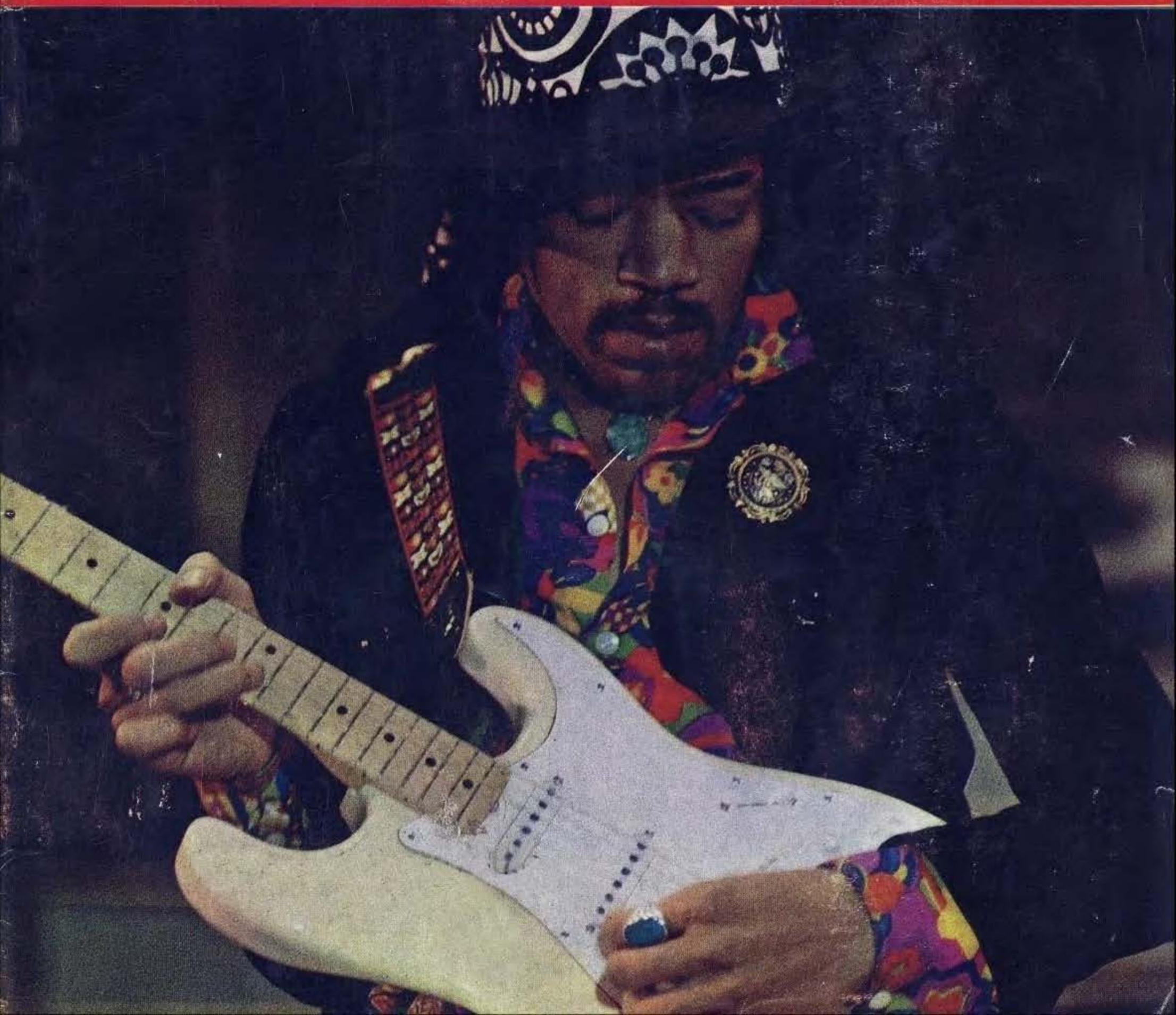


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Editorial

Very few people who have not actually tried to make a record and get it released realise just how many stages you must pass through before there is any chance of a hit. So it's worth listing them out. Let's start off by presuming that the artist, instrumentalist or group concerned are already proficient at vocals or playing. Taking that for granted, the first step is—find a song; secondly, get it arranged properly; then record it well; obtain a release on a reasonable label; do everything to get publicity for the record when it comes out; persuade the disc jockeys and producers to plug it and, finally, hope that the record buyers will go into their local shops and pay their hard-earned money for your own special seven inches of black wax.

Despite all these obstacles, there is no shortage of starters. But a different factor has come into the market recently because it is no longer absolutely essential to direct all your efforts at the Top Ten. Nowadays, many groups start off by recording a good album. Steady sales over a period of months can do a lot to establish them in the public's mind. Sometimes a hit single actually comes out of the LP. This new trend is very healthy because it does open up another door through which people can get to the top.

This issue of BEAT INSTRUMENTAL contains a major focus on some of Britain's leading recording studios. The idea is to give you a comprehensive guide to the recording facilities that are available and the prices charged, so that you can pick the ideal studio for your requirements when you come to make a recording—whether it be a first demonstration record or a master for release. I am sure that after reading it you will agree that this country's studios can provide every requirement which the modern group or instrumentalist could look for.

CONTENTS

SPECIAL ARTICLES

	Page
Win-an-organ presentation	8
Get Your Group Together—Part 3	11
Five-string banjo	12
Jimi Hendrix	16
Studio Survey	22

MONTH'S FEATURES

Eire Apparent	5
Spider John Koerner	7
Steamhammer	10
Harmony Grass	14
Poet and the One Man Band	18
The Move	36
Kenny Young	46
Circus	47

REGULAR FEATURES

Player of the Month—Jon Hiseman	6
The Tutor	9
Chart Fax	9
Viv Stanshall Column	15
Stateside Report	20
Instrumental News	38
Your Queries Answered	40
A and R Man—Ron Richards	41
Songwriters' Column	41
Profile—Tony McPhee	43
LP Reviews	44
Letters	45

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As yet, they aren't a big name in England. Ernie Graham, second guitar and singer; Tiger Taylor, lead guitar; Chris Stewart, bass; Dave Lutton, drums. These are the four members of Eire Apparent, a group that produces good tough rock with skill, enthusiasm, not the slightest taint of pretentiousness, and a good deal of volume. To hear them at work, throwing all their weight into the music, is an exhilarating experience. Their stock in trade is excitement.

Originally from Belfast, Eire Apparent have lived through good, bad and indifferent times since they



EIRE APPARENT

formed in 1964. They have survived with the same personnel, though Tiger left the group for a period. In the early days, most of their playing centred on Dublin rather than their home city. We tend to dismiss Ireland as a musically depressed area, with schmaltz, teams of Jim Reeves imitators, ghastly showbands and little else. Chris Stewart, however, remembers their Dublin days with affection.

"Wherever there are young people there has to be music for them. The stuff we played then was basically the same as today, and though there weren't over many places to play, we made a fair living and we had fun," he says.

A couple of years later, the group came to try and make it in London. It was by no means easy. At one point they all lived in the group van, washing, shaving and changing in public conveniences, and treading the well-trodden path from agent to agent without much success. Their luck took a turn for the better when they bumped into a

former manager, Dave Robinson.

Robinson arranged some work for the group around the London clubs. On one of these dates Jimi Hendrix and Mike Jeffries, his manager, were in the audience. They were impressed—so much so that Jeffries and Chas Chandler took over the group's management and christened them Eire Apparent. Their first booking after this was the Saville, the second the Paris Olympia, the third Jimi's British tour. A healthy start.

Soon afterwards, Eire Apparent went over to the States on an Animals' tour. They'd made just one record in England, *Follow Me*, which they prefer to forget. "We were trying to get an instant hit with the most 'commercial' record we could make."

America proved to be a happy hunting ground for the group. They eventually stayed for almost a year, playing across the country on Hendrix packages.

"Our association with Jimi has been really tremendous,"

says Chris. "With him we got to play to really big audiences all the time. We made a lot of money and we learned so much about becoming a good hard-working band that earns its keep."

Dave Lutton thinks that America spoiled the group in some ways. "We left England at a point where our name was beginning to get known. Then we were in America where everything went so smoothly, and when we came back we had to start again from scratch. Hardly anybody knew who we were, and we began to think we had it all a bit too easy."

HEAD START

So Eire Apparent are back in England, fast building a solid following—and they've a head start as a result of Hendrix's interest in them. "Jimi started his record producing with us. We were all very nervous the first time in the studio. We were worried about making fools of ourselves before such a musician, and he was just as worried about being a good producer.

"After the tenseness had gone, it was great to work with him. He'd show us things. Jimi knows exactly what he wants, and he's a brilliant thinker, but he never

lays down the law. He's a very modest man, very quiet. We owe a lot to him," says Dave.

The first album, *Sun Rise*, is now available on Buddah. A recent single, *Rock and Roll Band*, was taken from it. The record well illustrates both the considerable talents and the musical philosophy of the band: "Follow Me was no good. You have to play honestly, but at the same time you have to get on an audience's wavelength. This can mean a certain amount of compromise." Perhaps balance is a less emotionally-charged way of describing this approach. Certainly the group are not happy about the attitudes of the recording establishment in England. "In America, the company says 'Go in the studio and make the record *you* want.' In England it seems to be money, money, money all the time. The powers think that there's a sure set of laws for what's going to be popular and what's not. It's so stupid. All you can do is play the music you like to the best of your ability. Being in a group is a job. But you've got to believe in what you're doing or it's a waste of everybody's time."

R.S.

PLAYER ^{OF} THE MONTH

Jon Hiseman



JON HISEMAN has been behind a drum kit since he was at school. He started playing with Dave Greenslade at a church youth club before being introduced to Tony Reeves who joined in on a double bass "borrowed" from school for numerous weekends. So although Jon Hiseman's Colosseum has only been in existence since last autumn, three of the band were starting their musical journeys together ten years ago.

Jon, Dave and Tony carried on playing together until they left school and went their separate ways. Jon started work for Mr. Unilever as a trainee market consultant, playing in the National Jazz Orchestra in his spare time. He continued on a semi-pro basis for a number of years, sitting in with just about everyone, including Ronnie Scott and Tubby Hayes, gaining experience, but never joining a band.

Then in 1966 Graham Bond told Jon that Ginger Baker was leaving the Organisation and asked him to join. Jon turned down the offer, but after two weeks of battering away Graham talked him into leaving his job.

"When I joined Graham I had gentle jazz abilities," Jon told me, "and I used the year with him to develop power and physical confidence. I practised hard and I really learnt a lot, and, of course, I got to know Dick Heckstall-Smith."

When Graham Bond disbanded the Organisation Jon joined Georgie Fame for six months where he started to come up against the demands of discipline. He had been able to hammer away with Bond but Georgie Fame wanted him to play in a certain way, as did John Mayall whom he joined at the beginning of last year. "John is the arch-disciplinarian," said Hiseman. "He wants you to play in a particular way, which is fair enough. I was never going to get in Graham's way, but with anyone else you overpower them if you are not disciplined, so the time with John taught me another side."

Playing in the Bluesbreakers brought Jon back with Dick Heckstall-Smith and Tony Reeves, who was Mayall's bassist, but he felt he wanted to run his own band where he would be able to make decisions on what was played. He wanted a band of musicians who naturally played his way so there would be no problems of fitting in and adaptation.

Dick had already left the Mayall outfit which had returned to a four-man line-up, Tony Reeves left the Bluesbreakers with Jon, and Dave Greenslade came in on keyboard. After a mammoth search for a guitarist—about 50 were auditioned—up popped James Litherland who literally packed his bags at 24 hours' notice and came down from Manchester to join the band. And so Colosseum was in business.

"The principle of the band is that no one can make a mistake," said Jon. "They do happen, of course, but only baby goofs; there are no mistakes about direction. The band is free and open, and it tends to work."

Which you could well describe as an understatement.

M.H.



Spider John Koerner



Willie Murphy

RUNNING JUMPING STANDING STILL

IN 1964, Elektra released an album called the *Blues Project*. Nothing to do with the New York folk-rock group of the same name (though one of its members, Danny Kalb, was on the record), the *Blues Project* was "a compendium of the very best on the urban blues scene," featuring unamplified blues tracks by white blues singers and guitarists. It had much in common with the present British country blues scene—Dave Kelly, Andy Fernbach, Tony McPhee and so on.

Some of the *Blues Project* people have become well-known. John Sebastian was on it. So were Geoff Muldaur (of the Kwasin Jug Band), Mark Spoelstra, Eric Von Schmidt and Dave Van Ronk. But the most impressive were Dave Ray, Tony Glover and John Koerner, three men from Minneapolis, and many people found themselves turned on to their albums, *Blues, Rags and Hollers*, *Lots More Blues, Rags and Hollers*, *The Return Of Koerner*, *Ray and Glover*, which are now deleted in the U.K.

Of the three, only Koerner ever made it to England to play. Paul Nelson, an American critic, says of him, "a lanky, long-legged character who . . . should have been French or Irish. His music seems to be a curious and exhilarating mixture of Gary Davis, Jesse Fuller and Blind Boy Fuller." In fact Koerner played a lunatic mixture of a wide variety of blues styles and turned them into something totally unique which immediately endeared him to fairly cold audiences the two times I saw him perform in England. In the intense atmosphere of blues here it would be difficult to imagine a performer bouncing on stage on a pogo stick. Koerner did.

His style was notable for its odd, staccato guitar work on either a 7-string Gibson, Gretsch, or steel-bodied National. Koerner lengthened phrases to fit in a few more words, took huge liberties with rhythms, structure and produced chord changes in the weirdest places. Funnily enough, it always worked, and the result was some of the wildest goodtime music ever. You just had to feel good with Koerner blasting along with *Duncan And Brady*, stamping his huge

boot on the floor with gusto. He spread a sort of glow, and surely that's what blues music is supposed to do. Get rid of your worries, not increase them.

And so he played the blues, influencing many British players. The Liverpool Scene's Andy Roberts picked up much from him, as did many others, mostly from his solo album, *Spider Blues*. Then Koerner dropped out of circulation for a while. He got married, his record contract expired, and he began to work with a hairy piano and bass player named Willie Murphy.

He and Willie, a rock and R & B veteran, rearranged John's old songs and wrote new ones. Says Tony Glover, "Not surprisingly, considering their backgrounds, the result was a really strange fusion of jazz, blues and rock." The result is on a tremendous record for release this month called *Running, Jumping, Standing Still*. (Koerner is crazy about films, amongst other things). Glover again: "Not only is it John's best music ever, but as a whole it ranks in my mind with the Beatles, both in concept and execution."

The record, made at Elektra's new studio in California, has John and Willie doing the singing, piano and guitar with Willie overdubbing bass later, and drums and other instruments where appropriate. The whole thing is even happier and wilder than Koerner's previous stuff, yet the band is tight as well as instinctive. "The fanciest we got was using echo," says John. "I'm not much of a psychedelic person."

"There's too many sad songs," John once said, "and it makes me happy to play this way." Despite this, he disliked all his previous recordings. He doesn't have copies of them or even a record player. When he'd finished *Running, Jumping, Standing Still* he simply said, "pretty good," and smiled. And he and Willie are now busy making another record. America is highly enthusiastic about the last one. It seems likely that the unsuspecting British public are going to be just as overwhelmed. It's nice to be happy.

R.S.



WIN-AN-ORGAN PRESENTATION



Alan Mobbs of Leicester is here seen receiving his first prize of a Capri Organ which he won in BEAT INSTRUMENTAL's January competition, from popular radio and TV personality Jerry Allen.

Following the presentation, Jerry Allen gave Alan Mobbs a run-down of the special features of his prize and then proceeded to put theory into practice with a lively rendition of half a dozen numbers on assorted organs, including the Capri.

Others present included Jack Moore, Retail Sales Director of Selmer's, Tony Hopkins, Major Mitchell Advertising, David Seville, Sales Manager of Selmer's, A. W. Friedman, Director of Selmer's, Sean O'Mahony, Managing Editor, B.I., Charles Woods, Advertisement Director, B.I., and Rick Desmond of B.I.

Jack Moore reported that sales of organs were particularly brisk at the moment. "Most of our lines are selling well these days, but, certainly, keyboards have been outstanding. Selmer's Charing Cross showrooms carry a very large range of the many leading makes that the company handles including Lowrey and Capri."



**Album—Richard P. Havens,
1983**

Concert — Royal Albert Hall, June 5th

Richie Havens — On M.G.M. Records

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DEVELOPING YOUR STYLE

BY THE TUTOR

When smaller and more portable organs were developed and brought on to the market it gave a new dimension to groups. With a chord on the organ, say seven or eight notes together, it could well represent that number of additional instruments in the group which cannot play chords, e.g. trumpet and sax. So, the refore, the overall sound is deeper and richer with the filling in of the auxiliary harmony that unites the bass of the guitar and the melody line of the lead or vocal. The organ also has a percussive effect, if the chords are short, sharp and syncopated it creates a third line of rhythm to drums and bass. Thus, using various techniques, the organ is a most versatile instrument.

To break up the repertoire, instrumental numbers should be tried, hitherto rather weak without the organ. Even something as simple as *Green Onions*, Booker T's 12 bar blues, is a good basis for interesting improvisation. It is mainly in the soul section that the beginner should look for examples of both rhythmic and melodic organ playing.

The organ is an imitative instrument and with practice one can easily develop a less vibrant Jimmy Smith style by listening to his records. With a small organ with one keyboard you will not get the driving left-hand style, but the treble melodic right-hand is fairly easy to imitate.

However much one is prejudiced, every would-be organist should listen to some of Bach's preludes and fugues and really see what a swinger and great improviser he was, both rhythmic and melodic. Junior Walker has a good style for studying the "backing" organ technique also too have musicians like Manfred Mann and Alan Price.

The unfortunate disadvantage in using a piano in a group is its size, which makes transportation of it impossible, its lack of amplification and also the fact that in halls the pianos are usually neglected and untuned. But if the opportunity to use one occurs you should have a go. The problem of amplification can be overcome by putting a mike inside it somewhere in the middle of its keyboard and using a bass amplifier, because if it is too treble it "jangles" like the piano down at the pub.

The piano is most often used in studios on disc because volume is controllable and it can be made to stand out above other instruments. Again, soul music gives the best examples. The left hand plays along with the bass guitar and the right hand is syncopated with the percussion. Tamla Motown has been using the piano to great advantage in most of its greatest hits. Blues also is a must for the piano. For style, polish and melodic improvisation listen to Mose Allison, Willie Dixon, Ray Charles, etc.

The only real advice to the newcomer to the piano and organ scene is to keep your ears open and listen to as much music as you can. Try to emulate it and expand it to your own style and taste.

BI's CHART FAX

Britain's best-sellers of the last four weeks, in alphabetical order showing songwriters, producer, studio, engineer and publisher.

