

# zigzag

NUMBER 21

THIRTEEN PENCE



# ZIGZAG

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## AT LAST QUIVER'S FIRST ALBUM



K46089

# meanwhile, down in the Bolan alley...

There I was, taking repite in one of those nasty Oxford Street polythene-food restaurants, sipping what the menu called coffee (tasted more like car radiator flushings), when my mind was attracted to the piped music. It was a diluted, plasticised version of T Rex's 'Hot Love'. Blank amazement turned to laughter - I couldn't believe it... the day had come when Marc Bolan's writings were considered suitable for mass audience muzak! Fabulous!

Well, that clinched it; I'd been on the point of seeking a chat with Mr B ever since the 'T Rex is selling out' bogus controversy had begun limping across the boring letter pages of the weeklies. So I did just that - fixed it up with BPFallon, his press liaison man, and zipped down to groovy Kings Road where his managers hang out. BP summed up the whole scene very well I thought: "everyone seems to be auditioning for a part in some film... and they all fail the auditions". It was true - even the way the trendies sat down in the pub was a practised movement, with facial expressions to match. But this is all irrelevant because, having eaten, we burned off to Little Venice, off the Edgware Road, where Marc currently lives. Earphoned, on the balcony, he greeted our arrival... it was 1956 Elvis that he was listening to. But enough of this old waffle - let's get to the meat.

ZZ: Let's start with the T Rex put-downs bit.... now the way I see it, the people who were never T Rex fans seem to think that you've sold out because they've been influenced by the letters, but the people who were always T Rex fans still are - except for the 0.0001% who write letters. (The ZZ questionnaire reflects an exceptional love and loyalty to T Rex).

Marc: Right. On live gigs we haven't had one bad vibe.... not one. As you say, about 10 people may have written in, but the sad thing is that I know for a fact that at least 40 or 50 good letters were sent in and didn't get printed. It's nobody's fault - it's just the 20th Century, and I have to accept it whether I like it or not..... I don't like it, but there you are.

ZZ: But it has been blown out of proportion - they usually have a sensational headline and a big photo beside the letter.... It's because you're a big wheel at the moment.

Marc: Yes - we're big business now, but you've known me for a long time and you



know that after 3½ years or so of funk along, doing alright and, in fact, no different from what we're doing now, we just happened to grow in a way that became acceptable to a wider public.... as did rock'n'roll. But I think that practically any of our old songs could be a top 5 hit now - now that people have got used to us.

ZZ: Does the criticism bring you down?

Marc: Well, the first time we got knocked in the papers, I was well prepared to just split and forget everything. We were 4 or 5 dates into our last tour, and I was ready to leave.... I felt really rejected.

ZZ: It hit you that hard?

Marc: Yes, but don't forget that I'm not a reasonable person.... I'm very erratic. I mean, my immediate reaction was "fuck it; why should I play for them if they feel like that?" But, as you just pointed out, it's not the people that dig us who are criticising.... so it's very stupid to let it upset me. But I did the whole number.... "I'm not going to do anymore, I'll split, I'll blow out the group, I'll just make records, I'll write books" and so on. But the gigs were dynamite - the whole tour was sold out in an hour - so why should I let it get me down.

ZZ: There were no people standing there shouting "boo"?

Marc: Not one... it was all good vibes. So I realised - "what am I doing? It was only 4 people".

ZZ: And now that the furore has died a bit - they've milked the story dry - they have printed a few pro-T Rex letters.

Marc: Yeah, but meanwhile I got used to the fact that these things happen. I know where I'm at, and I know where the music is at; if people don't dig it, then I'm sorry, but I've never felt so good about my music.... I'm satisfied both as a musician and a poet, which is very important. A lot of people think that because I've got away from long visual descriptions that I'm no longer a poet, but what I'm writing now is poetry of the heart really, and I'm much more interested in that now. Mind you, I've got enough poetry written down around the place to fill 25 books, and they're all just like the old T Rex stuff - I mean, that is all still there, but my interest now is getting to people's heads and hearts, and relating to their love lives, their problems, what pain they feel.... that's all I care about. I mean, in the last two years or so, I've had a fucking awful lot of pain - we all have, because we're in the right age in a problem world. That's all I'm into, and if people don't understand that, then they're not mature enough to feel pain - in which case, I don't care about them anyway.

ZZ: You're not the first successful musician to get shat on, anyway.

Marc: Right; Dylan has had so much shit laid on him, it's unbelievable.

ZZ: Well, that's a parallel case - he went electric and got ostracised, he changed style and got ostracised again, he simpli-



Tension and excitement in the dressing room! Trying to stay awake are (left to right), Steve Currie, Ian McDonald, 'Lead weight' O'Halloran (roadie), 'Pete the Road' and Bill Legend. On the poster (near the Chablis and Skol) are Marc and Mickey Finn.

fied his poetry and imagery and got put down again - it's happened to him all the time, and all he does is turn his back and say "get stuffed if you don't like it". Great!

Marc: It's the only way - but I saw a letter the other day which said "why can't Marc write songs like he did on the incredible Beard of Stars album?" Well, that was our least selling LP - why didn't they buy it at the time? It's very convenient for them to say it now... "what an amazing LP that was - they've sold out now!". Anyway, a lot of the stuff on that was more electric than the last one.

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ZZ: Your songwriting has changed pretty radically in style over the last year.

Marc: Well it's matured in relevance to the society we live in - that's what I hope. You see, I'm no longer interested in abstract thought - I'm now living my fantasy... I am what I used to write about on those old albums - I am that, so I don't have to write about it anymore... I see everyone as those images. At that time I was just a very young boy who had some sort of talent - or perhaps I didn't, it all depends on where you're sitting. I now live that incarnation... I see life something like a Fellini film - my head is that way - so I don't have to write like that anymore. Now I try to hit into the middle of what human beings are about. To me, it's the only important thing... but I don't care if I'm a roadsweeper tomorrow; that wouldn't hang me up at all. I'd boogie on being a roadsweeper, but 2 years ago I wouldn't have... so that's a growth. Two

years ago I was very into being a poet and I'm not any more because I am a poet... I don't have to think about it... I've now become Marc Bolan, in fact, which I never was before. All I care about is that people who dig and understand me should know that I dig them - because it's for them that I'm doing it.

ZZ: Are you saying that you wouldn't mind if it all folded up?

Marc: Yes - I wouldn't mind at all.

ZZ: How much has that feeling got to do with financial security?

Marc: Everything. Now I can afford to buy a house in St Tropez or somewhere, live there forever, never have to record again, and never have to worry that much. I mean, I wouldn't have £400 a week, but I'd probably have £10 a week over the rest of my life and I could be a beachcomber or something... maybe sell a poem or a song here and there. In fact, at the moment, I don't have any financial security - I'm not rich and I don't have any money, but I've got money coming to me over the years. Just to know that I've got the money to buy a house somewhere is enough - that's all I ever wanted in fact... I've got a tape recorder - I could make my own bootlegs.

ZZ: Do you find studio recording a drag?

Marc: Not at all - it excites me incredibly. I'll only reject it when and if I get rejected by the people who I think understand where I'm at.

ZZ: You'll call it a day before you sink to

small town cabaret level - before you get past it?

Marc: Well, for one thing, I don't think I'll get past it. A lot of people would argue that Dylan's best stuff was made around 1963, but to me his best was New Morning - his last. I loved Blonde on Blonde and all the others, but New Morning was the first where I felt that he was actually giving me his heart - the fact that the man was prepared to strip his stomach open and say "look inside, rummage about, dig me for what I am". That's all you can do... there ain't no more.

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ZZ: It would seem to me that in your old you devoted a lot of time to research, the theme and word choices, but 'Hot Love' for instance seemed to be a half hour job.

Marc: I never thought consciously about things like word choices in any of my old songs - I only thought about the feeling. 'Hot Love' I wrote because I wanted to write a rock record - I mean, I know it's exactly like a million other songs, but I hope it's got a little touch of me in it too. It was done as a happy record, and I wanted to make a twelve bar record a hit, which hasn't been done since 'High Heeled Sneakers' really... though I wasn't sure that it would be a hit. What happened was that we got very lushed one night, had about four bottles of brandy, it was about 4 in the morning, and we just did it - I wasn't aware that it was going to be such a big record... I just dug it, that's all.

ZZ: How long did it take to write?

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Marc: Ten minutes....didn't even think about it.

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ZZ: Can you tell us how and why you decided to expand the group?

Marc: Yes. I thought about it for a long, long time, but in the beginning I was just totally opposed to it - like I usually am to anything anyone suggests. Beep (the very same B P Fallon) once said to Jurie (wife of Marc) that we'd be really incredible if we had a bassplayer....but I just said "bollocks" - I didn't want to know about it. Then someone else said that if we had bass and drums we'd be one of the biggest groups in the world....but it was instant block - I just didn't want to know. Then suddenly I started thinking about it....I was overdubbing like mad on all the records and I wasn't really getting the feeling I wanted - there was a great gap. And then it struck me really hard, and I just couldn't do another gig without a bassplayer. Tony Visconti played bass on 2 gigs, we blew out another 4, and auditioned for a bass. We got Steve; he was the first we interviewed and he was dynamite. So we worked for two weeks like that and then realised that if Mickey wanted to get into congas, which he did, we'd have to get a kit drummer. So we did - I knew a guy called Bill, who was in Legend, and we did a couple of days rehearsal with him and off we went.

ZZ: That's Bill Legend?

Marc: Well, his real name is Bill Fyfield, but we always used to call him Bill Legend. We nicked Legend's roadie too, so I bet they hate me.

ZZ: You held several auditions for drummers before you got Bill didn't you?

Marc: Oh yes - about 4 days I think, but after a while I did a typical Bolan cop out and left Steve in there while I went and played billiards next door. For the first two, I was really enthusiastic and spoke for hours, but in the end we didn't choose any of them.

ZZ: Were they all bad?

Marc: No, they were all good, but not what I wanted.

ZZ: What about Snoopy? (See last issue)

Marc: I thought he would be a very good drummer if he was playing in a group like Santana. But it was their heads I was looking at, not their playing....I was looking inside them, and not one flitted. Bill was perfect.

ZZ: So you're back where you were in 1966 - with an electric group.

Marc: Yes, that's all I've done really...re-create Johns Children, or what I wanted Johns Children to be when I was with them at the beginning, and I'm writing exactly the same stuff as I was 5 years ago....it's no different really, except that it's a bit better, hopefully, and has a bit more insight. But I can play it now and I couldn't before....I could only play Desdemona.

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ZZ: Let's talk about the new album; I haven't heard it and the only things that I've read about it are that it's mainly 12 bar numbers, very personal and it was recorded in various parts of the globe.

Marc: Yes - it's called 'Electric Warrior' and we recorded about 6 tracks in Los Angeles, 4 in New York and 2 over here....Tony Visconti was over in America on holiday, so he was able to produce it again.

ZZ: Why was it done in America...time and convenience?

Marc: Yes, and I wanted Howard and Mark (Kaylan and Volman from the Mothers) to be on it, and they were in America. On some of the tracks, I hadn't rehearsed the band and I didn't want to - I just wanted us to go into the New York studios, very stoned, go through a number about four times, and then do the take....and that's how we did everything, whereas in the past I used to do about 15 takes.

ZZ: And are the songs basically more personal?

Marc: Well, they're really what I care about. As far as I'm concerned, it's the first album I've ever made; the others were just ideas, but in this one I spoke about me, and you, and all of us.

ZZ: How did you meet Howard and Mark in the first place?

Marc: Well, we played with them on the first Tyrannosaurus Rex tour of the US....it was their last dates as the Turtles, and we got to know them - they even stayed at the same Holiday Inns as we did.

ZZ: What exactly are these Holiday Inns - they seem to get mentioned by every American group as an intrinsic part of touring (like English bands mention the Blue Boar)?

Marc: They're just like motels, but they are well cheap and every group stays at them; they're very good, very serviceable, you can get booze any time you want it, and there are always plenty of groupies around if you're into that. We stayed at one in Chicago and there were at least 10 chicks outside the room and about 12 of them inside - we weren't really fuking with them, but they were there....just standing around.

But America is so different from England....another important thing is the radio - you grow up in your old man's car, which has 25 rock stations on the radio, and you hear just everything. If we had FM radio here, London would be the funkier city of all time; England would be the best country in the world if we had FM radio, because everyone would hang so loose. That's why America is so loose....the radio thing is dynamite.

Howard & Mark though - they are just incredible singers; when they came over with the Mothers we recorded 'Seagull Woman', then when they came over for '200 Motels' we did 'Hot Love', and they are on 'Get it on' too.

ZZ: I recently read that you've conquered America now, right?

Marc: Well, we're halfway to conquering America - the records are starting to sell now....'White Swan' got to about number 60, 'Hot Love' got to 49, and this one will hopefully do better. It's a progression, which to me is perfect....very solid.

ZZ: What about gigs?

Marc: They were lovely. The first tour was disastrous - it wasn't good at all, but the one we've just done was very good....the reaction was strong. We were bottom on most bills, but we were top at the Whiskey in LA and we filled it for 3 nights in a row, which, believe it or not, hasn't been done for a long time....packed it solid.

ZZ: I see you've changed your mind about the Dead; last time I spoke to you (about 15 months ago) you didn't like them.

Marc: Well, I saw them again this time and they were incredible - like a whole new

band. Jerry Garcia is dynamite - one of the best guitarists in the world...easily; he was just so good. Who else? Well, Jefferson Airplane were very good, much better than when I last saw them....and Alice Cooper, they're great....musically excellent, visually excellent....but a lot of the bands were terrible, Mountain included.

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ZZ: This new single - you're not going to tell me that's a 10 minute job.

