

NO. 7 DEC-JAN

RIP IT UP

NEW ZEALAND'S FREE MONTHLY ROCK PAPER

INSIDE: Fleetwood Mac, Mink DeVille, Blondie, & Enz.



WILLY DEVILLE

JOHN MCVIE AND LINDSEY BUCKINGHAM

RIP IT UP No. 7 Dec-Jan.



Dragon: Kerry Jacobsen, Robert Macklin Taylor, Marc Hunter, Todd Hunter and Paul Hewson.

Tales of New Zealand band's Making-it-big-in-Australia have been frequent this year — Mother Goose, the continuing success story of the Enz and so on. Well, here's yet another one. What's more this particular success story promises to turn into perhaps the biggest of them all.

Dragon, one-time Auckland based band, have now racked up four hit singles in Australia. Their first album *Sunshine* went gold and their just-released second, *Running Free*, is already gold on the strength of orders alone. But this may well be only the beginning, for three months ago they joined the small coterie of artists on the prestige American label, Portrait. The other acts on the label are — Heart, Burton Cummings, Joan Baez, and now, Dragon. Impressive, huh?

Success like this has not come easy. Todd Hunter the band's bass player related their story via a trans-Tasman phone call — "When we arrived in Australia we hit the pits completely. We had our equipment ripped off, we had no work, and then our drummer died." The death of long-time Dragon member Neil Storey was a shock to all and naturally hit the band hardest of all. "We were horrified, just horrified."

A week after Neil's death, however, their first single, "This Time", began to chart and replacement drummer Kerry Jacobsen was flown in from NZ to complete the line-up as it now stands

— Todd Hunter on bass, with his brother Marc on vocals, guitarist Robert Taylor and keyboards player Paul Hewson.

Their recording contract came about after Peter Dawkins, a NZ producer working for CBS in Sydney, saw them performing in a wine bar where, "the owner would pay us a bowl of mince each for the night's work and then we had to borrow money to pay for the taxi fare home." Nevertheless, Dawkins saw the potential even though Todd admits that the band were "pretty rough at the time." The result of the collaboration with Dawkins was one hell of an album. Titled *Sunshine*, it displayed their strongly melodic songs wedded to a crisp, efficient, funky sound. It was the break they needed.

Today the problems of how to pay the rent are behind them. As Todd asserts, "the money's really good now and we don't have to work as hard as we once did. For the past year we haven't stopped but now we're having three nights off a week. And with managers, press agents and all you can be screened from the people you don't want to see, which makes it more relaxed in its own way."

But their recent signing to Portrait promises to bring on the biggest changes yet. In April Dragon will move to the States where the label will set them up with all the road crew, PA and equipment necessary for them to begin

touring, probably as support act on other tours. Indeed the extent of Portrait's commitment to Dragon is staggering.

They were selected out of three hundred acts auditioned from around the world. And Todd relates that the label will put "five hundred grand into promoting us in the States." That's \$500,000 to you and me. Furthermore, the label boss has reportedly pledged not to sign another rock'n'roll act until Dragon have sold a million records. Now that's big business.

I asked Todd if the band felt confident enough to handle such high-powered promotion. His reply was curt and confident: "F**k yeah."

In fact the Rock Cruise in December, which brings them to Auckland for one concert on the 21st, will "enable us to get fit and prepare ourselves for touring and America next year." The concert may well be New Zealand's last chance to see Dragon for some time (though there is the possibility of a concert here in January).

As a parting shot, any message for the folks back in NZ, Todd? "Yeah... we miss you all, the weather's neat and we're looking forward to getting back." And I'll bet there are more than a few people looking forward to seeing them back.

Alastair Dougal

DRAGON AT ORATIA FESTIVAL

Dragon, NZ band who have already broken the Australian market and are now on their way to America, headline the Great Western Music Festival to be held at Mollers Farm, Oratia on Sunday the 15th January. This one-day event will be held in a site of fifteen acres of cleared land in a forest valley.

Other acts lined up for the festival are Living Force, Hello Sailor, Country Flyers and Rockinghorse.



"I Quit" E. JOHN (30)

Elton John announced his retirement from stage performing at a charity concert held in London last month. John had stopped performing late in 1976, but earlier this year he played 5 nights at London's Rainbow Theatre which seemed to signal his return to live performing on a more regular basis. But at last month's London performance John made an announcement part way through the show — "I haven't been touring for a long time. It's been a painful decision for me to come back on the road but this is going to be the last show. There's a lot more to me than playing on the road." He followed this announcement by playing "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me."

However it has been emphasised that this does not mean that Elton John has given up recording; in fact he has a single recorded and ready for release and an album is scheduled for release next year.



JOHN HOOD
7-midnight
Sunday-Friday

'putting the
night-time
back into
radio'



Let's hear it
for summer

SMALL STUFF

The Latest & the Greatest O'seas Rock News

The Sex Pistols have finally got their first album released (see review elsewhere in this issue), but as you might expect trouble is dogging them once again. In Britain all TV and radio advertising has been banned by the Independent Broadcasting Authority and it appears that the ban is not aimed at the album's title (*Never Mind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols*) but rather at the group itself. It has been suggested that the ban may be a result of the album containing two of the group's controversial singles — 'Anarchy in the UK' and 'God Save the Queen'. The British police have also been visiting shops suggesting that the album's cover be removed from window displays. Meanwhile, The Sex Pistols film has been resumed after an initial cancellation some weeks ago when one of the financial backers dropped out. Titled *Who Killed Bambi*, the film has been resumed with a different director. **Bob Marley** has written a song dedicated to punk rock. It's called 'Punky Reggae Party' and the song gives mention to Dr Feelgood, The Clash, The Jam, The Maytals and, of course, The Wailers. But

the old wave fights back. **Rod Stewart** has reportedly re-signed to Warner Brother for an offer that is said to be the largest in recording history. In New Zealand his latest, *Foot Loose and Fancy Free*, is already sitting at Number One on the album charts and 25 000 copies were shipped out in the first week of release. . . . reports are flying around of strife in the **Beach Boys** camp. Some reports have gone so far as to suggest that the band has already split but twelve concerts remain set for later this year in the States. Drummer and founder member **Dennis Wilson** also has a solo tour arranged using a 13 piece band with appearances from brother Carl Wilson, and Bruce Johnstone. . . . **Emerson, Lake and Palmer** follow up *Works Vol. One* with (surprise) *Volume Two*. This time it's a single album and includes tracks that have already been on release as solo singles. Thus it contains Lake's 'I Believe in Father Christmas' and Emerson's 'Honky Tonk Train Blues' together with Scott Joplin's 'Maple Leaf Rag' and a version of the old song 'Show Me the Way to Go



Rod Stewart

Home' . . . Joni Mitchell's newie's sounding stranger and stranger. Tentatively titled *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter*, it's a double album and reportedly includes a 17 minute piano piece recorded with a full orchestra. Members of Weather Report and Glen Frey and J.D. Souther also make contributions. . . . set for release early next year is the recording of **The Band's** farewell concert recorded at San Francisco's Winterland earlier this year. The set will feature contributions from Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Van Morrison, Neil Diamond, Ron Wood and a cast of thousands. The film of the concert (which reportedly will feature footage from other concerts as well) is due for release in NZ in March. . . . other albums due in the first few months of next year include the new **Bob Seger** (*Stranger in Town*) and the newie from Boz Scaggs, *Down Two, Then Left*. Also expect a live album from Thin Lizzy in the reasonably near future. . . . the **Sensational Alex Harvey Band** have lost Alex. Harvey's decision to quit took the band by surprise and occurred on the eve of the band's British tour. Guitarist Zal Cleminson has accused Alex of disloyalty and of 'sabotaging a great band'. Harvey remains adamant that 'it was time to move on'. . . . **Black Sabbath** have lost their long-time lead singer, Ozzy Osbourne. It was rumoured at one time that ex-Deep Purple singer David Coverdale would take his place but Sabbath are apparently working with an as yet un-named American as replacement. Osbourne will pursue a solo

career. . . . **Wings** are back in the studio and working on their next album. Their newest single, 'Mull of Kintyre' features the Pipes and Drums of the Campbeltown Pipe Band who live in the West of Scotland where McCartney makes his home. . . . **The Kussal Flyers**, a British band regrettably little-known in NZ, have broken up.

Singer Paul Shuttleworth has vowed to become 'the Max Bygraves of the blank generation' with **Fleetwood Mac** being recent visitors, it's worth noting that *Rumours* has now sold 10 million copies world wide. It must be rapidly creeping up on *Tapestry* to become the biggest selling album ever. . . . the band formed by ex-Sex Pistols bass player Glen Matlock, known as **The Rich Kids**, have been signed by EMI who you'll recall fired The Sex Pistols not so long ago. That's showbiz. . . . EMI's other recent new wave signing the **Tom Robinson Band** are already scoring heavily in the UK with their first single '2468 Motorway' sitting in the Top 5. . . . **Warren Zevon's** second album, *Excitable Boy*, was almost completed when he decided to scrap three tracks and replace them with newer material. **Bruce Springsteen** recording in New York and using Flo and Eddie on back-up vocals. . . . **Television** is also in New York and recording. Their new album will be a co-production job between Tom Verlaine and John Jansen, who worked on Supertramp's *Crime of the Century*. . . . **Lou Reed** recording with Genya Ravan. . . . **Alice Cooper** undergoing treatment for alcoholism. . . . next **10cc** LP is a live double titled *Live and Let Live*. . . . **Jackson Browne's** next now appears as though it will be part live and part new studio material. Tentative title is *Running On Empty*. . . . this being the last issue for 1976 we'd like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a rockin' New Year and warn you to watch for the first issue of Rip It Up for 1978 which should hit the streets in late January. See you then.