Behind A Painted Smile (*Hunter/Verdi*)

Isley Brothers

RP—Ivy Hunter. S—American MP—Jobete/Carlin

Boom Bang A Bang (*Warne/Moorehouse*) Lulu

RP—Mickie Most. S—de Lane Lea. E—Dave Siddle. MP—Chappell.

The Boxer (*Simon and Garfunkel*) Simon and Garfunkel

RP—Simon and Garfunkel. S—American. MP—Pattern.

Come Back And Shake Me (*Kenny Young*)

Clodagh Rodgers

RP—Kenny Young. S—American. MP—April.

Cupid (*Cooke*) Johnny Nash

RP—J. Nash. S—American. MP—Kags Music.

Games People Play (*South*) Joe South

RP—Joe South. S—American. MP—Lowery.

Gentle On My Mind (*Hartford*) Dean Martin

RP—Jimmy Bowen. S—American. MP—Acuff/Rose.

Get Back (*Lennon-McCartney*) Beatles

RP—Beatles. S—Apple. MP—Northern Songs.

Goodbye (*McCartney*) Mary Hopkin

RP—Paul McCartney. S—Olympic. E—Vic Smith. MP—Northern Songs.

Harlem Shuffle (*Relf/Nelson*) Bob and Earl

RP—Freddie Smith. S—American. MP—Keymore/Marc.

I Can Hear Music (*Spector/Barry/Greenwich*)

Beach Boys

RP—Carl Wilson. S—American. MP—Lieber/Stoller.

I Don't Know Why (*Hunter/Hardaway/Wonder/Riser*)

Stevie Wonder

RP—D. Hunter and S. Wonder. S—American. MP—Jobete/Carlin.

I Heard It Through The Grapevine (*Whitfield/Strong*)

Marvin Gaye

RP—Norman Whitfield. S—American. MP—Jobete/Carlin.

Israelites (*Dekker*) Desmond Dekker

RP—Leslie Cong. S—Jamaican. MP—Sparta.

Man Of The World (*Green*)

Fleetwood Mac

RP—Fleetwood Mac. S—de Lane Lea. E—Dave Siddle. MP—Fleetwood/Immediate.

My Sentimental Friend (*Stephenson/Carter*)

Herman's Hermits

RP—Mickie Most. S—de Lane Lea. E—Dave Siddle. MP—Monique.

My Way (*Anka/Francois/Revaux*) Frank Sinatra

RP—Don Costa. S—American. MP—Shapiro Bernstein.

Pinball Wizard (*Townshend*) The Who

RP—Kit Lambert. S—IBC. E—Damon Lyon-Shaw. MP—Fabulous.

Road Runner (*Holland/Dozier/Holland*)

Junior Walker

RP—Holland/Dozier. S—American. MP—Jobete/Carlin.

Windmills Of Your Mind (*Bergman/Bergman*)

Noel Harrison

RP—Jimmy Bowen. S—American. MP—United Artists.

RP—Record Producer. S—Studio. E—Engineer. MP—Music Publishers.

WHEN Freddie King was touring Britain in March he told *Beat*: "This group I'm with now, the Steamhammer; I like them a lot, and they're learning all the time." Which is a fair compliment for a group that had only been playing together for some six months at the time.

The King tour gave the group a good boost. Guitarist Martin Quittenton told me "We played our first gig with him after rehearsing for about 20 minutes, but it went all right. It was extremely tiring. He shouted out the key and we had to guess the rest. But it did us a lot of good musically. We found ourselves a tighter and, I think, a better group at the end of it and played our own spots on the tour which went down well."

As a result of playing behind Freddie King, Steamhammer have naturally been dubbed a blues group, but they have moved away from playing straight 12-bar blues. "I think the British blues boom is nearing its end," said Martin, "although the general feel will, of course, stay. But, it will be applied to other things." Steamhammer are broadening their repertoire and improvisation is becoming more important to them. Said Martin, "We are trying to play more freely without getting boring or just playing to ourselves."

Another changing influence is Steamhammer's new drummer none other than ex-Jeff Beck man Micky Waller. When I spoke to him he had only played three gigs with the group but everyone seemed happy. Said Martin, "We were introduced to Micky and right from the start it went well. He was pleased with it and so were we."

Micky Waller confirmed this: "I went and had a play with them and it was very good. I really enjoy playing with them." Although Micky Waller is something of a "name" (he's not too sure about it himself) he won't be "pushing" in the group. He said "You can't judge drummers on solos, they leave me cold. Playing well with a

steam hammer



group is far more important. The prime example is Charlie Watts, who really knows how to play simply and incredibly well. I think he's the most underrated drummer, apart from me, that is!"

On June 16th Steamhammer set off for the United States. Micky is looking forward to going over again: "I've been there four times now and I like American audiences. They listen and judge a group on musician-

ship, whereas the English tend to treat them like football teams. They follow personalities and have partisan loyalties. For instance, when I was with Jeff Beck, sometimes there'd be shouts of 'Mayall'."

Micky Waller's experience will certainly benefit the whole group, but there are other influences at work. Martin Quittenton told me: "Our bass player Steve Davy is listening to a lot of jazz and

lead guitarist Martin Pugh is becoming very jazz influenced. Audiences expect to classify him as a blues guitarist but he owes very little to other people. Keiran White, our singer, is getting better all the time and is also developing his harmonica, moving right away from the predictable stuff." And Martin himself, who plays finger style guitar, is studying classical guitar.

He is trying to work in classical guitar with the group, although he has had one unsuccessful attempt when he was defeated by feedback problems. "But I'm going to try again. There's an electronics workshop in south-west London who may be able to help me. The Hollies have used an amplified string section by means of contact mikes but I don't know if that would work with a guitar. Anyway, I hope to find someone who can help me sort it out."

Steamhammer are not short of ideas, which is why they are a little unhappy with their album, since it was recorded back in December and is not really typical of what they are doing now. They also had problems in the studio. "We put too much into the run-throughs so that when the actual take came it was getting a bit automatic," said Martin. "I think that relaxation and a little indifference saves a lot of frustration in a studio." They plan to record another album when they return from the U.S. and they feel they'll be better able to master the trials of studio work this time.

Another bit of bad luck came when their single *Junior's Wailing* was released—lead guitarist Martin Pugh was taken ill and they were unable to do any promotional work. A slight setback, but Steamhammer have no need to worry, as they set off across the Pond. Said Martin Quittenton: "Perhaps they are nearing saturation point with English groups, but we are not a heavy group like Led Zeppelin for instance, so I think we'll have some kind of identity over there."

"Anyway, I think it will make or break us!"

M.H.

Get Your Group Together

PART THREE:

WHAT THE PROFESSIONAL'S LIFE IS REALLY LIKE

After a certain time you may well find that you're earning about £15 a night and working, say, five nights a week. For four of you, that might seem like a good living. You're sure that your money and the standard of your music will improve when you get a 100 per cent into being a musician. No distractions like daily jobs to get hung up with. You're anxious to become a bunch of merry cavaliers, toting guitars into a different town every night, making hit records and raving it around the clubs with a string of beautiful groupies in tow.

TRUSTWORTHY

But the truth is less attractive. Let's suppose you've got yourselves a trustworthy agent — and this may have meant a lot of hard searching — with enough contacts in colleges and clubs to get you a booking somewhere for five nights a week. You have found a manager who's doing his best for you as regards a recording contract — but no hits yet. You have a good reliable set of equipment and spares and a

van to get around in. And you'll have a good road manager to keep things running smoothly and drive you home when you're exhausted, drunk and ruing the day you first picked up an instrument.

You have decided you're all ready to go off to London and start work in earnest. Unless you are something really special, you'll be lucky to go out for more than £30. In fact, you're lucky already if your agent has got you five nights a week working. So this will mean a total income of £150.

Now deduct the agent's ten per cent. £15. And the manager's cut — say 15 per cent. £22 10s. Roadie's wages. Another £15. Petrol. Say another £15 or so. All the H.P. you have to keep up on your equipment. That could easily be the same again. £15. You may have friends who can put you up in various towns, but you can reckon to spend three nights away from town in an average week. For five of you (Roadie, too. Never forget him. A good one is invaluable), then, at 25 bob a time, plus a few extras, that'll be £20 or more. You'll have clothes to be cleaned. £5 a week out of the kitty. And there are things like strings, drumsticks and other necessaries to be paid for. Say another £5. Add all this together and you're left with about £50 between the four of you.

Obviously this isn't a starvation wage, even today. But you'll most likely have a flat to keep up in London, the most expensive city in the country. You'll have to eat lousy food at



You need a good manager to take care of money worries

laughable prices in the famous motorway cafes. You'll probably discover yourself drinking a lot more on the road than you ever did at home, spending a lot more money on records and hi-fi, catching taxis back to a cold flat in the small hours. You will have changed your whole way of life. And your livelihood will depend quite simply on how much the audiences like you and are willing to pay to hear you.

IN THE VAN

In return for the honour, you will be expected to spend hours in the back of the van trundling along Britain's lovely M.1 and worse. You'll have to turn up at your gigs exactly on time if you want the promoter to hire you again. It won't be up to you where you perform. You go where the money says you go. In other words, to be a pro musician you have to be just that — professional.

MORE NEXT MONTH

The Banjo: ideal for folk, c & w and blues

REMEMBER the background music in *Bonnie and Clyde*? When Clyde climbed into his Model A Ford and took off with the entire Waterloo, Iowa, police force behind him, the music sounded as if it was being churned out by the Ford engine. It was the fast hard-driving sound that can come from only one instrument: the five string banjo. The sound wasn't new to fans of country or folk music, they recognised the Bonnie and Clyde theme as *Foggy Mountain Breakdown*. The experts among them knew as well that the musicians were none other than Earl Scruggs and Lester Flatt with the Foggy Mountain Boys, the headliners of the Nashville country and bluegrass scene. To connoisseurs of the Nashville sound, the five string banjo is no novelty. In fact, it is the basis

of bluegrass music. But the appeal of the five string banjo is branching out and the instrument is being used more and more on the current pop scene on both sides of the Atlantic.

To understand the banjo and how it fits into today's scene, a quick history of the instrument is in order. The original banjo appeared in America with the African slaves and was known as the *banjar*. It was made up of an unfretted neck and three or four strings stretched over a parchment drum head. This instrument provided the accompaniment for the early spirituals, gospel, and blues of the period. Later, in the eighteenth century, when the southern and eastern mountains were populated by immigrants from the British Isles, the mountain folk adopted the banjo and adapted it to their

own use. It was probably a Scot who added the fifth string to the normal four string banjo. The fifth string, which is attached halfway down the neck, is never fretted and so provides a drone effect similar to that of the bagpipe. The mountaineers, later known as hillbillies, *picked* the banjo rather than strumming it, and used it for playing the English, Irish, and Scots ballads that they brought with them to America. The four string banjo remained in use and became one of the basic early jazz instruments, and is still heard today wherever trad is played.

Three forms

Meanwhile, the five string banjo went on to influence three forms of music, all of which are part of the music of today: folk, country, and blues. Since the five string banjo is considered the only truly American musical instrument, it is a vital part of the American folk heritage. In recent years, the most famous banjo player is also America's most well known folk artist, Pete Seeger. Seeger is internationally known and loved. For the last 20 years he has been the prime mover of American folk music. He has provided inspiration and encouragement for players of stringed instruments from Woody Guthrie to Bob Dylan. Pete's banjo has been heard in accompaniment of not only Guthrie, but Cisco Houston, Sonny Terry, Brownie McGhee, and the great Leadbelly (Huddie Ledbetter). It is a well known fact that without Pete Seeger, the folk scene would never have developed to an extent that performers such as Bob Dylan could emerge from it.

Pete is also known for his innovations on the instrument itself, the most significant of which is the addition of three extra frets to the banjo's normal 22. The 25 fret banjo is now the characteristic "long neck" folk banjo. The addition of the extra frets gave the banjo a deep resonant tone and facilitate playing in the key of E. The folk banjo is known for its plaintive wailing sound. When strummed

it is a moving and emotional sound that is fine accompaniment for the unrequited love ballads. At the same time, when it is picked, it provides the energetic foot-stomping music that characterises a Pete Seeger performance. One of the more famous players of the long neck was Dave Guard, erstwhile leader of the Kingston Trio.

The five string banjo made the return trip across the Atlantic and became well known on the British folk scene and is heard wherever British folk assemble. A favourite folk duo here is Peggy Seeger and Ewan McColl (composer of *Dirty Old Town*). Peggy Seeger, now resident in Britain, is Pete's sister and a fine musician and songstress in her own right. Her very clean and melodic banjo playing is one of the finest examples of pure folk music.

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The country-western banjo scene is dominated, of course, by Earl Scruggs. Scruggs, who is reputed by some to be the best banjo picker in the world, plays with the Foggy Mountain Boys out of Nashville. Together with Lester Flatt, the guitarist and lead singer, he is internationally famous. The group has played to packed houses everywhere from the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville to Carnegie Hall in New York. They found unanimous acceptance at the Avalon in San Francisco, one of the centres of the west coast rock

scene. The music is characterised by Scruggs' three finger banjo picking which is lightning fast and hard as nails. The Foggy Mountain Boys' music revolves around the five string banjo as does all country music itself, although with the advent of electrified instruments, the banjo is often excluded.

Scruggs, too, is an innovator in banjo design. His contribution is known as "Scruggs Pegs". These are tuning pegs attached to the instrument's peg head that enable the musician to change the tuning in the middle of a song without having to stop. Scruggs pegs have been adopted by virtually all bluegrass banjo pickers and can be heard in action in such songs as *Earl's Breakdown*, written by Scruggs. *The Ballad of Jed Clampett*, the theme for the television programme, "Beverly Hillbillies", is another original composition.

Kentucky Hills

The all-too-common notion that bluegrass music is a novelty that has little interest outside of the Kentucky Hills is unfounded. It is both complex and well developed. Any doubters of its relevance to the current pop scene should refer to the latest Flatt and Scruggs LP, *Nashville*

Airplane. This album includes such popular material as Dylan's *Like A Rolling Stone*, *I'll Be Your Baby Tonight*, and *Rainy Day Woman*; Johnny Cash's *Folsom Prison Blues*; as well as *If I Were A Carpenter*, and *Gentle On My Mind*. With the current rebirth of country-western music one can expect to hear more and more five string banjo. In the Beatles' new single, *Get Back*, the slide guitar is the dobro sound, a dobro being one of the basic instruments in the Foggy Mountain Boys and other bluegrass groups, and often coupled with the five string banjo.

Perhaps the most significant of musical forms on the current popular scene are the blues. Almost all of today's groups rely on the blues for some of their material, and the blues in their pure form are appreciated by a large audience. In the development of blues, the five string banjo played a fundamental role. All of today's soul music, including the Motown sound, developed in a direct line from the city blues. The city blues, still being played by such groups as the Muddy Waters Band, Jimmy Cotten's Blues Band, the Paul Butterfield Band, to mention a few, stemmed directly from the rural blues of the 1920's, 30's,

and 40's. Many of the rural blues musicians in those times were banjo as well as guitar players.

Jug bands

The first actual blues bands arose in the 1920's and were known as jug bands. In the jug bands one finds the birth of the blues sound as we know it. The basic instruments in a jug band were guitar, mouth harp, washboard, kazoo, tub bass, jug, and five string banjo. One of the most famous jug bands was Cannon's Jug Stompers. Gus Cannon, the leader of the group, was a five string banjo player and was the lead instrumentalist on such songs as the now famous *Walk Right In* (Cannon's own composition). When electrified instruments came into use, the jug bands waned, but four years ago they enjoyed a brief revival. Some of the most famous of the modern jug bands were Jim Kweskin's Jug Band, the Even Dozen Jug Band, and Dave van Ronk's Jug Stompers, all of which included a five string banjo. These groups can be heard on LP along with many of the original jug bands, recorded in the 20's and 30's, which have been re-issued in classic blues anthologies.

Some of today's most popular groups are putting out the jug band-rural blues sound, most notably Canned Heat, in songs like *Going Down Country*. Duster Bennett is another example of this sort of music. Spider John Koerner (Elektra Records), a well known modern interpreter of earlier blues, has composed a piece called *Banjo Thing* in which he tries to equal the banjo sound on a seven string guitar.



The four string banjo became the five, now the five has become the six. Pete Parmenter, one of the top country artists in England's eastern counties, plays his new six string gold-plated Framus banjo. A twelve-string version is also available

Since the five string banjo is so much a part of the heritage of modern music, it is only a matter of time before it finds its way back into the musical mainstream. Already it is creeping back into the scene and can be heard on such pieces as *Bluebird on the Buffalo Springfield Again* LP. The fact that a banjo cannot be electrified has held it back to a great extent. However, it can be amplified, and because of the fifth string drone effect, the banjo is an excellent vehicle for Eastern and Oriental music. All things considered, it is quite possible that you'll be hearing a lot more five string banjo.

R.W.

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FRAMUS GIBSON EPIPHONE HARMONY VEGA FENDER

HARMONY Grass are far from happy with the new computer method of compiling the weekly hit-parade. "It's daft," they say. "One week *Move In A Little Closer, Baby* jumped 25 places into the Top Twenty with sales of 10,000. The next week, we sold 15,000 copies—but the record dropped down two places. And that very same week, The Scaffold's *Lily The Pink* jumped back to 25 after slowly falling to No. 40."

But the group are very happy with the 55,000 records of *Move In . . .* that changed hands over the counters of record shops in the U.K. "It reached No. 18, so we're not moaning. But every disc jockey and record reviewer reckoned it for the Top Five, so from that point of view we were a bit disappointed," said Tony Rivers.

The singer man then went on to explain why Tony Rivers And The Castaways became Harmony Grass. "Our manager, Colin Johnston, suggested the name," he said. "Why change it at all? Well, The Castaways had a good run of seven years. That really tested the name. We don't know if *Move In . . .* would have sold or not if we hadn't had a name change, but whatever happened, it worked.

Quite a story

"There's quite a story behind that record. We were going to sign up with a person who shall remain unnamed. He found *Move In . . .* for us, but couldn't afford to pay for the session, and so we left him, taking the song with us. Now we're with NEMS, and very happy."

Before I spoke to Tony and the rest of the group, they had entertained a very appreciative, if very small, audience in Jersey. Opening their act with the Beach Boys' *Fun, Fun, Fun* and continuing with *Barbara Anne* and *I've Got You Under My Skin*, Harmony Grass proved that they are indeed a force to be reckoned with.

Blues material, soul and Cream-type numbers are out. They rely purely on their vocal and instrumental talents. And what talents they are. Practically every number sounded exactly like the original record and, in *Good Vibrations*, Tony even managed to make his voice sound like a Theramin.