Marc: Oh no....but the actual backing track of guitar, drums, bass, Howard, Mark and me took about 10 minutes, and then we double tracked which took about another 5. But what we did was bring the track back from America, overdubbed Ian MacDonald on sax, and the strings were an afterthought really - we'd put strings on the b side, had some time over, and decided to put strings on 'Get it on' too. The only thing that took time was the lead guitar track - I did 4 which I wasn't happy with, then I did it again at Advision and managed to get what I wanted. The trouble was that I was playing too much, over-playing all the time, and it took some time to work that part out. Rick Wakeman did a piano part on it too....just came in, heard it, and played....took about five minutes and that was it.

ZZ: Another chartbuster!

Marc: Well I always felt that although you had your occasional hit by Cream, Jimi Hendrix, the Who, the Stones, etc, it was normally just 'Chirpy chirpy cheep cheep' type shit, and I feel that if we get hits, all the better. I see no reason why the freaks shouldn't be represented in the charts; but what bugs me is when they turn round and resent you for it....I mean, I'll do Radio One club or anything like that if it means talking to people - I could possibly turn a few people on to a good record, like 'Love her madly' by the Doors, and they might listen to that rather than the usual old tunes that we know and hate. But you can't deny singles.

ZZ: Well I always look on my collection of singles as a diary; I play one and it brings back memories of what was happening to me then....birds, places, times, friends, and so on.

Marc: Totally. They're so important. I mean, with 'Hot Love', there are about half a million people in England who are going to remember that record.

ZZ: Are you starting to get recognised in public now?

Marc: All the time.

ZZ: Were you always?

Marc: Never. The reason I am now is Top of the Pops and things like that, and I look reasonably like I'm supposed to....I mean, I don't walk around in a hat and sun glasses. Some people come up and chat, sometimes there are blank moments and nudges, and little girls rush up and say 'hello Marc, can I have your autograph', which I think is lovely....I give them a kiss too.

ZZ: Do blokes come up to you as well?

Marc: Oh yes, a lot of heads....they're sometimes a bit frightened, but basically they just want to talk - to say hello and to find where I'm at really. It's good - you have got to talk....forget all the 'super star' bit. Anyone can talk to me....I'll listen. Pete

Further reading: Zigzag 10.

Photographs (including the cover) are by Spud Murphy

# Harmony Row Jack Bruce

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# TALKING TO DANNY KOOTCH OF



Many readers probably know Danny Kootch only as a name on James Taylor sleeves. He's more than that.

He's been around quite a bit. So much so, that it seemed like a good idea to cap-sulate his career in chart form - then you can also see how he became associated with the other members of Jo Mama, which has been going for about a year and a half now. (First album just released here, the second on the point of release in the US).

Right. Having been through his past with him in the offices of Atlantic Records, I got round to his current band and the circumstances in which they got together. "We formed under circumstances of desperation; Gale had just quit 'Hair' because she couldn't stand it anymore - she was the lead female part for over a year - and the rest of us were out of work. Gale had access to a gig in a Los Angeles discoteque called The Factory, and so we decided to get together. It was hesitant at first, and we were all very suspicious of each other... mind you, we were all friends really - we used to hang out together long before the band started. Anyway, we had a lot of fun, sitting around smoking pot and rehear-

sing top 40 tunes for this gig, that we decided to stay together as a band".

The Factory was a typical discoteque catering for an audience less interested in the music than the environment, the drink and being groovy, so the gig didn't stretch the band's creativity or musical ability too much. "It was a definite thing to make money... we obviously couldn't get worked up about musical integrity, and so we just played the tunes tongue in cheek - almost as a put on". And they didn't have a name either - a fact played heavily upon by their press release: 'they had a different name every night; Baby Toshiba & the Del Rays, the Red Squids, Sister Agnew and the Malaprop Inc, Red, Flash & the Bummers, Sparky Lust. It was 'how about this?' and 'how about that?', until someone said 'how's jo (your) mama?' That was it!

Was there a grain of truth in all that, I wondered?

"Some of the facts are true - we did change our name a lot - but that bio was really just typical bullshit promo stuff. But when we eventually realised that we'd have to get a name if we were to stay together, we decided on Jo Mama, which means 'Your mother'... it's a New York expression which you hear all the time.

Since then, several members of the band have said they think it's a bad name, but I like it... I think it's a gas".

Gigs weren't too frequent in the early days - a disco here, a bar there, and a fag hang out in Hollywood "where guys dance with guys". But it was mostly beer-bars... "real funky places where people just get wasted and fall on their arse. But that is how a band gets started, playing places like that. That's what was wrong with City (see opposite); there was no way that Carole could have ever gone into one of those shit-holes and played... no way. But you've got to - and it's really work... like 5 forty minute sets every night. In this band, fortunately, the harder the work, the better we like it... we really dig to get out there and bust our arses".

Shortly after they formed, Michael Ney was run out in favour of drummer Joel O'Brien, who had returned from the Far East, and they got the management and agency side together a bit more. The next step was a record deal: "we used to rehearse at the Troubadour in LA a lot, and our manager used to bring various people down to see us. He brought a guy from A&M down, but he didn't like us, and

## JO MAMA'S ANCESTRY

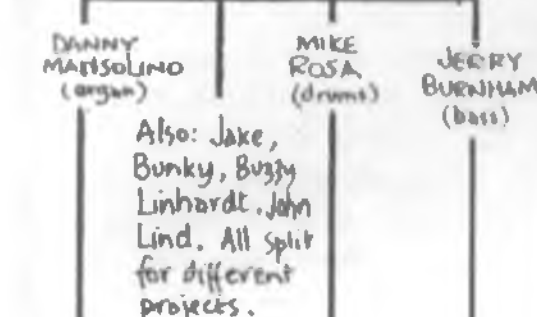
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### THE MIDDLE CLASS

"They were a great group" - but never recorded. 1966 - 1967

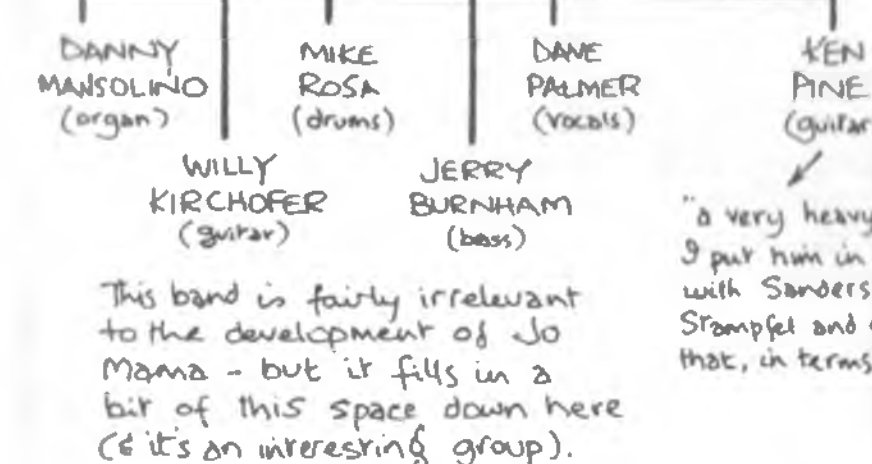


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he brought Ahmet Ertegun from Atlantic down, and he did like us - not only that, but he knew just where we were at, what we were trying to do. Atlantic has a long history and tradition of funky music, and we were glad at the chance to become a part of it. Meanwhile, word had got back to A&M that Ahmet liked us, and they came back and said 'we'll take you after all', but we said 'yeah? ... fuck that - the cat heard us and didn't like our music', which was fair enough, ... either you like it or you don't".

Peter Asher materialised as their producer - a natural choice in many ways. He'd first met Danny when the King Bees backed teen-idols Peter & Gordon on a tour of the States. Through Danny, he'd met James Taylor and the rest of the Taylors, and Danny had played on various records he produced - including the last two James Taylor albums and 'Willard' by John Stewart. The Jo Mama album, which has recently been put out by Atlantic, is over a year old, ... and 12 months is a lot of difference in terms of experience, playing together, learning - it's really a new band now. For what that album was, it's good, yeah, but for what the band is now, that's a different thing".

The new album (out here in a couple of months) is much better; "It's really boss ... funkier and harder altogether. Better cover too: on the first, the photographer thought of Jo Mama as an Italian rooted idea, and that's why we've got that cheesy shot of us in a pizza house. The new sleeve has us out in the desert, set up ready to play, except that my guitar is plugged into a garbage can, Charlie is plugged into an oil drum and things like that".

The first album sold only reasonably in the States, which was OK by them; their policy is gradual improvement and gradual audience widening. "It's gonna take us a while and a lot of hard work - we're not gonna be any overnight success, because, like I said, the music is not like other bands and people are gonna have to get used to us. The guy who was interviewing me before you asked me how I would categorise our music - whether it was blues or country or whatever - and I said 'it is none of those things, man, and all of them! ... but he didn't seem to understand too clearly what I was getting at. But people are going to have to relate to us strictly on our own terms - and we'll have to see how they do that. ... progress is a funny thing".

As I said at the beginning, Danny Kootch has got a bit of a reputation because he played on a couple of hit albums. "So what?" he thinks. "But if people are going to dig me for what I really do, that's something else, and that's when I'll agree that I've got a name - not just because I played on Carole's or James' records". What is more, he freely admits that Jo Mama is not his ideal band. "My ideal band is Miles Davis, Pharoah Sanders, Elvin Jones, all those cats. To me, you take what you've got and work with it. All of the cats in Jo Mama are great musicians though, ... man for man, I think that musically they're above almost any band in the country. Then again, musicianship alone doesn't mean much in terms of popular acceptance. ... In fact, it often gets in your way; a lot of people would rather see some band take its clothes off and freak out, than just see a bunch of cats up there playing - and I sometimes have to remind myself not to just stand there playing, but to move about and shake my arse a bit. It's kind of stupid, but I can see why people like that".

"Isn't it changing a bit now?"

"Only to the extent that the emphasis is on solo acts rather than groups, except

for a few, ... and the few are either absolutely the hardest, like Led Zeppelin, or absolutely the biggest, like Crosby Stills. Well, we're not a freak out, psychedelic, hard rock band and we're not superstars. My attitudes have changed though; when I started out, I wanted to be a star with a Cadillac and the whole bit, but after you've been working for a while and you don't achieve these goals immediately, you begin to think of other things - like becoming a great musician, or a master guitarist".

"I sometimes feel dissatisfied within myself and start thinking 'I wish I could play with Miles Davis or Pharoah Sanders', ... but I ain't good enough. If I do get that good, I'm going to make the effort to do just that - but I've got a long way to go. But you'll never see me looking like that (points to picture of Steve Stills with his acoustic guitar). ... if I ever reach the position he has, I won't be playing none of that folkie stuff - I'll be playing some far out shit that no-one has heard before. I mean, right now if I want to listen to some music, I'm not going to listen to Alvin Lee or Joe Cocker - I'm going to go back to the roots and listen to the real bluesmen ... and if I want to listen to some jazz, I'm not going to listen to Blood Sweat & Tears".

What about straight pop, I wondered ... did he ever listen to that?

"Almost never. Popular music is just that, ... popular music for the masses, music for the lowest common denominator, music that everyone can relate to. I like music which is remarkable". One man's meat is another man's poison; Danny likes R&B (the Isley Brothers, Lee Dorsey, Otis Redding, the Impressions, and stuff like that - "that's the best 'pop' as far as I'm concerned") and jazz (like those cats mentioned earlier). Well, as a person, I really dug Danny Kootch and though I could never ever get worked up about Lee Dorsey (eek and ugh!), he got me so interested in Pharoah Sanders (whose work I had, in my bigoted ignorance, never listened to) that I went out and swapped two bad new LPs for a second hand Sanders one.

"Music, just like novels, plays, television or movies, is basically entertainment. Different things entertain different people. ... like I'd rather read Dostoevsky than 'Love Story', because it's more entertaining to me - there's more there to groove me and keep my mind alert. Something that fucks with my head is entertaining to me. I could spend 4 dollars on a Crosby Stills album and after four or five listens, I'd know everything on it - or once even; you hear it once and that's it, there are no surprises anymore. But you can buy a Pharoah Sanders album and it's timeless - you can listen to it for a year and constantly find new things on it. ... it isn't rendered obsolete by the follow-up album. You could take a Miles Davis record that was made 9 years ago, and it's still fresh and meaningful".

Being a dumb rock-crazed git, I was out of my depth. Could he give some examples of records worth listening to?

"Well, 'Bitches Brew' by Miles is good; 'In a Silent Way' is a beautiful work - to me it represents some of the best music ever to come out of the United States ... just fantastic. You could listen to it a million times and still love it - it takes you on a trip. ... holy shit! I mean, I listen to albums the same way as everyone else; I smoke a joint, put a record on, and away. ... and Miles takes you places, man, into new dimensions. ... it's for your head".

What about Pharoah Sanders albums?

"Any of them; any record by him has got to groove you. You know Jr Walker? Well, Pharoah Sanders is like Jr Walker on acid. ... like a step beyond. ... very

lyrical, very beautiful, very melodic and very simple - to me it's the ultimate in music. What I eventually want to do, is play music that is as effective as his. Not like his, but as effective. ... whew! I want to take people on trips, man, because that's the best thing you can do - if you can take someone out of his chair. ... whew! There is a Sanders track called 'Upper and Lower Egypt' and this cat literally takes you down the Nile - it's for your head and for your fantasies. ... it's just beautiful. ... and I'm afraid that Black Sabbath don't do things like that for me".

Nor me. But back to Jo Mama - just where do they fit into all this? Is it a compromise of diluted ideals, dictated by the audience?