Electric Light Orchestra

TOURS

The Rock Cruise aboard the *Australis* will call into Auckland on December 25 and two shows will be presented that night.

At first show of the evening at 5 p.m. **Skyhooks** and **Hello Sailor** will play. At the second show at 8 p.m. **Renee Geyer** will headline supported by returning NZ band, **Dragon**. The order and presentation of these concerts was not finalised at the time of going to press. So you are recommended to

consult the daily newspapers for final times and running order.

Concerts set for early next year include two big outside presentations. In late January the **Electric Light Orchestra** will present one concert at Auckland's Western Springs Stadium. The newest album by the band entitled *Out of the Blue* will be released this month.

David Bowie is now booked to perform two outside concerts in early March. At this stage dates are not finalised, but it is intended to hold the concerts in Auckland and Christchurch.

Pacific Eardrum

Pacific Eardrum are six very excellent musicians. Four New Zealanders — Dave MacRae (keyboards), Billy Kristian (bass), Brian Smith (saxophone), and Joy Yates (vocals.) The line-up is completed by Isaac Guillory (an American and a superb guitarist) and Jeff Seopardie (drums,) and the only Briton in the band. At the moment, they are based in Britain, where they have recorded an album for Charisma.

The New Zealanders in the band (except for Billy Kristian) have mostly been working out of their country of origin for 10

years or more, and the experience they have gained in that time is impressive indeed. In fact, although Pacific Eardrum are not very well-known as yet, their combined pedigree speaks for itself. As well as the band members being involved with all manner of session work, the official Charisma biography given to me lists one or more of the band as having played with the likes of the Everly Brothers, Small Faces, Alan Price, Alexis Korner, Del Shannon, Chuck Berry, B. B. King, John Mayall, Buddy Rich, Matching Mole, Cat Stevens, Billy Preston, Cleo Lane, and Neil Sedaka.

Currently, they are playing support to the Brothers Johnston around Britain. I asked Dave MacRae how the tour had gone.

"The tour as such, well the major part has finished. It was about 10 days, couple of weeks, and a lot of consistent night after night work. Now we're doing about three gigs a week, colleges etc, and that's going to go ahead until Christmas, and then we're going to Europe next year. We try as much as possible to get into the concert area. We're sort of designed as a concert band, not so much as a dancing band."

"It wasn't till about a year ago that I myself started clicking to the fact that there was an actual New Zealand sound coming out, almost regardless of style, and I can actually feel this."

With a good album on the market, good promotional back-up from their record company and a European tour planned for next year, things look very promising for Pacific Eardrum.

Ken Weir

FREE ROCK

Free outdoor rock concerts are soon to resume in Auckland over the summer.

Radio Hauraki will once again present their series of concerts in Albert Park in the City, but this time will be using improved staging and sound gear. Most of the top local bands will be booked and much of the action will be filmed by an outside broadcast unit for subsequent TV use. The Hauraki concerts, which are sponsored by the ANZ bank, will begin on January 8th although there is a possibility they may begin earlier.

12M are also organising a series of concerts which will be held at the Mission Bay reserve. The rock concerts will run from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. on the following dates: 14, 21, 28 January and February 4.

Scorsese's NEW YORK NEW YORK



Liza Minnelli

Director Martin Scorsese's last film to be seen locally, the blood-bespattered *Taxi Driver*, not only won the Grand Prix at Cannes but was very well received by the general public. However, as Scorsese says, "You don't have to be violent to be a box office smash," and his latest work *New York, New York* is a romantic musical drama. Set in the post-war 40's, the story concerns the struggling careers of a danceband vocalist and the saxophonist who falls for her, played respectively by Liza Minnelli and Robert De Niro.

Minnelli attacks a tailor-made role with gusto, a part, interestingly, styled by the years of her mother's musical peak. For De Niro, however, it is the first attempt at a musical. Nonetheless, he approached the film with his usual in-depth character immersion. Where, for his Oscar-winning role in *Godfather II*, he visited Sicily, and for *Taxi Driver* he took out a licence and drove cabs at night, (practising gun-play during the day,) here the non-musician De Niro prepared by consulting retired band-era players and learned a bop tenor solo one finger at a time. Knowing the director from their *Taxi Driver* collaboration he also borrowed heavily from Scorsese's personality for his characterisation.

Scorsese has said that *New York, New York's* plot is straight-forward enough to be set in any time but he chose the 40's because of his fascination with the music. This period was, of course, the height of the big bands and the film contains 24 songs from the Glenn Miller and Dorsey bands as well as four new songs by Kander and Ebb, (who also scored *Cabaret* for Minnelli.) The film ends, as all 40's musicals must, with a huge production number called 'Happy Endings.' (Yeh, you guessed.)

Although this is Scorsese's first musical as a director, he has previously worked as editor on *Woodstock* and *Elvis on Tour*. Furthermore, his next film will be *The Last Waltz*, a recording of The Band's farewell concert which apparently included guest turns by nearly everyone. Should be interesting. Meanwhile, we have *New York, New York* to look forward to.

P.S. Keep an eye out for Bruce Springsteen's sax-man, Clarence Clemons, as a trumpet-player.

Peter Thomson

Rumours

Auckland venue, The Island of Real Cafe, will be premiering two new groups in December: **Cinema** with Jeff Clarkson and Paul Crowther (ex-Split Oinds) and Dave Marshall's new group. Move over Moses. Rock is back at the Globe Hotel and first up is **Citizen Band** on Dec 15 - 17 and 22 - 24. **Living Force** are touring out of Auckland, however they are purposely avoiding pub work and relying on concerts. Eddie Hansen has replaced Mike Fisher while Matt Matopi will be playing some percussion. A photo of **The Suburban Reptiles** appeared recently in London's *New Musical Express* pointing out the existence of such creatures in this country. Auckland's meanest group the **Scavengers** (Scavs to you) have been put out of action after two members were fed knuckle sandwiches by some lunky kiwis outside Parnell rock venue, Windsor Tavern, (winner of last years interior design award). Des Truction's wrist is in traction and Johnny Volume's Knob is out of action. The dick who distributed the damage forked out \$100 in fines. He was heard to mutter "Sink more piss. . .". **Fragment of Time** featuring Waikato guitarist and soloist Kevin Stanton, is touring constantly. The group hopes to get into different material soon. **Alistair Riddell** has recently finished mixing his new single for Mandrill Records. It features some interesting synthesizer work by Dedwood Trainhim. Should be available soon. **Malcolm McCallum** will be leaving us shortly (not short) for a career in Melbourne. He has a recording contract with CBS which is as good a start as anyone could hope for. . .

Winners of Onslow College's (Wgtn) **Talen Quest** were a college outfit called 'The Punk Rockers'. (Incredible name) Personnel runs something like Delinquent Diana, Suzi Sadistic, Slasher Sue, Julie Evil, Terrible Todd, and Johnny Jerkoff. No joke. Take me to the dressing room. . . Their winning song was entitled "I Wanna Kill a Seagull". Too much, eh? . . .

A new band has emerged called **The Tourists**. The lineup includes Tich, Gary, Ray and myself. . . **Lee Maalfrid** has released a soul-searching piece entitled "Lavender Mountain". It's released by WEA



Lee Maalfrid

and was produced by Mike Harvey and features noted musicians Paul Woolwright, Martin Wynch and Eddie Kilbride. Sounds pretty good too. I might add. (Then again I might subtract) . . . Christchurch has a punk rock group. They are also new wave which is good, eh? Entitled **Johnny Velox and the Vauxhalls** they play their own material as well as other peoples. So they tell us. Sounds mean. . . Te Puke has a punk rock group too. Called **Pushead and the Scabs**, it includes Su King, Car Bunkle, Jon Orrea and C. Lit. They are going down a storm at the local burger bar and they hope to buy some guitars soon. . . meanwhile local lads **Junk** have changed their name, if not their tune and will now be known as the **Edsels**.

A comprehensive album catalogue is on the market. Put out by the NZ Federation of the Phonographic Industry, it retails at \$1.95 and lists all currently available albums in NZ. A worth addition to the library of any conscientious rockophile.

Competition Results

The Rum and Coke Tour, Hello Sailor competition proved too tough for 75% of the entrants. The four talented winners were Debbie Capper-Starr, Liane Williams, Gerard Pain and Harvey Darb. The members of Hello Sailor pictured were — 1. Dave McCartney, 2. Harry Lyon and 3. Graham Brazier.

Wgtn

Saturday afternoons are a good time for music lovers in Wellington. **The 1860 Band** are still packing out the **1860 Tavern** and the sleazy **Seven Seas Bar** of the **Hotel St George** has **Schtung!** on Saturday afternoons too. Schtung!'s album and single are now released and they filmed a sequence a couple of weeks ago featuring their single "They Sleep Early in Cologne".