Continuing with such numbers as *Mrs. Robinson* and *Spanky And Our Gang's* beautifully harmonic *Little Bird Avenue*, Harmony Grass played their hearts out for one hour. They even included a medley of two great, all-time favourite rockers, *Rock Around the Clock* and *Let's Go To The Hop*, for good measure. Boy, after listening to so many screeching, ear-shattering groups,



HARMONY GRASS

it was a pleasure to listen to some real classy material performed by a completely professional group. The yells of "More" that followed *Let's Hang On*, their closing number, had to be heard to be believed.

"We do these kind of numbers because we like them," said Tony afterwards. Now we're moving into cabaret, which gives us the opportunity of doing more vocal harmony numbers. Things like *Soul Coaxing*, Four Freshmen style. Oh yes, did you know we're the first English group to ever have a hit with R.C.A. Records?" I said that I didn't know that, and Tony went on to give details of their next single.

"It looks like being *Good Thing*, a

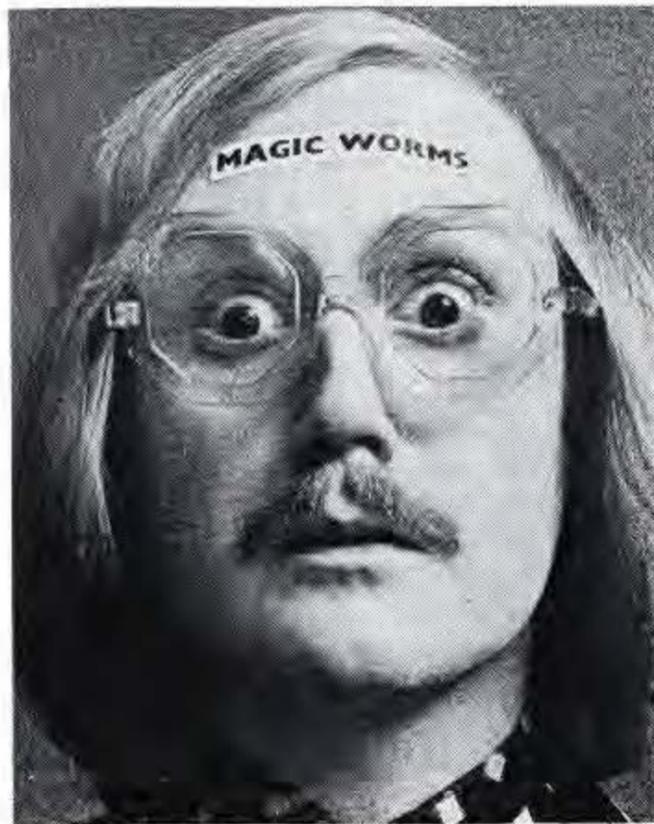
number which was specially written for us by the composers of *Move In A Little Closer, Baby*. I say it only looks like being that song, because we've recorded four titles and it depends what R.C.A. think. But *Good Thing* seems the favourite at the moment.

"We've been told that it will get the maximum amount of plugging, but we don't really need a hit record, although it is nice to have one. We've been working for seven years without one, whereas so many other groups get a hit, and then fade away into obscurity."

Judging by their continuing popularity, that's one thing that Harmony Grass won't do.

T.W.

Vivian Stanshall Column



What extraordinary stuff they strew around for you to read! "Country Life", "The Lady" and "Autocar". That'll take your mind off. Why not "Rabbit Weekly"? I think I'm going to complain. I think I'm going to be sick. How embarrassing this all is. Within the hour that enchanting Australian nurse that I so bravely and suavely gave my name to on the way in, will see me wriggling, screaming, squirming under the knife. Well, you know the drill. Aaaaagh. Do you find your job boring? Haw Haw Haaaaeeeeeyahhhh.

I think I'm next. Oh Lor, I had curry last night, a really garlicky one. Why does this always happen?

By the time you read this I shall be in the U.S.A. (I shall live on a reservation, I will paint my face, I will wear many beads, I will become an insufferable pig with a transatlantic grunt).

Here's a story of symmetry and conceit. A parable on publicity: "How the entire World became Vivian Stanshall".

I dreamt that I became so incredibly famous and had to do so many public appearances that I no longer had any private life at all. So one day I stopped a

geezer of the same height and build and offered him a fortune if he would undergo plastic surgery to make him look like me and halve my responsibility. And so he did. And it worked jolly well until some beast sussed us and squealed.

So after a little initial upset we decided to work as a double act. We were a sensation and became even richer than when I had only been one person. (Our "mirror routine" was the talk of the town)? But we tired of the novelty and one afternoon the pair of us slipped out to find two blokes of similar build. (Rugged).

Five years later the Vivian Stanshall Show, taking place in its own amphitheatre is 45 million strong, we all wear gold suits and blue bow ties and we all do the same routine, and we all have got the same colour hair and we all of us look like me.

Ten years later we were stopping cripples and midgets with bald heads. Twelve years later there were sheeps and pigs with my colour hair and my shaped legs. (Everybody sing).

And 20 years later there were wasps and plants and some were my sisters and some were my aunts. (Make it Judie).

And 30 years later my big red face (Yeh Yeh Yeh) was floating around like a RADISH IN SPACE

So there, let that be a warning to you.

This is my last column for you, I hope you've found it as engrossing and informative as I have.

Your Chum,
Vivian Stanshall.

HELLO Readers, today I'm at the dentists. I just popped in to make sure that wonderful heart-warming smile stays "sincerely yours and sparkling white". (Just the way you love it. Thanks for your letters. You housewives are so outrageous) I'm 10 minutes early and already the tension is building up. It's edge of the seat excitement here. I think they should give you an injection just to sit in the waiting-room. (I know I'm a big-boy but I've had a lot of worry, you see).

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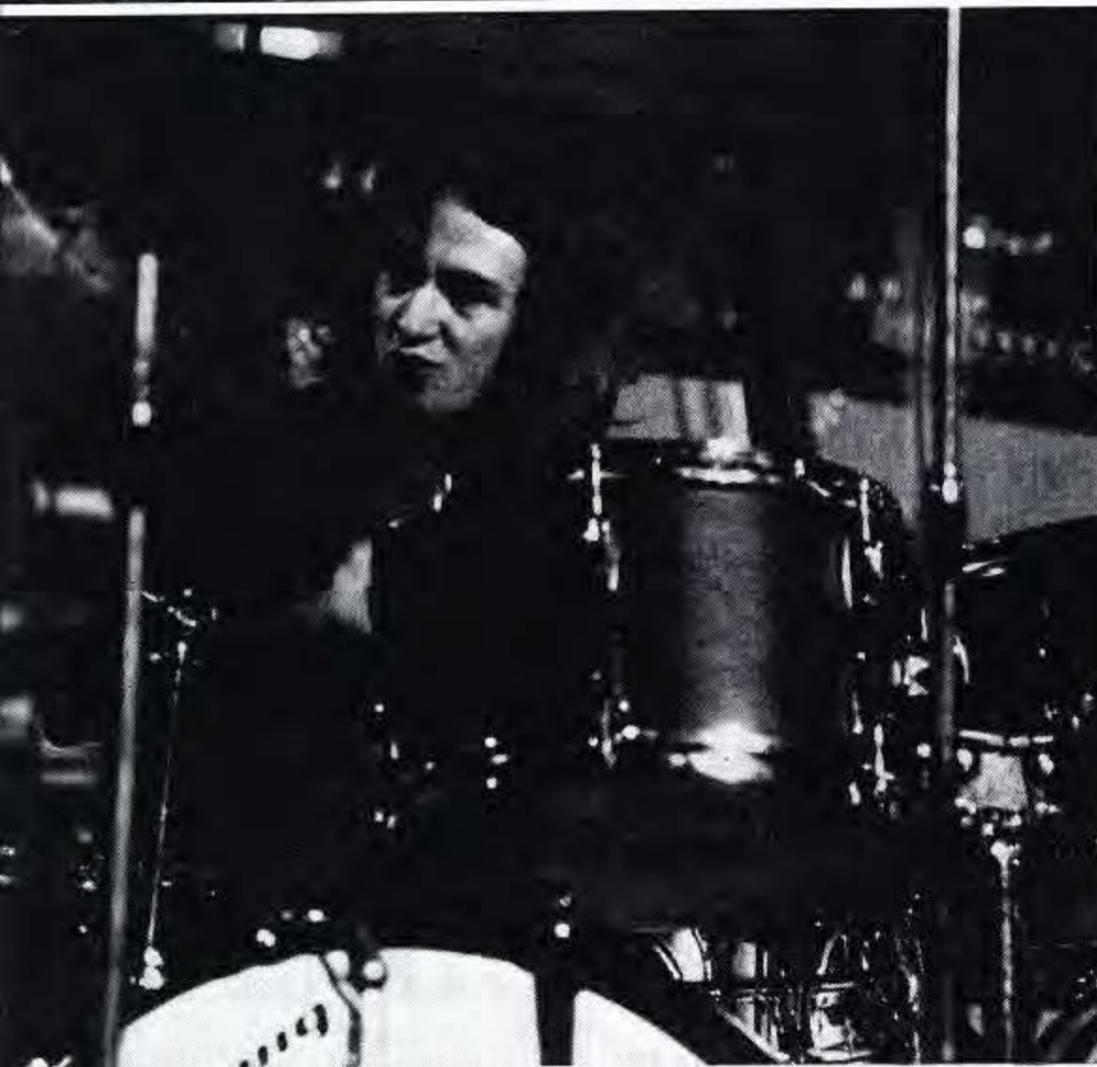
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THEY seek him here, they seek him there, that elusive Jimi Hendrix. The wild-man of soul-selling, currently the biggest group dollar-earner in the States, is seldom in London these days—he has too big a scene going in America. He has his flat here but is hardly ever there. In the States, one can chase him by telephone until the bill reaches astronomical heights.

More frequently in London is Noel Redding, who gathers himself and mates together in West End hostelryes—a figure all hair and glasses. Less frequently in London is Mitch Mitchell, drummer extraordinaire, the one member of the Experience who can sometimes pass through unrecognised.

But we did talk to Jimi, via a series of incredibly disorganised interviews. And culled the odd bit of gen from Noel and Mitch—Noel notably on his scene currently building big with Fat Mattress. We talked about the theories that Jimi and the others would split soon; that Jimi wanted to get out of the music business for at least a year; that he was depressed about some of the aspects of his fame in the States.

He said: "For three years, we've been working non-stop. That is a lot of physical and emotional strain. You go somewhere and the show is a bit under what it should be and you are told you are slipping . . . but it is the strain. It is the strain of the moral obligation to keep going even when you don't feel that you can manage even one more show. Maybe I'll never get to take that break; all I know is that I'm thinking about it most of the time now, and that doesn't help create the right mood."

To an extent, Jimi is getting a bit disenchanted with the American scene, despite his tremendous popularity and earning-power there. "It started for me in this country and I'd hate for me to move away for good. But there's this question of bread. Right now you can earn anything up to 20 times as much in the States for doing just the same work as you do here. I think the people, the fans, are great here. They're maybe that bit quieter, more in control, but we have to be in this business to earn the money. Who knows how long it can last? I'm not asking for a guarantee, I'm just going where the main action with money is."

What pleases Jimi, specially, is the way the pop music scene is getting freer and freer. It's not now just a matter of a group getting together and sticking together—it's leading up to com-

plete freedom between musicians who think alike and try to play alike. "They get together for some jamming. That's great. No hang-ups. This has been happening on the jazz scene for years now. A star, a soloist, gathers some guys around and they groove together. Maybe the group only exists for that one album, maybe they go on for a year or so together—but they don't stretch it out once it has started losing the sheer exuberance of jamming together.

"Now it's happening in the pop side of things. This can only be good. Still, I hope the boys don't lose sight of where they're at. You know, you can get so far ahead of yourself that you can't even see yourself. Like they take up a kind of sound and then develop it and out goes the heart of it and it becomes a sort of exercise in technique. By then it's got too far. Everybody loses interest and back they go to a more basic thing. Blues is basic;

JIMI

so too is a lot of the country music. So you get these two things there at the roots of what's going on. You change your style and it's only natural that you should get some new jamming guys round you."

And Jimi himself remains faithful to Bob Dylan, despite the many different facets shown nowadays on disc of the Dylan musical complexities. "Sometimes," he said, "I do a Dylan song and it seems to fit me so right that I figure maybe I wrote it. Dylan didn't always do it for me as a singer, not in the early days, but then I started listening to the lyrics. That sold me."

Jimi, of course, has to put up with the lot of all originals—that of the copyists moving in. There are cases of groups calling themselves after his songs—cases of guitarists "borrowing" his own eccentricities. "This has gotta happen, I guess," he said. "I've gotten used to it and in one way you can take it as flattering that somebody has caught on so strongly. But they've still got to find their own thing. You can get started on somebody else's back, but you end up having to go your own way."

Now totally used to getting tremendous receptions all over the States and in Britain, Jimi admits he still feels deep excitement when an audience reacts like this. Occasionally they might play it cool, but then he still gets enjoyment out of his work. In fact, there's an argument that

it's a "must" to see him work to an audience that is less than white-hot with enthusiasm because he then tends to use it as a sort of paid rehearsal and this means getting a whole load of less-known material.

There were signs, when he was last in concert here, that some of the old showmanship was missing. Jimi, Noel and Mitch tend to agree, but as they say, there is a limit to how far you can go in terms of sheer musical violence. They've been through that thing and now they want to develop in another way. When he talks about lyrics, Jimi almost gives the impression of a schoolmaster asking questions after a pupil has been told to read a Shakespeare play for homework. He stands or falls by the lyrics—he chooses his non-original material purely from the words at first. But he says: "There has to be complete marriage between the words and music in the end. Take them as

HENDRIX

a together thing. If the lyrics lose out completely to the music, then it's not done right. Or the other way round.

"But it's surprising how many people don't seem to really hear the lyrics. A drag considering the number of great writers who are raising standards all the time."

Earning so much money in two different countries can cause the odd problem. Generally speaking, the Experience trio try to keep it in America because of the incredibly high taxation here at their level of earning. said Noel: "You can pay 19s. 6d. in the pound once you reach a certain level, so obviously it's not worth it. We have to cash in abroad and then we have to explain to the fans here that it's not because we've lost interest, simply that there aren't the dates that pay the money."

And Jimi said: "There was a time when I worried about the money. I worried about whether I was getting all I was entitled to and so on. I'm no religious maniac, just go along with my own philosophy, but money doesn't affect me right now. These guys in the business who go out and spend, spend, spend—then end up flat busted broke, except maybe they have some personal things they bought. That's no good for me. Music is what matters; I'd rather talk about that subject than any other. Well, nearly any

other—'cept that I keep on saying that sex is the biggest motivating thing in the world and it's behind a lot of music, too. I know I have enough money but if I had it all I'd still want to get music across to anybody who wanted to listen. I get my biggest kicks out of music; sometimes it is like a fantastic personal release."

Jimi is still working on promoting a band called the Band Of Gypsies. Barely a day goes by without some up-coming outfit asking him for advice. "Some of these cats are good but they don't have any special drive. They wanna make it but they want to be helped every inch of the way and that's no good, either. If you wanna get there, the work must come from you—even though another guy can maybe give you a bit of help or some good advice."

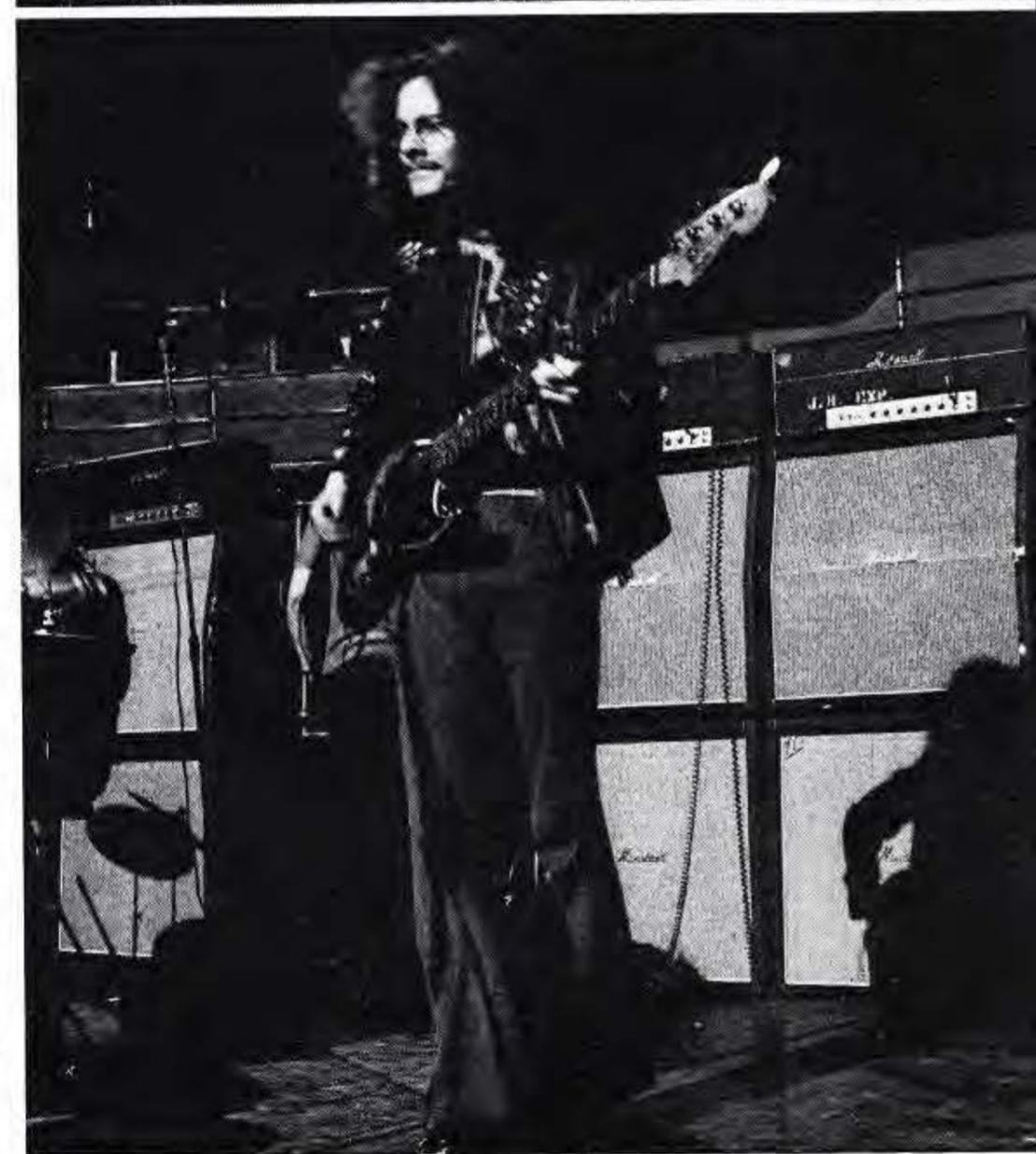
The musical tolerance of Jimi cannot be stretched to a wide limit. He talks of bubble-gum music with a look of near-horror on his face. What's more, he is sure that even the teeny-bopper fans are not all that keen on it. The basis, he believes, is the blues principally—and he's much happier to give more credit for appreciation to the youngest fans than are the record company executives. And he does not agree that anybody older than himself is incapable of digging his music.

