking about snow ploughs, he would have made no impression. The fact that he was not nominated shows - that, apart from Pete Stampfel and a few others, New Yorkers lack a sense of humour.

Similarly the famed Ken Kesey, US acid pioneer, invited to address an anti Vietnam war meeting saw too many parallels between the protesters themselves and the military mentality they were supposed to hate, so he got up on stage, blasted out Home Home on the Range on his harmonica in complete irrelevance and said: "Just look at it, look at the war and turn your backs and say ... Fuck it". Not a positive recommendation or a serious one, but a reaction to a situation where overearnestness was taking the fun out of life. A loud laugh makes a hell of a lot more noise and has more effect than a mournful whimper. Present on that occasion were Country Joe and The Fish, who later recorded "I feel like I'm fixing to die rag" (which Country Joe himself sang at the Chicago instant non returnable conspiracy trial), a happy and rollicky noise which makes the listener a lot more receptive than a funereal dirge.

The Broughton Band's "American Boy Soldier" started off as rather a serious sort of song, an openly ironical comment on the Vietnam war. But one night it went off the rails, they messed up some lines and it became a more variable song, one which can be tailored for the occasion and mood. When Edgar announces that it is the next song, there is always a cheer, expectation. The last version I heard included the tragic event of a peaceful vietnamese shot dead by the American Boy Soldier, shot dead in the middle of that most peaceful, non-agressive act - masturbation. Said Edgar 'Think of the devasting psychological effect on the soldier who fired the bullet'. A serious song about blood wouldn't hold half the interest. Life is a fun scene, there's fun in everything, and if politics is gonna get any attention from the Broughton Band, it has to be essentially a fun scene. Edgar says: "Everything is semi-serious, pure comedy is semi-serious, the more serious it is, the more funny it is, and the more serious it is". So The Edgar Broughton Band Political Foundation is a label, an actual piece of paper which you can stick on people's backs, on walls and windows. It is a non foundation, a non plan. Only politicians have plans. The foundation is an anti-political political foundation, tied-up with a non-voting non-election campaign to promote a complete lack of interest in the murk of politics.

The classical Broughton Band fun event, the one that convinced them of the validity and feasibility of non-violent destructive action, was the 'guerilla lorry' incident in their home town of Warwick (mentioned in ZZ wanderings of Oct). Their efforts to arrange a free festival in Warwick were hampered and finally blocked by obtuse attitudes on the part of the town council. Rather than just accept the council's decision as an irresistible force majeure they hired a lorry fitted with an electric generator to power their amps and in the centre of Warwick played some very nice and loud music to a thousand people, who had the incidental side effect of blocking the city centre for three hours. It was a happy, meaningful and non-violent event and should the need arise for repeat performances in other parts of the country, no doubt the band will oblige if the circumstances are fitting. With variations and surprises, of course. And summertime is approaching, when people want to be out in the open, as near as possible to good loud music and interesting events. If a short-notice, unpublicised event in Warwick in the lethargy of autumn can raise a thousand heads, imagine the effect of a well-planned and publicised event in some key London thoroughfare on a Saturday afternoon and in support of a worthy cause.

Asked about South African cricketers they said "You can't smash the South Africans' match because this time it's going to be too heavily guarded, just like you can't paint slogans on the House of commons ... but we can say "it's obvious that we can't get rid of you bastards, but we're bastards too and you can't get rid of us" - we play another game, not their game". But it wouldn't surprise me in the summer to read their name in the news in connection with disrupted all-white cricket.

Of all the bands I've seen in action, [illegible]'s is probably the one which is most [illegible] communication with the audience, [illegible] introspective ego-[illegible] audience. Their sets usually [illegible] audience indistinguishable [illegible] becomes a st[illegible] excorci[illegible] [illegible] so that the song would be authentic and effective on record - which of course never just [illegible] band's second single).

The mere phrase 'Out demons out' has been causing a lot of puzzlement and worry to some people in official posts - in places as far apart as

Birmingham and Belgium. The slogan has appeared on walls, roadsigns, doors and windows. Local council officials, questioned by the press, elaborate various theories about excorcism and black magic; obviously they haven't heard of the Broughton Band yet. When I asked Edgar what he knew about this scandalous daubing of public buildings he just smiled and said how he approved of people freely expressing themselves. Out demons out is not a political slogan, and it's nothing to do with magic.....it's positive and applies to straights and freaks alike - whatever your demons are, what is more innocent than saying to yourself; "whatever could bug me.... out with it".

Yes, Demons can be external or internal. They might be Greek Colonels, South African fascists, power hungry politicians, over zealous officers of the law, soviet jackboots, you name it. Or on a more personal level, alcohol hang-ups, laziness, greed, anything that bugs in fact. If you wake up each morning and ask yourself which demons you can feel the presence of, and decide to cast them out, then the day goes better.

Although 'Out Demons Out' is not magical, the group has more mysticism about it than you'd expect from their solid stevadore-like presence on stage. They are very sensitive to the vibrations of the occasion and are always aware of how they're going across. Most satisfying are the times when an atmosphere is built up that is very definite, as on one occasion in Manchester's Magic Village, when at the end of 'Evil' they acted out the killing of each other. They lay on the floor, silent, for about 4 minutes. Nobody spoke - they were spellbound, and even when the band eventually got up, people spoke in whispers until they'd left the stage.

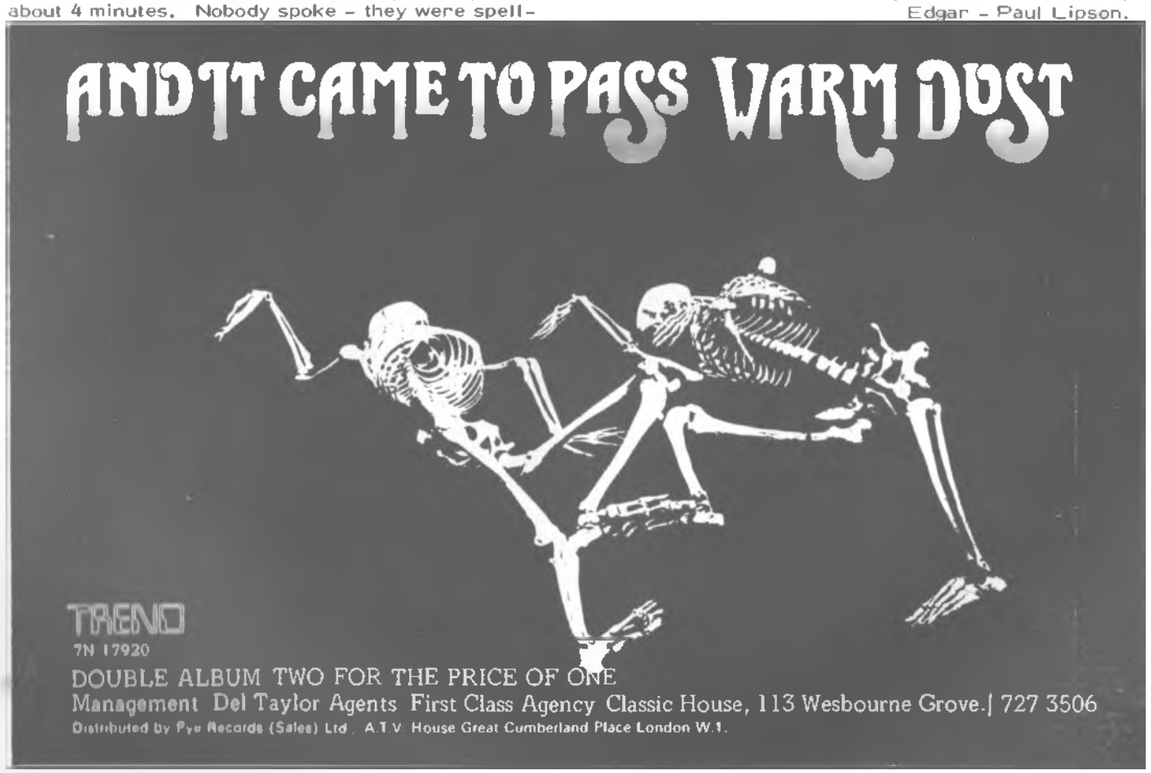
A recent trip to Denmark provided an extra aspect to their experience of audiences. There the kids have a very permissive life, and the polemics of the Broughton Band's songs were not so important to them, and consequently , in many cases, they fell a bit flat. This they had expected. But, on the other hand, it also had a strange and enriching effect on them and their stage performance - they played before some very straight audiences, situations in which their music was quite inappropriate. And in a very spontaneous way they reacted to this. They saw that if people could dance in a smoochy way to their music, not to mention twisting, then anything was possible, and they started playing intentional bum notes, explaining beforehand that it was 'avant garde time'. And the people accepted it, even got carried away with it, enthused. And they grooved along also when the band went into long and boring uninspiring guitar riffs.

Their second LP, due for release very soon, has been a fair time in the making. Whereas the band wasn't very satisfied with the first one, this one is just how they wanted it to be, in every way a great improvement on their first.

However good an experience it is to hear the album, it's an experience which needs to be completed by seeing the band and participating with them in an event. Summer is coming, keep your ears open and go down to wherever they are, to excorcise a demon well worth being rid of... whatever it may be.

Ian

Photos: group - Richard Imrie,
Edgar - Paul Lipson.



TWO JEWS' BLUES

PAUL KRASSNER INTERVIEWS BOB DYLAN
Reprinted from EVO

PK: I'm not sure what to say ... I feel as if I was about to suck off an elephant or something. What's a good interviewer question?

BD: Well, they usually start off with my health and then ask questions about that until they're tired and then they go home. They seem to get tired faster lately, I don't know - maybe they're worried about THEIR health ... because there's a lot of it going around lately....a lot of health. Most of it bad...

PK: Their mental health?

BD: Well, you know, they're connected. Your health and mine are too, during this interview at least. I don't know about afterward, but during this interview your mind affects...my body.

PK: Why not the other way round. Your mind and my body?

BD: I don't know man, I just didn't think it was important ... now if we were in love or something...

PK: (laughter) Yeah, I can imagine the children...

BD: There wouldn't have to be any children, unless you're a Catholic or something ... unless you believe in something and you don't do you? Believe in something?

PK: Oh, I suppose everybody has to believe in something. I'm not a Catholic though - just the opposite. I burn crucifixes in Italian neighbourhoods every Easter.

BD: Just the opposite - what does the opposite of a Catholic believe in? You said everybody had to believe in something, what makes you the opposite of a Catholic?

PK: Burning crucifixes. And Lenny Bruce. You know this is strange - people don't put me on very often. It's usually the other way around.

BD: Well, if you'd just let whichever end's in front come in first ... you keep trying to change ends around. I'm not putting you on really.

PK: Well, then what are you doing?

BD: I'm not doing anything - I'm just making a joke. You don't mind if I make a joke, do you?

PK: No, but if the person you're talking to isn't part of the joke, it's a put on.

BD: Y'know Paul, I just MAKE the jokes, if you don't want to be a part of it, that's up to you. I want you to be part of it, I want to include everybody in everything I'm doing. Besides, maybe the tape recorder understands it. Maybe the people who read this will think it's funny. You don't know.

PK: Do you expect people to understand your songs or are you putting the people who buy your records on?

BD: Do you understand them? I mean, let's turn it around ...

PK: Ah ha!

BD: You shouldn't interrupt ...

PK: But you were turning what I said around.

BD: Still, you shouldn't interrupt.

PK: I think I understand your songs as well as you understand my writings - I mean there are always private jokes.

BD: I don't care about your writings, man, I don't read writings! Writings interrupt people - they interrupt people's natural thoughts and make them stupid. I sing and study karate and don't have time to....

PK: The man who wrote "Blowing in the Wind" studies karate - wow! Why?

BD: Why what? Study karate? Because I don't like to have people interrupt my thoughts. If you don't read, you got to remember a long time before your thoughts turn into a song. I have to live with my thoughts. You can't interrupt a writer - he's always used up whatever he was thinking about anyway, but if you interrupt a song, you kill it. Some people go to concerts just to cough. Some people hang around T.B. wards, when they got a deadline or something ...

PK: I heard a tape of an interview you did with Pete Seeger where you said you'd written a bunch of songs the night before, but you'd lost the paper you'd written them on and couldn't remember how they went. So you MUST have been a writer at one time. Why did you stop writing?

BD: I never heard that tape, man. I once had an interviewer who asked me all about Peter, Paul and Mary. He said he'd read a Peter, Paul and Mary record jacket I'd written. I never read any of their liner notes, man, or any Roy Acuff liner notes either. That tape isn't important to me.

PK: In "Don't look back" you have your manager with you, and there is a scene where he and some other businessmen are working out a deal, very tense, a financial chess game. How do you get along with businessmen?

BD: Oh, I get along fine with businessmen - they don't go around trying to get put down. Hippies are always trying to slip their beards in a revolving door just before you push it, but businessmen got a certain thing they want from you. That's all they want, and it's very clean and honest. Yeah, I get along fine with businessmen.

PK: How are they to work with compared to radicals - you used to spend time around the Movement scene, SNCC and Broadside ...

BD: Well, they want something too, but they want a bigger piece. There were a lot of people just like Albert (Grossman, Dylan's manager) but they weren't as modest. Albert is really very modest - I imagine H.L. Hunt is very modest too, when he's talking about oil wells. Money limits greed, otherwise it extends to everything.

PK: That's a curious idea - money saves us from greed. I'd always ...

BD: Thought it was the other way around. You don't drive a motorcycle do you?

PK: No, I don't even drive.

BD: You try changing which end of a motorcycle is front and which is back at sixty miles an hour, and you got to type with your toes for a year.

PK: Your stretching a little - sometimes it must be a little hard to be Bob Dylan ...

BD: Not really, Bob Dylan stretches a little. He's made out of crepe paper and neon and there are all these Jews trying to grab a piece.