"Yes, of course it is. You see, the economics of keeping a rock band together means that you have to keep going up. It is no good maintaining a level - you've got to rise if you're going to function, because of the expense involved; there's no such thing as an unsuccessful rock band - they all break up when they start going down. You've got to be more and more successful and to do this, you just have to compromise somewhere along the line. If I were a big rock star, I would just stand there and play my music, but now I'm constantly aware that I've got to entertain the audience. We've changed our direction several times because of this; we wanted to just lay back, get into our music, and play our sounds, but we found that audiences were going to sleep - nodding off on us. ... they didn't fucking well care if we were playing good music, all they cared about was if we were moving about or not. So we had to start playing harder, funkier and get ourselves moving, and we got more of a reception thing going. But that audience supports you, and you've got to do it - especially in these days when nobody has any money. ... you've got to attack that audience and convince them that you're boss. What the fuck is all that about? It's a bringdown, but you've got to survive".

But though it's a compromise to a degree, it's an honest one - the audience pays for and gets a musically excellent band - and Jo Mama are not out to con anyone. They'll play for relatively low bread just to reach the people, because that's where it's at for them - gigs rather than records, come first. "You go to a record store and you see a million albums - and you can tell when a group has got together and put everything they've got into a first album. ... it's either going to make them or they'll starve; they have little esoteric jokes on the back, like 'booze by so and so', 'vibes by so and so' and they have pictures of the guys doing funny things. Well, in 99% of cases, nobody gives a fuck about them - they come out with the album, three people buy it, and the group has to break up. ... and they're broken hearted. ... they failed. Well, I learnt that you just can't do that - any fool can go and get a record deal and cut an album, but what you've got to do is go out and play for the people, all over the country, mostly at bullshit bread, and that way you can convince a few people to dig you and maybe even buy your album".

\*\*\*\*\*

Come and see me in ten years time; I shall be lying back in an easy chair listening to the latest Danny Kootch album. "You can keep all your pop shit" I'll say, "all I want to listen to is the work of genius. ... just listen to this cat - his music takes you into new dimensions, man. ... yeah, that's Danny Kootch".

It could happen. It'd be nice, too.  
Pete

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# THE (ALMOST) COMPLETE HISTORY OF AL KOOPER

Al Kooper: yet another important figure in American rock who seems to get glossed over in a few unenlightening paragraphs in the pop weeklies. (Not that he cares; see him showing his disdain for the journalists who criticised him while he was over here in the photograph over the page). The man is a giant... do they not realise? So here it is - the (almost) complete history as related by a supine Kooper relaxing on his hotel bed... but necessarily condensed because of its great length.

## PART ONE: GETTING STARTED

Al: I was a schoolkid, right?... playing a little guitar, learning to play piano - you know, 'Tennessee Waltz' or whatever was popular at the time... I used to pick them up by ear. And I had this guitar playing friend who knew the manager of a recording group and was fooling about with making records, so I really got under the spell of that. After a while I got the chance to play guitar for the group and I got hooked on hanging out at this manager's office... it was very Italian and very dishonest - the usual 50s scene. (The group was the Casuals, who had a hit record of 'So Tough').

Then I got to playing with these other cats called The Royal Teens, who were making records which weren't too big. It was very strange because I was 14 and a rocker, and suddenly we had this very big hit called 'Short Shorts' - so I became very arrogant and I wasn't too nice for a couple of years... really up in the clouds. I played with them for a couple of years on and off (because they were all older than me and I was still at school), but I didn't make a dime... I was robbed blind. But I learned some good shit, learned about the business and lost my virginity.

After that I did a lot of studio work, having got a reputation as a guitarist. I

used to play hookey from high school to do it, which baffled my parents who kept sending me to new schools every year because my education seemed to be sliding. Then, in my last year of school, I let all the music go, and I really burned my way through the lessons until I was second in class, because I wanted to go to college to learn music... but when I got there it was a drag - they taught music so very archaically; their whole head was fucked up... like still in the middle ages. I tried to explain it to them, but there just weren't any kindly hip teachers, so I was never able to get through to them... they were all losers. I did that for six months, stopped going to classes but still lived there for another six months, and tried to sort myself out. I was 19 and it was very serious not to go to college because everybody went to college at that time.

ZZ: What music were you into around that time?

Al: That was my jazz period; Art Blakey, Horace Silver, Maynard Ferguson, Ray Bryant, Cannonball Adderly... I just ate that up from say, 60 - 63. It was down to Birdland every night.

ZZ: You didn't get involved in folk music around that period?

Al: I didn't even know what folk music was then... except the Kingston Trio. Paul Simon was a friend of mine, and he was producing rock'n'roll records around that time, but Dylan was turning him on... he would come to me and play 'Baby let me follow you down' on his guitar and say 'Isn't that incredible?'. ... and I'd say 'No... not really'.

ZZ: So you left college?

Al: Yes - which upset my parents greatly, so I made a deal with them; if I couldn't do anything significant within one year, I'd go back to college... I thought that was fair.

So I got a job as apprentice engineer in a recording studio, which turned out to be sweeping the floor and getting the tea. But when everybody had gone home, I'd make these demos... all me overdubbed, and I started a company to make demos for people really cheap. That was a failure - I did them real good, but nobody else liked them... so Ko-op Productions went right out of business and left me with nothing but a lot of stationery and visiting cards that I'd had printed.

ZZ: Then came the songwriting era?

Al: Yeah - I met up with these two guys called Bob Brass and Irvine Levine; they had written 'A thing of the past' for the Shirelles, 'Oh Little Lonely One' by the Jarmels, and a few other hits, and they asked me to join them because they didn't play any instruments. They were weird guys - much older than me - but I was into that Tin Pan Alley bit so I joined them... and we got very tight. They were absolutely mad... we wrote about 10 songs a day, poured them out... and then, one of them became a number one hit; 'This diamond ring' by Gary Lewis & the Playboys. We wrote some really good songs, but that wasn't one of them - that was the one we least expected to make it, but it did... eleven months after I left college, so I figured that was significant enough to prevent me going back.

ZZ: How did you write your songs - just sit down and think 'my baby left me this morning' and throw in a few clichés, or what?

Al: It was a bit more technical than that - we'd sit at the piano, all three of us, and I'd play around, hum bits of tunes... then, as soon as we got something going, we'd juice it for all it was worth. We worked from titles and phrases... It was weird, sure enough. And we drank a lot, and I started getting high too - they turned me

This chart could obviously have been much fuller if we'd traced roots back further & included dates & other information, but we simplified it for clarity.

# AL KOOPER

ex Casuals, Royal Teens, songwriter, session guitarist, engineer, folksinger, organist in Bob Dylan's Band

## THE BLUES PROJECT

See also Zigzag 22. Originally planned by Kalb & Blumenfeld on New Year's Eve 1964.  
Albums: All Verve Folkways imports. 'Live at Cafe au Go Go' FTS 3000, 'Projections' FTS 3008, 'Live at Town Hall' FTS 3025, 'Best of' FTS 3069

ANDY KULBERG  
bass

ROY BLUMENFELD  
drums

DANNY KALB  
guitar/vocals

AL KOOPER  
keyboards/vocals

STEVE KATZ  
guitar/vocals

TOMMY FLANDERS  
vocals

Spir to make 2 solo album: 'The Moonstone' Verve SVLP 6020

## BLOOD SWEAT & TEARS

See also Zigzag 19 & 22  
Album: The Child is father to the man CBS 63296

## SEA TRAIN

Formed from remnants of Blues Project  
Albums: Planned Obsolescence Verve FTS 3046 [Import]  
Recorded under name of Blues Project  
Sea Train A&M AMLS 941

JIM ROBERTS  
lyrics

ANDY KULBERG  
bass/flute

ROY BLUMENFELD  
drums

DANNY KALB  
guitar/vocals  
Album with Stefan Grosman 'Cross currents' [Cotillion] Import

AL KOOPER  
keyboards & vocals

STEVE KATZ  
guitar/vocals

DICK HALLIGAN  
trombone

JERRY WEISS  
trumpet

RANDY BRECKER  
trumpet

Spir to make 2 solo album on U.A. & to play with Horace Silver

## SEA TRAIN

See also Zigzag 3

JIM ROBERTS  
lyrics

ANDY KULBERG  
bass/flute

DON KRETMAR  
sax/bass

left music to become a photographer

AL KOOPER  
Solo artist, Super-Sessioneer, producer  
See also Zigzag 22

## BLOOD SWEAT & TEARS

See also Zigzag 19  
Albums: Blood Sweat & Tears CBS 63504  
Blood Sweat & Tears 3 CBS 64024  
Blood Sweat & Tears 4 CBS 64355

## SEA TRAIN

Album: Sea Train Capitol EA ST 659

## BLUES PROJECT

Album recorded & ready for release

LLOYD BASKIN  
keyboards

PETE ROWAN  
gtr/vocals

JIM ROBERTS  
lyrics

LARRY ATAMANUIK  
drums

ANDY KULBERG  
bass/flute

RICHARD GREENE  
violin

DON KRETMAR  
bass/sax

ROY BLUMENFELD  
drums

DANNY KALB  
gtr/vocals

STEVE KATZ  
guitar

FRED LIPSUS  
sax/piano

DICK HALLIGAN  
organ

BOBBY COLOMBEY  
drums

JERRY HYMAN  
trombone

JIM FIELDER  
bass/flute

LEW SOLOFF  
trumpet

DAVID CLAYTON THOMAS  
vocals

chart by Pete

on.

ZZ: Why did you split from them?

AI: Well, they really lived that Tin Pan Alley life, and I was getting more diverse... I really got into folk music around then - Dylan hit me real hard (around the time of 'Another Side Of'). I started to go to folk clubs, began singing in them, and wrote some Dylan rip-off songs... I got a few gigs and called myself Al Casey (he was still songwriting and the two life-styles didn't reconcile themselves, so he temporarily changed his name). Meanwhile I was still playing session guitar on records by people like Connie Francis, Dion and various others - so I was, like I say, very diverse then.

PART TWO: BOB DYLAN

AI: When I wasn't songwriting, I'd be out playing the songs to producers, and Tom Wilson was one I got on very well with. Then one day he invited me to a Dylan session he was producing; well, I thought, I'm not just going to watch... I'm going to play on this session. I mean, I really did idolise Dylan then, and I was pretty ambitious at the same time - so I really practised the shit out of my guitar that day... and I stayed up all night playing and figuring out what it would be like.

The next day, I went into the studio an hour early, plugged my guitar into the amp and sat there waiting... I figured that Tom Wilson would maybe buy that, and I took the chance. Then the other cats came in - all studio cats I knew and had played with - and I thought I'd be able to pull it off. But then Dylan walked in with Mike Bloomfield, who I didn't know then - he had a Telecaster, but no case for it... just used to walk down the street with it slung on his shoulder. Well, he plugged in and I nearly died... I was just amazed... I couldn't believe that anyone could play like that, never mind a kid like Bloomfield was. Oh God.

ZZ: So you quietly unplugged your guitar and crept away?

AI: Right, and was I sad... just went into the booth and watched the session. Anyway after the third take, they moved Paul Griffin off the organ onto piano, because the organ wasn't making it - so I grabbed Tom Wilson and said "hey, let me play the organ". "But you can't even play organ!" he said. "Oh yes I can!", "But look Al, I don't want to embarrass you out there!" he said. "Come on Tom, just give me a try... if you don't like it, just tell me through the mike... I've got something good". Of course, I hadn't, and I was sitting there with no idea of what I was going to play - I knew the theory of keyboards, but I didn't play too well. Well, the song was very complicated; it wasn't written down, and the structure was very difficult to comprehend there and then... and I didn't even know how to work the organ. Then Tom shouted "OK, let's roll it".

Well, Jesus! Those cats were playing so loud that I couldn't even hear what I was playing... so I was just going by the knowledge that if you play G, it goes OK with an F chord, and so on. Well, I had no idea what was coming out of that organ, but we did the whole take there and then - straight through without stopping. Then we went back to listen, and about a quarter of the way through the playback, Dylan said to Tom Wilson "turn up the organ track". Tom said "high men, that cat's not an organ player!" "Don't tell me who's an organ player and who's not!" Dylan said, "turn up the organ!". Well, that track was "Like A Rolling Stone", and that take was the one they used on the record.



ZZ: So you became an organ player!

Al: Yes... it's like a movie story, isn't it? And it created a style of organ playing that other people copied... and it was really only based on ignorance. When Dylan and I heard other people playing the organ like that, like on P F Sloan's records, it just cracked us up... we'd get hysterical. But my own organ style grew on that too. Anyway, Dylan took my number that day, and I got friendly with Mike Bloomfield.

That year (1965), I went to the Newport Folk Festival as usual... paid for my tickets and sat in the audience. Then I saw Bloomfield (who was there to play with the Butterfield Blues Band) and I tried to get him to get me backstage. "Oh, hi man" he said, "I'm sorry, but it's just impossible to get you behind here, man". So I sat out there until about the third day when I met Albert Grossman (Dylan's manager): "Hey, Bob's looking for you... he heard you were here!" he said, and gave me some backstage passes. Then, later that night, Dylan arrived wearing that grey top hat he used to wear... "Al Kooper" he said, "we've been looking all over for you". That's when he played his first ever electric set, and I played organ.

ZZ: That was when he got booed by the hard-core folkies, right?

Al: I didn't hear any booing; a lot of the audience were thrown, and a lot of them were disappointed though... there was even a rumour that Pete Seeger was so pissed off that he laid into Al Grossman, and they had this flat fight, clobbering each other there in the grass... and I think it actually happened too.

ZZ: Who else was in the band that day?

Al: Sam Lay (who was Butterfield's drummer), Jerome Arnold (who was Butterfield bassplayer), Barry Goldberg weeded his way into it (on piano), and there was Mike Bloomfield and me. But we only rehearsed during one night... played all night long in a mansion nearby. Paul Rothchild (later the Doors' producer) helped us with the sound.

ZZ: From what I read at the time, most of the audience was really pissed off by his going electric, but that others (like Jac Holzman) saw new hope for rock, which until then had been frowned on by 'thinking' audiences.