If the sheer showmanship wildness has to an extent departed from Jimi's stage act, his appearance still gives rise to alarm, even in the most broad-minded boozers. Even though a star, he still gets the cold-shoulder treatment—like the taxi drivers who pull up, then pull away.

"I can't help this," says he. "I don't dress up just because somebody says I should. I don't think that way, not even about music. Some of these guys want everybody to be the same conforming types as themselves . . . well, they ain't gonna catch me like that."

The future then? Jimi more and more in the studios for production work on groups he likes—like Buddy Miles Express, or Eire Apparent. Noel and Mitch occasionally off on their own scenes, with groups they plan to build. But the Experience to carry on, even if there is a fairly lengthy "holiday" from the strain. "It's like being married, with me and Mitch and Noel," said Jimi. "Real happily married when we get our thing going without a single hang-up."

P.G.



Poet and the one man band

"IT'S the first date I've played for four years. I never thought I'd go back on the road, but here I am!" Thus spake Tony Colton, who with Ray Smith, is the moving force behind the group Poet and The One Man Band which played its debut gig at the plushy Speakeasy Club recently. The Speakeasy is not the best place for groups to play and get satisfaction, for the well-heeled and well-oiled tend to go there for nosh and hooch, with music in the background rather than the foreground.

Nevertheless Poet got a good reception and people listened to the group that never intended to play live, a group that released an album before coming face to face with an audience, a group composed of session men.

How did Poet and the One Man Band come into being? How did they get that name when there are seven of them?

Some four years ago Tony Colton decided he would leave the Crawdaddies (which the daddy-aged of our readers will remember) to write songs with Ray Smith. This they did most successfully, writing material for Cream, Georgie Fame and the Tremeloes amongst others. Those who bought Zoot Money's *Big Time Operator* will recall that Tony and Ray wrote that too.

They were working away happily with their writing, doing session work, record producing and a couple of film scores as well, when they fancied the idea of doing a folk-based album featuring Ray's guitar and some singing and poetry from Tony. (Hence the name Poet and the One Man Band). They put down a few tracks and added a rhythm section and all was going well. By this time there was a group of session musicians that Tony was working with a lot and that group became the basis of Poet.

Once the concept of Tony and Ray's album had grown from the duo idea, they considered forming a group with Zoot Money, having America in mind. However these plans did not materialise



and Ray and Tony pressed on without Zoot's presence but with his encouragement.

By this time Poet and the One Man Band was almost in existence and within two months the album was completed, but there was no intention of putting the band on the road—it was just what a bunch of session men who had worked together a lot had recorded.

But when MGM released the record it became clear that there was something that worked well and Poet became a group, and decided to go forth into the music places of the land. Their live sound is very close to the album, very clear, well put together, expertly played, all excellently done. Perhaps the only thing lacking is a definite musical personality. But this is something that will no doubt develop as the group plays more, and it is extremely unfair to pass judgment on the basis of a group's debut show.

Three guitars

One interesting feature of the band is the three-guitar line up in addition to bass, drums and keyboard. As well as Ray Smith on guitar, there is Jerry Donaghue, who does backing vocals behind Tony Colton's lead singing, and Albert Lee who has had various enthusiastic tags stuck on him such as the "guitarist's guitarist", and "the fastest guitarist alive." Albert is very unwilling to push himself forward, but it is said that a few years back certain budding British guitarists were to be seen listening to Albert, taping his phrases

on portable recorders and learning them off. Albert is highly rated by Chet Atkins and was offered the chance of playing with the Everly Brothers in the States, which he turned down.

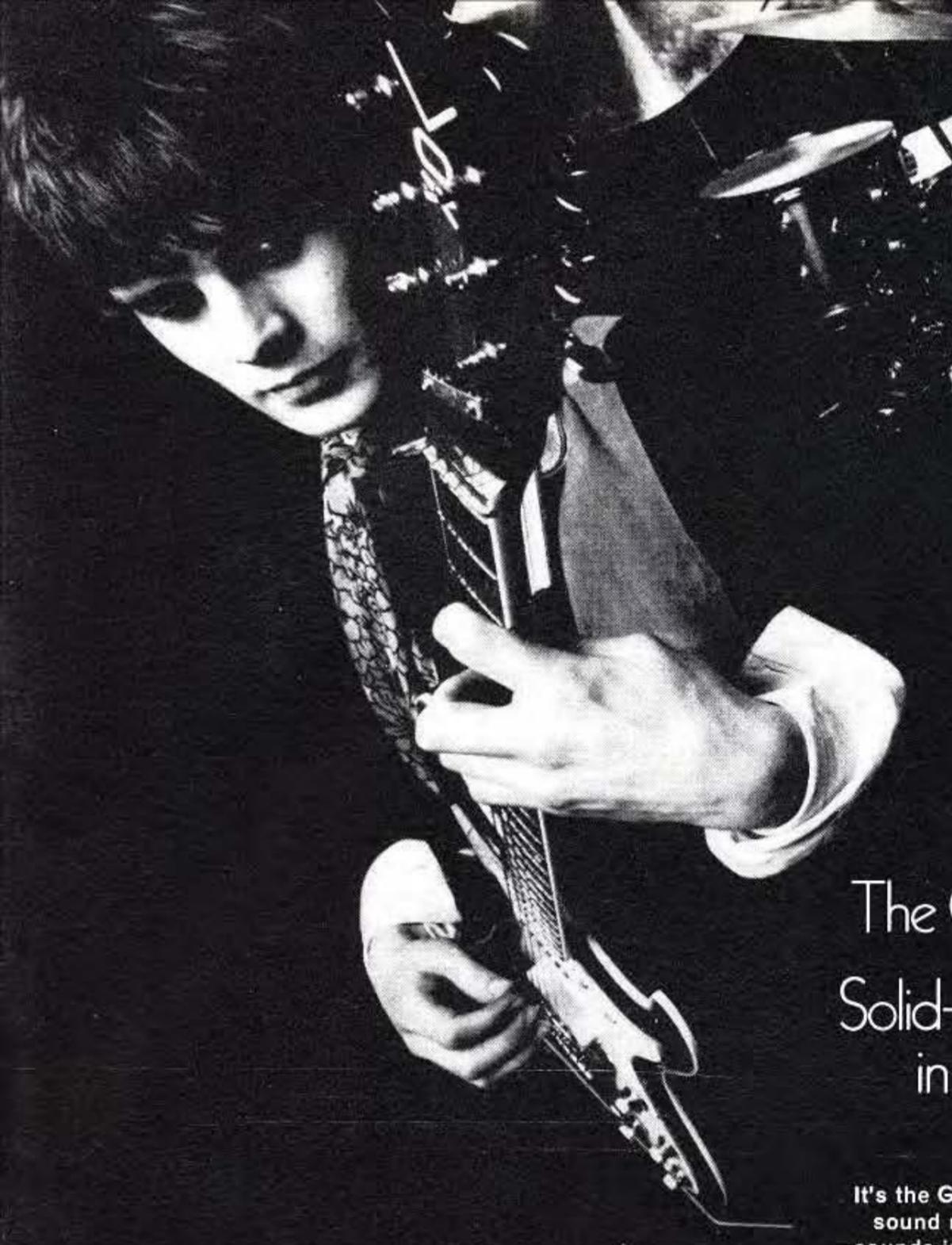
Country music

As you might have guessed, Albert's great love is country music and he still plays with Country Fever as well as Poet. Another Country Fever man in Poet is bassist Pat Donaldson, also a sessionman with Zoot Money associations. Completing Poet's line up is drummer Pete Gavin, who used to play with Long John Baldry, and keyboard player Mike O'Neill, who was with Tony in the Crawdaddies and has played with Donovan. Another O'Neill claim to fame is that many moons ago he was Nero of Nero and the Gladiators. (Either you remember "Hey There Brutus Man, Here Come the Gladiators" or you don't).

That is the permanent line up but Nicky Hopkins, who played on the group's album, will be playing with them whenever commitments with Jeff Beck's group allow him to do so. He should be playing with Poet at an Albert Hall concert this summer.

So there you have it, a complicated history and an extremely talented bunch of musicians in the happy position of playing live shows, doing session work and following other personal paths at the same time. Give their album a good listen and see them if you have the chance.

M.H.



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STATESIDE REPORT



THREE of the best rock albums to be marketed recently support the belief that today's music is highly derivative of other musical idioms. These new albums—by Sea Train, the Sons of Champlin, and Tongue And Groove—have very little in common except that all three bands are influenced by forms of music besides straight rock and roll.

Sea Train, whose bright future was predicted here in the December "B.I.", has just had their first album issued in America on the A & M label. This group's music is a blending of jazz and classical rock. All the musicians have played either jazz or classical music prior to forming this band, and the influences of their musical experiences are brought together in a brilliant amalgamation on this record. The violin of Richard Greene and the flute of Andrew Kulberg are unique features of this LP. Greene, who played with the Jim Kweskin Jug Band earlier, is the dominant instrumentalist, and his playing shifts back and forth from jug band to classical.

The arrangements are often in the form of theme-and-variation (for example their



Sea Train's first album, now on U.S. release, is a blend of jazz and classical rock

beautiful *Sweet Creek's Suite*), changing tempo and mood frequently without disrupting the precision and flow of the music.

First album

Loosen Up Naturally, the first album by the Sons of Champlin, is a dynamo of musical power in the style of the big band sound. The jazz influences are evident, particularly in the horn work of Tim Cain. Musically, the Sons are loud and driving; they rarely pause for a breath except between numbers. The

clash of Cain's sax and the lead guitar of Terry Haggerty often culminates to a climactic din. This collection, a two-record set, also includes the Sons' first Capitol single, 1982-A.

Tongue and Groove, still an obscure San Francisco band at this writing, plays superb blues and features a marvellous vocalist named Lynne Hughes, probably the only white female blues singer who can rival Janis Joplin. On their first album, on the Fontana label, the group stands as a trio with Miss

Hughes doing most of the singing; Michael Ferguson, formerly of the Charlatans, on vocals and piano; and Randy Lewis on guitar. The trio was assisted by various bassists and drummers for the album; two new players were added to the group after completion of this recording.

Excitement

Miss Hughes' singing debut is very impressive. She always seems composed, yet manages to churn plenty of excitement. *Devil, Sidetrack* and *Come On In My Kitchen*, her own compositions, are her best performances. Her rendition of Mance Lipscomb's *Cherry Ball (Shake Shake Mama)*, is also beautiful. The piano of Michael Ferguson is multi-tracked in some numbers, providing the rhythm source as well as some dazzling keyboard virtuoso sections.

Jack Casady and Jorma Kaukonen of Jefferson Airplane recorded their first album together recently in San Francisco, and played with the Airplane for its sixth album. Besides their recording session, the bassist and guitarist have made public appearances together outside the Airplane group, but they

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have no immediate plans of putting this project ahead of their work with the band. The pair's contract with RCA is good for at least two albums. Meanwhile the Airplane, whose recent *Pointed Little Head* live LP seems destined to become a gold record, has issued *Plastic Fantastic Lover* from that album as a single.

After more than a year away from the recording studio, the Mamas and Papas (minus Cass Elliott who is now a soloist) have resumed activity and will release future material through John Phillips' Warlock Records. The lawsuit Dunhill Records, the M & P's previous recording label, filed against the group for breach of contract earlier this year was settled out of court. Part of the settlement includes the right of Dunhill to distribute all forthcoming records by the group.



Sons of Champlin produce a big band style of sound

Included in Phillips' plans for Warlock Records is the erection of a Hollywood recording studio and the signing of other artists. Recently signed by Phillips is a U.S.-Canadian band called Jamme. Mama Cass, whose records have been selling well since she left the group, has a new single entitled *Move In A Little Closer, Baby*.

The Monkees are planning a new image, and want to get away from the "bubble gum" sound of their past. Co-

incidentally, this new image comes at a time when their popularity is at its lowest point since they began in 1967. Their future recordings, which will include material by The Beatles and Jimmy Webb, will reflect this so-called new image that they hope will go over better than their old one.

Zappa's empire

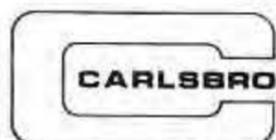
Frank Zappa is slowly building himself an empire, judging from the latest pro-

ject he's started in America. With Herb Cohen, Zappa has launched a new independent label called Straight Records. This label will be separate from the Zappa-Cohen Bizarre label, distributed by Warner Bros., which the Mothers are now recording on. Among the artists signed to Bizarre are Tim Buckley and Judy Henske, both formerly with Elektra. The Mothers' new Bizarre album *Uncle Meat*, the soundtrack for their yet-unfinished film, has been released.

John Sebastian's first solo album is scheduled for U.S. release this month. Blood, Sweat and Tears' second album is number one nationally as is their single, *You've Made Me So Very Happy*. Johnny Winter's recently-recorded Columbia album has been issued, and Imperial has released his *Rollin' and Tumblin'* on a single.

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STUDIO

BBRITAIN is now firmly established as one of the great recording centres of the world. Although the majority of studios are situated in the greater London area, many in the provinces are fast building a big reputation for themselves.

“BEAT INSTRUMENTAL” recently made a tour of certain selected studios and on the following pages we give details of their facilities and equipment, the type of recording they undertake and the cost involved.



Trident's studio is on a lower level than the control room

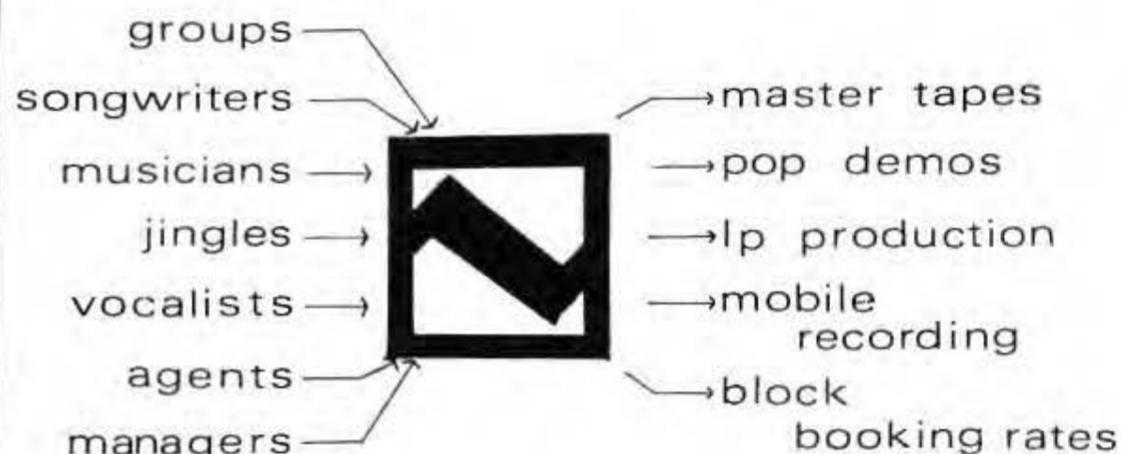
Trident Studios are in St. Anne's Court, which connects Wardour Street and Dean Street in Soho. They have six floors, but only four are used at the moment so there's still room for their constant expansion of facilities. The studio is in the basement and ground floor. They've only been open for a year, but already have a long list of big name clients.

The studio is 50 ft. by 20 ft. and 22 ft. high. The control room is on a higher level, looking down. Said Norman Sheffield: "We have here a Bechstein piano and Ludwig drum kit and we'll soon be adding a Hammond C-3 organ. We were the first people in Europe to have an eight-track

machine and the first in the world to use 16-track.

"In a separate room is a 16-track re-mix, in other words, voice over facilities and effects equipment. Also a separate copying room." The engineers are Norman's brother Barry, Malcolm Toft, Ken Scott and Robin Cable.

"Our engineers are interested in all types of pop music as individuals. Barry is especially keen on jazz and complex pop; Malcolm goes more for simple pop and folk, like Tyrannosaurus Rex . . . an 'extreme' man who gets great string sounds; Rob looks after the underground groups; and Ken likes group orchestral things and light music, such as film scores."



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SURVEY

One expert told us that over 60% of the pop output is now coming from independent studios. Others produced variations on this figure, but the fact is that the independents can now provide recording facilities and service equal to anything possessed by the major recording companies.

Development of 16-track machines was one big talking point so let's start with the company that pioneered in this field.

Many stars use the studios. Like The Beatles, Mary Hopkin, Joe Cocker, Manfred Mann, Small Faces, Herd, T. Rex, Bonzo Dog, the M.J.Q., lots of Apple work and its acts, Chris Farlowe, plus orchestral work for Polydor and albums with Nirvana, for instance, from AIR London.

And among the hits: *Hey Jude*, *My Name Is Jack*, *Nut Brown Flake* and *Those Were The Days*.

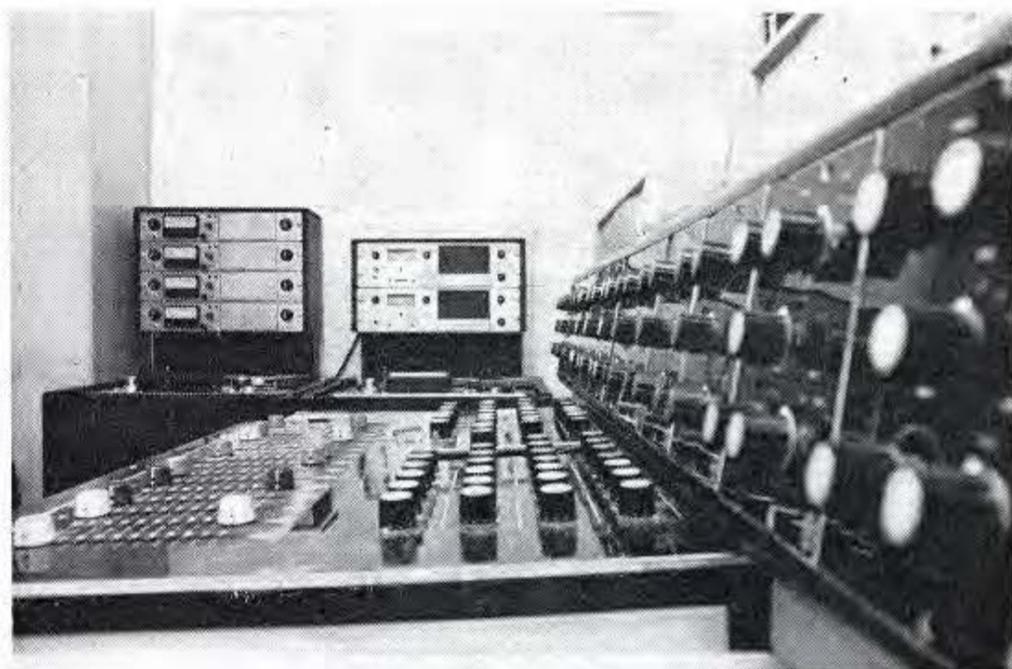
The charges: 16-track is £35 per hour; 8-track is £25; 3-4 track is £20; stereo £15; mono £12.