Rockinghorse have taken on a new lead singer, a new manager, and a new lease of life. . . Barry Saunders who used to play



Barry Saunders, Wayne Mason and Kevin Bayley of Rocking Horse

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

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with a Christchurch band called **Orange** is the singer, and Danny Ryan who has had a lot of experience with artists and management while at EMI, is the new manager. **Rockinghorse** is a lot rockier, raunchier and more together than ever before. . . Jim Lawrie on drums and Clinton Brown on bass provide a chunky rhythm section, while Wayne Mason is one of the rock 'n' roll keyboardists from way back. Kevin Bayley is surely one of New Zealand's top guitarists, and together they provide the sort of energy and excitement seen at Hinuera last month.

Coast to Coast and **Les Hots** are still pubbing around the country, but hope to make a few Wellington appearances in the remainder of 77.

Rough Justice play for a week in Tauranga from Boxing Day, then are planning to stay in Auckland for a while. . . they are currently taking a break from gigging, while they rehearse some of their original material. **Rough Justice** have also added two new members to the band — Michael Gupp on keyboards and Peter Boyd on baritone and tenor sax.

Red Rose continue their residency at **Doctor John's Disco** and a couple of weeks ago introduced a "punk" set into their act. They have been getting a lot of exposure on the telly.

We have it on good authority that the **Met Office** single will be released on 14th December.

Lynne Attwood

Rock Movies

Early next year the Classic Cinema in Auckland will be screening a series of rock films. The major titles to be shown are **Emerson, Lake and Palmer on Tour** which follows the band on a 32 day European tour; **Goodbye Cream** which documents the final performance Cream ever gave, held at London's Albert Hall, and the final feature will be **Festival** which has footage from the Newport Folk Festivals between 1963 and 1966 and shows performances from Dylan, Joan Baez and Peter, Paul and Mary.

Other shorter rock films will also be shown. These will include **The Rolling Stones** plain tracks from **Goat's Head Soup**, **James Taylor** in **Concert** and **Van Morrison** at the **Rainbow**.



ROCK TURNS A NEW CORNER WITH
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Midge Marsden

Midge Marsden, lead singer and rhythm guitarist for the Country Flyers, is a living example of the old Blues expression, "paying your dues". He has been playing for years, and it shows in his wide knowledge of (and affection for) music. The current Flyers includes some equally experienced musicians: Richard Kennedy (guitar), Neal Hannan (bass), Bud Hooper (drums), and Beaver (vocals). They play an astounding range and depth of material, stuff that can get an entire audience on their feet, or sail right over the heads of the unaware. It's something Midge is well aware of.

"We tend to be in a minority field, musically. We don't play a hell of a lot of Top 40. We don't play the heavier stuff that a lot of bands do. We try to do it in our own way, which is relying on lots of different sources — reggae, rock n' roll, country, blues, New Orleans funk, R n'B, and swing. I think we fit into a gap other people don't fill.

"We play quite a lot of blues. I've been interested in it for years. I used to have a radio programme on 2ZM called *Blues is News*. But I think people are more aware of what the blues is, today, than when the boom came in the 60's."

Yet despite the wide disparity between

the sources the Flyers tap, there is an overall sound that distinguishes the band. I asked Midge how a band could play styles as distinct as country music and the blues.

"Well in some ways it can be related, 'cos blues is basically a poor man's music. And yet the original concept of country music was the same thing — it was the white man's blues. And reggae? "We enjoy doing it. I like good reggae. It's always been there but I think it's got to the stage now that a lot of people have tuned into it."

At the moment, the Country Flyers are in Auckland, working the usual pub gigs, but also playing the music and taking part in the Red Mole theatre group's performances at the *Ace of Clubs*. They have had the odd concert at the *Island of Real*, where a more specialised audience has responded to their less widely known material.

"Unfortunately I think the people that like the Randy Newman and Ry Cooder and things which we do a lot of, are not people who want to go to pubs all the time. The *Island of Real* was amazing. What I liked about it was that there was no alcohol, and people still got up. People enjoyed it.

After three or four years you get sick of

hotels. We could go around and play Top 40 and a few Rolling Stones things, and they'd think you were champion. But it's nice to do other things."

The inevitable question about the possibilities across the Tasman comes up. Midge isn't committed to it, but he's clearly open to persuasion.

"That's in the air. Red Mole are going, regardless, and they say, 'Are you coming? We're going — are you coming?' There's no reason why we shouldn't go."

"People say, 'You'll make it', but what is making it? Where does the music finish and the business start? I think it destroys a lot of bands."

Watching the Flyers, you get the impression of a band that really loves to play. But it's work too. What makes a person go out there six nights a week and work his butt off to give the people a good time?

"It's a rapport thing. If people see you've got something to give, they respond to that. But if you don't, if you just get up there and go through the motions, you don't get anything back. I enjoy it."

John Malloy

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According to one Sunday newspaper visiting British singer Graham Bonnet believes he is James Dean reincarnated. However, his manner does not suggest a man possessed. Calm and reticent but friendly, Bonnet certainly looks like Dean but asserts it's no affectation. "I've looked like this for about five years. It's not a put together image."

In fact, Bonnet is no new-comer to the rock scene. Today, he's probably best remembered as the voice on the Marbles' big 1968 hit "Only One Woman". After that single hit Bonnet pursued diverse interests. He appeared in a movie with Diana Dors that he matter of factly states was "a disaster movie. But it wasn't supposed to be." He played bass in Southern Comfort for a few months, then put together an album of his own compositions but it was never released.

Currently, Bonnet's tidy, American fifties looks are wrapped around an album that has more more substantial ties to the sixties, for on it he covers Dylan's "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue" and the Shirelles' "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow". Indeed Bonnet's presence in this country is explained by the chart success of "Baby Blue" in Australia and there's a good possibility he'll return to tour this country after recording his second album early in the next year.

JUNKIE LOVELIES

What a boost to a tired morale it was opening my first issue of *Dark Star* and seeing a rave review of Leonard Schaeffer's first (and only) album *A Boy and his Dog* (Warners 1756). What caught my eye first? A winsome Lenny on the cover, a dollar price tag, the line-up of backing musicians that included William Truckaway and Dan Hicks? Anyway, in a period sort of way, it is a pretty nice little album. A little oasis in a rocky desert, if you will pardon such punishable wordplay.

In the words of Sarris, Schaeffer would be strictly 'oddy, one-shot or newcomer' but with the talent turnover in the rock world you never know who's gonna make a comeback. Just as the small fanzines inject some vitality into a scene dominated by a few major papers, these other artists perform a similar service on the musical side. Esoteric? Elitist? There are degrees to this sort of thing. On the one hand you have artists like Pearls before Swine or the English singer Nick Drake who virtually revel in their non-commercialism. Like many others, Pearls before Swine do enjoy a major critical reputation, even though most of their records bombed financially. However, there are oddities and one-shots who really have just produced one or two albums only to vanish from the music scene.

Anyway, here goes. A sort of random rave about what you, lucky antipodean, might find in the bargain bins of your local store, or even in the local trading post. So what about a few possum hides for a Dr Strangely Strange album?

How many can remember the awful glut when MCA let loose an enormous catalogue of crud on the market in the early seventies? Sadly, a few of these records were rather interesting. Two songwriters in particular:

One was Orville Stoeber. Now there's a name Jack Warner or Darryl F. Zanuck would have changed! His only album *Songs* (MCA 4872) is a breath of fresh acoustic air, graced by a couple of sensitive e.e. cummings settings. Stylistically, he is a bit like Andy Pratt without amphetamines.

Another was the Canadian writer Tom Northcott whose *Upside Downside* (MCA 5185) reached an all-time low of 10c a copy in one Wellington store a few years ago. Apart from his own songs, the album is worth getting for a lovely version of Randy Newman's "Old Kentucky Home" replete with minstrel-style chorus in the Stephen Foster refrain.

On the sun shines bright on my old Kentucky home

And the young folks roll on the floor.

Mention Randy Newman, and my mind runs to Martin Mull and David Ackles. Well you can pick up Martin Mull's *Normal* (Capricorn 0126) in bargain basements all round the place but it is really a pale reflection of his first album (Capricorn 0106) which never made it out here. David Ackles' expressionist snapshots of life are not dissimilar to Newman spiritually, although Ackles' tendency to a rather lush Romantic strain is very foreign to Newman's polished and wry vignettes. All these comparisons spring to mind when a friend paid a buck for a new copy of Ackles' *American Gothic* (Elektra 75032) an hour after I had dished out eight for the new Randy Newman. And if you come across Ackles' very first album

(Elektra 74022) now that is a classic

You might find a copy of Mad River's second album *Paradise Bar and Grill* (Capitol 185) as it was released here years ago. One track even features Richard Brautigan reading a poem. Reading through various overseas papers would suggest that is one of the most sought after discs there.

Then there is that great Boston group Earth Opera whose first album (Elektra 74016) made it here about the same time as Ackles' first album. A lovely gentle album, the conception of Pete Rowan whose later work can be seen in Sea Train and the Rowan Brothers' albums. Earth Opera's second album *The Great American Eagle Tragedy* (Elektra 74038) never saw NZ shops which is a pity, because its bleakness is revealing when placed alongside the sixties optimism of the first album.

Poor Elektra! They made so many commercial flops — i.e. artistic successes, that for a while one could almost buy any Elektra record with confidence — except for *The Zodiac - Cosmic Sounds* (74009).

CBS's flop was the United States of America's first album (SBP 473 519) which has now been recognised as one of the most important releases of the late sixties. The whole thing was the brainchild of electronic whizz, Joseph Byrd who was responsible for the brilliant arrangement for Phil Ochs' "Crucifixion". Musically literate beyond their calling, the U.S.A. give us a musical texture ranging from Ives to Sgt. Pepper, cataloging every facet of American culture from schoolgirl masochists to men's room encounters. An album that vindicates almost all the excrescences of Barbra Streisand on that label!