Al: Well, some of our set that day was a bit fucked up... Sam Lay turned the beat of 'Maggles Farm' around and that ended up as a piece of shit, but the other stuff was great.

ZZ: I read in Sing Out that the audience was booing...

Al: That was the legend - not the real thing.

ZZ: ...and that Dylan walked off crying his heart out.

Al: Oh, bullshit... bullshit... fucking bullshit! Right here and now I've got to tell you - don't believe everything that you read. Oh, bullshit - I mean, I was really tight with Bob for nearly a year, and I never saw him cry or even approach crying.

ZZ: Was he pleased with the gig?

Al: He was confused.

ZZ: You were subsequently in his road band weren't you?

Al: Well, after Newport we came back and did the rest of the Highway 61 album... really worked hard on that.

ZZ: The line-up of musicians was missed off the English sleeve - who else was on it?

Al: Me, Bloomfield, Harvey Brooks (who was still using his real name, Harvey Goldstein, at that time), Paul Griffin, Russ Savakus, Frank Owens, Bobby Gregg and Bruce Langhorne. We did 'Positively 4th Street' at those sessions too.

ZZ: Was Dylan genuinely bitter when he put that song together?

Al: Well, it was just another song... we didn't talk about them too much. I liked 'Positively 4th St' - I played the organ very similarly to Like A Rolling Stone to get a sort of follow up feel. Anyway, we finished the album, and he decided to get a band together. Bloomfield turned him down to stay with Butterfield, and I really respected him for that; I remember, he was talking to me and Harvey over lunch one day, and he said 'you cats are going to be really famous one day if you stay with Bob - and you'll make pots of money... but I just want to play the blues'. Well, I thought he was an arsehole - a mad arsehole at that, but I understood later that it was a groovy decision. So Bob went out and scouted for the rest of the band - it was me and Harvey, we knew that for sure... you see, me and Harvey were old friends - when he had a session, he roped me in, and when I had a session I roped him in... and I'd roped him into the Highway 61 sessions.

ZZ: Did that album earn you a reputation?

Al: Well, when it came out it credited me as 'Alan Kooper - organ', and then all these people started calling me up to play on their records - and I really didn't have organ playing together at all... I couldn't play it. But I explained this to them, and if they still wanted me, then I played for them. I did a lot of sessions around that time... Judy Collins and a lot of other folkie stuff.

ZZ: You came over here with Judy Collins once didn't you?

Al: Yes - I was real friendly with her... lived at her house for a while. She was a great lady - like an earth mother... so good. She took care of so many people - Danny Kalb, Eric Andersen and me included... I don't mean sexually, but you could go to her house and it was a great hang out. Can I tell you a story? A story that nobody will believe, but it's true. When I was in the Blues Project, this folksy-sounding chick had just come into town... she had just split from her husband and was going the rounds. She was going with the drummer in the Blues Project, who already had a lady, and it was all very messy. Well, one night she was really depressed and crying in her beer, so I went home with her and listened to her songs - I didn't go to bed with her because she was with the drummer, and that's one of the things you just don't do... besides, every one had told me she was a weird chick. So anyway, she played me her songs, and they were just incredible... so incredible that I phoned Judy Collins up there and then (at 5 in the morning, this was), and said "I know you've got to get up early this morning to go off to Newport (she was on the board of directors for the Newport Folk Festival that year), but you've just got to get this girl onto the festival... it's the best shit that I've heard for years - songs that you could do too". Well, she was real drowsy, but she said OK, and she took her up to Newport... and that was Joni Mitchell.

ZZ: A true story?

Al: Right. And Joni Mitchell scored big at that festival... she's never yet said

thankyou. Anyway, where was I? Oh, yes. Dylan went and got these guys... Levon Helm and Robbie Robertson, and the band was ready - me, Harvey, Levon and Robbie - and we went and rehearsed and then played a concert at Forest Hills in New York... yes, that was our first gig... Forest Hills Stadium.

Well, Harvey and I lived in Forest Hills, so it was our old stomping ground and we thought it would be alright. Bob went out and did the first half acoustically and then we got ready to go out and do the second part as an electric band. Then Bob took us to one side; "it's gonna be very weird out there" he said, "...any thing could happen... I just want you to know that". So we went out, and boy was it fuckin' weird! It was the end of August, but as soon as we got on stage, the wind came up... it was like a hurricane. It blew all the mike stands over, the temperature dropped right down, and the wind was just howling and whistling around that bowl... God must have been watching. Well, we played the first 30 seconds and the audience just started booing - I could hardly believe it, because we were really good. Then people started rushing the stage to grab him, and I got knocked over, right on my arse out there on stage, and it was incredible... he just stood there, with the wind really blowing his hair out sideways... and the booing went on... I'll never forget it.

Then he went over to the piano and started to play 'Ballad of a thin man'. The audience was still booing, but he just shouted to us to keep playing the introduction until they shut up. So we did... kept playing those chords, and all the while people were coming up to the front of the stage and screaming "you scumbag" and things like that... and then suddenly it went quiet and he sang the song. When he finished the audience went wild - it was unbelievable.

Well, for some reason, he was rushed away after the concert and we didn't get a chance to find out how he felt about it, but we knew we'd meet him later on at this party. So we were standing there, really worried that he was going to be really saddened, and he suddenly came into the room, walked straight over to me and hugged me... "wasn't it fantastic?" he said. He was really happy about it.

A week later we did exactly the same show at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles to a completely different reaction... which showed the difference between the two coasts. Everyone was there; the Byrds, the Beach Boys, Johnny Cash, Gregory Peck, Tuesday Weld, everyone. But the audience was just stunned and seemed to clap automatically... until towards the end they started to love it, so it turned out to be very rewarding for us.

They were the only gigs I did with Dylan. Robbie and Levon were having a lot of trouble because they'd left their own band to go with him, and the band were putting a lot of pressure on them. Anyway, Harvey quit and I decided to go too... there was a gig in Texas that I didn't particularly feel like doing, and it would make everything a lot easier and more convenient if I left to make way for Garth and Rick and Richard. But all the same, I was scared of telling Dylan... I called him up and said "Hi Bob, what are you doing?". "I'm eating a piece of toast and listening to Smokey Robinson" he said. I told him and he said OK.

John/Pete  
To be continued in the next issue (and the one after that, I shouldn't wonder).

Photographs by Mike O'Mahoney

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# Victoria

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Edward Baird John David Gladwin Terence Alan Wincott

## Amazing Blondel

John Gladwin could probably write a book about the dissatisfaction, financial and managerial hassles, and musical clashes he experienced when he and Terry Wincott were in Methuselah, a Lincolnshire rock group which recorded two albums (only one of which was released) for the Elektra label. But since that's entirely another story (and still the subject of litigation), we asked him to talk about how Amazing Blondel rose out of the tattered shreds and grew to their present strength.

### HISTORY

"Terry and I had got quite friendly in Methuselah and when the band broke up we didn't want to get jobs digging roads or washing cars, so we had a little think. In Methuselah we used to do an acoustic number - just Terry and me - and it used to go down very well... not so much because it was sophisticated, but because it was different... so we developed the idea. Terry already played guitar and bongos and he learnt woodwind very quickly, and I played guitar, and so it started from there... that was September 1969. The first gigs were really grotty;

working mens clubs and things like that... "and now ladies and gentlemen, for your entertainment, the amazing Blondels". At one, a miners' club in Sheffield, they pulled us off after three numbers to make way for the usual old soprano with a glitter dress and big tits, and though that sort of thing was pretty distressing at the time, it's something we can look back on now and think of as being funny.

The initial idea was to do the folk clubs; we'd go out for about £25 a night, wouldn't need a p.a., and we'd get by quite well... but it turned out that folk clubs won't take artistes unless they go and play free first, and it was too much to go lugging a harmonium up a lot of stairs just for two songs. So we started doing the same sort of gigs that Methuselah had done - schools, colleges and clubs around the North East, from Nottingham to Newcastle - and we got on alright and started to earn some money."

### THE FIRST ALBUM - ON BELL

"We were still tied to a deal with Steve Rowland at that time, but we were desperate to get a record out, so

we went down and played him some of our songs. "Yeah, that's great" he'd say, "we can put some brass on that bit, some strings there... can you write a few more in the same vein..." and he put us with Big Jim Sullivan, who plays guitar for Tom Jones. As it happens, he's a really nice bloke and a great classical guitarist - his one love is studying the classical guitar, so much so that it must be really soul destroying to play all that stuff he has to. The backing on that album turned out very brassy though - which I don't think would have happened if Jim Sullivan had thought he was being given a freer hand, but there again we, as a group, didn't really have our direction sorted out then. Some of the songs were ok, and we still do them on stage, but it was over produced... and it didn't sell at all.

After that, we were very depressed; they'd promised us all this publicity and so on, but nothing happened and so we went to see Bell with this great big list of complaints and demanded to get out of the contract. In the end, Chris Blackwell (of Island) bought our contract out...

it was a hassle, but Bell could have been a lot more difficult than they were.

What had happened in the meantime was that Free had seen us on a couple of gigs and had advised us to get in touch with Island."

#### MOVING TO ISLAND

"Our first Island album didn't do too badly - sold just over ten thousand, which is apparently good for a first LP. But we haven't got any illusions about it - we know we're not going to make it big in a year, like Free, or anything. . . we know it's going to be a steady growth, though our fees have gone up since we came to Island.

As well as playing to pop audiences, we do classical concerts too, and I think that eventually we're going to come halfway between the two, which is good because we'll last longer that way. But Island get us some very nice work, going out with their big groups, and it's the only way we'll be able to break through really. Their agency is very concerned about all their artistes and is more like a service to the groups than a profit making idea."

#### THE OBSCENITY BANS

"It was during our tour with Free that it all happened, and we got banned at three places. At one we got re-instated - they wanted to book us back, but we wouldn't go back because it wasn't the right sort of venue for us - and we've played different halls in the other two towns. The papers picked up on it and we had journalists coming up asking us how long we've been vulgar and things like that, but it was never a feature of the act designed to attract publicity. When we started using lutes, after Eddie (Edward Baird) joined us in April 1970, we used to get worried that the audiences would think we were too serious. . . like, we had footstools and cushions and our classical instruments. So, to keep the right perspective, and to keep the audience from feeling the need to sit there with stiff backs, looking very intent and serious, we introduced these jokes. It was purely to break down the 'serious' barrier and let the people know that as well as listening to the music, they were there to enjoy themselves as well. I mean, the jokes were in character with the music really, because all the old Elizabethan songs were about blokes getting their leg over - they used to be a filthy lot of bug-gers in those days. . . all the songs were about getting your leg over. Anyway, we decided to tell a few jokes to break the tension, which you could genuinely feel as you walked on the stage.

The jokes involved a few words that various factions of the audience objected to - like "wank" and "shit". We've since changed "shit" to "waste from the botto" and the "wank" joke was dropped because the Director of Public Prosecutions was told about it and there were threats that we were going to be done for obscenity.

One of the jokes was about a young boy who comes home and finds everybody else in the family getting his leg over. When he asks what they're doing, each of them says 'oh I'm just playing cards with my partner'. Then he goes into the bathroom and finds his grandad having a wank, so he asks him what he's doing. 'Playing cards' he says. Well, where's your partner?" So he says 'oh you don't need a partner if you've got a good hand'. That was it - and the press really picked up on it. The real trouble was that at Sunderland, the mayor was there with his young daughter, and at Nelson, the mayor and

the aldermen were there with their ten year old daughters. I don't know how the jokes went down with their daughters, but they didn't go down too well with the parents.

In Elizabethan days, they in variably told dirty jokes and everybody had a good laugh. I don't know what the Elizabethan word for "wank" was. . . I've never looked that one up."

#### THE HISTORICAL ASPECTS

"When Blondel started, we wanted to do English music rather than American. . . something directly from English heritage rather than traditional folk or Dylan stuff or anything like that. The Elizabethan era produced lots of cheerful, tuneful songs and we thought it'd be great to use their ideas but bring them up to date a bit - we wanted to portray the romanticism of a troubadour walking around strumming his lute. Anyway, we couldn't find any lutes where we lived (in Scunthorpe), so we started on guitars, then broadened it gradually - adding lutes and things, and now we've added a crumhorn, which is like a short walking stick upside down. . . it's got an enclosed reed, and you blow into it, building up air pressure in this sort of box, which vibrates the reed. . . it's akin to the bagpipe chanter, but the note isn't delayed.

The name Blondel came about just before we went out on the road. I was singing some of my songs to a friend who said "oh yes, very Blondel". (He was Richard the First's minstrel). The amazing part came as a result of our playing all these weird instruments, and Bell thought it would be better to keep the amazing part. So did Chris Blackwell. . . we were going to drop it when we came to Island. I suppose our music is amazing to some people.

We've studied the roots of our music to a certain extent - the more predominant composers of the era, and a bit about the different instruments we use - but most Mediaeval music was just a row, terrible. . . raucous harmonies and out of tune instruments. The Elizabethan and Tudor periods were the first periods when music became tuneful, and we base our music on the time between the early Elizabethan period and just before the classical period. . . from say 1500 to 1700.

The singing is not authentic because they sang like opera singers, and our music is based around what is known in folk circles as a finger pick with a continuous bass run - but they didn't bother with that sort of thing. . . in their songs, the lute followed the voice. Most of the music was just instrumental though, and I suppose that someone who was a real Elizabethan era purist would probably sneer at our music!"