There is also a spacious, air-conditioned, 35-seater pre-view theatre.

Now we go to Orange Studios,

in New Compton Street, just off Charing Cross Road. Here comes Cliff Cooper, co-director of the organisation. A young organisation — and one with many different aspects — their own agency, publishing house, management deals, equipment manufacturing . . . just about everything to make it a complete show-business tie-up.

The studio is in a basement, some 40 ft. long, by 16 ft. wide, with a 12 ft. high ceiling. But in addition there are separate booths for vocal and drums. The drum booth has a bent ceiling, to give good reflecting qualities for microphones. The vocal booth is acoustically treated and both are about 8 ft. by 8 ft. And the whole thing at



In the control room of Orange's basement studio in New Compton Street off Charing Cross Road

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very economical prices. Cliff told us: "We have provision for coupling direct injection and mike take-offs. Which means we are able to reduce distortion from amplifiers and speakers and microphones by inserting the guitar lead directly into the output of the tape-recorder. This is a method now used extensively in America. At one end of the studio, we have a ceiling reflector to improve string sounds."

Available in the studio is a C-3 Hammond organ, a big Leslie cabinet, Leslie tone cabinet, a Mellotron, a choice of Martin guitars—or any instrument from the retail shop which is just above. And any kind of amp.

Many big names have already booked the studio . . . Emperor Rosco, Georgie Fame, Fleetwood Mac, Crispian St. Peter etc. There is a 24-hour service, seven days a week. And the studio engineers are Cliff himself and his partner, Brian Hatt.

West End

The de Lane Lea Studios are situated at 129, Kingsway not far from the West End scenes. We spoke to Barry Ainsworth,



De Lane Lea Studios, who record many top groups, undertake a wide range of recordings

the chief engineer, who told us the facts and figures. The studio is large enough to accommodate and record 35-40 musicians and is 57 ft. long, 20 ft. wide and 12 ft. high.

There is total separation between the sections and it has been done in both a decorative and a practical way. The studio was actually enlarged two years back, so is now double the original size.

Said Barry: "The equipment

we have here consists of an 8-track machine, made by the 3-M company, and a new type of amplifier, our own design, half the size of the normal. We also have 4- and 2-track Ampex machines as well as mono. The pattern these days is for people to make smaller equipment because of the space problems, whereas in the early days it was mainly mono. Now with 8- and even 16-track machines, we just don't have

the space to spread.

"Our charges are, I think, very reasonable. For 8-track, it is £22 per hour. 4-track—£18. 2-track is £16 and mono £14 per hour." We asked about the artists and groups who use de Lane Lea.

Fleetwood Mac

"Mickie Most records Lulu here, plus Herman's Hermits, Jeff Beck, Donovan and Terry Reid. Then there are also Fleetwood Mac, the Troggs, Deep Purple, Taste, Glass Menagerie, Vanity Fare, Sam Gopal—and just recently I've recorded J. J. Jackson. Although the majority are mainly pop groups, we also record the Larry Page Orchestra. I steer clear of classical recordings because the studio was designed essentially for pop. Our hit ratio is high . . . Lulu's Eurovision song, Deep Purple who've had three hits in the States since *Hush*. And many of Herman's biggest."

Basically they record for stereo and the set-up produces virtually "classical" recordings, so they aim at getting a very wide sound. "This means that when



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you hear the ensemble you cannot identify where any one particular instrument is playing, be it left, centre or right, until they take a solo. It is rather like a very wide mono sound. I personally prefer this overall sound effect, but unfortunately there is no time to do this process for singles, because of the time factor. It is not worth setting up the group, which might take an hour, if you are only going to do two titles."

Any changes over the past year or so? "Really only in the extremely wide range of recordings that we undertake. As I said before, it's from pop groups to pop orchestras. Manfred Mann comes here to do some of the music for his award-winning commercials. And also several song writers, including Phil Coulter and Bill Martin, come here."

Boss man

Next port of call was **Spot Productions**, where we met Mr. Gary Levy, who is the most businesslike managing director and boss man behind this organisation which is in South Molton Street, not far from Oxford Street and Bond Street.



Spot Productions engineers Tony O'Leary and Jim Richardson plus a pretty young trainee!

The studio itself is small and could accommodate up to 20 musicians only . . . but there is a small studio upstairs which could take an extra four musicians for the same session.

To keep track on what is happening in the main studio, also the smaller one, closed circuit television is installed. The reason is that the control room is blocked off from the main studio. "We use the Leever-Rich 8-track recorder

which we've had since February this year." said Mr. Levy. "There are features of the machine which are demanded by the larger studios but which also make possible for even a small studio to make a hit record by skilful mixing.

"It is about time people decided to buy British material and save money rather than pay out extra dollars for American or German equivalents. My contention is Buy British.

Coupled with the Leever-Rich recorder, we have custom-built 8-track 16-channel desk, which has tape delay, reverberation, full equalisation and limiting, and is completely comprehensive. In the studio, the mikes we use are Neumann and AKG, condenser and dynamic range mikes."

Among the artists who use Spot Productions are Cupid's Inspiration, Johnny Hallyday, Raymond Froggat (who did his first album there), Joe Brown, the Herd, Family Dogg, Barry Mason, World of Oz, Amory Kane, Blossom Toes, the Who, Mireille Mathieu, Vikki Carr, Big Joe Williams, Clement Freud, David Frost, Julie Felix—and they also recorded the Cream's first LP *Fresh Cream*.

And Robin Gibb, of the Bee Gees, was there recently to tackle a solo session. Hint of gossip!

"Leever-Rich are very good because they provide a 24-hour coverage and have engineers on stand-by, even in the middle of the night should anything crop up. We operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

Charges: for 8-track, £19 19s. per hour and the rest is correspondingly lower.

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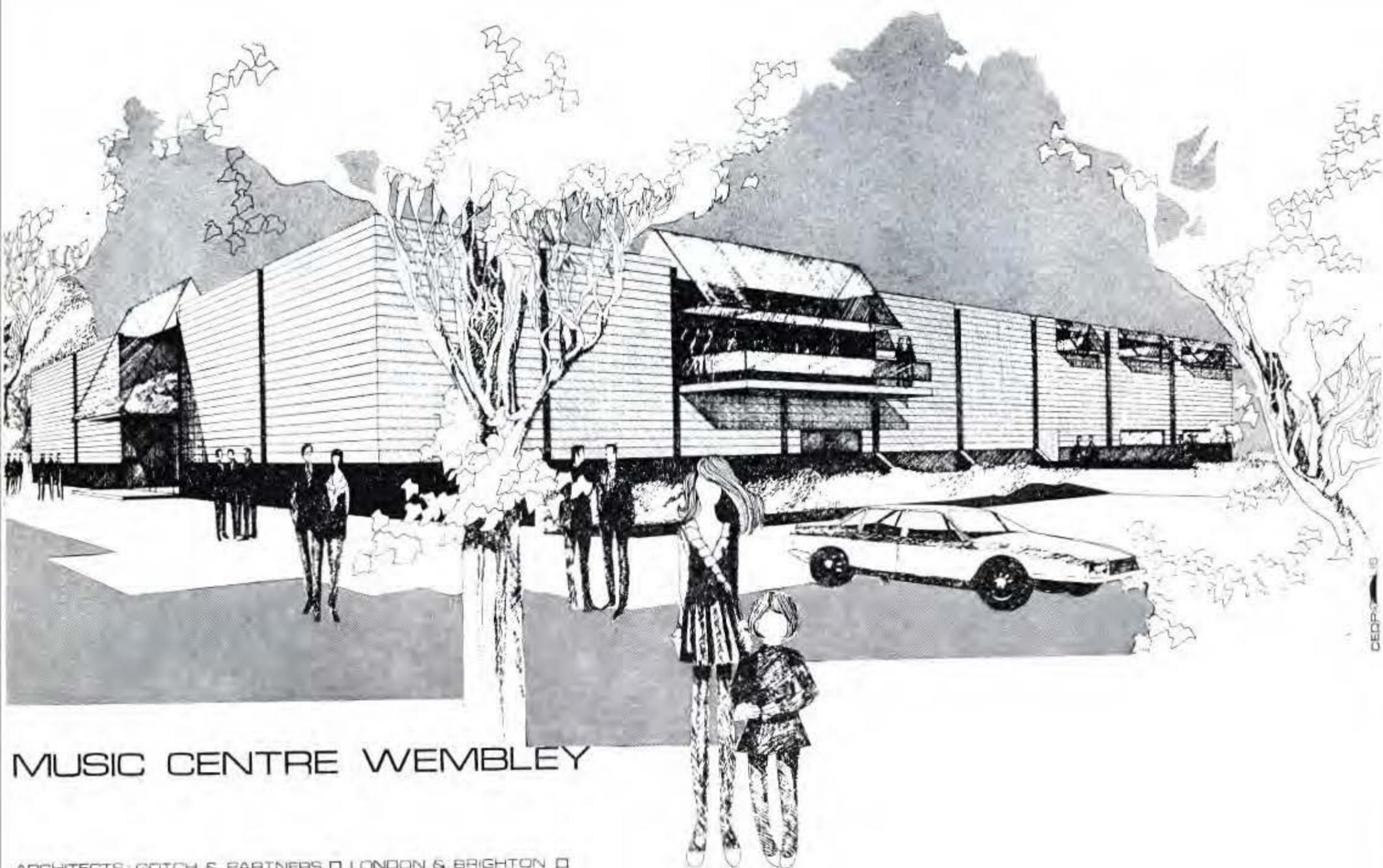
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Engineers—Barry Ainsworth, Martin Birch and Dave Siddle



Advision's control desk was custom-built, designed by Dag Fellner of Feldon Recording

It can take up to 30 musicians but that depends on the line-up, and they're open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

They use Scully equipment exclusively. The control desk was started in January, 1965, and became operational in September, 1967. It's an Advision custom-built, designed by Dag Fellner, who is a director of Feldon Recording Ltd. It is 24-channel, designed specially for 8-track and is extremely flexible. You can select any channel on to any track, or on to all tracks. It has full equalisation on all channels. And three individual echo systems for each channel.

book the studio for three hours but now they'll record for two days. They more or less live here."

They have a Scully 8-track model 284-8 which is completely remote controlled. And can be a one-man operation. Said Dag Fellner: "Unless techniques improve over the next two years, there is a theoretical limit to the number of tracks you can use. Nevertheless, you can't use 32-track because there is too much to contend with. But 16-track might happen."

Independent

Charges are £20 an hour for 8-track recording, mono or stereo £14 per hour. Artists who use it include Alan Price, Georgie Fame, Julie Driscoll, Manfred Mann, Arthur Brown, the Move, the Who, Grapefruit, etc. *Get Away* was made there, plus many of the Move biggies, *Wheels On Fire* and *Fire* for Arthur Brown. "There's a trend to record albums rather than singles," said Roger.

"At one time, people would

Tony Pike is the head of **Tepee Records** and is in the S.W.15 area of South London. We talked first about his record company. "We're the first independent record company to be distributed by Pye. And apart from our main-line catalogue, we have just started TePee Pioneer series, albums at 25s., which is essentially for neglected artists." Jim Lawless, the

Asked about current trends, Mr. Levy said: "The question of going back to the out-and-out pop type of music rather than the more way-out things. People are reverting to the more simple type of material like Peter Sarstedt and Noel Harrison."

The engineers at Spot Productions are Derek Mills, chief; and Tony O'Leary, who is assistant.

Advision is at 83 New Bond Street and has been going for 16 years, one of the oldest independents in London. Roger Cameron, who is a director, showed us round the studio, which is one of the only three in London which can offer music to film facilities. It is 40 ft. long, by 18 ft. wide, with a 12 ft. high ceiling.



Tony Pike's Tepee Records have just started a Tepee Pioneer album series



A session in progress in IBC's main studios at the Portland Place premises



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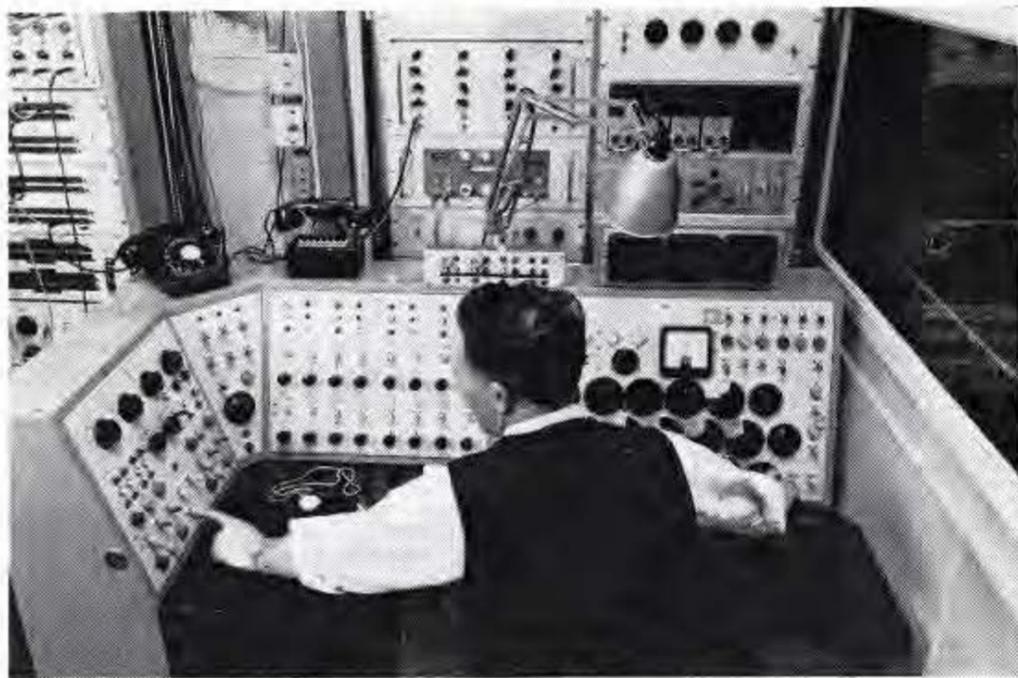
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Most of the Birmingham-based groups have used Hollick and Taylor's studios in Handsworth Wood, Birmingham

Country Line (who used to be the Kentucky Ramblers), Ian Bird-John Curtis Quintet. Although it is a budget line, standards have to be very high.

His studios are 30 ft. by 16 ft., with ceilings at two levels—15 ft. and 12 ft. And a vocal booth which is 8 ft. by 8 ft. It normally accommodates up to 15 musicians and they recently had the Johnny Howard band in, which is 17 strong. They use a Scully 4-track recorder and the desk is of their own design and 16-channel.

Reduction

Costs—12 guineas an hour for 3- and 4-track; eight for mono. Reduction for 4-track is eight guineas an hour. They normally start recording at nine in the morning and try and finish by 10.30 at night. Engineers are Tony Pike and Roger Harris. Although the studio is owned by the record company, the amount of outside bookings is fifty-fifty. One of the hits from the studio was *The Long Long Road* by Gilded Cage, which is doing very well in Germany.

On the recording side, they have signed folk singer Dave Travis for five years—"In the past he has only done one-record deals with other companies."

A particularly well-known studio is that of **IBC** in Portland Place a stone's throw from Broadcasting House. We talked to Angela Peberdy, who told us: "Our main studio is 60 ft. by 35 ft. by 18 ft. high, with a control room overlooking. The instruments permanently in the studio are a Hammond M-100 organ, two grand pianos, a jangle-box and a specially interesting item, a Melotron 300. This last was made by Mellotron Ltd., which is one

of our group of companies. They've even got one at Tamla Motown.

"The studio will take 46 musicians. In the control room there is a 20-channel mixer, designed by our own people, and 8-, 4-, 3- and 2-track recorders, together with mono—all Ampex." A second studio has also been opened and is used mainly for reduction but also for voice-over or instrument over.

And there is another room—a mono and stereo dubbing channel. There are two disc-cutting rooms, one for mono and one for stereo. They use Danish Ortofon disc-cutters. They also have their own technical department where their equipment is designed. Charges: for 8-track, £24 an hour; 4: £20; 3: £18; 2: £15; mono: £12. And they are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Many top names use, or have used, IBC. The Stones, The Beatles. Also a great deal of work for Polydor France. Recent big names: Barry Ryan, the Bee Gees, the Who (recording their new album *Tommy* when we called), Lainie Kazan, the Move, Cream, Lee Hazlewood, Amen Corner, Sacha Distel. From these studios: *Pin Ball Wizard*, *Good Times*, *Walls Fall Down*—the Marbles' biggie. *Eloise*, too.

"We've had records in the Top Ten in nearly every European country," said Miss Peberdy. "Our main engineers are Michael Claydon, who does most of the Polydor material, Damon Lyon Shaw, who does a lot of the track and orbit material, and John Pantry.

"We train our own engineers and over the years former employees have moved over to most of the major companies."

One of the oldest of the independents, this company has

been going since pre-war days when it was known as Radio Normandy. After the war it was re-formed, became a recording studios and has shown constant improvement ever since.

One of the successful provincial studios is that of **Hollick and Taylor**, in Handsworth Wood, Birmingham. John Taylor, a director, told us: "Most of the Birmingham-based groups have recorded here, including the Move and the Rockin' Berries. Our studio is 40 ft. by 18 ft. and the control room overlooks it."

Always available for use are a Lowery organ and a Chappell grand piano. In the studio are Console amps for direct injection—and they also do mike take-offs. In the control room is a stereo and mono tape machine, plus an Ampex 300 which at the moment is used only as 3-track but will possibly be used as 8-track later on. The desk is 16 channels with echo on each channel and there are three separate master systems and three display equalisers.

"In Birmingham, we don't get the same volume of professional work as a London studio might have, although we are kept pretty busy. We do a

lot of mobile work specially in stereo, and use a Studa 2-track tape machine with Sel-sync—used a lot for brass bands. In the main studio, we do a lot of film work, commentary to film, also many commercials. And we do demo work for most of the major recording companies."

In the evening

The charges: mono, nine guineas; stereo, 10 guineas; multi-track, 11 guineas. The studio is open normally from nine a.m. to five in the evening but can be booked by special arrangement in the evening. The engineers there are John Taylor himself, his wife Jean—plus others.