PK: That sounds anti-semetic to me.

BD: I'm a Jew. You're a Jew. So's Albert. And Lirwin Silber. So are the Beatles, but nobody knows it. Everybody's stretching. The thing about Jews isn't that they grab - everybody does - it's what they grab. Most of the really modest people in the world are Jews, except for Jewish musicians who aren't really modest or really Jews either.

PK: Your songs seem to have become less personal somehow - on something like "Corinna Corinna" or "One too many mornings" I was always conscious of the personality of the singer, but on "Lay Lady Lay" I just hear the song. You don't change inflection much in any given song.

BD: Well, yeah.

PK: You don't like being interviewed, do you?

BD: Well, I don't mind, actually, it's recreational. But it's not like playing music - do you play or sing or anything?

PK: I just make love. And write sometimes, but sometimes when I'm in bed with a woman it's very musical. Do you think of sex as musical?

BD: Not really - sex is more like words, but you have to be a musician to appreciate that. You scheme and plot a thousand times as much with a woman you really love than with a song - even if you hate the song. I bet you first said that thing about music to

BRINSLEY SCH..

a woman, right?

PK: I guess so, because it was true ...

BD: But it's only true because you're not a musician. If you were, it would be different. It's like a eunuch comparing intrigue to love - it's true, but what he's thinking still isn't the way it is.

PK: I feel like I used to feel before I'd taken acid, there's this big secret that I don't know and everybody says I can't understand how important it is.

BD: Yeah, but acid isn't like anything else, so it's useless - it's inapplicable. Music goes everywhere. There are songs about death and whiskey and whores and even politics, though some of those aren't real songs. Some of them are, "Payday on Cold Creek" and "Satisfaction" are songs about politics.

PK: Is "Wicked Messenger" about you when you were involved in politics?

BD: No, it's about stupid fucking Jews I have known. The really stupid ones, stupid in a way that you could not see in a million years ... really dumb! Hey, you're starting to affect my body you know that?

PK: What do you do with the money you make from records and concerts?

BD: I really don't know. Some of it goes in the bank, and some of it just goes. I don't ever really count it.

PK: Did you ever think of doing something strange with it - like putting up a billboard saying "Radium gives your baby strong bones" or even "Whaaaat?"

BD: What for?

PK: Maybe it would change something.

BD: Naaaw - I do all that stuff in my songs, and what does that change?

PK: The shape of American society - the lives of millions of kids.

BD: As long as you can connect what millions of people are doing to a song, the song hasn't really gotten across.

PK: Which song?

BD: ANY song. You can't live a song or a billboard. It doesn't give anything but itself - it's a finger-pointing not a place to live in.

PK: Don't you feel your music implies a responsibility?

BD: But my songs don't TAKE any responsibility - they don't care what people do with them. How can I? You write a song to do one thing and it do es another, and so you write a song about what happened and you don't know what that's going to do.

PK: So you don't advise people to trust your music?

BD: I don't advise people. To trust. Music or books. Or anything.

Photo by K. Abe JAZZ & POP

(Paul Krassner, who conducted this interview, used to edit a magazine called The Realist, which was well known for putting its readers on with faked-up news items. We're 80% certain that this interview is bogus, but whether it is or not, it's still interesting. What do you think?)

..WARZ what else can we say?

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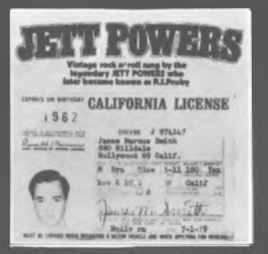

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Quicksilver Messenger Service

It's a long time since the tag 'San Francisco Sound' was used to sell a band, but during the heyday of the SF era, every record company in America was desperate to get its hands on anything they could proclaim as being part of it. Simply because, as an entity, the 'San Francisco Sound' was a valid conception, and was accepted as such by the record buying heads; it was musically strong and innovative for the most part and was certain, because of the wide media coverage, to be commercially successful. (For amplification of this, see Zigzag 4). Subsequent similar campaigns didn't make it – the 'Boston Sound' for instance, failed because there was no Boston sound, but merely a bunch of groups who happened to be working out of the Boston/Cambridge area. But the San Francisco sound was more than just a geographical thing. There was a cohesion....several factors common to all the bands of the time. Each developed in the same spirit and the same influences, and there was the common thread of a community feeling, which had evolved long before the papers discovered the city and spread flower-power all over America's breakfast tables.

In an article he wrote several months before he started 'Rolling Stone', Jan Wenner wrote an explanatory article on just what was happening in his city, for the benefit of Music Maker readers. The bands there, he contended, were characterised by their preference to stay at home and play to familiar audiences rather than do concert hall circuits, and by their refusal to get involved in the commercial end of the pop business, letting record companies and promoters treat them as investments rather than artistes. In short, they did not think twice about relative obscurity and lack of bread. It was all tied up with enjoyment and a kind of San Franciscan integrity if you like.

As Paul Williams wrote in Crawdaddy in August 1967, "There is a geography of rock; San Francisco is different from New York musically, different because the music made by the Grateful Dead would be different if they had developed in New York, playing the Night Owl, trying to get a master sold, living on East 7th Street, and maybe dealing meth for rent money (see later), padlocking their front door and freezing in winter, and worrying about the air and not having children until they can afford the suburbs, reading the New York Times, never considering that they might find a manager who wasn't just an adversary, never ever thinking there was much more to it than making the charts....maybe hating each other after a while and wondering why people shat on them for doing just what everyone else does".

"New York is New York, and it's very good for some things. The energy it generates is second to none; nowhere in the world is there as much activity to dive into every time you turn around. Some people thrive on that. I do, much of the time, and that's why I stay here; but I don't think it's a place to make music. San Francisco is".

And so, the SF sound grew out of the indigenous lifestyle, and was shaped by the energy Bill Graham and the Family Dog put into running their ballrooms, Ralph Gleason's journalism and enthusiasm, the acid explosion, and so on, and was firmly established long before the weekend hippies started rolling in to Haight Ashbury.

Quicksilver in early 1967 (photo by David Flooke/Crawdaddy).

When Williams explored San Francisco (summer 67), Quicksilver Messenger Service were unrecorded. "Quicksilver" he said, "are a fine example of a group that would have gone nowhere, were it not for the Fillmore/Avalon audience egging them on".

Indeed they were one of the last of the big Frisco bands to get tied up with a record company, and when they eventually did, people thought that they had left it too late and missed the boat. Gary Duncan, one of their lead guitarists, emphasised that they had merely been waiting until the time was right...."playing live" he said, "a song changes in performance. In a studio you attack things intellectually; onstage it's all emotion". The feeling was common to most Bay area bands - scorning the studio-first-live-afterwards approach of the Los Angeles bands. "LA hurts our eyes".

Quicksilver had started up in 1965 in Mill Valley, just outside San Francisco, and had become almost residents at the Fillmore and Avalon Ballrooms (they played a total of 75 evenings at the latter) after the very small beginnings of gigs in clubs and coffee houses in SF's North Beach. Gary Duncan (guitar) and Greg Elmore (drums) had been in an unsuccessful band called the Brogues, which they disbanded in the hope of finding other musicians who shared their concepts of rock. Eventually they found John Cippolina (guitar) and David Freiberg (bass), and a singing harp player called Jim Murray, who didn't stay with them for long.

David Freiberg was working as a railway clerk but quit in 1963 because he found he could make as much bread by doing weekend folk club work. "I was pretty dead-beat in those days" he recalls. "I took a load of pills and nobody liked me. I teamed up with a chick and we called ourselves David and Michaela, doing traditional folk stuff until she stopped smoking dope, married an engineer and it all ended. I got busted and went to jail for 60 days, and when I came out I found myself a group".

"I'll tell you how Quicksilver started", said Cippolina. "We were together as a group of people for eight months before we ever played together... Jim Murray, David and I were living in this funky house. David was playing folk music then, but we never really talked about music till one day we asked each other what we could do besides deal to make a living".

"I had a job as real estate salesman at the time and went to work each day getting flippy. I was taking a lot of LSD and sat in the office all day doodling. All this time I'd been driving around with a guitar, a bass and amps in the trunk of my car. One evening I felt like playing so I brought everything into the house and the guys flipped. We jammed all night and decided to be a band. I quit the real estate business - I had a little money behind me because I'd managed to sell one thing by accident. The day I quit, I went to work tripping and flipped out. The office manager said 'Take two weeks holiday, you're working too hard' and I haven't been back since."

"Then I worked in a bar for a while, and when I got home we'd play all night in that crazy house on the hill. We thought we'd like to play with Dino Valente and arranged a rehearsal, but the car with our equipment got lost and the next night we couldn't find Dino. He'd been busted."

"We hung around for 1½ years waiting for Dino to get out of jail and meanwhile we played all the time and found Gary and Greg. By the time Dino finally got out, we were pretty much together as we were. We could hang together better than any other band in town....we were a unit, all the time".

All four of them are Virgos (Cippolina and Freiberg were born on Aug 24, and Duncan and Elmore were born on Sept 4) and have always been into astrology, from which they took their name. All Virgos are ruled by Mercury, which is also called Hermes, and Hermes is the messenger of the gods. Quicksilver is the metal that is influenced by the planet Mercury. (Murray, the original singer, wasn't a Virgo but a Gemini, and they are ruled by Mercury too).

They remained unrecorded for two years, but in early 1968 signed with Capitol on their own terms....artistic control, good percentages, and $50 000 advance. In other words they waited until they got just what they wanted. As a quartet they released their first album in 1968. It consisted of material they'd been playing for years and, with the minimum direction from producers Nick Gravenites and Pete Welding, they succeeded in capturing a lot of the vitality of a live performance. But considering that most of their potential audience had only heard about them (they hadn't performed away from the West coast), the album didn't sell as well as Capitol had anticipated. When they did get to New York in late 1968, Annie Fisher of the Village Voice saw them and wrote this about them: "The group raises images of white Spanish missions with red tile roofs in old California, of Wells Fargo, of 1865 San Francisco corruption and of 1965 San Francisco purity still intact. In person, Quicksilver is a musical mental movie of the history of the West". She really dug them, which is more than can be said about Barret Hansen, who, in his account of the Monterey Festival in Down Beat, thought that their material and arrangements were pretty uninspired, but thought that they were "very good at the psychedelic crescendos that are a SF hallmark". What?

Then in Spring 1969, 'Happy Trails' was released. This, except for one cut, was live material recorded at the Fillmores, and was one of the best and certainly the most exciting rock albums ever made. If the first was good (and it was), this was beautiful, and included the 'Who do you love suite', which, though spliced from more than one performance, typifies their music. "We just jam for as long as it works".

The whole album, including the sleeve by Michael Ferguson of Globe Propaganda (and formerly of the Charlatans), was intended to capture part of the feeling of the west. We never got to see the Roy Rogers shows on TV over here (thankfully) but 'Happy Trails To You' was its signature tune.

Quicksilver in early 1968: Elmore, Freiberg, Cippolina & Duncan.

A lot of people thought that this would be the last Quicksilver LP because Gary Duncan left the group tc join Dino Valente in a projected rock band called the Outlaws, but late last year Nicky Hopkins, who had been working on their new album since leaving Jeff Beck and who had become a good friend of Cippolina's, decided to join the band full time.

Hopkins played in Cyril Davies' R&B band for a for a few months in 1962, but then became ill. "In May 1963 I was taken seriously ill and spent the next 19 months in hospital, and in January 1964, while I was still laid up, Cyril Davies died, at the age of 32, from pleurisy".

"I left hospital on Christmas Eve 1964, and in January 1965 I did my first recording session as an independent musician. Glyn Johns was at the session, and Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck and Jon Mark were all on it too. After the session we did a half hour jam and they kept the tape running. The results were unearthed last year and released on Immediate's Anthology of British Blues Vol 3. Following the session, Glyn asked me if I'd like to do more studio work, and this suited me fine because I knew I couldn't join a band and go on the road for some time. All the studios were in London so it meant only local travelling!"

"So for nearly four years I did sessions. I did three Stones albums, four with the Kinks, an album with the Who, a Dusty Springfield album, lots of other album tracks and singles with people like Donovan, the Beatles, Jackie Lomax, and so on".

In October 1968, he was fit for the road once more and joined the Jeff Beck Group, but quit the following June after various incompatabilities. "Soon after, I left to work on a Steve Miller album which Glyn was producing in San Francisco. That was one of the most interesting and enjoyable albums I've ever worked on. Whilst we were making it, John and David came up to see me and asked if I'd stay on to do some work on the third Quicksilver album. So I did".

Gary Duncan & Dino Valenti

John Cipollina, Greg Elmore, Nicky Hopkins & David Freiberg

The album, 'Shady Grove', was subsequently released and showed Hopkins' influence and how they had been changed by his arrival. A lot of people disliked the piano domination and compared it unfavourably with the brilliance of 'Happy Trails'. On the other hand, there are few pianists to equal Hopkins, and he's certainly given Quicksilver another dimension.

Then in February of this year, Gary Duncan returned, bringing with him Dino Valente. When Valente had arrived in Greenwich Village in the early sixties, he'd become one of the most copied performers on the folk scene. His songs (like 'Hey Joe', 'Birdses' and 'Get Together') were recorded by all manner of East coast artistes, but he apparently disappeared disenchanted, and went to the Bay area, living the life of a semi recluse.

His joining the band has given them yet another change of direction. Their tightness is still very evident, but Valente has taken over as vocalist on most numbers, and as well as introducing his strange nasal voice, a lot more of his songs with their rambling melodies and crammed lyrics have been taken into their repertoire.

By all accounts the new 6 piece Quicksilver is a remarkable thing, and if their reputation is reflected on their next album, it will be a cracker. Meanwhile, why the hell hasn't anyone brought them to England yet? Why?