Read next issues column for answers to the following questions:

- What writer of rock classics ended up reciting obstetrics manuals to the music of Handel?
- Can you believe the Fifth Dimension ever did anything worth the vinyl it was pressed on?
- Why didn't Golden Filth make it down under?

William Dart

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Mink DeVille
Capitol Records

Willie DeVille is a classic punk. No green-toothed Johnny Rotten, but an out-front New York street boy, slick pompadour and snakeskin jacket ("man, all I have to do is wear that thing on stage and people applaud..."). Elegant.

Willie's band, Mink DeVille, make classic punk music. It's all a matter of definition, I suppose, but there are some classic punks. Early Mick Jagger, the Van Morrison of Them (what greater punk anthem than "Gloria"?). This is the music of Mink DeVille.

There are hints of Jagger, Van Morrison (remember the Bang album *Blowing Your Mind*?) on his way to *Astral Weeks*, and of seventies punk Springsteen, but the material and the band are too strong for any accusations of imitation to be sustained.

"We mix everything," says Willie, "we dig a lot of different things and really try to open up the scope. Purists wreck everything."

There's nothing pure about Willie. Even his love songs snarl. The album was originally to be called "Cabretta" (it is still printed on the back of the sleeve), a type of leather that's tough, but tender. That's Willie.

There's a song list of dedications on the sleeve. Among them is one La La, singer with the Crystals, whose "Little Girl" is included on the album. Producer is Jack Nitzsche, who arranged for Phil Spector, master of the punk symphony. Initially, there were plans for Spector to produce the album as a sort of West Side Story punk opera. No disrespect, but I'm glad Spector didn't make the date. Nitzsche's production is assured, but this is Mink DeVille's album all the way.

All but two of the ten songs are written by Willie (published by Fire Escape Music) and they jump out of the speakers with the same intensity as those other golden punks, Jagger and Morrison. But this is no memory lane stroll for old farts. It's rock and roll, summer in the city, New York heat-wave.

Atlantic Records had no option on Mink DeVille. Willie's words: "We went to them with this contract and we said, 'Sign this or we go on Capitol' — we were going to go on Capitol anyway — and they said, 'We'd only give a contract like that to the Rolling Stones.' And we said, 'You don't know what you're turning down, man.'"

"I'm a gunslinger" — Willie DeVille.
Ken Williams



Mother Goose: Steve Young, Dennis Gibbins, Pete Dickson (at the rear), Marcel Rodeka, Kevin "Dwarf" Collings and Craig Johnstone.

Mother Goose came back to New Zealand to have a holiday, to tour and, according to Craig Johnston (vocals and sailor suit), "to spread goodwill, humanist ideology, creative work and love."

I'm not too sure about the last items, but from all reports they didn't rest much nor did they tour. In fact, they only played twice — once at the Hinuera Festival and once in Dunedin. On both occasions they proved their Australian success has been no accident but is a direct result of their ability to turn in an entertaining and hilarious show, and the music isn't too bad either.

Anyway, a few days after those appearances the following letter came crashing through our window wrapped around a brick and attached to a note that threatened to violate our bodies with Baked Beans if we didn't print it. What could we do? We printed it.

So at very little expense and no little pain, we present the Mother Goose letter. Take it away, boys.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Hello. My name is Craig. As my fellow Geese rehearse "America" (because that's where we're heading) — the *West Side Story* version — back in our Dunedin practice

room, my mind belly flops and crashlands over what has happened to we six wee Dunedin lads over the two years since the band formed.

We've made a lot of people laugh, a few people cry (including our manager). We've sold 12,000 copies of *Stuffed* (our first album) in Australia and "Baked Beans" (our first single) saw quite a lot of Top 20 action in most Australian cities which, backed up by very good national television coverage, has all resulted in M. Goose actually building a strong national following.

We were to do a tour of New Zealand which unfortunately has now been cancelled. Our 8 week NZ jaunt has already cost us \$7,500 which includes return airfares for ten people with equipment, eight weeks wages, etc. The point is that it costs a lot of money to take M. Goose on the road these days, being so heavy and having a Dutchman in the band, and a tour here would inevitably run at a loss. We could have compromised on equipment, lighting etc but we just didn't want to. We'll either put on an international class show in our home country or we just won't put one on.

Our manager is in the States at present arranging things for us over there (though I think he really went just to see Olivia Newton-John and Disneyland). We're headlining our own tour of Australia at the end of this year, so we should have cleared all our debts after a few months and then we can go and get a whole lot of new ones in America. Then we'll learn some Nana Mouskouri hits and do a tour of Iraq — which is not quite as silly as going to the States but more fun. I'm afraid (and so is our recording company) that we can't take things too seriously.

The six members of M. Goose, much to their dismay, remain the same as they were the day the band formed. No one has been serious enough to leave and probably no one else would be silly enough to join if they did.

I really wish you could be stuck in the middle of this rehearsal like I am. Now they're discussing whether or not to learn "Puppet on a String" or "Does Your Chewing Gum Lose Its Flavour on the Bed Post Overnight," or combine them both into one song. It's obvious to me that we should be learning some Vera Lynn material. You see we still do the odd unoriginal song (with emphasis on the 'odd'), although about 80% of our material is now original. The *Stuffed* album (as it may well be) contains all original material.

Now they're trying to fit the "God Defend New Zealand" melody into one of Steve's new songs! Anyway there's not much more I can say really. If I've written this much without saying anything it seems a little bit silly to carry on.

Besides, I've got to say goodbye now because it's my turn make the coffee and stop Pete beating up Marcel. I must get on or we'll never get on the Dinah Shore show.

Yours Goosibly, Craig.

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Sun scorched and done to a turn, the Western Springs crowd was slumping before Fleetwood Mac ever appeared. Forty thousand people. Ever-reddening sardines on a picnic.

A metallic opening set by local Rum and Coca Cola boys Helio Sailor was received mildly. The guitar strut of the Kevin Borich Express, all whining notes and choppy boogie, was better received, but the set seemed interminable.

A lengthy wait while the stage was re-set (a droopy potted palm as backdrop), and then just before five, Fleetwood Mac arrived and drove straight into an hour and a half of hit tunes.

This latest permutation of a one-time blues band that first saw the light of day a decade ago under the guidance of guitar wizard Peter Green is now the biggest selling recording group in the world. But as Lindsey Buckingham said: "This trip is semi tour, semi vacation."

It shows at the edges. Perhaps too much of the good life in the couple of days they've been killing time around town. They perform well, but most of the numbers lack the edge that was apparent in the recently re-screened television film of the group and even more apparent in the excellent bootleg album *Rockhoppers Live*.

It's by no means a bad show. Things are a bit shaky to begin with, but they find their stride with Stevie Nicks' party piece "Rhiannon", the song she says she likes performing most. The audience respond enthusiastically and they know all the tunes. The material is all from the last two albums, with one exception, Peter Green's witty little "Oh Well." It seems a strange choice, it draws a blank with most of the crowd (too young? too old?) and it seems unsuited to the instrumentation of the present line-up. Moreover, Lindsey Buckingham's mannered vocals on this tune fail to capture the drollness that is the song.

Buckingham is an interesting and sensitive guitarist, complementing his musical partners at all times, changing guitars, playing everything from raging howls to acoustic picking ("I played a lot of bluegrass banjo . . . until my banjo was stolen").

An acoustic set is highlighted by "Never Going Back Again" but it's "World Turning" with Mick and his African talking drum that gets the crowd moving.

The encore is "The Chain" and

FLEETWOOD



MAC

"Second Hand News", both performed with the gusto and precision that one might have expected earlier in the show. But then it's the end of the tour. Goodbye, road. They're pros and they can do the stuff, but they seem happy to get it over. Buckingham: "You can get sick of anything."

The *Rumours* album has stayed at number one on the American charts longer than any other album. More people are buying Fleetwood Mac than at any time in the confused, and sometimes confusing, history of the band.

"It's one of those things that wasn't planned," says Mick Fleetwood, drummer-manager-spokesman. "The way the band is now is obviously interesting visually and most of all, musically. Having three songwriters in the band and three singers in the band makes it that much more appealing. The band is definitely more versatile than in the past."

"We all realise what the band has accomplished and find it very exciting that we can feel we have a lot of steel left in us as far as making albums goes and whatever else is involved in running and being in a band. We're carrying on . . . as we normally do . . . we've got used to carrying on."

On the question of the band's new and outstanding success, Christine McVie, she of the brandy voice and world wise looks, says, "It must be something which is brand new. I don't want to use the word revolution or renaissance or anything like that because I don't think it's quite that heavy . . . but it's definitely something which is a new concept. Since the Beatles I believe there hasn't been a band of this versatility."

Since the formation of the first band from the ruins of John Mayall's Bluebreakers, Fleetwood Mac has been beset by problems — Jeremy Spencer's sudden disappearance to re-appear as a convert to the Children of God, Peter Green's despair and rejection of the trappings of success, personnel changes too numerous to relate, legal battles with a manager who put a substitute group on the road using the name Fleetwood Mac. With the current formation it's been emotional problems. Fleetwood's marriage broke up (later there was a re-union), the marriage of Christine and John McVie dissolved, and Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham's



Prism



Press Conference Photos By Murray Cammick

Mick Fleetwood

seven year romance wilted and died. Quite a strain for five people to persevere under.