John and Malcolm Jackson are the sons of disc-jockey Jack Jackson and their highly ambitious recording organisation is in Rickmansworth, Herts. We talked to John. They have, for a start, their own record label, Ad-Rhythm, which is concerned with organ music—they were recording Harold Smart during our conversation. They have just produced a single for Denver records, written and performed by John McCauley, *Pretty Girl From Omagh* which

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Malcolm Jackson in his studio control room at Rickmansworth



Pye studios' stereo cutting machine in operation—a morning's session can be on disc by the afternoon

has already sold 15,000 copies. Shades of Bernadette.

The Jacksons were very successful at the Midem trade get-together and have signed distribution deals for Ad-Rhythm with six different countries. They make records and sell them to the major companies, too.

Their studio is 30 ft. by 20 ft. and ceiling goes from 12 ft. to 17 ft. The control room is on side. They use an Ampex 2- and 4-track recorder and

EMI mono. "We're getting a 16-channel desk to our own design and custom built. We have been going since 1957 in one form or another and up to 1964 the studio was used mainly for voice-over. Only in the last 18 months, we've really swung into the LP market. Our main business now is in LPs and it's the small studios who can offer a very good service."

Charges are 10 guineas for 4-track and seven for mono or ordinary stereo. They specialise

in creative sounds on records, with special effects, which go out on a tape. This side of the business is mainly for sales presentations, or educational purposes. And they have production tie-ups with Davjon Records and Bowler Hat Records.

Mr. Pat Godwin is the studio administrator at **Pye Studios**, in Great Cumberland Place, only a stone's throw from Marble Arch. He told of their

two studios—one which can take 50 musicians and the other which can take about 14, used mainly for groups. The bigger one is 40 ft. by 35 ft., ceiling 18 ft., and the other 20 ft. by 20 ft. and 18 ft. high.

There is an 8-track Scully in both and a 4-track mono and stereo Ampex in both. In the main studio they use a Neve console which has 24 channels. In the smaller control room, there is a Pye Recording Studio mixer which is hand-built. There



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are two reduction dubbing suites, one using a Neve reduction and the other an original Telefunken mixer.

Said Mr. Godwin: "We offer eight-to-eight track and four-to-four track copying. And we have two rooms where we can slow down or speed up tapes. This is a tricky thing, but important, where people want to change the pitch up or down—and we can also do phasing on it. And we offer a very fast cutting service—in fact, you can have a session in the morning and come back in the evening for the acetate.

"Although it is a record company, 60 per cent of the studio time is booked by outside clients. It's a 24-hour a day service. Another facility is the mobile recording unit—we have two, working in 4-track." Charges: 8-track in studio one, £27 inclusive . . . that is from 8-12, and 25 per cent extra after midnight. And extra on Saturdays or Sundays. Eight-track in studio two is £22 per hour. Four-track is £23 and £18 respectively; two-track, £16 and £12 respectively; mono, £14 and £11 respectively

Big names are regularly there . . . Sammy Davis, Nancy



A session in progress at Regent Sound Studios in Denmark Street—alias Tin Pan Alley. Regent deal mainly with demo disc work

Sinatra, Manfred Mann, Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd, Who, Troggs, Anita Harris. On the mobile, they did Paul McCartney with the Black Dyke Mills Band, also Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, Led Zeppelin—for the Super Show. The cream of the British artists have worked at Pye. And all the Pye hits were made there.

Next we called on Bill Farley, of **Regent Sound Studios**, which is slap bang in the middle of Tin Pan Alley, alias Denmark Street. They have a studio 30 ft. by 30 ft. and a 12 ft. ceiling. A piano is permanently there.

They can do either two-track stereo or mono, Ampex, and are going in for 4-track shortly. They use a Tiros desk, which has 10 channels. Said Bill: "Although we have recorded masters, our business now is mainly in the production of demo discs. In fact, we are known as the main demo studio in the London area and sometimes get four or five groups in one day.

"The hours are normally from 10 to six, with overtime after that. It could be any time, but people don't want to pay a fortune just for a demo disc. Charges are £6 per hour during the day and £8 in the evening until midnight. And there is a very cheap disc-cutting service, with £1 for a single and 30s. for a double."

Although they specialise in demos, they have recorded the Tremeloes, Don Partridge (on *Rosie* and *Blue Eyes*) and the early Rolling Stones' stuff was done there. And there was Twinkle's *Terry*. Over the years, just about everyone has been there.

Rhythm tracks

The studio is exceptionally good for rhythm tracks; in fact the rhythm tracks for *Don't Let Maggie Go* were recorded there. The Greenaway-Cook team, Mitch Murray, Tony Macaulay—all use the place for demo discs.

"What we aim for, and get, is a quick, good and cheap job," said Bill.

Studio Republic is in Pinner, Middlesex, and we talked to Mr. Bales, who is managing director. There they have two studios, one 30 ft. by 15 ft., 12 ft. high, and the other 15 ft. by 12 ft. and again 12 ft. high. They have a 4- and a 2-track Ampex tape machine and a 12-channel desk, with full equalisation and echo in each channel. The desk is their own design.

The small studio is used in conjunction with the bigger one, if necessary. At the time we spoke, George Blackmore was recording an organ album, on Hammond. And they also recorded the launching of Merry Maker Records—and do a great deal of agency work, which they are particularly interested in.

It is possible to have a demo disc made there but the main service is for masters. Four-track costs £12 10s. an hour, and two-track stereo and mono, £7 10s. They also allow a 10 per cent discount for cash payment at the end of the session. In the near future, they will have a four-track mobile recording unit available for hire. That will cost £25 a day, or £15 for a three-hour session.

The mobile unit has long leads for connection with customers' mixers. They also record on location themselves and they worked at Exeter Cathedral for Pilgrim Records.

And there are more plans for further development.

Go-ahead

On Willesden High Road, North West London, is a lively go-ahead outfit . . . **Morgan Studios**. Morgan have only been in existence eight months but amongst their regular customers are Paul McCartney, Mary Hopkin, George Harrison, Donovan, the Stones, Jethro Tull, Spooky Tooth and the now defunct Traffic. So it's fair to describe Morgan Studios as a successful concern!

Monty Babson, one of the four directors, told us "We've got as far in eight months as I hoped we'd get in two years. We have a really young team all round—our oldest engineer is 22—and a really keen bunch of guys when we started off, including Terry Brown who's now in Canada. The word must have got around and that sparked something off which has become quite a flame."

The studio is housed in an old warehouse that the firm has converted. Said Monty "We took the shell and put it together, designing everything ourselves right the way through." And the process of conversion isn't finished yet, for a new 1,000 square feet of studio space will be opened up in the autumn.

At present there is a 500 square foot studio which can take up to about 20 musicians on a session and has a Hammond C3 complete with speakers available for hire. In the control room there are Scully 8-track, Ampex 4-track and stereo and

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mono machines, and a 20-channel Cadac desk which gives a whole range of effects. "You name it, we've got it," said Monty.

The new studio, which is directly above the one already in operation, will give Morgan 16-track facilities (convertible to eight) on 3M equipment. There will be a 24-channel Cadac desk which is a newer version of their present desk with a few more features. It has been quite a major job fitting up the new studio, because literally everything from the floor upwards has had to be built from scratch.

Steinway grand

The new studio will have an organ, a seven-foot Steinway grand and possibly a harpsichord as well, and will be big enough to record a 35-piece orchestra. At present most of

get your master cut, play that back and you find you've lost some of the excitement. We find that the sound on record is as it sounds in the control room, which gives you a very true sound."

Morgan Studios is run by four directors; Monty Babson is one, the others being Barry Morgan, drummer with Johnny Pearson's Top of the Pops Orchestra, trumpeter Leon Calvert—no relation of Eddie—and Gerry Allen. There are another seven engineers and tape jockeys working there as well.

The charges run down from £22 an hour for 8-track recording but when the new studio opens a new flat-rate will come into operation, which will give a group use of full facilities using whatever they want for £20 for 8-track. There will be a similar flat-rate for 16-track work. Morgan's will undertake any kind of work. "We welcome it all," said Monty Babson.



The control room at Morgan Studios who are opening another studio in the autumn

the work is group recording. Monty Babson again: "It's really a group's haven here. As I said, we're a young team, we record right round the clock, we've got excellent parking facilities and we're only 10 minutes from central London. And we'll soon be opening a canteen big enough for 30 or 40 people."

Morgan Studios believe they have an excellent sound, that the studio sound comes out faithfully on wax. "So often it happens that you reduce your recorded work, play it back in the control room and it sounds tremendous," said Monty. "You

593 High Road, Leyton, E.10. This is the home of **Progressive Sound** studios, a new organisation on the recording scene. The man who runs it all is Bob Bloomfield. The studio itself is not a big one—dimensions being about 15 ft. x 15 ft.—and it is a rebuild of what was originally a much larger room. Says Bob: "People who come in seem to like the small, intimate atmosphere. The decor is designed to produce a restful setting conducive to an artist giving of his best. You can't do that in an impersonal studio unless you're a real professional. The environ-



Bob Bloomfield's Progressive Sound studio in Leyton has an intimate atmosphere

ment should help."

Even though the studio isn't big, "it's fine for the vast majority. You can do all you want to if you're not the London Philharmonic," says Bob. In fact the majority of Progressive customers are groups who want good results without paying the earth for them. Demo discs are the main source of business.

The control room is set up with four machines, all Bang & Ollufson. Two are mono, two are stereo, and before long it is hoped to add an Ampex 4-track machine. The main amplifier is "like a rejigged Quad", and mixing facilities are available for up to 10 channels. Loop echo and normal spring echo equipment is incorporated, giving possible echo on every channel.

Progressive have a particularly good stock of microphones. These are mostly AKG, with some Shure models. Effects other than echo that you can have are wah-wah, "telephone voice", tremolo and others. Standard instruments available in the studio for no extra charge include a piano, two guitars, and tambourines and maraccas. Hire of other instruments can be arranged by the studio, and they will also find musicians if you

want them. Mobile recordings can also be carried out by Progressive.

Studio charges are very reasonable. Basic rate is £5 an hour for recording, £2 an hour for editing, and tape charges work out at about £2 a reel. And the studio has one big advantage in that Bob Bloomfield is genuinely interested in the music he records. As he says, "I don't think that the equipment is the most important factor. After all, it doesn't do anything at all unless there's someone who knows what he can do with it. I think that a good sympathetic atmosphere is far more important for making good recordings, and that's what we try to provide."

Medium-sized

Twenty-five miles out of London, just off the A1, is **Studio Sound**, Hitchin. We spoke to Mike Swain, who shares engineering duties with Bunting and Chris Brown. The studio is medium-sized, being able to accommodate 14 or 15 musicians, and occupies one floor. Mike told us that they have three tape machines—one Ampex 4-track, two Wright and

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Weir, one mono and one stereo. The studio can take 13 channels, and is equipped with AKG microphones throughout. It offers all normal production effects, being equipped with equalisers, limiters, compressors, reverb and so on.

One unique feature of Studio Sound is that, due to their association with a local music shop, they can provide any instrument required on the spot. The same goes for amplifiers. Inside the studio itself is a piano and a Lowrey organ. No charge is made for the use of these instruments. A further point in the studio's favour is that they operate on a 24-hour basis, and they can offer the services of an experienced producer — Eric Massey, who has worked for EMI—for anyone who needs guidance on what to record.

Most of the studio's output is demos—"we like to give people really personal service when they make a demo here. Being a medium-sized studio, we are able to work with a more individual approach to suit our customers." However, Studio Sound are now making masters for their own company, Advance Records. The two first releases are due in late May and early June, albums by the Alabama Hayriders and the Icon.

Costs at Studio Sound are competitive. The minimum charge is £12 for a two-hour session, after which it'll cost you £5 an hour. Editing and reduction sessions are £4 an hour, while tapes and acetates are sold at normal retail prices.

Our next call was on Lansdowne Studios situated in a Victorian house at Holland Park in West London. They have been at their Lansdowne Road premises since the firm started up in 1959 and they have been expanding their basement studio facilities as business has mounted up.

At present they are well-equipped with Scully 8-track and Ampex 4-track, Ampex and Telefunken stereo machines and an Ampex mono machine. Mikes are AKG and Neumann and they use Atec-Lancing monitor speakers.

Lansdowne's control desk was designed, developed and built by the firm itself which gives them the advantage of having a custom-built unit. This is a 20-channel set up with eight group output with equalisation on all channels, and all standard effects are available. Lansdowne have found themselves outgrowing existing space as they have become more and more busy and they will have a new



Above: Lansdowne Studios: control room

Below: Icon recording at Studio Sound, Hitchin



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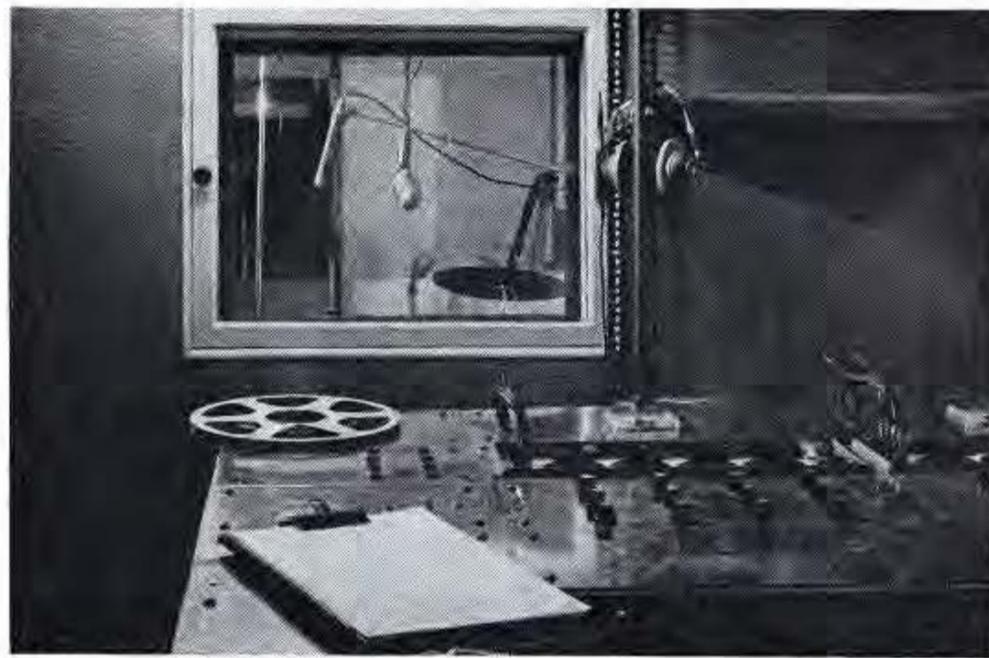
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spacious, air-conditioned control room ready for use by the end of the year. Not only will it give Lansdowne a really large and comfortable control room, it will also make 16-track recording facilities available, with a 28-channel desk with 16 group output having proviso for 24 group output.

As well as their main studio, which is a roomy 40 ft. long by 25 ft. wide, Lansdowne have a smaller dubbing suite and two separation rooms that can be used for small string or woodwind sections or solo vocals etc.

Adrian Kerridge, manager of Lansdowne, told us of one interesting feature: "We are the only studio in the country producing true compatible stereo. While the possibility of a compatible stereo disc is doubtful, we have compatible tape. Technically, this means we can record something in stereo and play the tape back on a mono machine whereby the perspective and level remain the same and there is virtually no phase change. This simplifies getting records cut because you can use the same tape for mono and stereo."

Lansdowne record many top groups including Jon Hiseman's Colosseum, Dave Dee and co,



Independent Recording Studio serves the area East of London

Peter Sarstedt, Dave Clark and Cupid's Inspiration, as well as doing a lot of television and orchestral work. Their charges per hour: £24 for 8-track recording; £20 for 4-track; £15 for stereo; £12 for mono. Eight-track reduction costs £18 an hour and 4-track reduction £12 an hour.

On the other side of London is **Independent Recording Studio** at Gravesend in Kent. We spoke to John Oram, their technical director, who pointed out that they are the only studio covering the outer London area in the

East. Independent Recording Studio was designed and constructed for this area and deals basically with producing demonstration records, although they have just finished making an LP with the Sacred Heart Choir at Southend which will be released through Philips.

The studio comfortably accommodates 12 musicians, and Jennings J40 very low noise, full range amplifiers are being installed for guitarists to eliminate difficulties in recording noisy amplification. "This is a really big problem," said John Oram,

"but these amps are suitable for bass or lead work and will speed up sessions."

In the control room, the custom-built control desk can shape, bend, compress, limit and equalise any signal of any channel, and other normal technical facilities are available. The studio features two specially adapted Revox twin track tape transporters that have excellent speed stability and frequency response. Rates of hire range from five guineas an hour and session musicians are available for all types of music, while the studio has several MDs who can be hired for quite moderate rates.

John Oram is always to hand to give advice and help from either the technical or musical side, for as well as being a designer and engineer, he is a jazz drummer. He is also available to design special effects equipment to suit the individual producer or group to get the exact sound required. The studio has been open now for some 14 months but Independent are looking for larger premises already. John Oram told us, "We aren't interested in just churning out run of the mill stuff. We try and make things recorded here have character and I think that is important."

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ON THE MOVE AGAIN



GLANCING through the press cuttings books of the Move, one appreciates right away that this is no run-of-the-mill outfit, either musically or in terms of controversy. I mean, there was the writ issued on behalf of the Prime Minister, to mention but one incident which pulled in a few miles of screaming headlines.

But it is true that this year nearly saw the end of the Move. There were all sorts of things involved. There was living down the adverse publicity—the whole thing got out of hand and there were high-ups at the BBC who genuinely believed that the Move comprised a band of homicidal maniacs. There was the flop of *Wild Tiger Woman*, which naturally had the cynics writing off the group once and for all.

There was the emergence of the underground scene. Now it was thought that the Move fitted neatly into that scene but they begged to differ. Their view was that they had come rather too early in the business to get acceptance in that line. And there was the desperation at having certain promoters believe they needn't pay the Move because there was bound to be some awful damage to the hall which would later be discovered.

The image, the boys now admit, had got out of hand. What was initially a booster for their career, by getting them

talked about, had reverberated round the industry and made them feared rather than respected. However, things are now changing.

What enabled them to go for a fresh start was the success of *Blackberry Way*, which Carl Wayne regards as being easily the most commercial record they had made. There will be more, he says, on the same lines.

What also helped, in a way, though it originally looked like disaster, was the departure of Trevor Burton. A fine musician, he nevertheless was very much on a blues kick, enjoying himself most on 15-minute spectacular build-ups which really appealed to a minority instinct at that time. When Trevor left, there was the remarkable story that they approached Hank B. Marvin, then splitting the Shadows, to lend an aura of new respectability to the team.

Elder statesman

This would obviously have come off but the elder statesman of the group business rather predictably decided to resist the offer. A management change helped get across the idea that the Move were changing direction, though, and the amiable and "lovable" Rick Price joined in place of Trevor.

Says Rick: "I didn't have any sort of image to live down. I could just come

in and be . . . well, myself. I'd been with Sight and Sound and earned pretty well, gigging just about every night, but the change has been remarkable. Like lashing out a couple of hundred quid on clothes suddenly, and working only more select dates."