#### THEIR INSTRUMENTS

"There's this chap called David Rubio, who used to make all Julian Bream's lutes and guitars, and he's really fantastic, but he's a real classical purist. When we first went to see him, he looked at our lutes and said "these are commercial instruments. . . they're not musical instruments", which was true really, because they're just mass produced crap. But we asked him if he could make us some new instruments with the characteristics of the lute I've got, tuned to a guitar in concert pitch - and he wasn't at all keen to even think about it. Then we put 'Fantasia Lindum' on and he was very impressed - opened up straight away, whereas until then he just didn't want to know. He was commenting on it being a good fusion of the two styles and he became interested in us; so now he's going through all his

books to find the instrument we want - he only does authentic reproductions, so he has got to find one with the pear shaped body we require and a long enough finger board to all guitar tuning. But he really goes to town - takes X rays of the original so that things like the depth of wood and the strutting are authentic. He's got a three year waiting list, but he told us that since we're musicians in need, he'd put us at the top of his list, whereas if someone just wants a David Rubio guitar for the prestige, he's got to wait for it.

We really need new instruments - it came to a head the other week; you see, our lutes are very inferior, with warped necks and so on, and it took us about 5 hours to get in tune. Everyone's on the verge of a nervous breakdown, because we literally have to spend at least 3 hours a night tuning up. . . literally 3 hours of turning pegs and plucking strings. But the other night it took 5 hours, and because we couldn't hear above the noise of the records they were playing, we had to go down to the van and do it. Then, when we got back to the hall, the heat just made the nylon strings go out of tune again. We did two songs and I just threw my lute down in disgust. . . did a Pete Townshend.

The trouble with lutes is that they're very light, they don't have truss rods like a guitar does, and the pressure from the strings tends to pull on the sound board. The neck eventually starts warping, and the fingerboard and soundboard distort, and it just becomes terrible, and practically impossible to tune. It's alright to say a bad workman blames his tool, but our instruments just aren't good enough for concerts. . . a dischord really shows up in our music because it's so light. . . you can't cover it up like you can when you're in an electric rock band.

When David Rubio made the last guitar for Julian Bream, Bream was on about having the string come back to his finger at a certain rate of vibrations when he was doing a certain run. . . and he was serious. What's more, Rubio caters for that kind of requirement. . . you just wouldn't believe it.

At the moment, I've got banjo machines to tune the strings on my lute, and Rubio told me that a wooden peg - you know, just an ordinary peg rotating in a hole - is much better, but I didn't believe him until he showed me. It was perfect; just like a machine. . . so much precision. . . not just a peg you ram into a hole. If you hold his lutes up to the light you can see the light through them, they're so light and precise.

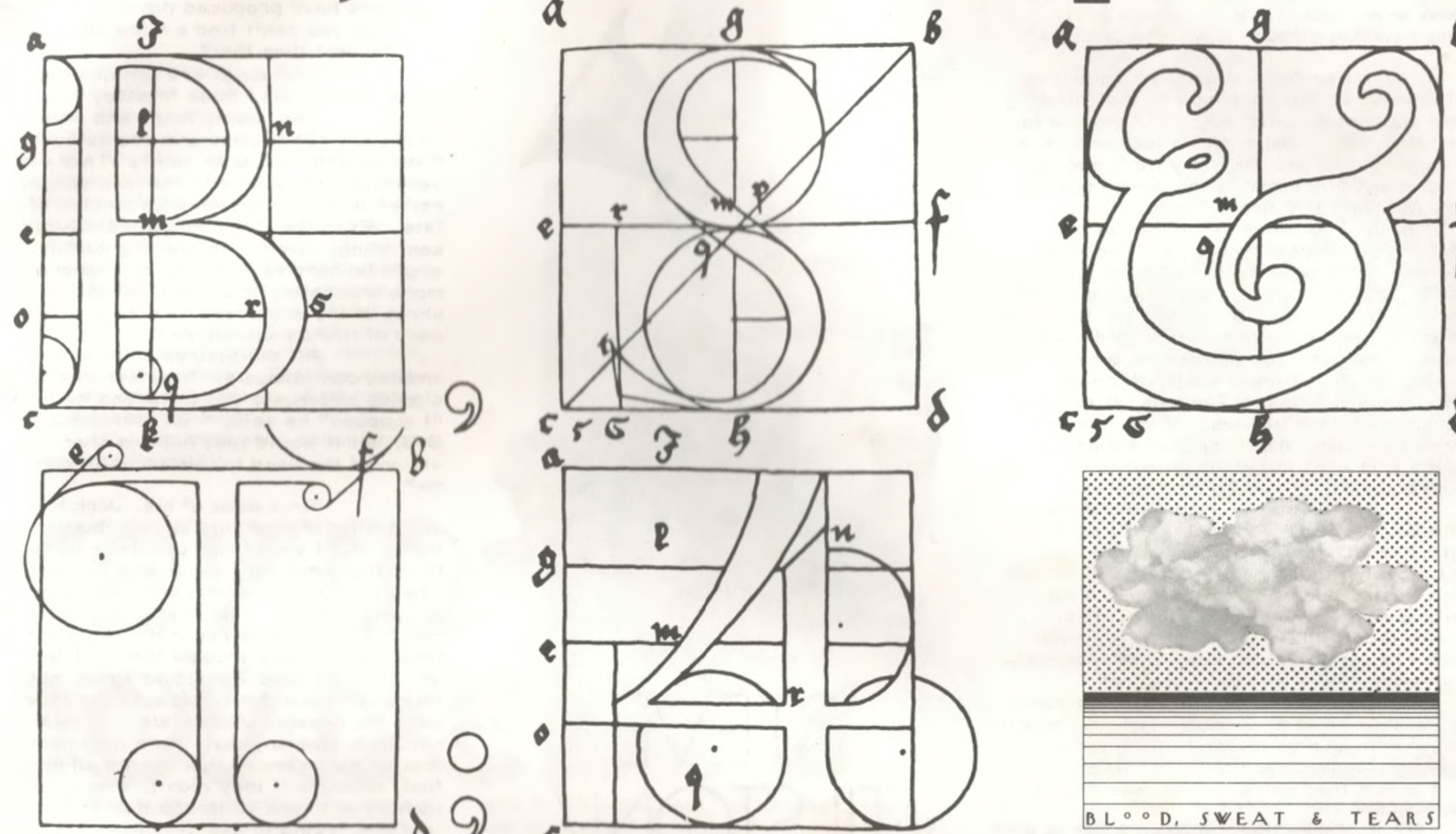
Hopefully, by the time we come to record our next album we'll have the new lutes, because once he's found the right instruments it'll only take two months to build them."

#### FANTASIA LINDUM (THEIR LATEST LP)

"We come from Scunthorpe in Lincolnshire and we've all developed an interest in local history. At Christmas, we went to a banquet at Horncastle, where Oliver Cromwell stayed, and they had everything: serving wenches, eating with daggers, lute players and so on, and it gave us renewed interest in the history of the area.

Fantasia Lindum, about Lincolnshire, came as a result of our wish to get some of our heritage down. I mean, the county was prominent in those days - its cathedral for example, and William Byrd, who was a leading writer in the 1500s, was from Lincolnshire and was organist at Lincoln Cathedral. Generally, the interest is there if you want to look for it."

# Blood, Sweat & Tears present



## on CBS 64355

### Read on-then you must listen.

*Blood, Sweat & Tears. Vitality, energy and inspiration. That's what it's all about—channeling the powers of nine gifted performers into a dynamic blend of song and spirit, of melody and rhythm.*

We recorded in San Francisco, with its glorious light, clean air, and brilliantly sparkling Bay. A good place to make music. Some of the guys were already there. Fred Lipsius rambling around his house, doing a marathon piano-playing trip, 24 hours a day, non-stop. Jim Fielder, lean and laconic, impatiently waiting for a new place near Muir Wood. And David Clayton-Thomas, writing new tunes in his ultimate bachelor's digs—perched like an eagle's aerie high in the hills of Marin County. Roy Halee, master engineer and co-producer, was just glad to be living in San Francisco, and enthusiastic as a cherub about the bright new studios and space ship recording console Columbia had built for him. Dick Halligan commuted from Los Angeles, flying in through the smog almost daily, usually carrying a new arrangement.

The rest of us moved West, en masse, from cold and damp December New York City. Chuck Winfield and Dave Barger—the quiet ones—came like a gypsy caravan, trailing wives, children and assorted pets. Bobby Colomby and Breve Katz reluctantly left their houses and basketball courts and pool tables, and Lewie Soloff somehow managed to convince an airline that 14 trumpets

and flugel-horns really were part of his hand luggage.

Two months had been cleared from our schedules by the most stringent methods—only one or two bookings for the band, and, for me, some midnight-hour moonlighting to keep up my writing commitments. Two months to produce an album that might match the electric energies of previous Blood, Sweat & Tears recordings.

We decided to go for as many original pieces as possible. Given the range of back-grounds and skills in the band, it seemed to me that the album should be a kind of seed-bed for the future—a garden of music that would bloom with brightly colored perennials. *Lisa, Listen To Me* came first, flowing with such good vibrations that we knew the Karma was right. On *Go Down Gamblin'*, David holstered up his trusty guitar (for the first time with B, S, & T), and ripped out solo lines raunchy enough to quiver the walls in the adjoining studio (no mean feat, considering that Santana was recording there).

*Redemption* came in a sudden, almost magic rush. Everything jelled—the rhythm's furious drive, a roaring, shouting horn section, and David's powerful vocal. There never was a question of making another take. Steve's *For My Lady* and *Valentine's Day* called for particularly sensitive treatment. In both cases—Dick's arrangement of *Lady* and Freddie's chart on *Valentine's Day*—the textures are richly impressionistic, filled with the sounds of woodwinds and flugel-horns. (And, on *Valentine's Day*, Lew finally got his long-awaited chance to play piccolo trumpet.)

*Cowboys And Indians* was a Halligan surprise; he just showed up with it one day. (The unusual sound at the end by the way, is made by Dave Barger, playing a low note on tuba and singing another note at the same time.) It took at least two or three metamorphoses before we found the right frame for *High On A Mountain*, and again, it was Halligan's extraordinary scoring—almost symphonic in character—that created the perfect setting for David's vocal. *Mama Gets High* developed out of a half-joking conversation that Steve, Dave Barger and I had about the possibilities of a Dixieland-rock tune, and *A Look To My Heart* celebrates Freddie's pleasure over the sense of peace he has discovered since moving to San Francisco.

Two pieces came from outside the band. Al Kooper and Phyllis Major's *John The Baptist* stimulated some of Freddie's finest scoring, and the gutsy rhythm-section surge on the Isley Brothers' *Take Me In Your Arms* lets David get down to basics.

The old labels—jazz-rock and the like—are gone, replaced by the simple, straight-forward idea of making music. With nine players who share individual and common experiences the include everything from *Ars Nova* to *Bluegrass*, how can any other description be adequate.

Reprinted from the sleeve notes by — Don Heckman



There is something very satisfying about listening to live music in small smoke filled rooms. It creates an intimacy between artiste and audience that cannot exist when listening to a postage stamp image coming through a two thousand watt p a .

For that reason, I hope Steve Tilston never becomes part of the Albert Hall superstar syndrome. The trouble is, he just might. His music is fashionable in the sense that your friendly local record shop would place him in the same rack as Joni Mitchell and James Taylor.

The songs are personal but deal with universal emotions. The most common word to be found in his lyrics may be "I", but it is an "I" with which you can relate and identify. And that, as the owner of one of the smaller record companies made only too obvious as we sat in an Old Compton Street spaghetti house after hearing Steve at Cousins, does have commercial possibilities. If you are interested in such matters, that makes two labels who want to get Steve out of his contract with Village Thing Records.

"Despite an early infatuation with Elvis when I was twelve, it wasn't until I saw Dylan at the de Montfort Hall in Leicester that I really became involved with music. He was, and still is, a totally natural man - wholly accessible. His poetry didn't strike me at first - it wasn't until I heard an import copy of 'Freewheeling' that I really started listening".

"I started writing my own songs in the sixth form at school. They all sounded like 'That'll be the day' - in those days I really liked Buddy Holly, cos he played all his own lead parts, which was then unbelievable".

There then followed a job as a commercial artist with an advertising agency in Leicester before going on the road in a manner that can best be described as middle-class bumming:

"I slept safe at night, and I never had to worry where the next meal was coming from. I played an odd gig at folk clubs in Nottingham, Leicester and Derby, and I found that the songs were coming easily ... the music still does - it's the words I really have to work on. I'm not a poet, but I think that if I could write poetry, I would give up writing music. But there is always immediate communication with music - it sets the mood for the words. I'd be really flattered if people thought it was art, but it's too accessible. I realise that compared with someone like Dylan Thomas, I just can't compete. He can do it all with words. With songs you're restricted by the scanning of the lyrics, although someone like Robin Williamson doesn't seem to be. His best songs are the ones in which the musical framework is at its most restricting".

As a songwriter, Steve has been compared with John Martyn, amongst others. The comparison may not be valid, but he certainly has the potential. Seeing him the first time, I felt the same sensation as I did with King Crimson, Roy Harper, or Mott the Hoople at a similar stage of their development. It's a nice feeling. It makes all the other nights of sitting through bum acts worthwhile.

"All the songs are really about me and the things that happen to me. I'm going through this relationship at the moment and I know I'll end up writing a song about it. I suppose you could say that songwriters are parasites that live off the lives of others. You know, you can meet a bird and think 'ah yes, she'll make a good song!'. It can be a source of great embarrassment when someone recognises herself in one of my songs".

"Fortunately, I'm usually out of things before I start writing about them,



## STEVE TILSTON/ AN ACOUSTIC CONFUSION

I have to know what I'm going to say and how I'm going to say it, and it usually comes to me when my mind's on something completely different. It's never wholly spontaneous - I really have to work at it ... every artist's best friend is his waste paper basket. I have to be on my own with some beer, ciggies, some clean Basilidon Bond, and this little blue book in which I write down most of my ideas. There's a story about Thomas Hardy, who thought out the entire plot to what would have been his greatest novel while he was pruning a tree in his garden, but by the time he'd finished, he had forgotten it all. I'm the same - unless I write things down I forget them".