"To start with there were problems," says Christine. "Normally when a couple separate they just separate. They don't see each other. In our situation we had to work it out where we just had to be with each other for the sake of the rest of the members of the group."

The emotional traumas held up the recording of *Rumours*, which took 11 months to record, although actual studio time would amount to about eight months.

Stevie Nicks: "A lot of the delay was technical, a lot of it was emotional. We didn't want to release it until it was right. It was important to all of us to keep the band together."

Mick: "It was horrendous, but despite the emotional problems never once did anyone consider leaving the band. It wasn't because of the money... and it's nice to know that the money wasn't the reason. We were very involved in the energy of the band and we felt we had to get through it. It was a growing up process. A lot of people felt it would be absolutely impossible to do but the point is we did it and what's more we came out the other side smiling."

"We all know each other very well, probably a lot better than before and the people concerned have done something very hard, that is going from an emotional relationship to one which is professional."

Fleetwood shrugs off any suggestions of overnight success, pointing out to those who don't know that the band members have been around a long time and Fleetwood Mac, while not the world phenomenon it is today, has never been without a modicum of success. He is, however, careful to avoid overexposure, and notes "we have been approached to do some things that are tacky. There can be overkill."

He patiently explains to those trapped in a 12-bar time warp that Fleetwood Mac ceased being a blues band a long time ago.

He'll talk about Peter Green, but the subject is not to be dwelt upon: "He's living with his mother and father. He's not happy. He was thinking himself into a corner when he left the band and he's still in that corner. Peter's a very sensitive person. The money thing freaked him out. He stopped

playing guitar and denied what he was best able to do. If he asked me to play with him again I would, but it's not likely to happen.

"He's pleased with what Fleetwood Mac are doing now. He likes the album."

The band has plans to take a two to three month break after the Far East tour before starting work on a new album.

Mick: "I don't think we plan to copy the success of *Rumours*. We will just go and make another album. It would be naive to think the next album will be a total failure so there's no overwhelming pressure. Even if it sold only half as many copies as *Rumours* (nine million or so) it would still be a success."

When you're riding the crest of a wave what's the next direction?

Lindsey Buckingham: "Downhill, I guess" (slow-breaking grin).

Christine McVie: "If I've changed it would show more to friends of mine than it would to me. I haven't become particularly snotty nosed or anything I don't think. "I think you become more discriminating about the reasons people want to be friends of yours. All my friends are long standing friends from years gone by, very few are newly acquired. When you do become very successful people often have ulterior motives for being your best buddy."

Ken Williams



Stevie Nicks



Blondes have more fun An interview with Debbie Harry

Debbie Harry in Auckland



Debbie Harry, lead singer of New York group Blondie and cover girl to a hundred punk rock fanzines, was in Auckland with her manager about two months ago before flying on to Australia, hoping to give some publicity to a December tour of Japan, Australia and New Zealand. *The Auckland Star* put her photo on the front page, that evening, with a three-line caption. Television One carried a short news interview with her. The truth was that very few people knew anything about her. Blondie's first album, released in the States in December — last year — hadn't been released in New Zealand at that time.

The album was produced by Richard Gottehrer, co-writer of the Chiffons' "My Boyfriend's Back", producer of the McCoys' hits (including "Hang On Sloopy"), and his influence had some critics calling it a nostalgia album, placing Blondie — purportedly a New Wave band — in a strange position.

For, as Debbie Harry explains, "... it worked well for us commercially but artistically some of us were at odds with it. But for a first record I think it was great... We sound much harder and much rawer when we are live... the record to me is slower".

Gottehrer first approached Blondie after seeing them play at New York's CBGB's where, prior to forming Blondie, Debbie Harry had sung with a group called The Stilettoes. Chris Stein, Blondie's guitar player, was guitarist with The Stilettoes.

"The Stilettoes were together in 1973, before punk rock was called punk rock. We were one of the first punk groups on the scene. It was an all-girl trio with a three-piece band. We would all wear ripped clothing and garters. We looked exactly like the punk kids do in London now but we did it two years before they did it. We had songs like "Platinum Blonde", "Poor Fool"... a whole bunch of stuff like that. Real rough, bitchy songs.

"We did some slow songs, some

cabaret-type numbers. We did some r & b, some girl-group-type songs — like the Shirelles or Supremes. "Platinum Blonde" was one of my songs from that period, "Rip Her to Shreds" and "Man Overboard" were leftover songs from that period.

"We were the house band at CBGB's. We played there every single weekend with Television when Richard Hell was the bass player. We got the Ramones their first gig there... ah, that was after The Stilettoes, as Blondie.

"We were into a lot of camp and a lot of schtick. Like knives on stage and day-glo crosses and all kinds of weird stuff... blood. It was definitely punk. It was ahead of its time."

The Stilettoes played in New York for seven months before splitting up; Debbie and Chris forming Blondie with James Destri on keyboards, Gary Valentine on bass and Clement Burke on drums. They played at CBGB's, didn't move out of New York until February this year. In March and April they made their first national tour, as opening act to Iggy Pop and David Bowie ("it was a big thrill and Bowie and Iggy were great"), in May and June they toured England.

Since they recorded their first album, Nigel Harrison, originally bass guitarist with Michael Des Barres' former group Silverhead, has replaced Gary Valentine, Frank Infante (Debbie calls him Frank Freak) has moved from his position as temporary bassist to add a second guitar to Blondie's line-up. A new album, as yet untitled, was recorded in August and is due for release in Japan this month, in the States in January. Like the first album it was produced by Richard Gottehrer but the band was more sure of itself this time and more sure of the sound they wanted.

These days Blondie doesn't play CBGB's. Last time they played there they broke all the club's attendance records.

Jeremy Templer

RECORDS

Robert Gordon with Link Wray *Private Stock Records*

Rockabilly Lives! Robert Gordon's debut album is subtitled "An Instant Record". Appropriate. It rocks with raw power from the opening bars of "Red Hot" and doesn't let up.

Gordon is a former singer for a punk band who claims his heart lies in Tennessee, or more precisely in the Land of Sun Records and the rockabilly sounds of Elvis and Carl Perkins and Eddie Cochran and that mythical figure Link Wray, who features on guitar and writes a few tunes.

All the material is firmly in the white rock n' roll tradition of the mid fifties. Gordon's delivery does his inspirations proud. "I'm not trying to recreate something," he says, "this is how I feel."

The lasting impression is of vitality with no sacrifice of musicality. Good rocking.
Ken Williams



Nick Garvey of The Motors

The Motors

1
Virgin

The Motors may look like a punk band, but the resemblance ends there. They got nothing to say of any social significance, and they don't believe in the three minute limit. What they are is a rock n' roll band. Wanna go deaf fast? Go to a Motors gig.

Punks they have listened to include the number one teen greasy of all time, Chuck Berry, and those mod boys, the Who. There really is nothin' new, believe me.

They do have a flair for melody, with a few catchy hooks thrown in for the kids, the best example being "Dancing the Night Away". Gets into your brain after a while. Doesn't really matter where they got it from. It's Rock n' roll. Two guitars, bass and drums, and they all sing. In the conventional sense of the word. Good songs too. Make you dance.

So if you're into energy in a big way, and you like catchy toons, light on the punk stuff, take a bite of Motors with your amphetamines. Body food.

John Malloy

Rod Stewart *Foot Loose & Fancy Free* *Warner Brothers*

Goodbye to Hollywood and all that. Blurred and besotted-looking, Rod Stewart stares off the cover of his new album. His white suit is crumpled.

Having shed Britt, Stewart hasn't quite shaken off his LA ennui. But he's made a good stab at it, with what seems to be a deliberate reversion to former times. The booklet inserted in the sleeve stresses the boozy, bawling image (there's Rod, chug-a-lugging, supporting soccer).

A key to the vigour of the album may be the choice of musicians, not the session men of the previous two outings, but the band Stewart brought with him to Western Springs earlier this year. The empathy between Stewart and his band gives the music a far firmer base.

The songs are strong. The rockers "Hot Legs" and "Born Loose" are reminiscent of those lurchers that were the staple of the Faces. "If Loving You is Wrong" I Don't Want To Be Right" demonstrates Stewart's ability at wringing every nuance from a strong ballad, and "You Keep Me Hangin' On" is a mini-symphony worthy of the memory of the Vanilla Fudge.

But it's not all rock n' roll heaven on Sunset Boulevard. This otherwise very strong album contains two songs of sentiment, "You're In My Heart" and "I Was Only Joking." Tilting ditties, romantic, effusive, mawkish. Sadly, they are the songs that will sell the record.

Ken Williams

Booty on a Black Street



Beauty on a Back Street Daryl Hall & John Oates *RCA*

In many ways, Hall and Oates have taken on the mantle which slipped from the rickety shoulders of Todd Rundgren after *Something/Anything*. Blue-eyed soul is a rather meaningless term, but it expresses what both acts have in common — an application of black music's fire to the technology of pop-rock. But even a dose of Rundgren won't prepare you for just how complex Hall and Oates' music has become.

Beauty on a Back Street is firmly based on strong melodies and the best rhythm playing you're ever going to get from white boys, but aside from the positively infectious opener — "Don't Change" — there's nothing on here to woo the casual listener. *Beauty on a Back Street* needs constant replaying and pretty much undivided attention for quite a while before it pays off, but at least it offers quite a dividend.