Rick, in terms of the group's future development, could be useful as a songwriter, too. But he feels that is well handled by Roy Wood . . . "a surprisingly quiet person, who doesn't push himself, but writes amazingly consistent stuff."

This basic quietness is, of course, a mind-boggling matter for those who know the Move only by reputation. They *are* a quiet lot, yet somehow able to switch on shattering extrovert scenes on stage.

Chance coming

Had the Move really made it in the States, perhaps there would have been none of this year's doubts about the future. Their chance looks like coming, though—at present planned is a 100,000-dollar tour of America later this summer. Surprisingly this is their first visit there. Several major tours were worked out in the past, but cancelled because of illness, or permit difficulties or the old question of their reputation preceding them. It's still there, in fact . . . they are still written about as the villains of pop and obviously they will have to include a reasonable percentage of the old violence, come what may.

They have already made their cabaret debut in this country, and that went well enough to suggest that the old reputation is being slowly forgotten. There is also talk of them working together with the Midland Light Orchestra, which should finally convince the doubters of their genuine change of approach. Carl will sing ballady songs, Roy and Rick will handle arrangements and Bev will be added to the orchestra's percussion department.

Carl says: "We've always been a very proud group—proud of what we are trying to do and, in some ways, what we have achieved. I tended to get very short-tempered when people deliberately tried to put us down. There were all sorts of threats in the earlier days. But it was hard when the plugs stopped on BBC, and some of the disc-jockeys had a go at us, and when theatre companies like Top Rank and ABC were against us. Then Ace Kefford had to go . . . it was like a nightmare, really. We simply had to go out and try to get our own individual things going for a while—we simply didn't think we'd be together for much longer."

They have had five records in the Top Three, however. The odd failure would normally have gone unnoticed, but be-

cause it was the Villainous Move involved . . . well, it was important to some of the knockers to ensure that the public believed the skids were under the boys. For many months before *Blackberry Way*, more or less written to orders by Roy, they had to find their own money, finance their own sessions—and do most of the production work as well, though with a lot of help from the indefatigable Jimmy Miller.

Roy Wood says: "It's obviously true that we're in it for the money. When Trevor left, it seemed odd to me. He had fallen out with the music we were doing, but it still baffled me that he should go off entirely on his own. After all, we'd started out in this business to make money and if people are honest about it that is the motive of most everybody."

Incredible though it sounds, the Move really have gone out for a family-type audience. One hesitates to use the term "all-round entertainment", even at this stage, but they have widened their scope to include folk material from such as the Byrds and Tom Paxton. There is a limit, of course, and the fierce-looking Roy Wood has made no concessions in terms of his appearance. The hair and the "tache" are intact.

Sometimes, though, Carl and Roy admit that they are still disappointed



Carl Wayne—a thoughtful character

when people will not accept them for what they *are*, as opposed to what people believe them to be. Carl, a well-educated and thoughtful character, studies the business carefully, manages the group's affairs with flair—and is prepared to pester any lackadaisical agent until he gets exactly what he wants. Roy, in terms of imagination, is way up there among the top British writers. Yet there are many who will not

take them seriously . . . or at least seriously enough.

One day Carl will surely go into films as an actor. As a boy he dabbled in school Shakespearian productions but he feels he might end up in more comedy-type and modern work. At one time he was very keen on getting into record production but there were business splits and he is no longer sure he wants to make a profession out of production.

Really the Move remain the great enigma of the British pop scene. People who know them realise how sincere they are in their determination to go ahead now and break fresh ground. But there is still this aura of menace about them. One can perhaps understand managements still feeling apprehensive about a return to the old days when whole stages disappeared in clouds of smoke and violence. But the Move also find that the local toughies, who love to have a go at groups (presumably because of the effect on local chicks), tend to play it safe when the Move depart from a venue. There's little cat-calling, little offerings of a sharp punch-up.

But let's own up. If *Blackberry Way* had flopped; if the Move had gone their own separate ways . . . pop music would have been much the poorer for it.

P.G.



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Another addition to the Telecaster family is manufactured from a complete solid block of rosewood — neck and fingerboard included. This instrument is fitted with a new type of super light gauge rock 'n' roll strings, not yet available separately. The first model was flown in recently at the request of George Harrison.



COUNTRY MUSIC: DILLARDS HAVE BEEN AT IT FOR YEARS!

Country music is on the up-and-up, what with Dylan, the Byrds and other names all going rustic. But, surprisingly, the original music is still out of favour in general, often rather unjustly. The Dillards are a country group who really know what it's about. They've been at it for years, recording for Capitol and now Elektra, and

their sound should open the eyes of those who think country music is a load of whining cowboys drowning in sentimentality on the lonesome prairie. The group's present record — "The Wheatstraw Suite" — is a beauty. Give it a listen and you'll see why the heroes turned on to country in the first place.

COLOSSEUM FOR MONTREUX— AGAIN!

Jon Hiseman's Colosseum are due to appear at the Montreux Jazz Festival on the 22nd of this month. They were offered a whole afternoon at the jazz festival following their performance at the Montreux television festival, and they also have the chance of touring Holland in the autumn.

A contract has been negotiated with Dunhill to release Colosseum recordings in the United States and a six-figure launching campaign is reported. Meanwhile in Britain, Colosseum's first single was released last month — "Walking In The Park" and "Those About To Die", both tracks from the Colosseum album.

Vox warning



Vox have issued a warning to the music trade against imitations of Vox equipment following a High Court case in April when Vox obtained an injunction against two firms who had been selling amplifiers resembling Vox equipment. Vox warn that legal proceedings will be taken against anyone selling imitations and they advise dealers to return any such equipment to the suppliers. The pictures above show how imitation amps (top) can be distinguished from the Vox (bottom).



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STEPPEWOLF IN BRITAIN

American group Steppenwolf arrived in Britain on May 13th. In addition to live and TV appearances in this country, they were also playing dates in Germany, Scandinavia and Holland. Steppenwolf have a large following amongst the younger element in the States, and have had several hit records. In this country, their latest releases are a single—*Born To Be Wild* and an album—*At Your Birthday Party*, both on the Stateside / Dunhill label.

Members of Steppenwolf are: John Kay, guitarist and group leader; Goldie McJohn, piano and organ; Jerry Edmington, drums; Mike Monarch, lead guitar; and Nick St. Nicholas, bass.



Rush Release for Proud Mary

Following their recent announcement of the acquisition of release rights in the U.K. to Fantasy Records of America — Liberty UA rush released the first sample from the new label on May 9th by Creedence Clearwater Revival, called *Proud Mary*. The song tells the story of a Mississippi riverboat, and has a tremendously commercial "sound" — recently reaching the top of the American charts. Old favourite *I Put A Spell On You* is the B-side.

Splinter Plays

Getting a fair number of radio plays is "Walk On Gilded Splinters" by Hair star Marsha Hunt on Track Records. Before she landed her part in Hair she had been singing with Alexis Korner, Long John Baldry and more recently Ferris Wheel.

Uncle Frank & Uncle Meat

Coinciding with their British tour from May 30 to June 6, the Mothers of Invention have a new double LP released by Transatlantic which another British company refused to put out, reportedly on grounds of "obscenity". Entitled *Uncle Meat*, Frank Zappa intended it as the sound track of a film which remains unfinished. part of the album was recorded live at the Albert Hall on the Mothers' visit of two years ago and side four contains variations on King Kong, including one called *King Kong (as played live on a flattened diesel at a pop festival in Miami, Florida)*.

POP PROM

A whole week of pop at the Albert Hall—that's what's taking place between June 29 and July 5. Artists booked to appear during the week include Chuck Berry, The Who, Led Zeppelin, Fleetwood Mac, Blodwyn Pig, Liverpool Scene, Incredible String Band and Chicken Shack.

Stones for Memphis?

Champion Jack Dupree has been invited to appear along with the Rolling Stones, Blind Faith (Clapton / Winwood / Baker) and The Beatles at the Memphis Country Blues Festival which is to be held in Memphis, Tennessee, on June 6th, 7th and 8th. All the proceeds from the concerts will go to The William Christopher Memorial Foundation and Memphis Country Blues Society.

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Fret repair

I have a Fender precision bass and I would be grateful if you could advise me on the following. Is it okay to replace the first consecutive seven frets without having to do the complete neck and do I have to remove the neck to do this?

Ron Smith,
Bootle.

● It is all right to replace the first seven frets of your bass guitar if these appear to be the only ones which are worn down. We assume that you are capable of undertaking such a repair. Forgive us for saying this, but it is really a job for an expert guitar repairer but if you have had some experience then you should have no trouble. It is not usually necessary to remove the neck in order to renew the frets.

Working out chords

I have been playing lead guitar for about five years now and although I want to keep on improving, one thing holds me back. When I was in a group we got used to buying the sheet music and record for each number we wanted to learn. Therefore, working out the chords was no problem as we just copied the sheet music.

Since the group broke up I have realised that I am limited to playing on sheet music all the time and perhaps it

would be better for me to work out the chords myself. This brings me to my point of concern. If I work out the chords of a number using just the record and I think they are all right, there is a good chance that I've missed some out or got the wrong inversions of some chords. Can you help me solve this problem?

A. L. Halsall,
Warley, Worcs.

● Most groups today use sheet music to work out their numbers but usually find that the pitch at which the song is set to is either too high or low, so they find themselves having to work out new chords by transposition. Then having done this in a key suitable for their voice range or that of their singer if it is a group with a solo singer, the more keen groups around will usually try to impose some of their characteristic style into the tune and this will probably mean fitting in new chords here and there.

In the end product, maybe the basic chord set up will be the same but the whole arrangement will have been worked out to suit their own style. So you shouldn't worry too much about getting the chord arrangements exactly as the record; providing of course that you have achieved the basic structure of chords the rest depends on you.

This applies to inversions of the chord shapes as well. Very often a particular chord shape is employed instead of another because it is easier to follow the

one that went before in that position, than say an inversion maybe four or five frets lower.

Organ conversion

A short while ago a friend of mine with a Vox Continental two-manual organ told me that he had percussion added to the top manual about 18 months ago. I have since tried this organ and the transformation is really fantastic.

Could you please tell me if there is someone who could still do this conversion because I would like to buy this type of organ myself.

B. Wells,
Fulham.

● The conversion you require is now no longer necessary for the two-manual Continental organ, as the latest model, which was released at the Frankfurt Fair in February, features percussion. It has four push button controls giving a very wide range of percussive effects just in the right way for today's blues music. Reg Clark, the company's sales manager, assures us that this organ was one of the best selling lines on the Vox stand at the fair because percussion has been the one thing most requested for that organ over the years. Full details can be obtained from Vox at Erith, Kent, or from their main London agents: Musical Exchange, Charing Cross Road, London WC2.



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SONG- WRITER'S COLUMN

ACKLES & COHEN: LYRIC WRITING AT ITS BEST

The *Beat* poll a few months ago threw up a surprisingly large number of votes for American singer/songwriter David Ackles. Had he been English he'd have rated a high placing in the songwriter section. So too would Leonard Cohen.

The following for both artists, though excellent performers, seems to hang on their writing talent, and they are both symptomatic of the rise of the poet in pop, though it's doubtful whether Ackles would appreciate the highbrow overtones of such a label.

In their minds

But neither artist writes songs you could file in any neat category. The fact is that both Ackles and Cohen are simply concerned with saying what they have in their minds as effectively as possible. It happens to enhance their words to set them to music, so with uncanny accuracy they write melodies to set off the lyrics.

Many of the so-called progressive groups are trying to tell it like it is, etc., in their songs. They want songs to be important. But very often, though no doubt they are totally sincere, they use pretty, significant words to mask a commonplace thought which would have been better stated more directly or forgotten.

The beauty of Ackles and Cohen is that they are writers who know their trade. No spare words, no loose ends, no "poetic" waffle. It's all crisp, neat and to the point, even if it sometimes takes time to appreciate the full meaning. Like Dylan and The Beatles, there is no bluff. This is pop lyric writing at its best. This is what people mean when they talk of pop as art.

THE A & R MEN

RON RICHARDS

"LOOKING ahead in the record industry, it's impossible to see exactly what musical changes there will be. But it's dead certain that we'll follow the Americans yet again in that singles will be important only as trailers for album sales. Nobody will care how many copies a single sells just so long as it makes the charts—and triggers off a reaction for the accompanying album".

The speaker: Ron Richards. Part of the AIR (London) set-up. Producer of the whole run of Hollies' so-consistent hits and albums. Specially pleased with the new *Hollies Sing Dylan* LP. Bespectacled and cheery. And knowledgeable.

Ron was born in Kensington, studied piano, saxophone, string bass at school—and was early on a Stan Kenton, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker be-bop kick. On his 16th birthday got a foot in the music business by joining Campbell Connelly in the trade department. He later went into the Royal Air Force, joining the Central Band, playing sax and bass. He signed on for five years. On demob, he joined Chappells as a plugger, then went to Boosey and Hawkes for three years.

Comedy records

Then he joined EMI, first as plugger, then as production assistant to George Martin. They did a lot of comedy records, by Spike Milligan and Charlie Drake. And Peter Sellers, including *Goodness Gracious Me*, featuring Sophia Loren. "Working with her in the studio was no hardship at all," explained Ron.

Then he did his own production work with artists like Jerry Lordan, who had a hit with *Who Could Be Bluer* and with such as Shane Fenton and the Fentones. This was immediately prior to The Beatles, unearthed for records by George Martin. Note for enquirers after the career of hit-making Shane: he's doing well on the Continent in a cabaret act with his wife. Ron next found the Hollies.

"First time I saw them was in the Cavern. They knocked me out. But I was standing very close to them and they were making a terrific noise—very loud indeed. Then, afterwards, I was talking to them and noticed that Graham Nash was playing acoustic guitar—but it had no strings!"

The AIR (London) set-up came in 1965. Now Ron looks for hit stardom for his discovery John Burness, who had a record out a few months back . . . *Teresa*, a sizeable seller on the Continent. Says Ron: "I used to miss playing—I'd like to go into the jazz clubs and have a blow. Now I find I get all the necessary kicks and frustrations from production work.



In the studio, obviously, I don't give the impression of being the sort of person I think I am. Artists tell me how cool and detached I appear to be. In fact, I'm a bundle of bloody nerves.

"My own favourite productions? Well, I've got a cabinet full of great records that never made it. I was specially keen on Duffy Power's *Ain't Necessarily So*, which didn't really sell. And I did a lot of stuff with Graham Bond, Ginger Baker and Jack Bruce. I loved the work they did together on sessions, but the records were never released. Of the more successful records, I like *Bus Stop* and *Look Through Any Window* by the Hollies . . . and *Just One Look*.

"When I get home and just sit down and listen to other people's records, I like the Association and the Fifth Dimension. Not the Cream so much, nowadays.

"Getting back to the album *Hollies Sing Dylan*—I can predict that the Dylan purists will be a bit upset by it. But you can't argue about this business of interpretation, not when a really fine writer is involved.

"I mean, if you start arguing then you must go right the way back. Was a Toscanini Beethoven performance better than—well, an original. The purists speak up, but what does the writer himself feel? As far as I know, Dylan himself liked the Manfred Mann *Mighty Quinn*.

Things do change

"I simply can't look ahead on the purely musical side of things, but I must repeat that theory about singles being important only in previewing albums. Things do change in this business. When I was with a publisher, for instance, everything was based on sheet music sales, the original Top Twenty, and the record charts were only just on the way. I remember Teddy Holmes saying: 'That song's in the record charts, but not the sheet music twenty—what's the use of that!' It all changed. And it'll change again so that the album chart is the most important of all.

"But on the actual musical content, I haven't a clue. I'll just have to go along and see what is developing."

P.G.

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THERE'S an enigma surrounding Tony McPhee, more perhaps than any other name guitarist in this country. Conversations referring to him go something like: "Have you heard that Tony McPhee's forming a new band?" "Yes. I think I've seen him a couple of times on stage, but he doesn't make records, does he."

He's a fairly anonymous figure, who is, at last, breaking through the invisible barrier, and becoming a personality, rather than the man behind a sound, or a technique. But he does owe this new stature to a movement, which he personally has been involved in for some years. Blues music discovered McPhee these last few months, although it was in the early sixties when he first became involved with blues. "I started playing after being influenced by people like Chuck Berry and Little Richard, although Cyril Davies was the man who put me into the blues as it is now."

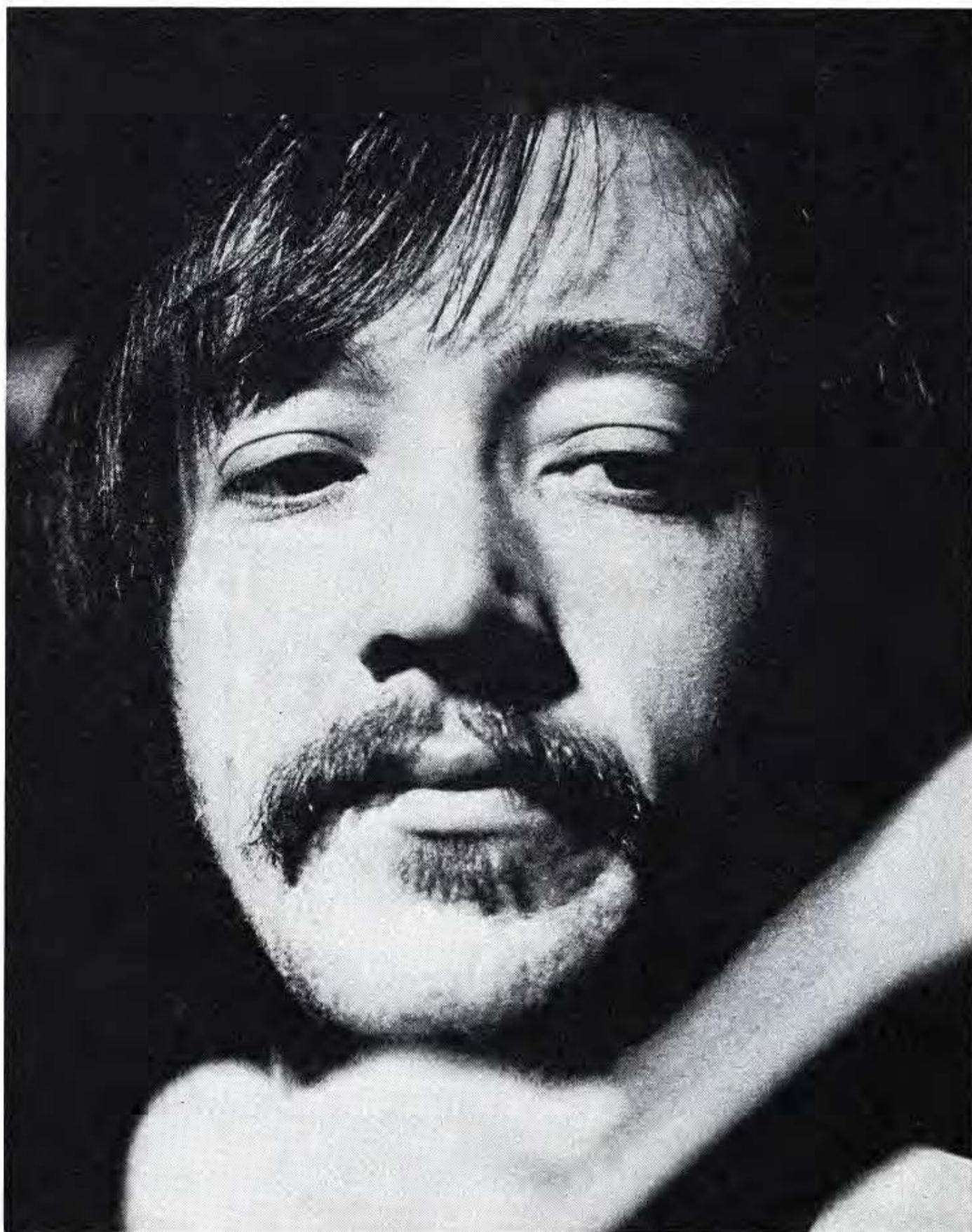
He started as an electric guitarist, but is now equally as well known as an acoustic player. He often separates from his band, the Groundhogs, to do solo work in the clubs, and was a great success at the two Blue Horizon/London Blues Society concerts.