Records:

'Revolution' (2 tracks)	UAS 29069
'Quicksilver Mess Service'	ST 2904
'Happy Trails'	ST 120
'Shady Grove'	ST 391
'Dino Valente'	CBS 63443

Mac Garry

(with special thanks to Roger St Pierre of Record Buyer for permission to use part of his interview).

new address and phone

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BRINGING BRINSLEY TO THE NATION

It all started one sunday about four months ago. Hugh Nolan, then Blackhill's unhustling publicist,had very half heartedly implored me to get down to the Country Club to witness their amazing new band Formerly Fat Harry. Regardless of days of rest, the films on the telly, church, my exhausted body, etc, I complied. As it happened I never got to see Fat Harry because I was so tired that I had to clear off back home, but I did see (in an hour of relative clarity) the support group, which was Brinsley Schwarz. Maybe it was their debut - I'd never seen them before ... in fact, I'd never heard of them before. I can't honestly say that their music was very memorable (their version of the Band's 'Chest Fever' was the only song I remember), and one of the few conclusions I drew from the performance was that though musically strong, there was too much volume and too little separation between instruments.

In a nutshell, they were OK; it was a classic case of "Go away and polish it up boys, you've got the germ of a good band there ... come back in a year". Steve Broughton agreed. (Yes folks, the Broughtons are very hep and with it, and frequent all the groovy in clubs, and an opportunity for me to drop a name is too rare to miss). Andrew Lauder from Liberty was there as well, and he was much more enthusiastic about them.

Time passed. Apart from an Implosion, I saw no further adverts for them, though I heard snatches of talk about an acetate being touted round the record companies.

Then POW! - this cat from Famepushers Ltd (who I'd also never heard of) phones me up and says would I like to go to New York and see them play at the Fillmore....free, gratis, and for nothing? Jesus Christ, of course I would. Bloody right.

But then I had a sit down and thought about the whole business. Famepushers were chartering a plane and filling it with journalists, film crews, DJs, and the winners of a highly publicised Melody Maker competition. There were mumbles about 'The hype of the century' and how the whole thing was a cunning plot to lever a huge advance out of record companies eager to outbid each other to secure 1970's biggest group. A full page ad was seen in Friends: 'Brinsley Schwarz, Fillmore East, April 4th', and name dropping started to appear in the pop press - like the Face's snippet in Record Mirror 'Brinsley Schwarz...and remember you read it here'. I got to thinking about how to win friends and influence people, and I got to thinking that any writer with an ounce of integrity is going to denounce the whole shebang as a giant, blatant con. And I envisaged the bumlick articles too. And so on. But I knew all the same that I was far too selfish to turn down a free trip to New York.

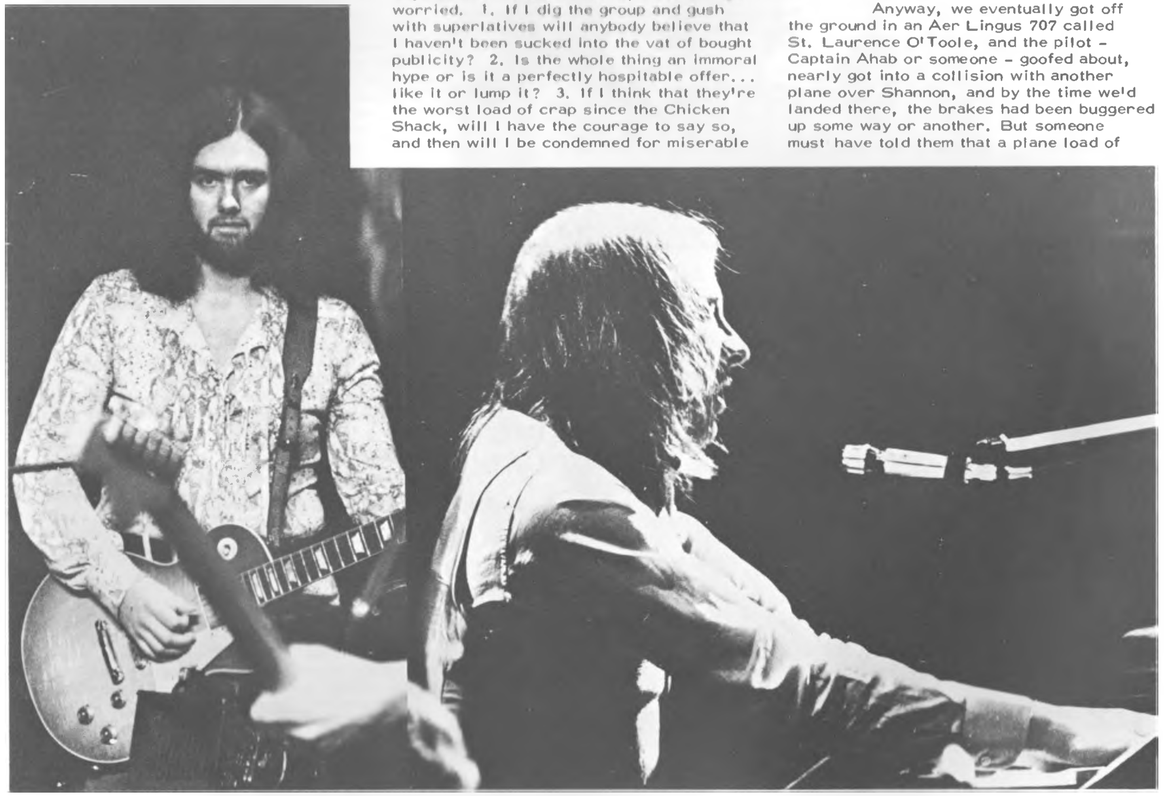
And having written this far, 10 days before I'm due to leave, I start to get worried. 1. If I dig the group and gush with superlatives will anybody believe that I haven't been sucked into the vat of bought publicity? 2. Is the whole thing an immoral hype or is it a perfectly hospitable offer... like it or lump it? 3. If I think that they're the worst load of crap since the Chicken Shack, will I have the courage to say so, and then will I be condemned for miserable ingratitude, or for being intentionally nasty for the sake of opposing the views of the straight press? 4. Would I care what anybody thought about what I thought anyway?

Easter sunday rolls round and just as I'm finishing my eighth egg, Andrew Lauder phones up to say that Liberty have just signed Brinsley Schwarz for the world excluding Canada and USA. He exhorts their management who decided to choose Liberty because Andrew had expressed a genuine interest before the hype started. They've agreed on a £12 thousand advance which is apparently somewhat lower than that offered by various other companies, the record has been completed already, and the sleeves printed too. The album is just great he reckons, and we usually see eye to eye.

So there you go. I couldn't be in a more confused pre-trip state if I tried.

Rumours of our being 3 hours late taking off were confirmed and sandwiches were instantly rushed out to appease groaning pressmen, who then commenced to sit around in the lounge taking part in what looked like a sort of air conditioned indoor picnic. Everyone was on about the extravagance and expense of the expedition, and you investigated the sandwiches half expecting to see "with the compliments of Brinsley Schwarz" written on the cheese.

Anyway, we eventually got off the ground in an Aer Lingus 707 called St. Laurence O'Toole, and the pilot - Captain Ahab or someone - goofed about, nearly got into a collision with another plane over Shannon, and by the time we'd landed there, the brakes had been buggered up some way or another. But someone must have told them that a plane load of hippies was coming in because they had this big supermarket at the airport waiting for us, full of plastic Jesi, musical box madonnas, painted gnomes, glow in the dark statuettes of Val Doonican, and the other rubbishy trappings that the wellington boot clad peat bog workers must spend their bread on. No wonder they all come over here.



We got off again, a motley crew of freaks, including some of the older pop press who got it together by throwing balls of paper at each other. They must have been writing for kids so long that they'd all become Lathers (see Jefferson Airplane).

But everything had been thrown out of time by various Aer Lingus cock-ups. We had been scheduled to load ourselves into 20 Cadillac Fleetwoods in the early afternoon sunshine and fly through the New York streets in this big fuzz-led motorcade. The idea was to stun people....their heads would swivel and they'd shout 'Hey look at that' before getting on with their shopping for hominy grits or whatever, and meanwhile, the whole thing could be filmed in living technicolour to relay round the expectant world.

But of course, we didn't get out of Kennedy Airport until around 7 pm, when it was dark and the city's populace had already settled in front of the TV. So no-one saw the spectacle, and we had to shoot straight to the Fillmore because we were too late for the press conferences and other planned delights. Danny, driving our car, was young and jittery and jumped red lights galore to keep up with the rest, and we buzzed across the 59th Street Bridge (Feelin' Groovy of course) to the wonderous sounds of station WABC, hosted by a creep called Bob Scott who told an enthralled audience about some Salt Lake City kids who blew themselves apart when they attacked a live mortar shell with a crowbar. In between such news items and antisweat commercials he played the odd record but usually talked over the first half of it.

The pavement (sidewalk?) outside the Fillmore was full of people who either wanted spare tickets, spare change or to sell you some grass, and the Fillmore itself which is just like a cinema (a bit like the old Middle Earth Royalty) was policed by green football shirted ushers. I got to my seat just in time to see an old Brylcreem boy ease out of the wings ... "Good evening and please welcome Brinsley Schwarz" he said in terse uninterested monotones.

And out they came, to wild unabandoned applause....well - there was a bit of clapping anyway....and lunged into their set. Brinsley Schwarz himself on guitar, Nick Lowe (bass), Bill Rankin (drums) and Bob Andrews (organ). They started ragged and ended up less ragged, having burned their way through 'Life is dead', 'Indian Woman' and various other respectably performed but unmemorable numbers.

I was sitting there making ridiculous notes in the dark - like "organist sings like Steve Stills" "sound getting tighter" and stuff like that, but there really just wasn't anything to make notes about. The drummer had a bit of style (and a Captain America shirt) and the organist seemed to be having a good time. Between each number they collapsed in giggling fits - more than a wee bit stoned I suspect.

Their set complete, the straights of our party shot off to the hotel without bothering to see Van Morrison or Quicksilver, the others on the bill. I wondered what they thought about Brinsley Schwarz, as I tried to think of something good to say about them. But quite honestly they are, at the moment, a very ordinary, very mediocre group, and I'm sure that they must realise this themselves. I asked various New Yorkers what they thought, hoping I'd find one who'd have a good word, but none did. But it wasn't really an anti-climax to the trip, because I don't think that anyone expected a climax.

It must have been a bloody ordeal for them, knowing that their career and £30,000 depended on their performance, so I sneaked back to the theatre for the second show. (This I accomplished by a fiendish and devious bit of trickery). Lo and behold the band was more relaxed, tighter, and at the end of their set there were even cries for more. It wasn't your actual standing ovation scene, but there was a bit more than the total lack of enthusiasm when they left the stage after their first show.

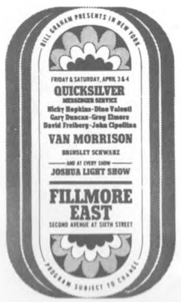
Van Morrison's 'orchestra' (as he calls it) takes the stage and starts playing the intro to "Mystic Eyes", an old Them number, and the man himself appears, looking most unlike his photographs. His hair is slicked down (really plastered down) with a big parting and looks very straight except that it's long at the sides and back. (I was sitting next to one of the Melody Maker winners, and he thought that Morrison looked like Benny Hill with a wig. God, enough to give Simon Stable a very nasty heart tremor). His lower half is clad in ultramarine velvet - and he has a frilly seer-sucker shirt (fashion note for groovers).

He sings a verse of 'Mystic Eyes', blows a few shaky harp notes and then goes into 'Astral Weeks', belting the life out of a Guild jumbo. Man alive!...very strange. His band is crummy - a good keyboard man, a nice drummer, but a very rudimentary guitarist, an ordinary bassist, and two mediocre sax/percussionists/flautists.... but it is strangely virtually the same personnel that played on 'Moondance'. In the two sets I saw, Morrison sang 'Crazy Love', 'Caravan', 'Moondance', 'These dreams of you', 'Brown Eyed Girl'(jazzed up so that it lost its guts), 'Stoned Me', 'Into the mystic', 'Come running' ("this is our latest single, we hope you like it") and a very dramatic 'Cypress Avenue'. But on every song, something was wrong - the timing, the arrangement, and more often than not his singing was way out of tune. How he records his albums I don't know, because they are full of subtle voice inflections and perfect pitching.

Throughout the performances his face remained sour; it was as if he was trying to win a bet by not smiling for 10 years, and he did a bit of half hearted microphone stand manipulating, but he just seemed like the proverbial spare prick at a wedding, just so ill at ease. Another idol bites the dust.

Quicksilver Messenger Service were just beautiful. With Nicky Hopkins, sitting almost in the wings, playing superbly throughout, especially on "Edward the mad shirt grinder", and Dino Valente, who joined recently, doing most of the singing and strumming a fat guitar, moving like an Eddie Cochran or a Gene Vincent. I won't go on at length bearing in mind that there is a Quicksilver article elsewhere in this issue, but let me say that they completely lived up to my expectations, as they ran through a lot of new material and a few familiar songs: "Have another hit of sweet California sunshine", "I'll never escape from the chains", "So far from my home", "Mona", "I'm a poor boy", "I want to tell you the truth now". Really fine - how I wish that someone would bring them over here.

Got to admit that I was disappointed by the Fillmore audience which was staid, slow and relatively unappreciative, but the acoustics and resident light show were both superb and an English equivalent would be nice.



With what free time we had before the return flight, we were allowed to roam around New York. I had hoped to do a Bernard Chanticleer (like in "You're a big boy now") and investigate all the shops (with John Sebastian harp music buzzing around my head), but most of them were shut on Sunday, including most of the decent record shops, which was a drag. So anyway, we did the tourist bit and mooched around Greenwich Village shouting 'lids, tabs, acid etc', I stood on the corner of Bleeker and McDougall just like Fred Neil on his Elektra album, walked along

Positively 4th St., bought some mint flavoured cigarette papers which made your lips and teeth a lurid apple green, saw dejected birds sitting on tenement steps near St. Marks Place (just like in the films about it), investigated the porn (technicolour clitorises shone out of every bookshop window), and generally had a good time.