It may be necessary to forgive the occasional excess where they stray too far into the mystical ("Winged Bull") and cutesy, neo-Sparksism ("Bad Habits" and "Infections"), but in the main, they display a remarkably deft touch for pure pop sensibility at its most intelligent. In "Bigger than Both of Us", aside from a literate lyric:

*Think of me as another page in your life
A curious way for you to pass the time
Just another memory when you're middle-aged
There's someone for the girl with everything*

there is also an arrangement which demonstrates just how much dynamic force you can generate at little more than ballad pace, and uniformly impeccable playing (although things might have been even better if producer, synthesiser-player, back-up vocalist, major-domo and lead guitarist, Christopher Bond had left his fuzz box at home).

I don't really know how many people buy Hall and Oates records around this neighbourhood, but I suppose it's none too many. That really is a shame because, working from the same basic premises that underlie much top-40 music, Hall and Oates produce records which leave for dead all but a handful of rivals. It's music for the feet all right, but also for the ears, and what's left of what's between them.

Francis Stark

Fusion a Go Go



Go Too Stomu Yamashta *Arista*

In his 30 years Yamashta has accomplished much. By 14 he was tympanist with the Kyoto and Osaka Philharmonic orchestras. He has composed for movies, (working for such directors as Kurosawa, Ken Russell and Robert Altman,) the Royal Ballet, not to mention his own theatrical troupe. Nevertheless, despite his impeccable credentials, I approached *Go Too* with some trepidation. I have this terrible prejudice against anything redolent of classical rock, and, like Kipling, think that never the twain should meet. Arthur Fiedler's orchestrations of John Lennon were bad enough but they hardly warranted Keith Emerson's revenge upon Bach and Bartok. Attempts at a third stream fusion also leave me cold. (I leave the room if even the innocuous Mike Oldfield is played.) O.K. tirade over, but you get my bias.

Go Too comes as a pleasant surprise. I'd

heard its predecessor only once, in less than ideal conditions, so didn't really know what to expect — namely that Yamashta is well enough grounded in both fields to go about the merger with some assurance. He obviously has considerable savvy and is shrewd enough not to attempt too much. Where others have buried fragile melodic lines under impossible orchestrations, or, worse still, kicked great music with clubbed feet, Yamashta's music is original and his arrangements, if attempting the grandiose, do so without falling into pretentiousness. The only real lapses are on the latter part of Side One where a couple of tunes are protracted beyond their capacity.

The material is strong and varied, encompassing pop ballads sung by Jess Roden and Linda Lewis, punchy rockers propelled by the superb drumming of Mike Shrieve and the graceful fire of Al DiMeola's guitar, plus a couple of spacey instrumentals a la mid-period Pink Floyd. These latter are dominated by the synthesizer of Klaus Schulze who contributes excellent work throughout the album. And, of course, there's the ubiquitous Yamashta. His percussion effects add subtle colouring while his production is lush enough to wallow in. (Parts of the album could induce a quadraphonic wet dream.)

All concept albums must, of course, have a Grand Theme and while *Go Too* is no exception its subject seems to be a straightforward happy love affair. No doubt the album originally had a double cover giving the lyrics — often hard to hear due to the production — or at least a thematic note. This would help explain the various sound effects: (footsteps, whale-calls etc.) A listing of instrumental credits would have been given as well but the local record company has only supplied a single cover, so depriving us of the information.

I cavil however; the most important thing is the music and, on the whole, it is impressive. My prejudice has taken a beating. Yamashta has demonstrated that attempts at such fusion music can succeed. Roll over Keith Emerson and tell Rick Wakeman the news.

Peter Thomson

The Steve Gibbons Band Rollin' On *Polydor*

The Steve Gibbons Band is a Birmingham based outfit currently suffering from an affliction that ails many British bands — they're not new wave. Furthermore, being from outside London they're doomed to be continually ignored in the music press.

No matter, they are a tasty little rock n' roll unit — a two guitars line-up fronted by vocalist Steve Gibbons who has a good line in leather gear and sultry, macho good looks. But despite the strength of the performing ability evident here, they have one basic problem. They tend to lack identity or, perhaps more correctly, personality. Their original material, which veers from straight country to rock n' roll, is melodically strong and their choice of others songs (Chuck Berry's "Tulane" and Jerry Reed's "Tupelo Mississippi Flash") inspired. It's just that nagging lack of a distinctive character which sabotages this record and keeps it in its place as a pleasant collection of tunes.

A truly strong album could well break these boys through from the interesting/promising category and turn them into a top flight act. This isn't it, but their next could well be.

Alastair Dougal

Heroes. David Bowie. *RCA*

In many ways *Heroes* is a surprisingly small step onward from its predecessor *Low* but it suffers nothing in comparison to that album nor anything else that's being done right now.

Most obviously it differs very little in the way it's programmed, there's still the division of the album into a wordy side and a side that's largely instrumental. The music itself is also similar, much of it still comes on like a shattering windscreen but the arrangements are more complex, the instrumentation more varied. *Heroes* is abrasive and distancing in parts while in others it's completely seductive, and the continuing presence of Eno as a musician and a major influence throughout ensures the music's surrealist intensity.

Early doubts included a suspicion of gratuitous weirdness masquerading as the avant garde, but there's hardly been a Bowie album that hasn't caused a slight twinge of "am I being had?". In my experience it's testament to the power of his music that such twinges are almost part of the initial attraction and then they soon disappear.

Bowie has made several great albums and even the odd one that's difficult to like has never been less than interesting, none can be ignored. His music is now at its most original and challenging on *Heroes*.

The explorations are made underground, in the dark and on the run, and the findings are brilliant ciphers held close to the chest with one hand as the other incites us to dance.

"Beauty And The Beast." Bowie wails down the air-conditioning shaft accompanied by disgruntled synthesizer rumblings and a catchy love chorus giving all they've got that's catching.

*MY-MY
someone fetch a priest
you can't say no to
the Beauty and the Beast.*

"Joe The Lion." Further down the shaft as Bowie's last-ditch singing spurs all participants onto maximum effort until the last Jagged throe. Probably not about Chris Burden who had himself nailed to a Volkswagen.

"Heroes." Rock-heart hypnosis with the touch of the Velvets, lacework by Eno. If dolphins had discos, I'd go and watch. Love this one.

"Sons Of The Silent Age." British psychedelic reborn... astonishing pop with the return of that Bowie voice in a deceptive arrangement that grows more fluid every time.

"Blackout." Like "The Secret Life of Arabia" which we find on the other side, this harks back to the quasi soul-funk (blush) of *Young Americans*, but "Blackout" stops at the Station along the way.

And if you liked the instrumentals on *Low* you'll like those on *Heroes*, they differ only in small ways, but there's no brief and easy description of these tracks although parts of "Sense of Doubt" make my typewriter rattle if that's of any significance. Last night I climbed into my bath with a paperback while *Heroes* filtered through the wall — just as Bowie's saxophone emitted the final bleats of "Neukoln" I found myself reading the words, "and the saxophone sounds like some prehistoric bird. Man, these are musicians." Good records have their own ways of helping you come to grips with them, it seems.

Terence Hogan

Sex Pistols: Pretty Blatant



The Sex Pistols: Sid Vicious, Johnny Rotten, Paul Cook and Steve Jones.

The Sex Pistols
Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The Sex Pistols
Virgin

I could write a whole bloody essay on the Sex Pistols but I'd bore you all shitless. It's all in the N.M.E. anyway. First of all, forget all the shit you've heard about them. They can play. No class. No subtlety. But they can play.

And then there's Johnny Rotten. It's sort of irrelevant whether he can sing or not. He can deliver. Menacing? I'll say. Your mother won't like him.

The songs are ruthless, repetitive, politically naive, abusive, and brilliant. They're not about political reality. They're about the way you feel.

I am an antichrist
I am an anarchist
Don't know what I want but I know how to get it
I wanna destroy . . .
They're a challenge.
Problems, problems
The problem is you
Whatcha gonna do?

Listening to them is like listening to a circular saw. It stops hurting after a while.

That's it. It's the most important record of 1977. It takes stamina to listen to it. Only the strong survive. Play it after school, after work. Play it before breakfast. Play it loud. If that don't get you kicked out of home, you're living by yourself.
John Malloy

Lust for Life
Iggy Pop
RCA

I was surprised when faced with this album. I didn't imagine Mr Pop to be so fertile in composition. And of the contents? . . . Well, it's a bit of this and that with bits and pieces of other things

thrown in. David Bowie recorded the album and wrote the music, however, the only thing that points to Bowie's involvement is his name on the record sleeve: the sound of the album is far removed from any Bowie I can remember. Structurally it is as simple as the excretory system of a tui — take that how you will.

When ego is not a dirty word



Skyhooks
The Skyhooks Tapes
Mushroom Records

Radio Birdman
Radios Appear
Trafalgar Records

America may never understand Skyhooks but their wide appeal to Australians has always seemed obvious; a combination of catchy, often simplistic songs with lyrics relevant to Australian youth, that dealt with such as VD, dope, homosexuality and ego. In America Skyhooks have been compared with the Tubes, 10cc, Roxy Music, Kiss, the Rolling Stones . . . even the Bay City Rollers. The inclusion of Skyhooks' "Horror Movies" on Vertigo's compilation album *New Wave* — among songs by Patti Smith, the Damned, Talking Heads, the Ramones and the New York Dolls — can only cause further confusion.