In an interview with Jerry Gilbert in Sounds, Steve was quoted as saying "If you move to the country, you're supposed to write beautiful songs, but I don't think it works like that at all". Why it doesn't work that way was never explained, so to continue where Sounds left off: "To me, the whole country scene reeks of wandering through fields wishing one could be a cow, because it must be nice to be a cow - but it's impossible ... we're human beings. It's an escape. I would probably write peaceful songs, but I don't want to - I would miss the conflict that's always happening between me and others. I realise that I'd be lost without it. My songs are about life, and my inadequacies in competing with it. I don't even know if I want to resolve my problems - I'd be

frightened to be without them. Definitely I need to be depressed to write ... perhaps every artist needs to be to create. I mean, Russians have produced the finest literature, and you can't find a more depressing environment than that".

The songs are full of images of briars, serpents, false friends, final hours, bruises, pain, tears and empty promises. There are statements such as "I've written words in vain". There is very little happiness in the love songs, rather a preoccupation with circles of fate. Even the music has a plaintive, searching, sometimes searing quality. It would be hard to describe as exuberant, more accurately it's like a perpetual shrug of the shoulders - a sense of acceptance of life's continuity.

All the time we talked, Steve smoked continuously. You feel that people, ciggies and music are the props he needs. "I suppose" he said, "I'm searching for God, but it would take nothing short of a vision of the road to Damascus to convince me".

"In a book of his, Jack Kerouac spent a lot of time just saying 'that's it, that's it'. I would like people to be able to do that where my songs are concerned. The point is, a true artiste doesn't need to communicate. The really valid statements are the ones that make people think 'yes, I've always thought that'. There are so many guys who could write incredible poetry but don't, because they don't want the hassle. An artiste is a totally nebulous idea anyway. He's only communicating experiences that people already feel, because if they didn't, they couldn't identify with and understand what the artiste was trying to say".

At this point, for various personal reasons, Steve asked me to "put in something about Sheila Macdonald. Apart from the fact that I adore her physically, she's the only British singer to compare with Joni Mitchell". This took me conveniently to my next question, so I can't complain. I wanted to know what Steve thought of the idea that once an artiste is successful, the resulting change in their way of life that money brings, no longer means that they can write about universal experiences, because their experiences are no longer the same as those of their audience.

After a few obvious comments to the effect that as none of us had any money, we were hardly qualified to talk on the subject, Steve pointed out "if you get rich, you must change. Your experiences will be different and they probably won't have the same depth. I think that life should be harder than making it by the time that you are 23. It means that you miss out on a lot of the conflict that you would otherwise experience".

Some of these problems are on Steve's album for Village Thing. It's a good first album, recorded at the label's studio out in the depths of the west country. The first efforts were scrapped, due, amongst a variety of reasons, to the fact that it was winter and the temperature in the studio was not exactly conducive to flexible finger work on the fretboard. The second version, which was used, is worth hearing if you don't have the opportunity of seeing Steve in person. At Cousins he passed a bottle of wine round the audience - a better incentive than green shield stamps. You may be lucky.

I can't think of a better way to end than with these two lines from one of his songs:

"Sometimes when the songs fall free, they take me where I really want to be".

Absolutely. Richard Howell

"When I was very young, a fat-arsed bingo club manager said: 'You're going to the top, right to the top, and I'm going to take you there, all the way'. He was the first in a long line of promise makers, the first of the smart alegs. How many other performers have had this? I suppose most of them have. They are everywhere - 10 (and sometimes 25) per centers, bearing lists of imaginary contracts, introductions to famous people, and ideas about 'making it big'. Most of the time their sights are set on pin money, on extra cash for their suburban families, their big spending wives. They're small-time, greedy and dangerous. And small-time men become big time ...

What do they care about creativity and commitment?"

## KEVIN COYNE

There are about five people in the world, I suppose, who can see Kevin Coyne, the singer with Dandelion group Siren, as a future, near future, superstar. I'm one of them, and I'm not ashamed to admit it. There are also one or two people a lot more influential than me who think the same way - Jac Holzman, president of Elektra, and Clive Selwood, boss of Dandelion, for example - and there's also Kevin himself ... not that he's at all big headed, as I hope this chunk of Kevin talking will show. As well as being an immensely likeable and interesting person, his knowledge of the rock'n'roll era is pretty encyclopaedic, but the one trouble we had was the conversation dwindling as a result of turning on the tape recorder. After a couple of hours though, we got a bit more into the swing of it, and Kevin's ramblings on assorted subjects are recorded below.

### SIREN'S RECORDS

"The promotional kit that Dandelion did for 'Strange Locomotion' was pretty good ... definitely a nice thing to have. For the first album we only got an ad in Melody Maker. The curious thing is, you think they're good LPs and you're sure people are going to like them, but I've learned that it's just not the case. Maybe ads and all the rest don't make any difference to sales anyway - it's not the ads that are going to make us in the end. There's such a vast number of records coming out now, and they're so expensive; something new, ok, but when you've got to pay over £2 for it it gets a bit difficult ... you get a bit choosy. I mean, if it were me, I don't know if I'd rush out and buy Stackwaddy or Siren or any of these people. I don't buy new records anyway; I tend to buy things that are a few years old, like those compilations of oldies and goldies for example, and I'm always at least 3 or 4 years behind what's happening, so I'm a poor advert for people buying new records. I would imagine that a hell of a lot of people



are in the same boat, or at least aren't too interested in buying fresh material by fresh artistes. A lot of uncertain fourteen year olds wouldn't really understand our music anyway - who's going to understand a song like 'Relaxin with Bonnie Lou' if they're not 26 or over? I think that age has a hell of a lot to do with my writing and my attitude; I'm so basically steeped in that magical era when we all bought London American singles ... that time has never been equalled. On the other hand, some of our songs, like 'Asylum', 'I wonder where' and 'Some dark day' have nothing to do with rock'n'roll really - they're just personal statements.

I aspire sometimes to being a poet, and Nick (Cudworth) aspires to being a guitarist, but whether the results are acceptable, I'm not too sure. Going back to age, a fourteen year old will have very little to identify with in music like our's, and we don't go in for extended solos - not that we couldn't, but we don't feel we should. My influence is all consuming, and I'm a bit of a dead weight on occasions because of my obsession with a style of singing and a style of lyric, which are both dated in relation to today. Really though, my influences vary from day to day - I imagine I'm a fairly good mimic - but on record I try to keep it fairly consistent. But stylistically, I'm an aspirant Jerry Butler on occasions, aspirant Ben E King certainly, and traces of lots of others - cruder, raw singers like Buddy Guy and Elmore James ... and all the rest of my favourite singers from way back. My own record collection is 70% Blues, so I reckon that basically it's my biggest influence; the first time I sang creatively was in the mid sixties boom, and I was singing blues then. The songs I write aren't blues particularly though - they're written for all sorts of different reasons.

### STARTS AND STOPS

"I'd like to see more people around Dandelion smiling and being more optimistic if we're going to stay with them. I'm not an

optimist myself, I'm a miserable depressive sort of person, probably because of the work I do - not seeing the best side of human nature all the time. The future is very hard to predict, but I'm very grateful that I've been able to get something down on record, after all these years of, in a sense, performing in front of a mirror with a Hoover handle for a microphone. Actually, getting the chance to make these records is fantastic ... I'm still really overwhelmed with gratitude, and I don't want to be offensive about Dandelion, because tomorrow I'd regret it.

It's fair to say that there is some doubt about Siren's future, but it could be like Bo Diddley's 'My Story'; you know, a man with a big cigar and a Cadillac with four headlights, sign on the dotted line and I'll make you a star. And I think I'm very susceptible to that sort of thing - I always see myself as a star, and I think that comes over on stage ... the basic confidence and the basic arrogance. I've always wanted to be treated like that, with some respect, instead of the casual "who are you? what are you?" You get a bit pissed off with reeling your life story off when you're talking to people - they weren't there and they haven't been through all the degradation I've been through in terms of just desperately wanting to sing, and putting up with any old crap backing just in order to get a blow, because to me, singing is just as natural as all the other bodily functions.

There's very little of the original Siren left at the moment. I haven't seen Dave Clague for some time, though I suppose I'm still friends with him, and Nick Cudworth is perhaps branching out in other directions - and other bands ... he's too good to be kept down. But when I make some more records, Nick will be there, because the bond with him is so total.

It all started out at Art College in Derby - me putting an ad on the notice board; wanting to form a college blues

band, all interested persons to turn up. Nick turned up as a drummer, playing a bit of boogie piano on the side, and from that, things just built up... you get to like people, you know. Unless I wanted to do a totally solo thing, I'd always call on Nick for backing, because nobody plays as well as him... you've really got to see him at his best, pumping away in a pub or something, to realise how good he is. He's also an interesting guitarist, I think, with lots of melodic ideas.

I think I could con anybody into thinking I was a good pianist, until they looked at my hands. Like those old films with Frank Sinatra peering over the top of the piano, but you never see his hands on the keyboard because he can't play it. But I'm neither a pianist or a guitarist in the accepted sense - I only play in open E on guitar... it stomps alright, but it's a bit limited.

The other original Siren members, I've lost touch with. Tat Meager is apparently writing songs for Gerry Bron and doing session work - he was from Cheltenham, like Brian Jones. I met Tat through Dave, who lived with him, and I met Dave through Nick, who wrote me a letter saying he'd met this bloke in a pub who used to be in the Bonzo Dog Band - he wanted to form a band and make some tapes. I was living in Preston, working in a mental hospital, and I came down and had a blow with them. John Chichester was our first guitarist, but he left and I don't know much about him. We also had this agent, Graham Wood, who got us a few gigs - he did his best, but he thought we were a rock'n'roll revival type band, and we're not really into that. We've never had an agent since. We did get a few gigs ourselves, and we went up to Mothers with John Peel and did a gig with-out a drummer. And we never had a manager, though Dave did the job for a while.

The main trouble was, we never got organised; it would have made a hell of a difference if we had. Our own lives were difficult enough to organise though; I'd just got away from 4 gruelling years of working in a mental hospital. I was working there because I'd had some contact with mental diseases in my own family, and was very conscious of my own inadequacies in dealing with that sort of thing. I applied for the job in New Statesman, and to my surprise I got it.

I did quite a bit of painting, on and off, and whatever else happens to me, I'll still draw and paint - but I got really disillusioned with the whole art exhibition business, so I didn't carry on with it. It is similar to the pop business really - it's not what you know, but who you know. I personally feel that art colleges should be closed down - to most people it's a sort of elaborate finishing school, and there's nothing you can do afterwards in most cases. I studied fine-art and the only thing to do was teach or something. I had an interview with a headmaster who said "you're not very big - we've got some big lads here... you won't do". So I became a bus conductor and then moved on to Preston and I've been in mental welfare work ever since. Although I find it very exhausting and painful, I feel it's the necessary thing for me to do... maybe I need the patients as much as they need me. It's a constant job, and there's a real need for people to be talked to and he helped in the most practical way you can. In fact I probably think and worry about it at certain times more than I do about the music, but if things went right musically, I think I'd get out, because I long to get on a stage. At the moment I'm incredibly frustrated because I can't do it very often. I'm going to do a thing with Ian

Breakwell at the Open Space Theatre. He has done a lot of work with happenings and things, and I've got this idea for a musical about institutions and asylums, which is a fascinating subject. It won't be like 'Hair' or 'Catch my soul', but virtually a solo thing from my point of view. I'll do all the singing and talking, with maybe a few odd guys wandering about in the back-



The original Siren of 1969 (then called Coyne-Clague): David Gibbons (guitar), Tat Meager (drums), Kevin Coyne (singer), Dave Clague (bass), John Chichester (guitar) and Nick Cudworth (piano).

ground. It's a fairly depressing subject, not the sort of thing for an LP - though certain songs might be organised enough to get recorded - and most of it will be based on sponteely, which is my forte, because I hate to be restricted by other people's doubts and limitations, especially musically. I suppose I'm the most musically limited person on this earth, but you can get around it with a lot of energy and shouting. The only Siren thing involved in this play will be 'Shake a hand', and that's my solo anyway; there were one or two other things like that which I did and was sad to see disappear, especially a song called 'Black Minnie'. I desperately want to make a whole LP of that sort of stuff - I think tomorrow that I'll get on the telephone and push myself, but basically I'm so lazy and so frightened that I don't suppose I will. What I need is somebody to drive me, to spark me off and point me in the right direction... but I've had bad experiences with co-operating with people who say they're fans, but take everything and dilute it for their own purposes. I need someone who has faith in what I have to say, which is quite a lot really.

#### INTERVIEWS AND REVIEWS

"You're doing this interview with me because you want others to share your enthusiasm, which is great. Like, the loneliest thing I can think of is to be stuck with 3000 rare singles and nobody to share them with... I was a bit like that in Preston, good sounds and nobody to share them with. Zigzag comes across as an enthusiast's magazine, like 'Aeromodelling' or 'Tin Soldiers' or something, which is probably what you're aiming at. Like me, you're collectors of everything... and I think that sharing your enthusiasm is like singing into a microphone.

The only interview I did before this one was the previous one in Zigzag. I'd like to be interviewed more often, especially in Melody Maker, which I despise

and hate. It's evil. We got a terrible review for our album, and I don't mind saying that at all. It seemed to be written with the intention of offending and distressing people... that's all the review was - a personal attack, and the one before that was just as abysmal. Melody Maker was totally unfair, a right sod... he'd pretty obviously not even listened to the record for a start... I mean, how anyone could describe the songs as unbelievably primitive, I will never know. Some of them were pretty sophisticated. The review was by Roy Hollingworth, who used to work for the Derby Evening Telegraph; I suppose the reason that he came to do it was that he was at school with Nick, who approached him to do it. In Derby he is quite a big name I suppose... I can't see what possible reason there was for putting us down like that. Even about 'The Way We Live' he was totally unfair - he could have said he didn't like it, rather than saying nothing about 4 times. I didn't really agree with the Sounds review totally either - as far as I'm concerned "sweaty boozy music" means singing in a pub - but it was a much fairer review.