People going down to the ground, buildings going up to the sky; New York is a strange place and 24 hours is no time at all. Superficially it seemed like your actual melting pot, but you could feel the tension of the city and everyone looked miserable - probably because they were breathing noxious fumes the whole time. All the streets were wide canyons, dominated by madarse drivers; about every fourth car is a taxi and every single one is dented somewhere - they're all matt yellow, so that when they have a prang they can just nip out and spray some paint on the scars. And the cops have guns, the full realisation of which didn't hit me until I saw it for myself. But I managed to get in a flying visit to Peter Stampfel and Antonia, our New York writers, and that was a gas.

But back to Brinsley ....what amuses me, or rather perturbs me, about the whole spectacle is the fact that most of the journalists who went seem to have totally disregarded (or maybe just blandly accepted) the fact that this is the most immoral hype in the history of pop. If someone from Famepushers had seen Brinsley Schwarz playing in a club somewhere and said "Wow ... this is amazing music ... what a total knockout ... we must sign these cats up and try and spread the word ... I have great faith in their ability to shake the world etc" ... then conceivably it wouldn't quite have been so bad. But it didn't happen that way at all. Famepushers advertised for a group and had dozens of replies, from which they selected Brinsley. It was like an experiment. As if they'd said "right let's find an unknown group and see if we can catapult them to world class by bread alone".

Now I went in for that Melody Maker competition. I crossed out all the qualities like stage presence, originality, musical ability, clothes and whatever, and I wrote "Of no importance" beside them. Then as an answer to the question "What will make a group outstanding in 1970?" I put "Having loads of bread and an enormous hype machine behind them so that they get maximum media coverage". I didn't win but I think I should have done, because Brinsley Schwarz had precious little of any of the qualities they mentioned in that list. In fact, about 3 hours after I got back from New York I went out again and saw a band who probably make about £30 a night, and on every count they were better; yet Brinsley Schwarz have apparently been booked for an Albert Hall show, they've managed to get hold of unprecedented advances, and all the straight journalists on the trip wrote exactly what was required of them.

Now Famepushers are no doubt going to be more than a little pissed off by this, and I can imagine all kinds of words like "ungrateful" etc being used, but quite honestly in their hearts, they must know that they are perpetrating a ridiculous hype, and I can't see how any journalist with any integrity can say that the band was great, or even good. They were just totally mediocre.

(To appease MU rules, Brinsley Schwarz were apparently exchanged for Love. If that's true, I've got some other exchange ideas - what about Status Quo for Grateful Dead, Orange Bicycle for Jefferson Airplane, Malcolm Roberts for John Sebastian, Pickety Witch for Quicksilver?)

"Why should we live in foul air?"

One small thing that I found, shall I say, a little incongruous was the absence of a reporter from IT. IT's music section is good and comprehensive, but yet no one from there had been invited (presumably). On the other hand, there were 3 writers from Friends, which is owned by Fame pushers Ltd. Richard Neville of Oz was there however, and so was Paul Whitehead from Time Out, and I look forward to reading what they have to say about it all.

Looking back, this whole article seems a bit on the facetious side, but one has to regard it as a joke. If you can just buy instant plastic stardom, then God help us all. As for Brinsley Schwarz, they're only a pawn in the game (and when a millionairess pays for a trip like that, it is a game); they're nice enough blokes, and they have the potential to become a very good band, but I can't imagine that their audience (or the audience they are hoping for) are going to be very receptive to this kind of gimmickry....after all, it's not a very far cry from the Monkees.

However, at the time of going to press, I hear good reports about their album from people that I usually agree with. I haven't heard it myself, but I certainly hope it is good.

To sum up, although I've just done it, I think it's too early to pass any judgement on Brinsley Schwarz, but I'm going to follow their progress with great interest.

Pete

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MAD DOGS AND ENGLISHMEN

LEON RUSSELL

JOE COCKER

Joe Cocker is hardly your actual English dandy. He comes on like a slovenly pipefitter. The Cocker aura of bravado, even with his recent beard, comes across as secondary to his amenable but prosaic self. His manner is totally British working class, which, mind you, is a hell of an important and noble breed of person. But, unlike the Peter Townshend-John Lennon art school intelligensia who sort of make English rock and rollers a breed apart, Cocker comes on like Zappa's Ruben Sano.

He gets stoned, a lot, you know; just kind of happily, not a complaint from Cocker. Totally amicable, just sort of bland. Not a bad thing to say about him. And a lot of good ones.... even if most of them have been said before.

He doesn't seem to bear any scars from his ten year career in the British boondocks of rock. Ten years of gigging around Sheffield would weather most men more than it has Joe, but Cocker seems content. He also seems content not to question what he's become, at least not overmuch.

The whole thing is that Joe Cocker might just be better at being Joe Cocker than an A1 rock star with crushed velvet and satin. The dimensions of the man, however large, are barely visible at the first level of perception. But his talent, edging into genius at certain points, certainly is too great to be ignored.

What he is, he's kinda lackadaisical - not dull really, just sort of your average popstar. Until he gets on stage.... where he becomes a raving bundle of flying hair and meat. Undeniably spastic, he twitches and strums his pseudo-guitar fantasizing god knows what, turning unexpected songs into cathartic mini-psychodramas.

It's not a simple matter to watch a guy try to destroy himself on stage. Where with James Brown all that falling down emotion and crying out is presented in a slick choreographed way, Cocker's windmill jerkings are completely spontaneous. He half shakes himself to death on occasion, but just when it becomes apparent that he's about to blow himself into pieces.... just when you expect to see him drifting, atom by atom, into the tenderly expectant arms of groupie chicks and velvet vested boys, he somehow suddenly diverts the energy into a shout that's quite unlike anything you've experienced. And at that moment, despite their validity, Cocker/Charles comparisons come up against absurdity. For obvious reasons Charles doesn't go mucking about the stage, grinning and carrying on like a spaced voodoo child. Sedate, Joe isn't.

Even to himself his performances are embarassing. His shaking and writhing are, at first goop, certainly bizarre, but they're fun to watch and are surely distinctive. And his effect on certain chicks is legendary.... there was a reason behind the inverted crotch dot-screen Delta Lady ad (see Zigzag 8). But Cocker deals with it simply: "If I watch television or something like that I'm aware of it. But you can't worry about what shape your face is in". Even when it's contorting near psychotically.

The story of how he got to be Joe Cocker, famous, from being Joe Cocker, pub singer, is rather mundane, but Sheffield, the archetypal English factory town, could only provide him with pub jobs. "When I lived in Sheffield" he remembers, "I used to sing a lot of Motown - sort of Four Tops 'Sugar Pie Honey Bunch' kind of things. But while I was doing that, I was sort of getting something else together in my head, you know? We always knew that we didn't really want to drift into that sort of thing, but it was just a way to make a living. While we were doing that, we were also making demos to send off to people".

We at that time was only Joe and Chris Stainton, now his keyboard man and formerly leader of the infamous Grease Band. Joe'd been about ready to give up, but then "we heard Sgt Pepper and I thought we might as well have another go at it".

"Chris did 'Marjorine' as a backing track with all these instruments and for drums used things like kettles and stuff. I put the vocal on, double tracked, and he mixed it. It was a really weird sounding thing, man.... the actual record was nowhere near as effective.... it's a shame nobody heard it, because it was really free".

Marjorine led them to Denny Cordell's Tarantula Productions (see Zigzag 9), and drawn out sessions working on the first Cocker album, which in America became an instant critical and commercial hit.

Next of course came the de rigeur American tour. Unfortunately the people who had backed Joe on the lp (with the exceptions of Stainton and Henry McCullough - late of Eire Apparent), were tied up in little projects like Led Zeppelin and Blind Faith. But Wynder K Frog had just broken up, and while the killer toad left to join Mason Wood Capaldi & Frog, the bassist and drummer, Allan Spenner and Bruce Rowlands, became the rest of the Grease Band.

The Grease Band fitted Cocker as perfectly as the Band fit Dylan - fairly unobtrusively, simply turning out excellent music while still bearing in mind that Cocker was the star. And Cocker is the rare performer with the ability to translate any song into his own particular framework. That he has always received excellent instrumental backing is almost secondary, in fact, to his ability to select apparently incongruous material and have it work.

His last album featured 'Delta Lady', written by Leon Russell , of Delaney & Bonnie fame, who also helped to produce it. But, like the other elements of Cocker's success, Russell's appearance was more happenstance than planning. "Just before we left England I got a copy of the Delaney & Bonnie album and was knocked out by Leon Russell's piano playing on 'Ghetto'. And then, when we came to Los

Angeles, Delaney & Bonnie were doing some recording at A&M studios, and Leon was there playing piano. So we invited him down to a session one night and he came and thought we were all insane. Then he came again a couple of nights later and I talked with him.... we just got to know him slowly, and one night he walked in, sat down at the piano, and started to sing 'WOOO-man of the country...'".

Mutual musical tastes and ideas were discovered; respect was kindled and flourished, hidden for a while. Then suddenly, earlier this year, Cocker pulled out of any engagements and announced his intention to spend a month in the West Indies to recuperate from overstrain. Before the month was up, he was back on the West Coast, plotting new moves with Leon Russell.

Russell, a well known producer and arranger around the Los Angeles area (he's played on various Byrds and Stones cuts among others), had been half of a commercially unsuccessful group called the Asylum Choir, before gaining aclaim for his work with Delaney & Bonnie. He'd been with them during part of 1969 and had, with Delaney, arranged the 'Accept no substitute' album.

Since leaving them, he has, together with the aforementioned Cordell, formed a record label called Shelter Records (distributed by Blue Thumb in America and A&M here). Apart from Russell himself, the only artist so far contracted is a singer-guitarist from Dallas called Marc Benno, who was the other half of the Asylum Choir.

Russell's own very excellent album has just been released here, but we'll discuss that at greater length in part two of this article next month.

Meanwhile the results of the Cocker-Russell conspiracy were revealed last month: Joe has disbanded his Grease Band, retaining only Chris Stainton (the other three are currently without a group) and has conglomerated a new back-up called Mad Dogs & Englishmen, led by Leon. Apart from Russell and Stainton, members include Jim Price (trumpet), Bobby Keys (sax), Jim Gordon, Carl Radle (bass) and Rita Coolidge (vocals) - all from Delaney & Bonnie's friends - but these are but a handful of the 36 who comprise the new band. It is highly unlikely that the whole ensemble will ever play in England, but transatlantic reports indicate that Joe Cocker is more wildly frenetic than ever, that Leon Russell's handling of both guitar and piano border on genius, and that the whole spectacle has semblances of some kind of white revival meeting, with a chorus of 13, piano, organ, drums, 3 other percussionists, guitars, saxes, trumpet, bass, children, and a dog.... for good measure, no doubt.

And Joe Cocker is one of the two or three best rock singers alive on the planet; all we can do is hope that he doesn't entirely turn his back on the largely unappreciative British.... and until a new Cocker album appears, pick up on the Leon Russell one. It's very good.

Dave Marsh & Mac Garry

(part of this article first appeared in Creem).

Next month; Part Two....Leon Russell.

TEN YEARS AFTER

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Bill Fay?

When I first started writing for Zigzag about a year ago my only qualification to write about rock was that I liked it - it's still my only qualification but I'm a little wiser now about how the business works. I mean I know a bit more about how people are recorded and promoted and the incredible lengths to which publicists will go, in order to promote their latest darlings. As soon as you start to write about records and artists you get bombarded with publicity handouts and press releases making the most amazing claims for that singer or this band - they are all supremely gifted, unaffected by success, beautiful to know, possessed of quirky and loveable personal mannerisms and traits and generally the greatest gift to music since the invention of the earplug. If I hadn't seen these tatty offerings I wouldn't have believed that such mindless, insulting banalities actually existed and the fact that people are handsomely paid for producing such rubbish, is almost beyond belief. The danger of this sort of publicity is that it's so bad that it can predispose you to dislike the artist because of it - the trouble is the publicists persist in telling you how good their artists are, rather than giving you some basic information and leaving you to judge for yourself.

Recently I wrote about some records in Zigzag, one of which was being massively touted by some near demented publicist. I didn't like the record and said so and he nearly went potty - now he rings up offering free tickets to concerts so that I can go and hear his product and presumably change my mind. The curious thing is, that according to his own publicity handouts, the band is a sellout wherever it plays so quite why they need my vote is beyond me. I suppose the publicity wizards of rock, having failed to absorb the lesson of the Edsel Ford, still persist in the belief that if you shout your message long enough and loud enough, people will believe you - and with the Monkees' example cancelling out the Edsel, perhaps they're right; perhaps my belief that talent will finally triumph is too naive. Possibly the truth lays somewhere between the two, for, much as I dislike many of the aspects of promotion, I can see that if you record an artist but fail to tell anyone about it, then you don't even give people a chance of deciding whether he's any good or not. And just in case you wonder what on earth I'm beefing about now, all this is by way of an introduction to the work (and cautionary tale) of Bill Fay.

A month ago a chance acquaintance played an LP to me without saying who the artist was, and with my ears still bunged up with David Ackles, I was somewhat startled to hear a singer/pianist supported by a large orchestra coming on with some very original songs and some very good tunes. I liked the record immediately and was very curious to know about the singer - and then followed a mysterious train of events. Joe, the bloke who played me the record, turned out to be a friend of Bill Fay (the singer) and was anxious to get people to listen to the record - he'd no idea that I wrote for Zigzag, but, in any case I didn't need any persuading. I played the record continuously for a couple of days and then, by a complicated and curious chance met Bill himself. Bill turned out to be a very likeable and unaffected bloke who seemed slightly surprised that the record had ever come out and amazingly pleased to meet people who liked

it. He told me he wrote some songs for a demo tape four years ago and someone from Decca liked them and signed him up. He made a single for Decca three years ago which sank like the Titanic and made his LP early this year. The LP was originally made with a small supporting group but when the powers that be at Decca heard it, somebody decided that Bill was too good for the production and that the record should be remade with Mike Gibbs doing the arrangements and production and using top grade musicians and a thirty piece orchestra.