The *Milwaukee Journal* came closest in describing Skyhooks as "defiance, pure and simple. Even by the more liberal standards of the US, this has got to be the most blatantly rebellious group since the MC5". That was last year, before the New Wave.

Skyhooks are back in Australia at present, recording a new album with a new guitarist before returning to the States in the new year. *The Skyhooks Tapes* is a "best of" selection that summarises the band's career to date and includes five tracks previously unreleased on album with

a re-recorded version of "Whatever Happened to the Revolution?". "Revolution" was recorded at the same time as the third album, *Straight in a Gay, Gay World*, at the Record Plant in California, but it has lost its simplicity in the remaking. That loss of simplicity and, in turn, the loss of aggressiveness was the main failing of *Straight in a Gay, Gay World*. With Bob Spencer as replacement for Red Symons, with a new album that includes several new Greg Macainsh songs — with promising titles like "Megalomania", "Bedroom Eyes" and "Why Don't You All . . .?", Skyhooks may yet have the new confidence that's needed before America accepts them — probably as part of the New Wave.

Sydney's New Wave group Radio Birdman have always insisted on their own independence. *Radios Appear* was originally distributed in Australia by the group, their studio and by mail-order through their fan club, at a discount price. This hasn't endeared them to the record industry but has led to run-ins with promoters and media, with the group branded as too arrogant for their own good. Arrogance is okay if you've got the goods to match, and the album's only fault is a too obvious debt to the Stooges. *Radios Appear* includes a version of the Stooges' "TV Eye", more exact than the original and, while the band obviously loses some of the excitement it is supposed to have when playing live, the songs are tight, the production clean, the album more in common with New York's New Wave than England's.
Jeremy Templar

Mr Pops voice still dominates and he sounds peculiarly good. His lyrics read as if he made them up on the spot while recording. Beats me, mate. A bit wishy-washy this record . . . Perhaps I should mention some pertinent details such as a list of the dudes who play on this gig, man. Only one problem there, and that is I couldn't tell you.

The album is quite strange really. It seems unattractive but it dominates the room. It oozes onto the floor like boiling mud. It streams out of your woofers and tweeters into your lugs. The sort of album you jog on the spot to after a couple of jugs. Perhaps Ignatius himself could give you a more lucid explanation. I quote a section from an interview with him in the U.C.L.A. newspaper 'Scrimmage':

UCLA: "Is Lust For Life an extension of the Idiot, your previous album?"
Pop: . . . aside . . . "Burke" . . .
Mike Chunn

Osibisa
Black Magic Night
Bronze

In one public survey 90% of interviewees who like rock music gave as their reason, 'It makes me feel good.' Now, if you saw the respective audiences at the recent concerts by Lou Reed and Osibisa and apply the criterion suggested by that survey it's abundantly clear which performance was superior. The predominant tone of a Reed concert is calculated pose — nihilism ergo passivity. Osibisa, on the other hand, had people out of their seats by the second number, leaping and swaying in happy abandon. (Sorry Lou, Sally can dance; it's just that you don't get her excited anymore.)

Yet acclamation of Reed's (anti-) art is almost de rigueur in so many rock circles when Osibisa is often considered not worth discussion. Such inversion of popular reaction is not, I hope, just critical snobbery but witness to the fact that our primary response to rock music has always been via recordings rather than live performance, and, (forgive the reiteration) there is a vast difference between the two. This difference is even — nay, especially — evident in the case of 'live' recordings.

Black Magic Night is a double album recorded at London's Royal Festival Hall. Although it is well-recorded and adequately captures the spirit of a live concert, many aspects of the record begin to grate with successive listenings. Not only do announcements, introductions and audience cajoling irritate, but the music's limitations become increasingly obvious. Where you were once caught up in mass exuberance,

★★

Return of a Jewish Cowpoke



Randy Newman
Little Criminals
Warner Brothers

Randy Newman has a nice life. He lies around in the sun a lot, he likes his family, he gets paid by a record company, and he is probably a genius. Extravagant praise? Well, a new Randy Newman record after three years is cause for dancing in the streets so some heady celebration is permissible.

With *Little Criminals* Newman returns. It's good to have him back. There have been changes, notably Ry Cooder's virtual absence and Newman's use of L.A.'s silver throated sons, the Eagles. But Newman's economical arrangements are as original as ever they were, his melodic gift thrives, and he conjures with each song, an immense atmosphere.

From the comic throw-off "Short People", to the melancholy "Texas Girl at the Funeral of her Father", he appears to be in complete control. The guitar playing New-

man solicits from Glen Frey in "Baltimore" would suggest a masterful influence upon his musicians. And he remains one of few performers who can really use a studio orchestra.

Little Criminals, like *Sail Away*, demonstrates Randy Newman's flexibility. The dozen songs cover topics from small time hoods to Albert Einstein. He picks out fragments of American life and fondles them, his nasally evocative voice passing wry commentary. Newman in a recent interview said he wonders why song writers don't use the third person more often. The statement hints at his own special talents. He is the master of the narrative shred. He doesn't bare his soul, he doesn't accuse his audience, he doesn't call down God's wrath from the pulpit, but takes an incident and wrings from it the most astonishing and complex sentiments.

Ambivalence is the trademark of a Newman song. "In Germany Before the War" is about a Dusseldorf child murderer. It is a sympathetic and elliptical story of a man going, in early evening, down to the Rhine. There he watches a golden haired child. It is also a scary song.
We lie beneath the autumn sky
My little girl and I
And she lies very still
She lies very still.

Show Some Emotion
Joan Armatrading
A & M

About a year or so ago I spent more time than usual driving around in a car, and the clearest thing I can remember about the radio programming at the time was how neat "Down to Zero" and "Love and Affection" sounded against the wall-to wall disco which washed over the other fifty-five minutes in the hour.

When the Editor gave me *Show Some Emotion* as a consolation prize for not winning the Hello Sailor Competition, I was sure that I was in for a real treat, but I must confess it's all something of a disappointment. While the musical standards of this album are almost certainly as high as those of *Joan Armatrading*, there is nothing in its ten tracks to match the intensity of the best songs from the last album.

After a week of hopeful listening, "Never Is Too Late" emerges as the top contender for lightening a dull hour on the radio, but really you're going to have to write this one off to experience and go looking for *Joan Armatrading* or *Back to the Night*. This might leave you thinking that Armatrading is nothing more than a top-notch set of pipes. They are enough to convince you that she is a truly great songwriter.
Francis Stark

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Newman's humour grows out of this same balance between the everyday and the extraordinary. He loves a mock epic tone. "Sail Away" was an ironic anthem for the slave trade. "Jolly Coppers on Parade" deploys a similar touch.
Oh, it's all so nice
Looks like angels have come down from Paradise
Jolly coppers on parade.

There are few people who can be as funny as Randy Newman, and just as few who can be so devastating. On the one hand is the comic delivery of cowboy clichés in "Rider in the Rain", on the other is the sad "Texas Girl at the Funeral of her Father".

Because of his expressive scope and musical finesse Newman will probably still warrant listening in thirty years. For the present I'm content to label *Little Criminals* one of the year's best.
Bruce Belsham

It will be possible however to go to Golden Valley, the festival site just

Music acts will dominate the main stage, a 90' by 25' structure using a

To advertise Nambassa and also to involve those already interested the organisers will be staging a parade in Queen Street on December 16. Complete with floats, costumes and music the parade will leave the C.P.O. at about 7.30 pm featuring Living Force, Ratz Theatrx, poetry-reading and folk music. The parade will co-incide with the release of the festival programme with full details of camp sites, facilities and so on. Tickets are on sale at present at \$12 each, a reduction from the gate sale price of \$15. So buy now and enjoy Nambassa!

Louise Chunn

Island Saturdays Dec-Jan, Waiheke Island.
Hello Sailor Dec 5 & 6, Sundown Park Hotel, Gisborne. Dec 9, Rock & Roll Party, Rotorua Racecourse. Dec 10, Outdoor Concert and Timberlands Hotel, Tokoroa. Dec 11, Lady Hamilton Nightclub. Dec 21, Auckland Town Hall. Dec 22-24, Ponsonby Club Hotel.
Fly By Night (Dave Marshall's band). Dec 11, Island of Real, Airedale St.
Urban Road Dec 6, Island of Real
Rick Steele & Friends. Dec 11, Island of Real.
Country Flyers Dec 8-10 and 19-25, Windsor Tavern. Dec 19, Football Park, Hamilton.
Iceberg Dec 8, Top Cat Disco, Birkenhead. Dec 10-11 Showgrounds, Auckland. Dec 24, Pukekohe Hotel. Jan 2-14 Awapuni Hotel, Palmerston North.
Tama's Band Dec 16, Island of Real
Cinema Dec 18, Island of Real
Citizen Band Dec 15-17 & 22-24, Globe Hotel. Dec 23, 11 pm Island of Real
Fragments of Time Dec 6-10 & 13-17, New Plymouth. Dec 19-24, Hillcrest Tavern, Hamilton. Dec 26-31 Sandown, Gisborne. Jan 2-14, Te Mata, Havelock North, Jan 16-28, Wellington.
Pooh Bear Lake Tavern, Rotorua from Nov 30.
Rough Justice Dec 5-17, Lion Tavern, Wellington. Dec 21-24, Broderick Inn, Porirua.
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FIRST RELEASE OF ACTS APPEARING (Final Release in the third week of December). Living Force, Citizen Band, Rocking Horse, Ragnarok, Wonder Ones with Alistair Riddell, Schtung, Cohesion, Country Flyers, Rough Justice, Spats, Elm'fudd, Head for the Hills, Side Street, Cinema, and Tattiebogle.