#### DERBY AND AROUND

"Derby is really badly off for bands and celebrities... there's only Roy Hollingworth that I can think of, and he may not even be from Derby because he supports Nottingham Forest and not Derby County, which is criminal if he comes from Derby. I think there was a drummer who once did a session for the Kinks, too. We never had any write-ups in the local papers. My brother used to run a trad jazz club in Derby which had 2000 members, but he lost interest. Nick and I both played in local groups, but the nearest things of interest were happening in Birmingham... the early days of Spencer Davis, when John Lee's 'Dimples' had just come out. Winwood knocked me out... totally... but I can't say the same for him now I'm afraid. Traffic bore me - he doesn't seem to sing with the same enthusiasm. Ten Years After are from Nottingham of course, but Derby and Nottingham are traditional enemies... Nottingham is better off; it's got a theatre and little cinemas and a better shopping centre.

#### FURTHER NORTH

"I first really got going in Preston, in the hospital pantomimes and things, and I used to take patients to working mens clubs, where I used to get up on stage to impress everybody. It was a pretty lonely existence up there because you rarely got the right backing... you take pot luck in that sort of a place. You'd give them a list of songs and they couldn't play any of them. At one hospital do, I suggested a music through the ages' thing, and for the rock and roll bit, I said to do 'Blue Suede Shoes' - so they actually bought the sheet music for it. There was this 50 year old bloke, Charlie, playing it in this incredible wooden way. I suppose it's all very valuable experience, but it all comes from wanting to perform.

#### SIREN ON THE ROAD

"We went out for about £30 - £40 most of the time when we did go out. We once got £50 - that was at Sunderland Locarno, but it was a long way to go to sing songs of pain and hate to twelve year olds. Perhaps half the problem of trying to sell our records is that there are relatively few rock'n'roll fanatics left from the fifties; most of them have switched to Sinatra and Tony Bennett. If I spoke to anybody I was at school with, and told them what I was doing, listening to records, singing and looking at charts and things, they'd be amazed. People probably think we're a

sort of humourous throwback like the Tiny Tim scene - perhaps they'd say that they had more sense than to listen to records, but I could never agree with that. It's the accepted thing that when you reach about 25 you stop listening to pop and become staid. It doesn't happen like that in the States of course. Jac Holzman's a living example - the greatest of all time, leaping about like that... and he's probably our biggest fan in America, playing our stuff on his cassette in his car even. He is extraordinary, but of course, he can listen to records without the hassles of next door complaining with broom handles.

#### REMINISCING

"I saw all the rockers when they came through Derby on the package tours. Bo Diddley was the best - he was on tour with the Stones who were dressed in suits and looked very strange. Bill Haley was a great hero, and not the fat ridiculous guy he's made out to be now... 'ROCK ROCK' was my favourite. I saw Little Richard several times, once on his first tour with Sam Cooke, who was possibly the most amazing singer I ever saw. His voice, in Sheffield City Hall, a big mock Grecian cold hall, was warm and pure, bouncing off the walls at the back. I saw Billy Preston with Little Richard... I was very disappointed with Little Richard because he was doing this weird striptease and balancing a chair on his nose or something - but he had a beautiful baritone saxplayer with him. I'd like to see James Brown because his records are fabulous - great arrangements on them even though he puts out so many... it's like a factory. I've seen Gene Vincent, who was very quiet, and the Four Seasons, who were fantastic - with the little man standing to the right apart from the rest... Frankie Valli. I

saw the Larry Parnes tours several times... people like Julian X, Billy Fury and Duffy Power... I'd like to have been discovered by Larry Parnes, because I think I've got a much better voice than most of his blokes had. Oh yes, I even saw the first Cliff Richard tour... terrible... pink coat and slideboards. Wee Willie Harris with his green hair and a grand piano, leaping about. I saw Vince Taylor and the Playboys, who were a good group - they all had blond hair and wore caps... like Gene Vincent's Blue Caps did in 'The Girl Can't Help It'. Taylor made a great single called 'Jet Black Machine' and a follow up called 'Brand New Cadillac'. He was all quivering knees and white shoes and also he was the only rock singer of those days who was ever arrested for carrying a knuckle duster. He was very big in France, singing Elvis ballads. Like Larry Page in 'Teenage Rock'... the Larry Page... and Mickie Most doing 'Johnny B Goode' lying on his back - that was on the Everlys' first tour. I never got down to the 2 1s coffee bar because I was in Derby, but I wish I had... during the era of Terry Dene. He did 'Start Movin', that Sal Mineo number, and he covered 'A white sport coat and a pink carnation', then he dropped out of the army and was married to Edna Savage - for about a week as I remember. Frankie Vaughan was even involved in rock'n'roll. And I keep thinking of names like Art Baxter and the Rocking Sinners who made a record called 'Drop Penny Rock'. Shane Fenton... and Joe Brown - I saw him several times but always thought he was very bad... he was one of those who would always sing the Coasters' songs, and I longed to see the Coasters. Marty Wilde I thought was good. Vince Eager was terrible - I remember seeing him sprawled across the stage,

banging it with his hand. Then there were the ridiculous ones like Darryl Quist and Simon Scott. It might be nice to revive a few of those songs from that era, particularly the horror ones like 'Dinner with Drac' by John Zacherle or 'Monster Mash' by Boris Pickett and the Crypt Kicker 5, or even 'Ape Call' by Nervous Norvovous, but I think that so few people would know what they were or remember them."

The latest thing is the latest Siren: Dave Clague has apparently vanished (with Siren's p a) to play in a reggae band in Spain; Tat Meager, session man extraordinaire, appeared on Roger Ruskin Spear's 'Rebel Trouser'. Now a very good new lead guitarist called Mick Connell has emerged from a heap of past loser groups, and when I saw the band playing their annual gig at Guildford Town Hall recently, he came over exceptionally well, as did Jim Sullivan (not 'The big' one) on bass. Acetates for 'Rabbits', a provisional title for the next Siren masterpiece are as rewarding as ever and surely it can't be long before Siren join Medicine Head as a hit group on Dandelion - particularly as John Michel, Medicine's manager, and Kevin are negotiating towards a management deal. With his guidance, the sky could be the limit.

#### FINAL WORD FROM KEVIN

"I really think I'm a better vocalist than almost anybody I see on stage. I want people to read your magazine and challenge me; say "Come along and prove it if you're as good as you say you are".

As told to John Amazing special offer to Zigzag readers: A copy of 'Strange Locomotion', Siren's recent Dandelion album can be yours for only £1.70. Genuine offer - only 34/-. Send today!



As in life, so in music  
As in music, so in life

The Moody Blues  
new album  
Every Good Boy  
Deserves Favour

THS 5



Buffy Saint Marie would like to stop singing protest songs and channel all her vitality into singing and writing love songs... but she knows she can't.

Buffy is a concert artist who, more than any other prominent American Indian has found success through her creative artistry, which has taken her around the world in concert route tours.

In an interview with John Carpenter, Miss Saint Marie said "hopefully, there will be no need for the protest song, one day... I hope so."

What would she do then? She would continue to deal movingly and poetically as she has, in singing Indian songs and writing love songs in the contemporary vein.

Talking in soft tones amidst the incense clouded, wood-paneled living room of Joni Mitchell's Laurel Canyon home, Miss Saint Marie said she would continue to "tell it as it is"—but she's not forgetting songs of love and other peaceful things.

CARPENTER: Were you exceptional in your tribe in that you were able to go to the University of Massachusetts and you were able to develop into a successful artist and performer?

BUFFY STE-MARIE: I was exceptional all right in that I was adopted if that is what you mean. My mother was part Indian you see; they raised me in a town where there weren't any other Indians and I was raised just like any other kid. I didn't feel any difference because of it. Just that I was darker, very much darker, than the other kids. I never said anything about it and neither did the other kids. I was never questioned about it. Most of the time I was growing up, you see, in Massachusetts—that is where my father worked—and weekends, when we had time, off we'd go to Maine.

C: Did you still keep in touch with your tribe then?

BSM: Oh yes. I've kept in touch all my life. We (her husband, Dwayne and herself) were just home, visited my reserve in Canada.

C: Did you do this primarily through your parents or what?

BSM: No, I just did all my life. I don't know. They didn't encourage me or discourage me. They were beautiful. They never told me... I had to go to college, that I shouldn't go to college. I wasn't interested in anything then that I am now. Not till I was sixteen. Then I was more interested in trying to bleach my hair. I knew all about all the different hair bleaches. Really, I knew about them. Then there were the lipsticks and the eye shadows, things the other girls used—skin bleaches to make your skin white. Oh, I looked horrible (laughs). My

# BUFFY SAINT MARIE



parents... my parents were beautiful. I remember wanting to have my nose changed—then I was interested in no more than looking like "17" Magazine—I wanted to do that and I remember my mother telling me that if I liked, they would give me the money that was to be used for my first semester of college to do it but that I would have to think it over for a while first.

I didn't do too well in high school. My grades were horrible. I guess I cared deeply for quiet things. I remember that I got into Oriental philosophy but didn't tell anybody about it because I thought that that would be considered far out or something... I've always had woods around me and I've always enjoyed doing things alone more than team sports. If you know what I mean, I enjoyed life. I played piano when I was little and I made up songs then, did hand work and colored pictures. I enjoyed life.

C: What kind of songs were you writing then?

BSM: Same as now, whatever is happening. I've just written some new songs that I'm not too excited over but a lot of people seem to like...

C: Do you like doing what you do, performing, touring? A lot of performers complain about the grind of a tour and being well-known.

BSM: Oh no! I'm not like that at all. I know there is a difference in people, in anyone, when they know who I am, there really is. You know, I'm away from all that and I come over to do these tours so I'm around it very little and don't really... Do you come across that in other performers?

C: Most of the time the reverse.

BSM: Oh really, hmmm... No, I like what I'm doing.

C: You live in Hawaii now?

BSM: I was going to do a concert in two weeks so I got the travel agent I use to find me a place very secluded, and one day I was on the beach—I was reading—and I met Dwayne. Dwayne is a surfer. I told him my name was Maria 'cause I wanted him to not know who I was in case he'd heard of me. It was almost the wedding day before I told him. People there still call me Maria. The people there are so wonderful. We have a farm there and we try to be there as much as possible. Dwayne and I thought we'd like to

stay on the farm three months, then work three months, that was the plan we had.

C: Did it work?

BSM: Well, the first three months did. We were off three months and we've been touring now for three, traveling around, you know; now, we're going to be working the next three with a band.

C: What kind of band will it be?

BSM: It's a band that's made of the drummer that's teaching western drumming to Ali Akbar Kahn and learning tabla from him, Little Richard's bass player, a flamenco guitarist, a country steel player. They're all from Santa Cruz and they're very beautiful people. I had no plan to do so but there are so many of the songs that I've been writing that this band could add so much to. They'll be at the Troubadour with me when I'm there. It might be wonderful or it might not. If it is wonderful, we'll continue and if not, we won't, but we're going to try it.

C: I read an article about you in Look Magazine two years ago that said you were working on an opera.

BSM: Yeah... That's still in my mind, I suppose. I guess I'm still working on it. I'm getting two screenplays ready, and some books of poetry, other things, another separate screenplay that is just sketched out. I like to keep in control of what I do. I like to do it well and it's very difficult if you're trying to do a whole lot of things at once to do it well. If you give a book to someone else to put out, then there will be all these corny illustrations and I like to choose my own illustrations. I know how I want to illustrate them. I just haven't had the time. If you're exposed a lot as a singer like I am, you're busy enough just being a singer. When I go into those things, I want to be able to spend a lot of time with them. I'm looking forward to the day to having time to do things. Dwayne and I haven't had any children yet and I want to have and adopt children—people should do that, don't you think? Children shouldn't just belong to or be cared for just by parents. Anyway, touring you have to take care of so much business. Little pieces of paper when you buy something and they the government, periodically, seems to always be interested in how much I'm earning. Then too, I'm devoting a great deal of time to Indian affairs, catching planes on time, then doing concerts.

C: What about "My Country 'tis of Thy People"?

BSM: I stopped singing that song. I had thought, you see, that this emotional response I would get from the audience when I sang it was an indication that things would get better for the Indian. I kept singing it, all the time thinking that through it I could inform the people; that when the people left, they would know something of how it is to be an Indian, something they weren't aware of when they came in. But you know, people would get a nice little guilt complex for themselves for about a week and, as I said before, nothing was getting better with the Indian.

C: What do you do now then?

BSM: What I'm trying to do now is like I'm putting several Indian lawyers through school to study Indian law. Another thing is I'm trying to start an Indian teachers college in Canada and the United States. I'm hoping that will become compulsory. The college will train teachers that want to teach Indian children what those Indian children need to learn. It will train people to teach Indian

C: How do you feel about all this sympathy from the people who applaud wildly when you sing "Buffalo" or "My Country 'tis of Thy People You're Dying"? Are you amazed at how little they do?

BSM: Oh, it's very easy to point the finger of guilt at your granpa

and condemn him, I stopped being amazed about six months ago. I stopped singing "My Country 'tis of Thy People You're Dying."