Bill is very pleased with the Mike Gibbs arrangements and justifiably so - I think they are brilliant and as sensitive and original as Bill's tunes. The big string section sounds (correctly) like Mantovani sometimes, John Marshall and Trevor Taylor are excellent on drums; there's some nice acoustic guitar from Richard Mills, some brilliant, but under-recorded electric guitar from Ray Russel, and Ray Warleigh and John Surman are among the brass. Finally there's Bill's piano - very simple, but I fancy a lot more knowing than you might suppose and anyway, on this record, dead right. When I first heard the record, it was the tunes that went straight into my head and Bill's rather flat North London voice, which was such a change from all the sub-Dylan English singers. But now it's his lyrics I really listen to, because he does manage to say a great deal in very few words words. The great contribution that Dylan has made to music is to free the song/poem from the conventions it worked within during the fifties and early sixties, and in this sense Dylan has influenced Bill and enabled him to use lines like ...

"chickens laughing in black dustbins
lillies bleeding in the street".

Those lines are from a song called "We have laid here", which has one of the strongest tunes of the LP and romps along at a fair rate with great sweeping runs from the strings and Ray Russel chugging away in the background. Sometimes Bill's chord sequences sound familiar but his melodies are so strong that you don't find yourself singing someone else's songs to them. On many tracks he uses the device of a second melody played on flute or alto and on "Sing us one of your songs May", which just uses snare drum and piano, he plays the second melody himself, as a sort of descant to the tune. This song and "Goodnight Stan", again a solo, have a beautiful pub-song quality - sentimental and warm.

"Sing us one of your songs May
the ones you know so well
Sing us one of your songsMay
you know we love you well
dry the tears from your eyes May
what's it going to be
for you know he's gone to heaven May
tho' he was only twenty three".

As I write this, it suddenly occurs to me that Ray Davies is the only other English composer I know who can catch that sort of feeling, and he's from North London too.

"Goodnight Stan,
mind how you go, going home tonight,
Goodnight Stan,
take a watering can to protect yourself".

Fay's songs are gentle and wise - "Be not so fearful" is a fine example - and in "Gentle Willie", like Yossarian in Catch 22, "Willie got to thinking they were plotting for his life".

A friend of mine thinks he is very influenced by Samuel Beckett but I would have thought surrealism was a major influence - when I asked Bill about the watering can line he said "couldn't think of a more harmless thing for Stan to carry".

In contrast with what I was saying in Zigzag 11, I can't hear a weak song on this record and his short songs like "Down to the bridge", instead of being fillers, are beautiful poems. "Methane River" and "Cannons Plain" are both great tunes and "Cannons Plain" with its chord sequence at times reminiscent of "Girl from the North Country", is outstanding. However, I think one of my favourite tracks is "The Garden Song" - where Bill's surreal imagination takes off again ...

"I'm planting myself in the garden
believe me
between the potatoes and parsley
believe me
and I wait for the sun
to annoint me
and the frost to awaken
my soul
I'm looking for lasting
relations
with the greenfly, spider or maggot
believe me".

Too many comparisons with other composers are odious and of no importance, but on the evidence of this record I think it is possible to talk of Bill in the same breath as Dylan, David Ackles and Randy Newman and if he gets the chance to make any more records we shall hear if he's got the stamina to stay with them. Since I got this record I've played it repeatedly and everyone who has heard it has really liked the songs. I believe that Decca have produced a very fine record and they should have some faith in Bill and make sure people get to hear it. Some while ago, when the first issue of records on the Decca/Deram "Nova" label came out, there was a splurge of advertising in the musical press and Zigzag received copies of all the records - except "Bill Fay". Now this is what amazes me about the record business. Obviously someone at Decca had the wit to recognise he had some talent but after one single flop they left him hanging around for three years before doing this record. Then, someone decides it's worth spending some money on the production and they turn out a really good and imaginitive record - and then fail to advertise its presence.

In fact if it wasn't for a chance meeting with Joe, and if it wasn't for the fact that Pete liked the record as well, this piece would never have been written.

As it was Pete had to approach Decca for a copy of the record - which is surely the wrong way round. Even so, I think in this case, talent will finally tell and someone at Decca will wake up to the fact they have a very good artiste that very few people know about. When they do - and start writing publicity handouts about him, I hope they avoid the frantic claims made for artistes with a fraction of his talent. Judging by the little poems and fragments of writing Bill has put on the cover of his record I think they should let him write his own handouts - then maybe something will happen.

Jeff Cloves

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And now, from the starmakers who brought you The Herd and Dave Dee .....MATTHEWS' SOUTHERN COMFORT

The tie that binds also chafes, which, in a nutshell is why Ian Matthews left the Fairport Convention just as they were making it. "I really don't know exactly why I left; it's a very difficult question. I suppose it was mainly because I felt that I wasn't contributing anything, I was just functioning".

After a season of professional football with Bradford City ("there wasn't any bread in that"), he sang with a group called The Pyramid, "the first of the mass harmony Beach Boy type groups, just before the "Lets go to San Francisco" era. We brought out one single called "The Summer of Last Year", which I thought was really great, but it didn't do anything ... must've been too early."

So it was at this point that the Convention saved him from fading into deeper obscurity and he in return, according to an aged press release, "saved them from being the only group where none of the male voices could sing in tune". He was on the much maligned but very excellent Polydor album (on which he was called, for a number of reasons, Ian MacDonald), and "What we did on our holidays", their first for Island, on which he also wrote "Book Song", one of my favourite 42 Fairport tracks, but one I could never really understand the words of. "It was about my girlfriend, who works for a West end firm that makes silk pattern books, and she used to come on gigs at weekends - 'When she leaves from her book to be with me'".

Just before he left, the Fairport were playing happy spoonfully music, including lots of country stuff like "Reno Nevada", "I still miss someone" and things like that, and I'd read that they only did this kind of material to please Ian. This was obviously not so because they were playing "Reno Nevada" long after he'd left, but I asked him about it anyway. "No, they were always into that ... Tyger turned me onto country music, and I was still listening to it after he'd moved on to other things". And now, Ian's music is more or less a continuation of that played by the Fairport a year ago, though his Uni LP, Matthew's Southern Comfort is in some ways a false start, having been made before the group was formed.

Wishing to record a solo LP of the songs he'd been writing since leaving the Fairport (and which Richard Thompson was busily arranging), he set about seeking management to finance the idea, and signed up with Howard and Blaikley (which ex-

plains our stupid title), who are not trying to 'mould' their new artiste, or even require him to record songs they've written. "They are" as Ian says, "good bread getters; they've done well for me already. And I seem to be moulding them rather than the other way round - they're more or less giving me a free hand and trying not to get in my way".

Surprisingly (I find it surprising anyway), securing a record contract wasn't just a formality; which is why the album is on the relatively obscure UNI label. "Atlantic turned me down, Island turned me down, Reprise turned me down". Astonishing! Did they hear the record, and see who was on it? "Oh yes ... but ... well, it's verging on pop music and they didn't want to get involved with it". Meanwhile UNI came across with a good bread deal and a nice advance.

And what about the record? Well it was recorded as a solo album, but just before it was released Ian Matthews decided to form a band called Matthews Southern Comfort and so that became the name, despite the fact that his present group bears little relation to the mixture of Fairporters, Fotheringayers, Steel Eye Spanners, Draft Dodgers and Blue Minkers, etc, who played on the sessions. And the music has changed a lot too. So ... the album, though very pleasant, hardly displays the elegance of style of the group (who's name he borrowed from an Ian and Sylvia song, having rejected a series of improbable names like Captian Benjamin Bonnieville) but he thought that giving the album the group title would be more beneficial to everyone. As it happened, Matthews is not highly delighted with the album; "It's a bit over the line ... just a bit too poppy".

Few of the numbers have survived, but they still do "Please be my friend" and "Everythings Alright" (which was called 'A Commercial Proposition' on the album because it was just about the most commercial thing Richard Thompson had written).

The band members come from all over the place; Mark Griffiths (lead) was with Harsh Reality, Andy Leigh (bass) was in Spooky Tooth for a while, Ramon Duffy (drums) was with Marmalade, Carl Barnwell (guitar) is an American songwriter, and Gordon Huntley (a superstar at 43) has played steel guitar in a variety of groups and sessions. And now, with the teething troubles over, (i.e. the prettiness has been partially replaced with a tighter sound ... "a lot of people think it's not as good now, but they're fools"), they are spending a lot of time at Morgan Studios getting their next album done. This one will be representative and comprises most of their stage numbers, including Blood Red Roses (rearranged since I last saw it performed), Johnson, Southern Comfort, Moses, Touch her if you can, and the Carl Perkins/NRBQ knockabout Tina.

The eventual idea is to amass a repertoire or original material, which I feel is a pity, because

I really like their versions of James Taylor's "Something in the way she moves" and Arlo Guthries "My front pages", and as a result of hearing the group several times I made a list of people whose records I thought Ian must be into. Tom Rush? "No". Youngbloods? "No, but I should". Fred Neil? "Yes, I've got 3 Fred Neil albums". Farinas? "Yes - nice - I've got a couple of their albums". Burritos? "Yes". James Taylor? "Yes ... I've just got the new one, and the new Joni Mitchell ... that song Big Yellow Taxi - what a song ... I just can't stop playing that. And the new Randy Newman - that(s really good". Byrds? "Yes - Easy Rider is the best album they've ever made - so together".

Does he enjoy the action packed, fast moving, glory of stardom? "Yes, I reckon so ... I must admit, I wallow in it".

Photographs by Paul Lipson

FRIARS LIVES

BRINSLEY SCHWARZ
what else can we say?

The Cat Comes Back

Cat Stevens talking to Jerry Floyd.

I started out about 3 years ago, which was when I first met Mike Hurst, who became a producer when the Springfields split up. He liked most of my stuff and wanted me to do a single ... so we did "I love my dog", which just sort of took off. It was a last ditch effort for him because he was ready to emigrate to the States, but the record changed his mind. After that we did "Matthew & Son", "I'm gonna get me a gun" and then a crazy thing called "Bad Night" - all these funny singles.

But my record company controlled everything I put down on record, and their whole thing was commerciality; they did ridiculous things like trying to find a formula for what constitutes a hit single, or else they'd release a song because it was reminiscent of a previous hit. And all that sort of thing is complete shit. I liked some of the records, but I'd have arranged them so differently ... but the drag about it all was that it just didn't happen the way I'd wanted it to. When I did start protesting about not having enough say in my career, the word was put around that "Cat Stevens is unmanageable", but I was really only rebelling about being put in a box, and they just couldn't understand that at all. To them I was just being awkward.

"Pop Star" on the new album is me during that period, and that song could apply to a lot of people today. I read these interviews with up and coming groups in the papers, and it's just so clear to me where they're at.

I had a bit of success writing songs for other people. The Tremeloes did "Here Comes My Baby", but the way they did it, they gave it this party atmosphere, whereas the theme of the song was serious. When I first heard it, I just didn't believe it ... but that was a big hit here and in the States. P P Arnold did one of my songs very well - "The first cut is the deepest" - I liked that.

Anyway, then I had this illness. I just broke down; my body couldn't take any more. I was doing gigs about 6 nights a week up and down the country, not eating properly, smoking too much, drinking ... it was just a crazy life, and I wore myself out. Consequently, I had to go into hospital for 3 months to recover, but I had to convalesce for a further year after that, and, apart from writing, I wasn't allowed to do anything. So I had a great time getting better by looking around the world, and just not getting involved in the pop scene at all ... no more reading all about it and keeping up with what was currently going on ... I just dropped out of all that and tried to find myself again, which I did after some time. And now everything's cool ... there isn't anything that can bug me now - like whether something is a hit or a miss just doesn't bother me anymore ... that sort of thing just isn't important. The main thing is just digging music, playing.

I've spent a lot of time listening to a lot of good music - Steve Miller, Joni Mitchell, Fats Domino, the Band, Creedence....all sorts. Dylan - one of the few; right words, right music, right time, right age. Just right. Now, I don't know... he's lost that go. I'd like to see him starve for half a year and then come back and write some more songs. I think that even before McCartney split, the Beatles were slipping. They had this fantastic direction, which I don't believe they were in control of....it was more like providence showing them the way, and the ship that they wanted to be captain of, was much too big for them. It wasn't the way they'd planned it - it just got out of hand. And I felt this self-destructive thing within the Beatles, because of all the pressures...they just looked back and realised they really had nothing to do with it at all, though they were the perfect tools.

It seems to me, coming back into music, that there is like a change going on in the world ... there's so much energy. But I also want to cut down on the cliches that have developed in pop, and go right back to the roots and say what I mean ... take a direct route to say something, and I want to get back on the road again - with the same guys I used on the record. It won't be the same charging around all over the place - just some concerts here and there, and then I'll be going to America in May just for a couple of gigs.

But whereas I used to rely on everybody else for direction and advice, I've learnt that I've got to find out for myself. Like now when someone says "Don't cross that bridge, it's going to collapse", I've got to cross it because that's the only way. I can't take these people who tell you to do such and such a thing ... I mean, we don't all read the same books, and we don't all listen to the same records, although we may go to the same shops.