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OTHER ACTS: Limbs Dance Troupe, Red Mole Puppet Show, The Ratz Theatrx, Chrunchy the Clown, Tony Wilson the Magician, Jonathon Acorn & the Butler Show & the puppets and **POETS** — Gary McCormick, John Adams and John Benson.

NAMBASSA QUEEN ST PARADE FRIDAY DEC. 16TH

Nambassa invites you to participate. With a little creative expression convert a bus or truck into a temporary float and/or get a costume together. Assemble at the Central Post Office at 7.30 p.m. The parade will go to Albert Park where there will be music, street theatre etc.

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Auckland — Crazy Shirts, Queen Street (next to Town Hall), Cook Street Market at David Lane, Upstairs Cafe and Sunshine Books. **Hamilton** — Heart and Soul Handcrafts, 70 Ward St. **Tauranga** — Khala Sutra Craft Market, 12 Wharf St. **Coromandel Peninsula** — Whole Earth Food Shop, Coroglen. **Christchurch** — Spins and Needles, 3 Oram St, New Brighton. **Whangarei** — Musicor Records, James Street Arcade. **Wellington** — Chelsea Record Bar, 71 Manners St. **Postal Address** — Nambassa Mother Centre, Box 113, Waihi.

THE GLOBE REOPENS WITH AUCKLAND'S ANSWER TO SYLVIA RAYNER: **CITIZEN BAND**



SPLIT SCREEN

Time — 1900 Hrs. 22 October, 1977

Place — BBC 2 Television/Radio 1 Studios

Right you lot, pencil the above information into your diary as proof indeed of the coming of age of New Zealand rock music.

Here we have a dyed-in-the-wool NZ rock group displaying their manifold wares to a vast TV and radio audience for a full 30 minutes.

A little background — *Sight and Sound* is a 60 minute live rock concert broadcast on both radio and TV from 6.30 every Saturday evening throughout the UK. A key time indeed, for the masses are at home after the afternoon's soccer, and before the Saturday night's drinking, concert, or movie-going activities.

This sort of exposure is certainly a blessing to any artists striving to succeed in the most competitive rock market in the world, and the choice of Split Enz for the programme indicates the steady progress they're making on the international scene.

It could not be better timed either as the recent release of *Dizrythmia* has brought the band much critical praise.

On Saturday the 22nd, then, groups of Antipodeans all over Britain crowded around their tellys eager to watch our lads prove to the Poms that we can produce real music and not just that Helen Reddy/Olivia Newton-John bland-out stuff.

The boys come in on Tim's chant of 'Tahi, Rua, Toru, Wha', straight into 'Bold as Brass' from *Dizrythmia*. A good opener, with its immediately compelling hooks and Eddie's tasty synthesizer touches. It's apparent already that the group is fully conscious of the importance of this gig. You can see determination written under their rouge.

Tim's typically witty between song patter — 'If music be the food of love, Split Enz be the silverware' — leads into 'My Mistake', the latest single. The appreciative

roar at the end vindicates its choice.

Let's see, if 5% of the radio and TV audience buy it, maybe it will reach the Top 20, but sadly I don't believe the musical climate is quite that suitable yet.

The vaudevillian eccentricities of 'My Mistake' gives way to the raunchy feel of 'True Colours'. Aurally, the concert is being recorded excellently, but we can now spot a few deficiencies on the visual side.

No fault of the band, they look predictably stunning, but the leaden camera work just isn't doing them justice. Tim's manic rushes around the stage obviously unsettles the cameramen, and their shooting makes his movements look awkward.

These misgivings are soon dispelled by what to me is the set's highlight, a devastating version of 'Charlie'. This song exemplifies Tim Finn's much-improved vocal prowess, while the instrumental break gives the others a chance to stretch out. 'Crosswords' is next, followed, predictably, by 'The Woman Who Loves You', the oldest song of the night. Noel Crombie's spoons solo obviously pleases the crowd but, at the risk of incurring the wrath of silverware strikers everywhere, I must say I find that after the first time it becomes as deadly dull as most drum solos.

But the song is great, and its closing gives Tim a chance to introduce the band, who then line up, produce spoons, drop them, and walk off. They are deservedly recalled for an encore. 'You're My Best Friend', (not the Queen song, thank God) — the crowd claps along, the credits roll, and that's it.

And we all had a chuckle when the first ad after the concert was for a series of Mozart piano concertos.

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Kerry Doole

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Alistair Riddell

Alistair Riddell
Island of Real

The case of Alistair Riddell is perhaps the most pointed example of the treadmill of Auckland's rock and roll scene. I first saw him more than five years ago at the University Cafe, fronting a band called Orb, who besides containing two future members of Split Enz, were largely noticeable for their performance of a pocket-sized rock opus called "Seabird", which was greeted with suitable enthusiasm by an audience of seventeen-year-old girls. Two weeks ago he was back at the Island of Real Cafe with his latest ensemble — the Wonder Ones. And the highlight of his set, at least in the eyes of the seventeen-year-old girls who filled the first few rows of a moderately-sized audience was none other than "Seabird". In the meantime, Riddell has been as close as you can get to being a star in New Zealand, and he has all the attributes of it now, after more than a year of virtual inactivity. Unfortunately, being a star in Auckland doesn't really mean that you can indulge in the same luxuries as your Los Angeles counterparts. For all the smooth professionalism of his backing band, the easy flash of his guitar-playing, and stage charm like Peter Frampton might envy, Alistair Riddell is in essence no further down the road to the big apple than he was five years ago. The Yes songs have been replaced by Herbie Hancock numbers but they must have played a good three quarters of the *Space Waltz* album, and of course, "Seabird". Quite rightly, Riddell probably considers that he hasn't had enough mileage out of what still remains his major compositions but that five-year-old albatross must be weighing a mite heavy. Francis Stark

The Enemy
Old Beneficiaries Hall
Dunedin's First New Wave Dance. The band take their name from the magazine and soon have twenty original songs ready for Wednesday, November 16. A week before, the bass player leaves, and a friend is brought in. He's played guitar before in bedrooms and things, but never on a stage. He's never played bass guitar before. The dance is held at the quaintly-named Old Beneficiaries Hall. A portrait of the Queen on a chair. A few safety pins. A television humming on top of a speaker — later to have the band's name inked on its blue glow. And a few hours of Pistols, Ramones, Stranglers et al to get everyone thinking the same way. The band finally come on. The bass player is unbelievably fine. Total commitment. He's also unbelievably important, because the guitar isn't heard at all for the first twenty minutes, so Mick Dawson becomes not only the bottom of the garage throb, but also the middle and the top. Chris Knox sings and writes many of the songs. A natural lead singer for a New Wave band, and also a vehement critic. The night before he's heard bellowing at Hello Sailor for not satisfying him on an Iggy Pop number. He also bellowed at Lou Reed throughout the man's Christchurch concert (not that Lou would really care) and Chris was and still is devoted to Lou Reed (not that Lou would really care). Alec Bathgate plays guitar and Mike Dooley drums. Both just keep getting hotter and hotter as the crowd drunks and

becomes more wildly converted to the throb from the stage. The songs are simple, the words possibly quite good (some are forgotten and many inaudible) and the rhythms relentless. Proper punk music. Great titles too — "I Wanna Die With You", "Jack Crap", "Pull Down The Shades", "Iggy Told Me", "Lou Reed", "Rainbow", "Government Health Warning", "I Just Can't Get It Up" and, of course, "We Are The Enemy". The crowd seem to love it. At least one Hello Sailor guitarist is seen, and when the music stops two hours later, he is seen to have moved two metres closer to the stage. And he's smiling. It was a real fun night. Roy Colbert

How could Mike Chunn in reviewing Kiss's LP *Love Gun* call their music boring. If he ever listened to Split Enz's *Mental Notes*, he would know what mass boredom is. Kiss music is a hell of a lot better than Chunn and his friends could ever do in 10,000 years. Ace, Gene, Paul and Peter

As a punk rock follower I am surprised at you lot for having no mention of the Scavengers who have been playing in Auckland recently. They are certainly worth a word or two or preferably more. In reply to Punk Rock Hater (November issue) — get stuffed! Punk is today's music. Why don't you take up a subscription to *Teen Beat* or *Fab*. A. Griffiths

Letters
RIP IT UP P.O. Box 5689, Auckland
Why is it that we, the rock public have to watch support acts from Australia, i.e. Hush and Kevin Borich Express when we have local bands who desperately need exposure. I would rather see someone like Alistair Riddell or Citizen band for example. So much for promoters helping local acts. I know for a fact that in Australia the musicians union demands that each overseas act has a local support. Where the hell is New Zealand's union? Bryan Stewart

Anyone who has the audacity to publicly declare the Eagles "the greatest group in the world", certainly has no right to pass judgement on punk rock, mankind's greatest achievement. Many people criticise only the word — punk, without even hearing the music itself. It could be a new type of wastermaster for all they care. Play "Telephone Line" a couple of times, closely followed by something from the Sex Pistols, London or the Damned. Listen to it objectively and if you still prefer such mediocre bilge as ELO to good punk, I'll eat my Pretty Vacant. Alan Austin

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