I have started a foundation. It's called Nehewan, which means talk Cree. You know, for the last four years I've spent about 95 percent of my time trying to inform the White man how it is for the Indian. I've been trying to tell WHY the Indians are in the predicament they are in today. I've been on TV, written articles about it, been interviewed, quoted and misquoted. Then it occurred to me that even while I was doing it, my little cousins were starving. While I was knocking my brains out hoping to get through to maybe nine Indian—would-be Indian—sympathizers about what was happening, that things right then were going bad for the Indians. So I've stopped all of that. I'm tired of hoping that people will just wise up. Wise up to the fact that perhaps their national honor is at stake and just might need some good propping up. I've just stopped hoping that people would care. It's not enough that people care, I care. I just care that they shape up, that they straighten out your—say our—society so that the society can be something fit for human beings to live in.

I don't mean an automaton, a person with all the proper goals—you can spell that kind any way you want, goal or gold—but people that can look at things the way they are and make this the place it says it is. I have great hope, though, with the young; they seem to be able to look at things the way they are, see what has gone before and not hide from it. Maybe they'll want a society fit for human beings to live in—all of us, I hope.

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law, in tribal rights, Indian medicine and at least a rudimentary Indian history, and the Indian languages. That's very important, I think. I'm working on what I know and can help in. I'm doing a primer on the Cree language to be used in grades one thru four.

Most of the Indians that have been exceptional, have been exceptional to begin with. The Indians that have succeeded, not just with money but in other things as well, have been able to become happy; in some way they've been exceptional people. They have had the exceptional breaks and inspiration and that is very hard to get for an Indian kid who goes to reservation schools. Indian education is not only insulting but is not true, contains so many fallacies about what the world is. They are almost entirely irrelevant to an Indian kid.

You know, an Indian kid doesn't drop out of school at the age of say nine to sixteen the way non-Indian kids do. Indian kids drop out at the fourth or fifth grade. I want to stop that. See, I maintain that the reason the Indian kid drops out is not because he's not smart or can't make it, but because he is very smart and he catches on. He sees the fallacies. He knows what is happening.

Oh there are some good, some very good teachers in Indian schools; their hearts are in the most beautiful places, but they are not able to prepare the Indian kid for the way it really is out there. He is told, like all of us have been told, that the United States or Canada is the best place to be, the perfect place to be, a place where, if you are willing to work, it's possible to have your dreams come true. He is told that all men are created and treated equal, that there is equal opportunity for all, all are free and equal. None of this is true and it's just so—I mean, the Indian leaves the reservation and goes to the city and doesn't know what it is really like; he's fully unprepared. He gets to the city and he walks around completely in a state that's hard for me to describe with words, till after a few months, he wakes up and he discovers the hideous joke that has been played on him all of these years. I don't think only Indian people go through this. I think we should start being completely honest with children and tell them that this country has a long way to go before it will be the kind of place we say it is; the kind of place we want it to be. I think we should give the kids something else to dream about. There's an awful lot for a kid to dream.

C: How is your foundation supported? I remember hearing you say at the Rose Bowl concert that you were making dresses or something.

BSM: All of the money comes out of the concerts—all of it. We

haven't been trying to get other support yet. I find that Indian charities, like all charities, never get where they're supposed to. Money is spent on mimeograph machines and the like, and then the Indian children that do get it are those in the front row, the ones that would get it anyway, from say the Red Cross; who say "yes, sir" and "yes, ma'am" and are the most noticeable. Everybody takes care of them.

I have this foundation and we're preparing a library, a Cree library that will provide tapes, records, books, tape recorders, the records of the Cree past, the songs of my own reserve. Then, to the learning of Cree. I wish all would learn their language but that is someone else's thing to do.

C: What is this clothing thing you advertised then? It's not part, huh?

BSM: That's another thing. (Laughs) That is an all-Indian shop. Record people that had been to Newport wanted me to wear feathers and all that, but I didn't want to do it 'cause—well, like at Newport, Joan Baez wore a buckskin fringe jacket and I just couldn't wear that 'cause I didn't want to DRESS as an Indian. A lot of designers approached me to endorse their Indian clothes and that was groovy except that they didn't want to give anything back to the Indians; this one designer decided that if I helped with the designing and modeled them in places like Eye and Harper's Bazaar that fifty percent of her profits would go to the Indians. It's an all-Indian workshop. The people who make the clothes are Indians, and there is bead work. In Canada there is Team. They're kind of like an import place that goes out into the provinces and gets things. They've got the most beautiful Indian things you can imagine. They sell them and its non-profit with the money going to the Indians. If you buy one of those beautiful turquoise and silver things like a bracelet from an Indian for thirty dollars, you can go around and sell it for maybe a hundred dollars. I would like to see that money go to the craftsman. The Indians have, I'm telling you, the greatest gift to mankind that has ever been given. All the primitive people do. And if people would only wise up to the fact that progress is not a limitless place, that there is a certain point in history, a certain point in progress, and a pace that is perfect for human beings. Many of the cities are over-shooting the mark. It's not only an aesthetic but in all of the spiritual values that you find driven out of the churches. I think that any person has only to take a month and live in a primitive place and they'll find what these gifts are. They are the nameless gifts, having to do with being human.

There is a god! (laughs) I don't mean that as a radical statement, and He's not on a religious kick and there's not that warm feelin' of self-brainwash. There is a basis for spirituality which is not something that the Europeans brought with them. There was God here all along.

C: The civilization the Spaniards and English confronted was highly advanced. Most are not aware of this.

BSM: Yes, People, most people, don't know or hear about that. Or that there was germ warfare in the United States since its beginning; that the Indians were triumphed over by a great European culture with weapons and smallpox blankets and lies. People forget that there was a real effort made to just get rid of the Indian, just make him extinct. I know of tribes you probably have never heard of that just vanished, extinct, but that's not what they teach in the schools.

I think that the young people will be aware of their past, that what they were told in school about their government, all of the ideals this country is supposed to stand for, is built on all of this. That's why I say that it's no good for some one to dress like an Indian and feel for them. They should work at wising up their own people and changing the hearts—the ways of their own people. Then the Indian will be able to be helped. One follows the other. First, though, you have to straighten out your own culture before you go running off to help the Indian. I would say if you want to help that you should know about the Indians first, not just wear beads and all the Indian boots but really know the Indian. If people are going to go into the Indian's lives to help, I would say he should be able to teach or do something, and be well off enough to not have to live off the little the Indian has. He should be able to train the Indians in crafts. Medical people, dentists, doctors, someone to train people in what they need to know, right now.

C: How do you feel about the mystic up north saying that she saw the spirits of dead Indians above the heads of hippies attending her gatherings and interpreting it to mean that the Indians are coming back in the form of the White man's children?

BSM: I hope there is. I hope the young people, the hippies, are concerned and are ready to accept the truth of what this country has been built on. I hope they are ready to make this country the kind of place everyone wants. It could be very beautiful but so many people just don't know that.

Los Angeles  
Free Press



In the last issue, I mentioned the possibility of my being superceded by John as editor. Well, for numerous and varied reasons (which will be explained in detail next issue - much to certain people's displeasure) I'm still here. So hello.

A busy month for John, Mike, Mac and me - everyone else seems to have vanished; Ian got married and disappeared, Jeff hasn't been seen for two months, though his articles pop up now and then in Ink magazine, and Pippin has decided to start his own magazine called 'Supersnazz'. Pippin is one of the world's leading authorities on rock, so the mag should be pretty amazing - the first issue will feature stuff on the Dead, Steve Miller, Stack Waddy, Mad River and a whole load of other grist. So send off 15p (and keep your fingers crossed) to 3 Rutland Avenue, Walton, Warrington, Lancs, from which northern outpost he is conducting his nefarious activities.

After 30 months of publication, we've finally got some T shirts made and available to our good readers (see the ad below). One trouble we had was finding a suitable slogan - Zigzag limps on was the one we finally selected after rejecting Zigzag your bag, Beans means Zigzag, Capt Beefheart reads Zigzag, I dig Zigzag, Don't be vague - ask for Zigzag, Zigzag makes the coming easy and the going back, and various other inabilities. The point is we're still looking for a better slogan, so if you've got any ideas, please let us have them and the winner (?) will get a free T shirt. Wow!

After much deliberation as to whether or not we should publish the complete Snoopy/Love interview, we thought 'balls' and went ahead (see ad below). A veritable hair curler, totally unabridged and untampered with. The Byrds issue is coming together - a pile of notes at least 8 miles high has been condensed into a magazine devoted solely to them. Details of that one next month (for certain), so don't send any bread yet. (Just send it for the Love thing!)

While on the subject of money (a sore point), don't forget the Siren LP as mentioned in the Kevin Coyne article. The album contains an amazing track

called 'Shake my hand'... devastating stuff. Their next one contains 'The stride' - one of my all-time favourite singles. Wahoo!

For the first time since we've been out here in Bucks County a few of the local bands have started getting a loyal following in the area. Watch out for The Gilbert Hampshire Armpit Review (three blokes all called Gilbert Hampshire, would you believe), Chameleon (article on them next month - or even this month if we can squeeze it in), and the John Otway Band (John Otway will become a superstar, mark my words).

If you want a laugh, go into a record shop and listen to Johnny Cash's 'Show Time' LP on Sun. It's a bogus live LP with an audience dubbed over a string of single tracks. Sounds like they used a recording of a baseball crowd. The very worst kind of duplicity... no marks to Sun for perpetrating this crime.

Records that I consider worth listening to include LA Woman - Doors, Randy Burns & the Sky Dog Band, John Sebastian, Leon Russell (don't like the 'I'm a superstar' cover though), Country Joe's 'Quiet days in Clichy' (Jimmy Young should play the first track on side 2 - just right to accompany mindless housewives as they're doing the washing), the Doobie Brothers (who seem to have spent a lot of time listening to Creedence and Brinsley), Stoneground, Grin, Rod Stewart (with the usual aborted English steeple), and Quiver (though the album lacks the punch, poke and excitement of their live work... time for me to release our bootleg of 'Quiver live at Huddersfield Poly!'). Also 'Angel Delight' by Fairport and 'Good Taste is timeless' by the Holy Modal Rounders (import - I don't think CBS will be crazy enough to release it here).

Heard the tapes for Stack Waddy's next (double) album. Eek! The gem of the collection is their rendering of 'the girl from Ipanema' if you can imagine that. As John Peel said 'never have I heard a singer singing so out of tune with such assurance' or words to that effect.

The British police are 90 per cent rubbish; I've checked it out, and it appears to be true. PC Lewis of the Thames Valley force not only had the im-

pudence to bust me for such trivia as a bald tyre, defective exhaust and one or two petty excise licence infringements, but he had the impertinence to look at the car and say 'it's a bit of a heap... the magazine can't be doing very well!'. If I'd been of sufficiently low initiative to do his job, then I could drive around in a new Cortina throwing my weight around, being vindictive and pretending I were a superior human being. It's a great pity that all police are not like our village copper, who is efficient, polite and worthy of our respect and admiration. If all were like him, there would be no freak/police bother at all.

Until the next issue.....

Pete

Some additional wanderings from John:

All the things I'd wanted to say have been banished by the news of Jim Morrison's death. Suffice it to say that, for me, no greater musical hero existed.

Good records I've noted include the return of Link Wray on Polydor, heading a group of shouting screaming people all having a great time, including a very tasteful mandolin player. Check this out when it reaches the shops, and also have a listen to the Allman Brothers' live double on Atco. Duane A (with E Clapton) is the most impressive guitarist in his field, and this band will rip open a few minds when they get here (hopefully) this autumn. The Brothers have a lot in common with Delaney & Bonnie, who have, as yet, not made a bad album - their latest (on Atlantic) is called 'Motel Shot' and is the one which was originally going to be on Elektra (all you butterfly freaks).

More records in the post-war masters series on Blue Horizon... a pleasant early B B King and the primitive and good syncopated guitars backing the vocals of Lazy Lester.

A quick plug now for the magnificent Action Replay series of singles, guaranteed to bring back from the subconscious a happy memory or two of a pulled bird (or bloke), and a further plug for Jackie Lomax's fine Warner album. Amazing lyrics on the title track 'Home is in my head'. And finally of course, the great L A Woman' by the Doors, which is as indispensable as their first. John

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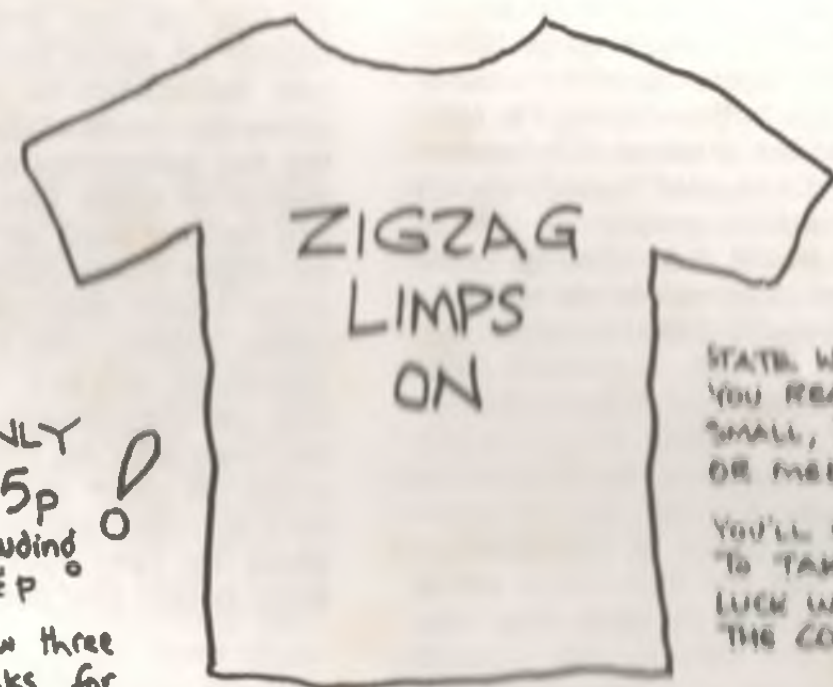
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