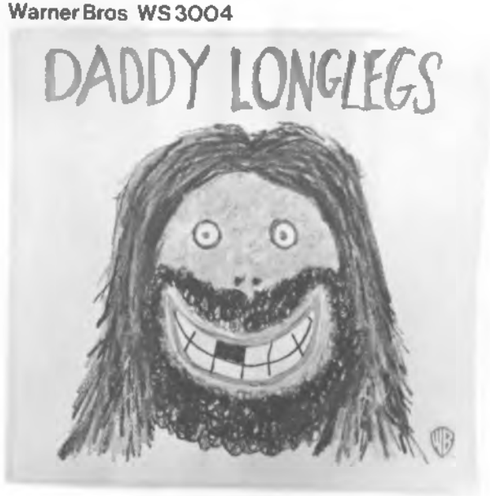
The album I've just done is the first that I've really been pleased about. At last I've been able to do what I want, whereas it's been company hassles previously. For instance, you must have noticed that I dropped those big arrangements which were on my earlier records. I never wanted to use them, but just got driven into a corner ... they were there and I had to use them. But now I keep them right out of it.

Island's attitude is so different ... it's the right side up; they help you all the way along. And Paul Samwell-Smith is the first producer who extended me rather than restricted me. Paul found the backing musicians on the album, and they were so good.

Mona Bone Jakon? that's something you'll have to figure out for yourself.

who the hell is Daddy Longlegs?

Warner Bros WS 3004



THE EVERLY BROTHERS, 13 YEARS ON

The Everly Brothers first single 'Bye Bye Love' was released in 1957 and their records have been consistently good since then. Don Everly, now 33, was in London for a few days, on his way home from a South African tour, and John (our rock'n'roll maniac) managed to interview him.

Z: When you started, your hair was relatively long at a time when the conventional rock'n'roll singers were usually in the clean-cut, all American Boy mould.

DE: I'd always worn my hair long - maybe it was the influence of country singers who used to wear a sort of long swept back pompadour style. I didn't go in for football or that sort of thing. But when we first started, the term rock'n'roll had become terribly abused; it was associated with stealing hub caps off cars, juvenile delinquency and so on ... and even now, it still is to a certain extent. We were called country singers when we started, even though Phil was born in Chicago, which is a mighty big city, and we were doing most of our singing in the Mid West, around Iowa.

Z: Someone told us that Buddy Holly wrote "Love's made a fool of you" and "Wishing" specifically for you, and you turned them down. Is that right?

DE: No, I don't think that story's true at all. Buddy Holly wrote "Not fade away" for us, because the rhythm was the sort that we were into at the time - the Bo Diddley type thing. But we told him that we thought it was more suitable for him. He was a very good friend of ours, and we gave him a song that Boudleaux Bryant had written for us, called "Raining in my heart", which was a very good one for him. When we were stuck for a group, he backed us up on stage a few times in 1958.

Z: We also heard that Buddy Holly used to wear pink jackets and Presley type extrovert clothing and that Norman Petty and you influenced him to smarten up.

DE: Norman Petty was no influence on him whatsoever, except that he used to put 10% of his record royalties into a Norman Petty trust fund. Someone told us about 6 months earlier that our clothes were terrible and he took us to this place to get fitted out. So we took him to the same place ... Yeah, he had some pretty awful suits that he'd had made in Lubbock, Texas. The last time I saw Buddy Holly, he'd been financially screwed - he didn't have any money - and he was on his last tour. He was killed in that plane because he was trying to gain a day for laundry and so on by flying.

Z: Buddy Holly is like a James Dean figure here - they've recently re-released every song he ever recorded.

DE: It seems to me that England has always been interested in the macabre, and dwelt on those singers who got killed.

Ian Samwell (who was also there): Maybe it's a sort of romance about dying with their boots on. Most people don't think of a singer as being anything other than that - the curtains open and there you are.

You're never thought about as a human being who happened to sing; and if you die, it's like being killed in the course of action.

Z: Well most of them were - Holly, Valens and Big Bopper were going to a gig, Reeves was going to a gig, Otis Redding was, Eddie Cochran was going home from a gig. They don't treat Sam Cooke in the same way!

DE: Yeah - he was shot running out of a motel!

Z: You used the Crickets as a back up group after he died didn't you - I remember you toured here with them. Did you ever record with them?

DE: Yes. Jerry Allison was on "Till I kissed you" and "Let it be me". Sonny Curtis was on a lot. The Crickets have just reformed, with the original bass player Joe B. Maudlin - they should be over here soon.

Z: When you changed from Cadence to Warner, you re-recorded and re-released your old hits, which disappointed a lot of people who loved the originals. Why was that?

DE: Well, business I guess. When we first went with Warners, they had no record label at all. We were the first artistes they had, and "Cathy's Clown" was No. WB1; their first single. They used us to sort of subsidise the other albums they put out. They had no offices then - just a room over the street from Warner Bros. Pictures - they had no producers or A & R men, and we were having a big hassle with our manager/publisher at that time ... Wesley Rose. He was like an equivalent of the Norman Petty God figure.

Z: Yes - we've got a quote from him ... "Without me they wouldn't be anything".

DE: Yes that sounds like a God figure doesn't it? The sort of thing God might say.

Z: So you're not published by Wesley Rose any more?

DE: No - not since 3 weeks ago. He had us on a monstrosity of a contract ... 13 years.

Z: Made himself a millionaire in the process I suppose. Is the old Cadence label defunct now, or is there any chance of re-releasing your old stuff?

DE: Archie Bleyer sold Cadence to Columbia ... made himself a millionaire too. So they're going to be released again soon.

Z: On your first Cadence album, there was this big writing over the front "They're off and rolling" says Archie. Was he some kind of ego maniac or something?

DE: Well he decided that he was going to make some money our of country music, because he only had Julius LaRosa, the Chordettes and Andy Williams on his label at that time. He'd turned us down when we sent a tape to him previously, but he changed his mind when he found that Wesley Rose was involved and decided to put us out on Cadence. We cut "Bye Bye Love" for him and he put it out as a country single - didn't have a clue that it might reach a wider market. He hired a publicity agent to build his image up. That's him on the other motorbike on the first sleeve!

Z: Boudleaux and Felice Bryant, who wrote most of your early hits - were they Acuff Rose signed songwriters?

DE: Yes, and they became good friends of ours. Boudleaux was a very observant man and very deep. He was aware that we were going to be bigger than either Wesley or Archie thought - in fact those two were always arguing about which side would be the A side ... a tremendous clash of egos. Archie was A & R ing (which was the old term for producing) on "Wake up Little Susie", but he didn't like the song at all and walked out of the session, and out of Nashville. So the next day Wesley took over, and that was the first time he'd done A & R work - he just happened to be there ... and he considered that his hit. Then "Let it be me" which Archie did; that was his hit and so on.

Z: You had your own record label for a while didn't you?

DE: Yes, Calliope Records, which was the first subsidiary label of Warner Bros. The first record we put out was very successful, a top 10 hit with a big band arrangement of "Pomp and Circumstance", which couldn't be released in England because of some copyright hassle. We were never on the label ourselves; we just controlled it. But we just didn't have time to keep at it after a while ... the Marine Corps didn't help matters any ... and it went defunct. We're gonna reactivate the label soon, with the same kind of brassy sound that we started with.

Z: This Gibson Everly model guitar that they sell ... did you design it?

DE: No, my father did. It was designed smaller than the jumbo, with a different bridge and bigger pick guards because we really used to beat the hell out of them. I reckon you've got to go to the factory to get one - I've had one good one in the last 6 they sent me. They've got a good guitar they call the 'Heritage', which is really a fine guitar; but the black ones we use on stage, I've had mine for 5 years and that's a good one.

Z: Why didn't you ever use pick-ups rather than having to play directly behind a mike?

DE: I don't think it would sound so good - we tried it for a short time but went back to just acoustic.

Z: Let's talk about some of your back up musicians ... Bill Preston for instance?

DE: Yeah ... he was on a few of our albums - he was really good; and so was Larry Knechtal who used to play for Duane Eddy and is still a very big studio musician - really amazing piano player.

Z: What about Chet Atkins?

DE: He's one of the best friends we ever had. He brought us to Nashville, helped us to audition around, published some of our songs without getting us to sign any contracts or anything, and he got us our recording contract. Dad and him used to write to each other before we met him. He was on a lot of our records ... he was on the earliest ones and the middle ones - like "Lucille" and so on.

Z: What sort of material do you play on stage now?

DE: Well we're in a bit of a transition period at the moment - we've been doing shows, we did Las Vegas, which was a challenge ...

Z: Was that back to Las Vegas, or was it the first time?

DE: Probably the last time. We don't see our future in the cabaret scene because we've got our own TV show now, which will change everything completely. We'll be able to do just what we want musically...

television is so powerful in the States. We're taking over the Johnny Cash Show, which is the number 3 rated show over there; Wednesday nights at 9 o'clock - we're doing 12, and we'll be picking our own guests and our own music.

Z: In a book called Rock and Other 4 Letter words, your brother put down Pete Seeger - did you see that?

DE: Yes - I read that far and put the book down. I couldn't bear to go on. But Phil's been misquoted a couple of times, and I haven't asked him about that. As far as I'm concerned, I think Pete Seeger is one of the major influences in all music ... I think he's influenced all music, to the extent that no one has realised yet and will continue to do so. And he's one of the most likely candidates for politics too, I would imagine.

Z: Ian says you've just come back from a 6 week tour of South Africa. As an American, you probably don't think of the racialism down there in the same way we do ... did it in fact strike you at all?

DE: I had to use the European loo - they didn't have one specifically for Americans. I couldn't go to the non-European loo or else I'd have been arrested. We played to some coloured audiences and some white audiences, but never mixed audiences. The audiences were terrible, unreceptive ... I wouldn't go back to play there for that reason. I don't care for that government down there ... as far as I understand it they can arrest you for no reason. But we read about your colour problem and how you stopped Pakistani immigration and I guess that the media in America is not the best place to get an accurate view of exactly what is going on in the world.

Z: Your last album "Roots" had extracts from your parents' radio show "The Singing Everly Family" on it. Was this something you'd particularly wanted to get on record for some time, or was it a company idea for a commercial record?

DE: I don't think it was that commercial, but the way it was done suited me. Andy Wickham spliced it together from tapes we had, and we suggested the idea. We only had a couple of tapes to choose from.

Z: What about the next one?

DE: Well, Warner want a live album and we've done one, but we want to cut some more numbers. We owe them one more album but technically our contract has expired.

Z: Are you going to re-sign?

DE: Depends. I hate contracts - I'd rather let it slide for awhile. But I do like Warners - they're really into it now.

Z: You've done tours with most of the big names of Rock'n'roll ... like Little Richard for instance.

DE: I think Little Richard's a lot more together than people think. Last time I saw him was in Las Vegas - he came out in in robes, a wig that came up to here - but he's still one of the finest rock'n'roll singers ever, incredible. Some of the records that are in the charts nowadays just aren't as good as those records like "Good Golly Miss Molly" and "Lucille".

Z: Which contemporary singers do you think compare well?

DE: Well, the Beatles - "Because" off "Abbey Road" is my favourite thing they've ever done. It's phenomenal how they maintain such a high degree of creativity. I like Crosby Stills and Nash, and James Taylor.

Z: Did you ever tour with Ronnie Hawkins?

DE: I'd never heard of him until Lennon started talking about him ... except for vague recollections. I couldn't name a song by him. Now Dale Hawkins is another matter ... he wrote "Susie Q" which is one of my all time favourite songs; we've always done that in our act - we still do it. A modern equivalent of him is Tony Joe White, I suppose.

Z: John Fogerty, writing songs like "Travellin Band" denies that there is a rock'n' roll revival ...

DE: Well, with that song I don't know if he's sending it up or putting it down. But I wouldn't want to be part of a rock'n'roll revival ... it's like saying we're gonna raise the dead. There's a group called Sha Na Na, who do a celebration of rock' n'roll, and they, to me, are incredible. All the forgotten things, they sing ... things like old 45s by groups that just went into the studio for 3 hours and then split up. They duplicate the originals, with all the ceremony of the old rock'n'roll era. We must get them on our show.

Z: When people like Jerry Lee Lewis come over here they're backed by cruddy groups who can't keep up with them, but you always take your own band around. Who is in it now?

DE: Sammy McKew on guitar, Tiny Schneider on drums and Bob Kay on bass. We started working with Sammy 6 years ago ... we found him playing in Milwaukee, and he found Tiny, and he in turn found Bob. We all live in California now.

THE PRODUCER'S ROLE

A lot of people seem totally mystified about just what a record producer does. So we asked John Anthony to expound on the subject. John Anthony progressed from being a soul music DJ, to playing records at UFO, to working for Mercury Records, to becoming an independent record producer. So far, he has produced the Rare Bird album, 2 albums by Van der Graaf Generator (one of which 'Aerosol Grey Machine' was released only in America), and one by Affinity.

For 2 hours he bamboozled us with technical details on levels and distortion, and we hope that we've edited his explanation into a readable form.

To begin with, you've got to have an idea of what the group can do: by this I mean that I have to work with them for about 3 weeks before we go into the studio, going to gigs with them and learning all the material - probably better than they know it themselves - so that I can suss out the weak parts. So I have an idea of how to handle them as people, because I've got to know them: by then, and how to handle them musically. Then I have to take the material, and by using the technical knowledge I've got (and the enormous amount more technical knowledge that my engineer's got), actually get down to producing or rather drawing out the music ... it's already there or else I wouldn't be in the studio, because I would not work with a crap group.

There are 4 things I look for in a group. 1/ Musicianship 2/ Material 3/ On-stage aura to get the first two over, and 4/ a mixture of disposition, integrity and suitable management.

So, when I go into the studio, I know all the numbers that they're going to do thoroughly. You've got to. I mean, my involvement with an album may be, say 6 weeks, which is quite a long time to produce 36 to 40 minutes of music.