Negro Music

By his own admission, he tries to get as close to the original negro music as possible and isn't embarrassed by the word "copy". "I am not particularly influenced by any one individual," he says, "but more by the feel and atmosphere. If you surround yourself in that, you must lean heavily towards the negro sound. It really is the same as the English musicians who play Indian music. They wouldn't attempt to make it anglicised."

There is a great market for this attitude, although it is heavily criticised in some quarters. He is the man behind Liberty's "Groundhog" record series, which is white English music making at as close as is possible to the original sound. The albums from this collection are selling very well, particularly Tony's own Groundhogs LP.

"There is a market, and we've exploited it. The important difference is we didn't look round to create the artists on these records. They were in this country, mostly unrecorded because the blues wasn't commercial at the



time and we simply did the necessary. The boom could have been a bad thing, but it did give very talented people a national outlet at last."

Groundhogs

Tony's first known group, the original Groundhogs, with John Lee, was highly praised by all visiting American bluesmen—with most of it directed at Tony, as a fine guitarist, and as a musician who could blend sympathetically behind the star, without losing his presence. John Lee Hooker, particularly, and in

fact whose name the group used, took tapes of the group to the States, where, unfortunately, they never saw the light of day, but the story got a lot of publicity and the name McPhee was remembered.

Rather dormant until now, unfortunately, but good things do emerge from trends. Tony McPhee is one, and all the projects in front of him, which should survive if the boom collapses, are another.

McPhee is here in the flesh now. Let's don't reduce him to just a name again.

M.C.

L.P. REVIEWS

STEAMHAMMER



STEAMHAMMER
CBS S 63611

This first album from Steamhammer, who are shortly off to tour the United States, is a goodun. It's unfair to call it a blues album, although there are some straight blues tracks on it, for there is a jazzy feel about this record. The group have developed the jazz side a lot more since this record was recorded back in December, but although it was made in wintertime it seems to be a lazing on the beach type of record—very relaxed, but moving along, nothing raucous. All but two of the tracks were composed by Steamhammer, who can be well pleased with their first album.

Side One: Water (Part One); Junior's Wailing; Lost You Too; She Is The Fire; You'll Never Know; Even The Clock.
Side Two: Down The Highway; On Your Road; 24 Hours; When All Your Friends Are Gone; Water (Part Two).

THE VOICE AND WRITING OF RAYMOND FROGGATT



RAYMOND FROGGATT
POLYDOR 583 044

Remember *Red Balloon* (Callow-la Vita) bashed out by Dave Clark and the Famous Five? Remember it was a tune you couldn't get out of your head in spite of your better self? Well, it was written by Raymond Froggatt who sings it on this album and it turns out to be a good song after all when given a folksy Froggatt treatment. And that's not the only good Froggatt song as you will find out when you hear this record, which is played by Raymond Froggatt (group), lead by R.F. (singer and composer).

Side One: Always Goodbye; Corrina Corrina; Red Balloon; Lonely Old World; ABC Goldfish; Sonnet by Hartley Cain.
Side Two: Something's Goin' On; The Old Accordion; Froggatt Went A Courtin'; Jeannie With The Light Brown Hair; We're All Going To The Seaside; Roly.

LIVE ADVENTURES



MIKE BLOOMFIELD AND AL KOOPER
CBS S66216

No one could deny that an Al Kooper—Mike Bloomfield double album selling for only 50 bob is good value, but the music doesn't really live up to the god-like reputation that has surrounded the musicians (for which they are not necessarily to blame). This live recording is a fine documentary record of the concert at the Fillmore last September, but Kooper and Bloomfield don't come near to touching Britain's best. One is tempted to ask what all the fuss is about. Now that K. and B. have kindly offered us their live adventures, which are mildly exciting, they have got it over with. Note: Nice to see *Sonny Boy Williamson* by Jack Bruce and Paul Jones has not been forgotten by the whole world.

First Record: Opening Speech; The 59th Bridge Street Song; I Wonder Who; Her Holy Modal Highness; The Weight; Mary Ann; Together 'Til The End Of Time; That's All Right; Green Onions.
Second Record: Opening Speech; Sonny Boy Williamson; No More Lonely Nights; Dear Mr. Fantasy; Don't Throw Your Love On Me So Strong; Finale.

RICHARD P. HAVENS, 1983



RICHIE HAVENS
VERVE FORECAST
SVLP 6014/5

There are two camps: those who go potty over Richie Havens and those who think he's OK. One thing you can't do is mistake his voice or the style he stamps on everything he touches. On this double album he does the Havens treatment on a number of Lennon-McCartney compositions, including *Strawberry Fields* and *A Little Help From My Friends*, which are pleasant enough, but aren't strong enough to stand in their own right in the way Joe Cocker's soul version of *Friends* does.

First Record: Stop Pulling And Pushing Me; For Haven's Sake; Strawberry Fields; What More Can I Say, John; I Pity The Poor Immigrant; Lady Madonna; Priests; Indian Rope Man; Cautiously.
Second Record: Just Above My Hobby Horse's Head; She's Leaving Home; Putting The Vibration And Hoping It Comes H The Parable of Ramon; A Little From My Friends; Wear Your Love Like Heaven; Run Shaker Life/Do You Feel Good?

LOVE IS



ERIC BURDON AND THE ANIMALS
MGM CS 8105

It's my life and I'll do what I want, so don't push me. So sang the Eric of old pre-Trans Love Airways days, and that seems to be the real Burdon in spite of the changes his head has gone through. He is happiest singing wild and free; he's best staying clear of self-conscious pretentiousness. On this album he lets himself go on *River Deep* and *Ring Of Fire* and *Coloured Rain*, and so comes up with his best LP in ages. True, Eric has made mistakes from being over-honest and over-earnest, but he seems to be back on form again.

Side One: River Deep. Mountain High; I'm An Animal; I'm Dying Or Am I?
Side Two: Ring Of Fire; Coloured Rain; To Love Somebody.

MOTHERMANIA



MOTHERS OF INVENTION
VERVE SVLP 9239

Subtitled the Best of the Mothers' this album includes highspot tracks from the Mothers' first two LPs mainly, and for those who haven't bought them this record is just what you need. The prospect of a Mothers' Best album was a bit worrying, but the tracks work out of the context of the original albums. A lot of people are getting on the freaky/social comment kick and most of them do it very badly or else act as a safety valve for society's frustrations in the manner of *Punch* or *Private Eye*. But Zappa is bitter as well as funny, and he means business. Yes, it is you he's talking about.

Side One: Brown Shoes Don't Make It; Mother People; Duke Of Prunes; Call Any Vegetable; The Idiot Bastard Son.
Side Two: It Can't Happen Here; You're Probably Wondering Why I'm Here; Who Are The Brain Police; Plastic People; Hungry Freaks, Daddy; America Drinks And Goes Home.

BY JOHN FORD

SWEET PAIN



SWEET PAIN
MERCURY 20146

Jam sessions are often a great stimulus for the players taking part, but the result's not too hot for anyone listening. This album is a jam in the sense that it is a group of established musicians getting together to make a record, but it avoids the jamming pitfalls since it was recorded in a studio with the object of making an album. The line-up: John O'Leary on harmonica; Keith Tilman on bass; sax by Dick Heckstall-Smith; piano and vocals from Sam Crozier; Annette Brox (Victor's wife) vocalising; and Junior Dunn playing drums. What they call thoroughbred blues, that's what it is.

Side One: The Steamer; Changin' Your Mind; Rubbin' and Scrapin'; Sick And Tired; The Rooster Crows At Midnight; Troubles Trouble.
Side Two: Don't Break Down; It's A Woman's Way; General Smit; Trouble In Mind; Song Of The Medusa.

THE EXCEPTIONAL EXCEPTION



THE EXCEPTION
PRESIDENT PTLs 1026

Once upon a time, people used to buy records that you could listen to and dance to as well. You can certainly dance to the Exception's album, which is quite a thing these days, but it is well worth sitting and listening to as well, for the tracks vary from rocky *Rock Bottom Cinder* to American-folky *Tailor Made Babe* with lots more in between.

Side One: Jack Rabbit; Hong Kong Blues; Rock Bottom Cinder; Woman Of The Green Lantern; Don't Torture Your Mind; Tailor Made Babe.
Side Two: Pendulum; Karen Train Blues; Too Much In Love With A Bad Thing; Mrs. Cocaine; Bum's Puzzle; Keep The Motor Running.

KICK OUT THE JAMS



MC5
ELEKTRA EKS 74042

During the Detroit riots last year MC5 kept playing while the looting and fighting raged all around. The violence of urban America is what this record is all about, and not just on the *Motor City Is Burning* track. "The MC5 is totally committed to the revolution", say the sleeve-notes written by a White Panther leader. MC5's revolution preaches no separation between people—"we have to get it together"—but theirs is no Donovan daisies and daffodils solution. It's violence, and their music is loud and violent, intended as a living example of wild, free Man doing his thing. Last word from the sleeve-notes: "MC5 are a working model of the new paleo-cybernetic culture in action." Er... well... yes.

Side One: Ramblin' Rose; Kick Out The Jams; Come Together; Rocket Reducer No. 62.
Side Two: Borderline; Motor City Is Burning; I Want You Right Now; Starship.

LETTERS

A hole in the Nice sound

Dear Sir,

In your March issue of *Beat* there was an article on the Nice. I was disappointed to read that the Nice don't plan to get another guitarist to replace Dave O'List, because I think they really could do with a guitar at the moment. Without one there seems to be a hole in their sound, compared to their old loud and full sound that they got on *Rondo* and *She Belongs To Me*.

They are still a great group, but I think they would be so much better with that one extra instrument. I think a group of four is the smallest number that Keith Emerson should work with, for a three-piece group is far too limiting for his great talent. Just think what he could have done with *Karelia* with a larger group—or even a full orchestra!

Bruce Windsor,
Shrewsbury.

Women? Not on your life

Dear Sir,

In your April issue, Nigel Lepage looked forward to hearing a really worthwhile

female vocal / instrumental group and wondered why there had never been one.

The answer is pretty simple. Have you ever heard a woman guitarist or drummer? Maybe you have. Have you ever heard a good woman guitarist or drummer? Not on your life.

Women seem to lack a basic sense of rhythm so that they just can't play decent beat music. Look at the disastrous She Trinity of some years ago. Also look at the great groups (ha ha) who have had female members: the Honeycombs and the Applejacks for instance.

Let's face it, there are certain things that men can do and women can't and playing blues or rock is one of them. The sight of a woman with a gleaming electric guitar awkwardly strapped to her body is enough to put anyone off for life.

True, there are notable exceptions to all this, such as Christine Perfect, but they are few and far between. And they will stay few and far between until the string quartet and the military two-step oust the blues.

Virginia Waters,
Camberley.

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PICKUPS AND CONTROLS





sang the song. In all, Kenny Young has had 18 American hits, including several with Ronnie Dove. *Boardwalk* remains his biggest, having scored 180,000 plays on U.S. radio stations from its many versions.

Last year, he wrote and produced *Captain Of Your Ship* for Reparata and the Delrons, and its popularity here no doubt turned his thoughts to England.

While he is here, Kenny Young is producing sessions for Clodagh Rodgers, Rolly Daniels, Pasha—a group named after his Afghan hound—and a name from the past, the Searchers. *Come Back and Shake Me* was made on eight tracks, five of which were vocal, but as the early product had Clodagh sounding rather like Reparata, Kenny decided to recut it.

How does Kenny like working in English studios? "It's fine, but it's very difficult to get the musicians to 'feel' the music," he said. "They can read OK, but they don't pick things up the way the American session men do. The brass sections are about the worst for this. I think it's the reason there are so few good R & B or Soul records to come out of

KENNY YOUNG

COME Back And Shake Me has proved very successful for Clodagh Rodgers. The song was arranged with a neat contrast in bongos and bass by Johnny Arthey. It was written by Kenny Young, who also produced the session.

Kenny Young is American and for the last six months or so has been living in London. "I came originally to try and get some work writing for films. I've written a few songs that have been used in films but never a complete score," Kenny told me. "But now the reason I'm here is that I like it."

Some years ago, he began as a singer-guitarist and started to write his own material. His early efforts to make it as a vocalist were thwarted and he turned to producing. "I was very lucky," he remembered. "My first session gave me a hit. This was with Charmettes. They were just three girls who worked in a local hospital. One could sing OK and the other two were supporting singers. I didn't know very much about producing then. I said to the piano-player to play like Phil Spector's piano-player, and that sort of thing."

With this record in the American charts, the chance came for Kenny to record the Drifters. His song *Under the Boardwalk* was cut and dried. He recalled that on the day of the session the lead singer of the group died and a new lead voice

England."

As a songwriter, he has now a grand total of 200 and averages about 25 new songs a year. He works with a guitar and does not usually bother to write a song down, preferring instead to make a demo. With an arrangement in his head, he aims to produce a demo that will not call for drastic changes for the resultant record. Kenny is also recording himself as a singer. Previously, he has made records under such pseudonyms as the San Francisco Earthquake, a West-Coast sounding group that might have existed. Now, under his own name, he has released one of his compositions called *Spider*.

In a scene that conjured up, for me, the same sort of images Stan Freberg's *Banana Boat Song* creates, I visited Wessex Studios to watch Kenny add the final touches to *Spider*. Not satisfied with his vocal on the first four lines of the song, he left the control room to sing it over. This completed, he decided the first line needed to be sung again for the sake of a flat note that had crept into the playback. Finally, Kenny dubbed on the first letter of the song—"A"—which needed strengthening. *Spider* was produced right to the last letter. C^o



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THERE was once a very well-respected band which apart from being a big attraction in its own right was also frequently given the job of backing visiting American rockers. Gene Vincent was one of them. The group was Philip Goodhand-Tait and the Stormsville Shakers.

Originally from Guildford, Surrey, the Shakers became known as a leading group without ever hitting the Big Time. Then, as the band progressed away from the simple, tough music of the early days, they changed the name to Circus, the personnel shifted, the old image of grease, leather and studs went. Goodhand-Tait had been building up other activities and six months ago he left the group to concentrate on writing. His songs are well-known *via* the Love Affair.

And so Circus are now a four-piece. Leader of the group is a veteran of the Shakers, Kirk Riddle, on bass. Ian Jelfs plays guitar and sings, Alan Bunn on drums, and Mel Collins plays flute and tenor sax with some vocals.

As you'd expect, the group's music has changed, too. Says Mel Collins: "We used to be nearer to a soul band than anything else when I joined three years ago. We would rather have people listen to us now. When we were with Philip, we had to play more or less set arrangements. Now we're more of an instrumental group—none of us really has the voice to become a flash lead singer — which means that we can improvise and experiment much more."

When Circus went out on its first gigs after the split, Mel was apprehensive that the audiences that used to know them wouldn't know what to make of their new stuff. "It takes them a while to warm up sometimes, but once the audiences get used to us they generally sit round the stage and just listen. We've not got the bird from anyone yet."

"We like to present as big a variety as possible in our act—different instrument combinations, different sounds—but still retain a group identity. Some of the songs we do are our own—not



CIRCUS

too many, since there are so many songs better than anything we could turn out." Circus' repertoire includes numbers by Tim Hardin, Jimmy Witherspoon, Charlie Mingus, the Mamas and the Papas and Jimmy Guiffre. "I suppose we're getting nearer to jazz all the time, though we do folky things, almost blues, pop and free form."

The group's jazz aspirations are shown by their dislike of too much volume. "We do play some heavier stuff, and some 12 bars, but these have to have a melody for us to like them. We're doing less and less of the loud stuff. Circus say no more robot music!"

When a group sacrifices the blanket of noise, it has to have a sound as near perfect as possible. There's nothing to hide behind. About his own playing, Collins says: "There are a lot of effective players in pop, but for me, a good musician is a man who's good at every facet of his music. You have to be good at reading, at technique, the lot."

"At one time I wanted to be a pop star. I think most of the group did,

but we've been through that stage. We've been a band long enough to get over all the trendy parties, all the frilly shirts on stage, all the girls. All I want now is to become a good musician. I'm very conscious of the gaps in my playing. I can't see myself ending up playing anything but jazz in the long run. It's the only thing that's wide enough. My father is at the top of his profession as a session man, and these people are the real players. Most of them do sessions because they have families to keep, but they're generally so much better than they're given credit for. People like Tubby Hayes you just can't fault."

Circus have a new record contract with Transatlantic. After a long time as second fiddles, they are getting better all the time. As audiences become more knowledgeable, so they demand a higher standard of music. Whether or not they get strings of number one chartbusters, a group as good as Circus can only profit by these higher standards. R.S.

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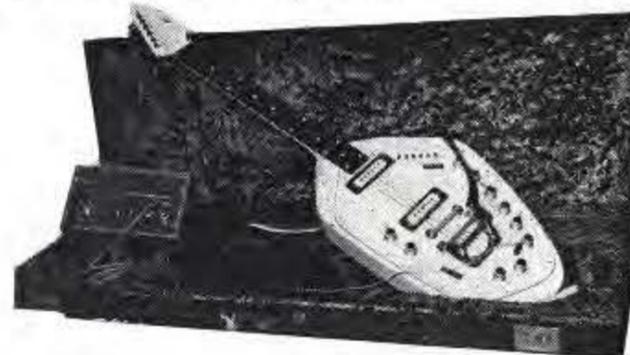
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