With the last group I worked with, Affinity, who have this amazing singer called Linda Hoyle, the thing I had to overcome was not the studio sound, or lack of material or anything like that, but the group's inferiority complex - they were paranoid about using the studio and their own capabilities. And when you hear the singer's voice - well she's probably one of the best girl singers I've ever heard - and the ideas that the organist comes up with ... well, they're just so good. So we went into the studio for a day, and did all the easy ones, which I usually do ... try and get down all the ones you think will be easiest first; whack them down - a backing track in 3 hours, say, and then build on it with overdubs until you've built up the complete number.

Then you look at it and wonder if it's just how you want it, or whether you think it could be improved. In the case of Affinity I thought a couple of numbers would sound better if some nice, tight brass arrangements were added, just to boost the sound. Now a lot of people think that this sort of thing is cheating, because they can't reproduce the sound on stage, but that kind of thinking really annoys me. If they're going to sit there and get all uptight because there's a trumpet or something on a certain track, then they shouldn't bother to buy the record. I set out to produce a recorded sound that I think people are going to like.

Part of a producer's job is to get in whatever extra studio musicians are needed. This is normally done through session bookers, but you can, if you know them, get friends to come in, which is what I prefer to do. For instance, Chris Hughes is a tenor player I know, and I might phone him up and say "Look I've got a session next Tuesday and need a trumpet player, a couple of saxes ..." or whatever and he gets it together. In the case of Affinity, they're managed by Ronnie Scott, so I just phoned up Pete King (who's the co-manager of the club) and said "Can you get us a few blowers?" So we ended up with Ian Carr on trumpet, Kenny Wheeler on trombone, Ronnie Scott on tenor, and a few other cream-of-British-jazz figures blowing away in the studio.

I use people I know as much as I can, but there are a lot of experienced session players who are really good and keen. A lot of studio musicians say "oh well, it's just another session" - they play acceptably, but just don't feel the incentive to put in any extra effort, and you have trouble communicating exactly what you want - they can't understand how you want certain passages to come out, because their heads aren't in the same place as yours. Studio musicians cock up a lot of records, but then so do some producers - the old school kind who just treat it as a job. They come in and say "set it up" to the engineer and they use the same settings on every record they make. Now, there are things called EQs - equalisations, which are basically middle, bottom and top - and these are controllable to a very fine degree ... there are like 10 settings for top and there are say 12 frequencies you can put it in on, and so on ... but you get producers who can't be bothered to pull a performance out. They go in, say "OK set it up - same as usual", get their Angling Times out and have a read while the group runs through about 3 takes, he can't tell one from another, and you end up with a sound ... sure it's a valid sound, but there's no sympathy, or atmosphere. And a lot of them say that you shouldn't give 100% effort because what are you going to give next time ... but I don't believe that - you've got to put everything into it, and you naturally progress so you put more into it next time anyway.

I've found 2 studios where the engineers are marvellously sympathetic to me as an individual and as a producer. They are Island, which is a relatively new studio with a very nice atmosphere, and Trident, which is one of the best studios there is. So far I've only done some mixing at Island, but I'll probably split the volume of work between the two in future. When people ask me why I use Trident, I tell them that Procol Harum's "Salty Dog" was produced there - the way the sounds come over on that record really knocks me out.

I've tried other studios but don't seem to be able to get on as well in them. Every room is acoustically different, so it's a question of getting used to them too. I went to one studio once, and the engineer said "Don't take any notice of the sound that comes out of the speakers; it won't sound like that when you get it home". I just about fell on the floor ... what's the point of recording in a place like that.

I found that I prefer certain microphones for certain things, like miking up the bass drum, say. The difference in sound quality in various microphones is amazing as regards echo, sharpness, tone and so on. So it's just experience really, because there's no format and no training. But to get a good engineer is a must. There are so many things he could goof up on, if he's not careful, and a guy who really knows what he's doing is

the difference between a good sound and a marvellous sound. Some are pretty fackadaisical, and not particularly helpful, so you've got to know what you're doing rather than spend a lot of time experimenting. So you say "Right let's limit this up to this ratio, put this amount of attack on, put this release on, and so on". But I've got past that stage really because I've found engineers that I can work well with. Robin at Trident is excellent ... whereas I jump about, shouting obscenities and encouragement, Robin sits quietly getting on with it and we're quite a good team really. I know it sounds all jolly and so on, but it is a team thing ... the difference between a mediocre result and, say, the Van der Graaf album which has received some incredible reviews.

Mixing is the hardest thing. I've goofed up so many tapes that you wouldn't believe it. It's the biggest battle. Anyone can get the tracks down on tape - but what you do with 16 tracks is another matter. For instance, on their separate tracks, the bass is nice and gutsy, the drums are fresh and so on; then you hear the mix and everything is watered down, there's no dynamic range, everything is limited out of its mind, and the whole thing sounds so thin. So mixing is the thing where a lot of people fall down ... you've got to reduce the 16 tracks to two, and retain all the quality. In a way I wish I could do the Van der Graaf album again because I've learn't so much more in the last 4 months.

Crosby Stills & Nash spent 600 hours on the first album; their second took 250 reels of tape. Van der Graaf Generator's took 5 reels of tape, because I've got a budget.

"Sympathy", which was a hit for Rare Bird, was unbelievably easy. We had the backing down on take 3, the vocal on the second take and it only took about an hour to mix down from 8 tracks. But that was a freak track. On Affinity's album there are some long numbers and I've got 16 tracks going. On one number there are 3 keyboards being used, and 6 different types of guitar sound; and I went for this Phil Spector type wall of sound, where nothing is very distinctive but on first hearing it will grab you, and on subsequent hearings you keep noticing new things.

A lot of producers use the same old session men, the same old sound, the same old material and the whole thing must be as exciting as making a lemon meringue pie. There is a formula for making a hit single; I could probably go in next week, get 10 session men and churn one out quite easily, I don't know. But these studio men know just how to produce the right sound from their instruments. The people I work with usually haven't had much studio experience and that's why, when they come in with their 200 watt amps and so on, I nip in and take a lot of presence off the bass, stick 9 notches of treble on the guitar or what have you, they think "Cor that bloke's a nutcase". Then they play through a song and think "What a wanky sound", but when they hear the playback they realise what I'm doing. And that's what a producer should be able to do well.

There are so many producers around at the moment that I have a great respect for: Joe Boyd, James Guercio, Lou Adler, George Martin, George Harrison are a few of them. But on the other hand, there are a lot of producers who have made reputations for themselves because the groups they've handled have made things so easy for them. Again, a lot of groups feel that they don't need a producer. I'm quite prepared to accept this, but I've known so many who have produced terrible sounds, because they don't really know what they're doing.

So, basically you've got to get the best possible sound out of the group - something that really delights the musicians and grabs the listeners - and you've got to get that sound onto the record from the tape. And that in itself is an immense problem. On the Van der Graaf Generator album, I recorded it at a very wide dynamic range, which they've got naturally - from Pete's acoustic guitar and very soft voice to Peter really screaming out with the whole group blasting away behind him. The volume indicator, in simple terms, went from -20 to +5, which you just can't have, so I had to use limiters, which literally limit the dynamic range. When a sound reaches a certain decibel level, it prevents it from going higher. (But you use limiters for a number of things - getting a very hard edge on the vocal, getting a snappy sound on the snare drum, brightening up a guitar tone, and damping down a bass sound, and all sorts of things).

My job ends, as I say, when the album goes onto the disc cutter, and it often loses a lot of quality at this stage. For this reason, I favour the eventual replacement of records with tapes, because you can get more level, more range and so on. A lot of albums come out badly pressed and processed; some of the Crosby Stills and Nash LP, and Van Morrison's first had faults that I know of, and some American copies of The Band's 2nd one jumped because they couldn't take the bass level. The original pressing of the Van der Graaf album was terrible and we had no end of trouble to get it how we wanted, but in the end, by using different pressing plants, we succeeded.

I'm not signed as an independent producer to my artistes, I just produce for Charisma (and in the case of Affinity, for Vertigo). I probably will be in a position shortly to sign up groups as their independent producer, because I feel that I've got a bit of a track record to justify such a move, but to sign a group up, you've really committed yourself because you're tying up a big side of their career for a long time. I mean, a year can be a long time ... you can die a death and vanish from the scene completely, or be as big as Jethro Tull.

As for the future, I've got my eye on one or two groups; Genesis excite me ... and very few groups give me that kind of a buzz, they have a style already, and very good material. Then there is a group called Farm, who seem to have the right idea. They need a lot of work on them, but I'm sure it'll come because they're still a very young group, and in terms of what they're putting down and where they'll be in 6 months, they justify a lot of time.

I think I could do 8 albums a year, but would hesitate to take more because I don't think I'd have enough time to turn out a really good record each time.

A dynamic, action-packed, fast-moving shot of Van der Graaf Generator

To follow up our Bob Fripp interview last month, Andy Dunkley talked to Ian McDonald (below right) and Mike Giles, who left King Crimson to persue separate ventures.

PART CRIMSON SPLINTER

Z. Could you give your reasons for leaving King Crimson and whether you've had any second thoughts on the matter?

Ian. Basically, it was the long stretches spent away from home whilst touring. I would prefer to spend the time spent doing long tours of America in the studios, where I feel there is more room for creativity. I want to be able to put down something straight away, in the studio. I don't say I'll never go back on the road again, but I shall be concentrating on recording. We might do individual concerts, but touring is out, for a while.

Mike. If Crimso says, for instance, there is a Traffic tour of six concerts and they want me as a drummer I'd say yes. If they say they are going to tour America, I'd say no. While K.C. hasn't a replacement drummer and they want me to fill in I will, but I have no intention of going back into the fold.

I. Musically I liked what K.C. were playing, but I wasn't able to express myself through the group, which was made up of four strong musical personalities. I felt a need to make my own music. With King Crimson I was compromising. I've no regrets about leaving the group, but it has brought about the situation where I have totally to do my own thing. Bob was the organiser and I rather let him get on with organising things in the group. Now I have to organise myself. Which at present means getting on with the music, with noone to fall back on for ideas. It's up to me to develop the courage of my own music. Which is a difficult thing to overcome, but it's alright once you do.

Z. About your own scene. What are your general plans?

I. Plans change. I've no one set policy, it changes bit by bit. I'm going to record an LP with Mike - working with him on the arrangements, using both our material - that's the first thing to be done. There may be concerts afterwards or I might want to go on with another album. I'd like to work with other people: playing, producing.

Z. Do you have any numbers already planned for this album?

I. We have a thing which is the original tune to "Cadence and Cascade"; Pete Sinfield wrote the words so I shall have to re-write. There's also "Tomorrow's People", which is one of Mike's numbers. I've lots of ideas and short melodies which need expanding and putting together. I'd like to get together with an arranger and do them orchestrally as they lend themselves to this rather than being songs with words. Things like "Trees" which was done with K.C.

Z. What are the chief differences between your music and King Crimson's?

I. The music will generally be lighter. There'll be nothing really aggressive on the album. Lots of Crimso's music is very powerful - it can be a bit neurotic and a bit depressing. I intend to make happier music - things to make people happy rather than depressed. There are so many depressing things about us, that it's necessary to make people happier. We all suffer from depression so there's bound to be a little bit of sadness in the music. But it is possible for sad music to produce happiness. I'm trying to express the point where happiness and sadness meet. It's the Yin-Yang thing again.

Z. Do you have any studio dates planned?

I. Not as yet. We hope to have an album out before June - if anything it needs to be out before then. We're thinking of recording a double-album - that is if we can get Island to release the album cheaply. Double-albums tend to be an extortionate price - people tend to be put off by the price, but funnily they will buy two single albums at the same time. It's a psychological thing. The idea is for there to be one album combining Mike and myself playing the group type music with guitars, drums etc., doing songs. On the other album one side will be Mike doing a more jazzy, freeform music - something rather in the vein of Keith Tippett, but bigger. Mike's a very good jazz drummer - but jazz is an inadequate label, modern music is more fitting.

M. The kind of music I'm after is what everyone else hasn't done yet! It's difficult to describe. Keith Tippett is near, but not it. CTA, Blood, Sweat & Tears and Flock are nowhere near it now, but they made a good start in the right direction and haven't progressed.

Z. How about Tony Williams, Miles Davis?

M. Nice, but not much of me there!

Z. Ian, what about your side of the second album?

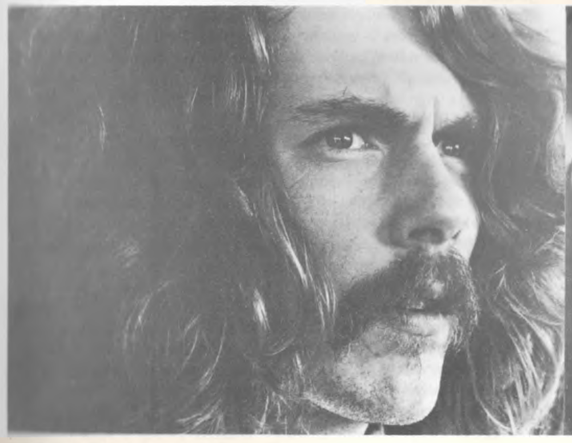
I. The fourth side will be more orchestral. I want to do something different with an orchestra - to make it appeal to people who like rock music. There are so many colours and shades you can produce, with an orchestra. I'll use the usual rock instruments, drums, guitars, etc, but with arrangements. I know a young arranger called Mick Gray and we might be able to do something together.

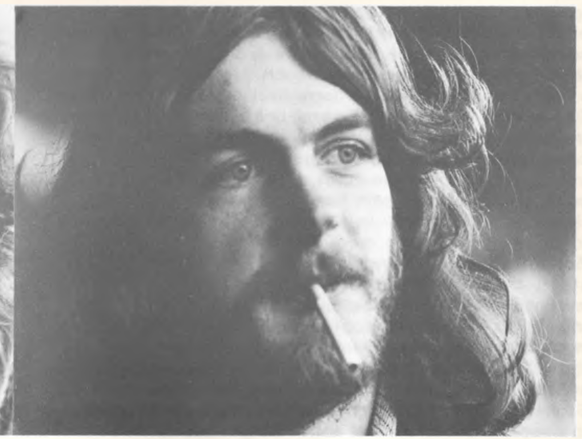
Z. Do you think having such a wide diversity of tastes will work?

M. It's a musical spectrum. I think people will accept the wide choice. The public are ready for more different <u>things</u>. I'm not sure if the public are ready for great differences in <u>one music</u>. They may have to be helped. It would be confusing to have a group type number followed by something orhcestral. So we'll put it (the orchestral) on one side of an album.

Z. Do you think you can combine your two musical styles successfully?

M. At present we seem to have a broad musical attitude. Our styles include points of interest that would clash, but they also include things that coincide. There are coincidences in our likings for Traffic, Dylan, Beatles, Crosby Stills & Nash, and others. The differences we accept and like. But the joint effort takes up most of our time and writing - individual things take up a much smaller part.





NICO; DESOLATION ANGEL

The truths sought by an artist like Nico are elusive, personal, equivocal. Nico is a perfectionist of anti art; a pessimist who somehow manages to fashion beautiful hallucinations from her sense of isolation. Her songs unite the search for, and despair of, salvation with the existential traditions of the European chanteuse. The fleeting, shadowy figures who populate her world are possessed of an irreconcilable melancholy, lost in a nihilist void. While many artists examine the plight of their characters, Nico is more concerned with the structure of the trap.

Her songs isolate a set of metaphors for dealing with the unpleasant facts of twentieth century life - the desolate sub-culture of hustlers, lovers and silence addicts with the hinterland of empty hotels and early morning confessions. Nico's words are accurate newscasts from the unconcious, that narrative stage upon which the whole business of human experience is constantly being dramatised. The scope and depth of her performance result from the artiste's obvious awareness of life, her care for true and revealing diction.

Nico is the most ethereal of Andy Warhol's superstars - she has a remote, icy beauty, like a face glimpsed in a dream. Seeing her perform one thinks of a medieval princess or one of Fellini's wounded angels. Her voice is cold and stark - she has seen too much and been hurt too many times. The pain shows through, the haunted inflection bearing associations with Berlin where much of her childhood was spent.

Nico's background is diverse - she appeared with Delon in 'La Dolce Vita', met the Stones and joined Warhol's Factory in New York, the super chic world of Ingrid Superstar, International Velvet, Ondine and Baby Jane Holzer. At the Balloon Farm she sang with the Velvet Underground as part of the Exploding Plastic Inevitable, a kinetic, stroboscopic trip which was probably the first ever mixed-media experience. After cutting an album with the Underground she split the East Side and began composing her own music, accompanying herself on an Indian harmonium. Nico has made two albums - 'Chelsea Girl' (named after the Warhol film in which she appeared) and 'The Marble Index'.

'Marble Index' could be a sound track for 2001; a droning, circular succession of mantric chants, like the slow motion collision of two mouths. The influence of Warhol is evident in the timeless, frozen quality of the songs. Background is harmonium, cello, violin, electronics; the Index is infinity music overlaid with an obscure and ritualistic text. On the album notes to 'Highway 61 revisited', Dylan explained: "songs on this specific record are not so much songs as exercises in breath control". Nico's songs seem to resemble little more than exercises in sustained surrealist repartee. The crucial sub-text is internal, it remains buried under words. Nico's ideas are abstractions; peel away the layers and there lies the truth. Her songs are an escape from pain, a withdrawal into the frozen, self-created universe of the psyche.

From a musical point of view, 'The Marble Index' is difficult to criticise, since it is so bound up in Nico's own mystique and personal philosophy. Arranger John Cale of the Velvet Underground employs electronic sounds, chamber music and Gregorian rhythms in an imaginative and inventive fashion - never allowing them to drown Nico's plaintive voice. 'Facing the wind' and 'Frozen warnings' are minor masterpieces; the sounds crystalizing into a wailing, awesome hymn of sorrow and isolation. Nico's voice achieves a strange intensity, blending like another instrument.

Nico's appearances in Britain have been few - she performed at an Implosion concert some time ago, looking more lost and haunted than ever. Her voice seemed more fragile and vulnerable than on record. She accompanied herself on the harmonium and held a large audience captive with songs like 'No one is there', which gave a glimpse of her talent as a lyricist. The European influence was strong, the careful pronounciation reminding one of Dietrich and Greco. Hopefully there will be more records and appearances - and perhaps someday Nico will be recognized as one of the few original talents around.

Robert Lightfoot
Drawing by John Arundel

apartheid and rock

What's the connection? Well, quite honestly, any link between apartheid and rock is very tenuous, and although our usual policy where politics is concerned is "turn your back and forget it", we don't feel inclined to turn our backs on this proposed cricket tour, so we did all we could to find a connection. So here is part of an interview between Roger McGuinn of The Byrds and Jay Ruby of Jazz & Pop Magazine (published in March 1969):

J: Would you prefer not to do concerts then?

R: Well, it's difficult work. We just did South Africa, which is a terrible place; we did sixteen concerts in 10 days. I'd say they were anywhere from 100 years on some levels to 5 or 10 years behind the scene. And of course, the segregation thing is terrible and they wouldn't let any spades in to see us.

J: Were you given a chance to play for any black audiences?

R: Yeah, finally in Salisbury, Rhodesia, which is (was) an integrated country, we were. And we were promised that we'd have more chances than that, which is the only reason we really went over there, but they sort of copped out. In fact, they didn't even pay us all the bread, for the whole thing. They were really bad to us. Let me tell you a little bit about the place. Television is illegal in South Africa, you know. They do not allow television, because it would drastically change the status quo, if all these oppressed people saw what they were missing in the world. Even the tight control they would have on it would leak something through. And you're not allowed to mention the Beatles on the air there because of what they said about Jesus, and...

J: This is South Africa?

R: Right, and there's a Dusty Springfield law, because she said something to the effect that she would rather sleep with a spade than any one of them, and they kicked her out of the country, they made a law against her. It's like on the books, the Dusty Springfield law. We told the press various things, like they should take away the segregation signs, and they really blasted us, hated us. We went down there more or less for political reasons, to help straighten out the scene or agitate or try to change the status quo as much as we could, but I thought I was going to get assassinated because of what we said to the papers. We were getting threats, and telephone calls, saying get out of the country or else, stuff like that. It was like Nazi Germany before the war. There was a tremendous nationalistic feeling there, sort of self-conscious, defensive attitude that we're right, even if we're wrong. They knew they were wrong, and they knew that we knew that they were wrong, and they hated us for it.

So there you are; and maximum points to Dusty Springfield while we're on the subject.

Now, apologists defending the regime in South Africa usually point out that we who criticise the place haven't even been there, that things are not the same as here; there are climatic, sociological and economic factors that we in Britain can't even begin to understand.

Dead right. It is entirely due to the climate down there that there exists the 90 day law

under which you can be jailed for 90 days without trial. And when released you can be immediately rearrested and replaced inside for a further 90 days, still without trial or charges.

It is surely for sociological reasons that the South African police have been known to pass electricity through the more delicate parts of their prison inmates' anatomy in pursuance of their vision of the truth.

It is for economic reasons that black people and white people are not allowed to make love - it would take a lot of people with special visual training to classify mixed blood children under the correct colour category, and if they made mistakes, a lot of judges would be kept busy reclassifying them.

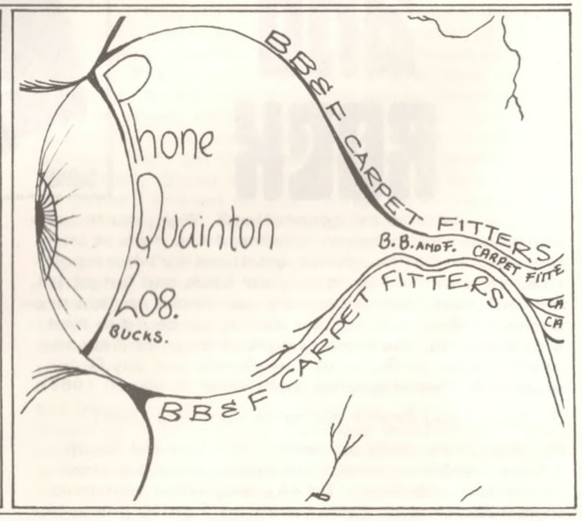
The South African government controls directly, or by garden-shears censorship, all the media in that country. Including, as McGuinn says, the prohibition of television - mainly because they couldn't make enough programmes of their own to fill the air time each week, and imported programmes from most other parts of the world would inevitably have some element of truth and reality in them, and worse still, they might even be so dangerous as to encourage people to THINK!

IT presented some interesting facts in issue number 76, from which we extracted the following chart:

	WHITES	AFRICANS
Percentage of population	19	71
Annual income per head	£476	£43.5
Expenditure per school child per annum	£75	£7
Tuberculosis (notifiable cases per 100,000 pop)	37.1	459.3
Rights to land in the country as a whole	87%	13%
Life expectancy (males)	64.6	40-45yrs
Infant mortality rate	2	42 (rural) 55(urban)

The reports of British anti-Springbok protests last autumn in South African papers were based on the Vorsterian inverted square root calculation system, which adds 1 bishop + 1 longhair + 1 housewife + 1 lecturer and produces the odd few communist protesters, all carrying bricks, all with pimples and sickles and hammers and.... spades...

See you at the cricket matches - sorry, at the cricket match, or at least at the place where an all white cricket match is planned. Everyone.



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THE CROSBY, STILLS, NASH & YOUNG COMPETITION

Last month we said we'd print the names of the winners of our Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young competition, which was pretty stupid of us because we go to press about two weeks before the issue appears on your friendly neighbourhood bookstall. And anyway, we don't know the answers to a couple of the questions ourselves yet. So, the winners will be notified around the time of publication and their names and the answers will appear next month. As it happens, the response has been vastly greater than we anticipated, and they're still coming in folks. We might even have some more.

Nothing better to do?

WHAT POINT of significance was behind this example of graffiti, we wonder. The legend, sprayed in black paint, was found on the wall next to the entrance to the old county council offices in Aylesbury on Tuesday morning — sprayed right across the stone laid by Lord Cottesloe in 1928. The same sentiment had also been sprayed on one wall of the new county offices, on the other side of the road, and on the front of the County Hall, at the bottom of Market Square.

It took a man called in by the council a hard day's scrubbing with a wire brush to expunge the offending words. "They need stringing up," he said of the vandals. "The so and so's ought to be made to come and scrape it off themselves."

"Maybe they were exorcising the place," said a spokesman for the county council. He agreed that the cost of putting right this sort of vandalism falls ultimately on the ratepayers. So if you see any suspicious characters with paint sprays, you know what to do. . . .

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Says Edgar Broughton: "It's encouraging to see that some people have nice ideas".

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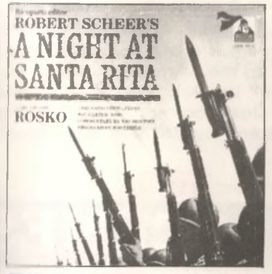

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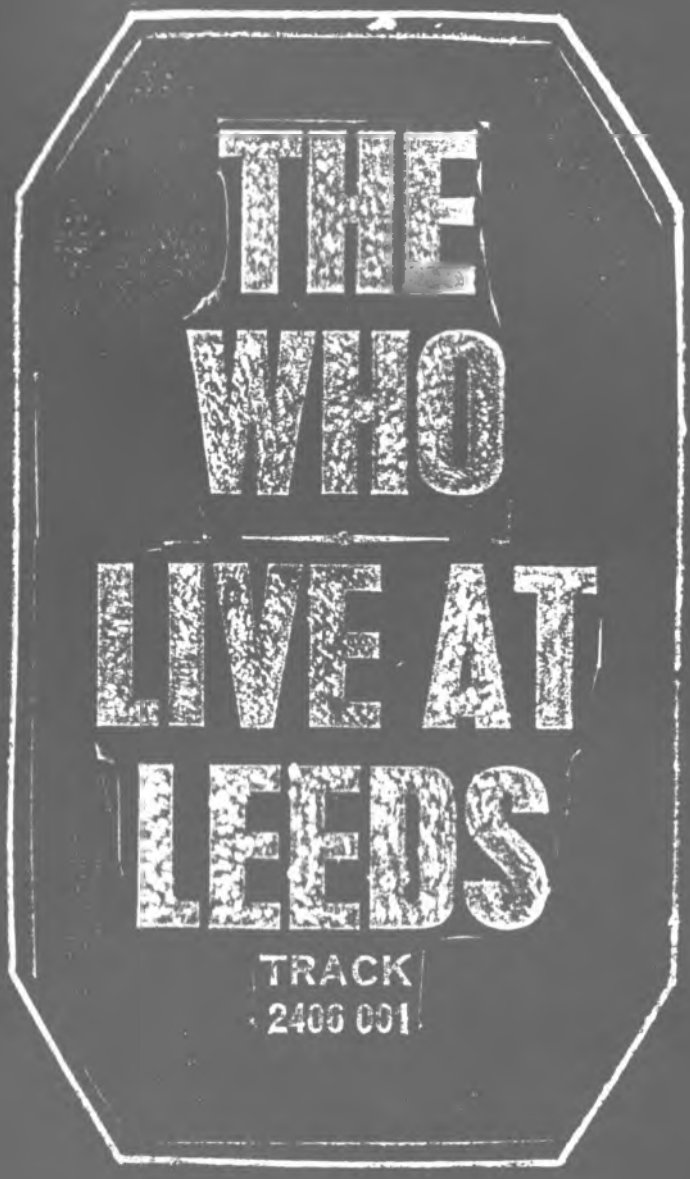

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