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BEAT INSTRUMENTAL AND INTERNATIONAL RECORDING STUDIO

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Editorial

EVERY big event always requires a lot of action behind the scenes before anything is ready to unveil to the public.

The 1970 British Song Contest is no exception. It is, of course, the first one of its kind and everything has had to be worked out from scratch. But, at last, we are nearing the end of the Contest. And the results of the hectic behind-the-scenes activity will soon be made public.

But when that moment finally comes, *Beat Instrumental* will have at least done something to further the cause that it has promoted for years—namely, to discover and help new talent to reap the rewards that it so richly deserves.

As a magazine, we have always said that this country is loaded with talent. What it lacks are enough executives and producers in important places who are willing to make the effort and give new talent a chance to show what it can do. There is always an element of risk in this, of course. If nothing emerges, then people can turn round and say that they wasted their time. Indeed, people may say this when we get to our Final.

But, personally, I don't think that this is going to happen because the standard of songs which were submitted was very high, so, unless British recording managers suddenly have an overnight loss of creative ability—something which I am quite certain is not going to happen—they must produce some great records.

The whole scene has livened up recently. Groups like Mungo Jerry and Free obviously have tremendous talent and a great future, provided that they stay with it.

Indeed, this has been the tragedy of many famous groups over the past few years, with so many key players leaving the outfits which gave them fame and fortune, to form new groups which have subsequently broken up and so on, almost *ad infinitum*.

It is sad because it is so often damaging to everyone, including those people who believe they have the most talent, and I could not leave this subject without congratulating the Who on being one of the few groups who have gone through it all and emerged at the end of it with the same relationship that they started off with. As far as I am concerned, I would like them to go on playing for another hundred years at least.

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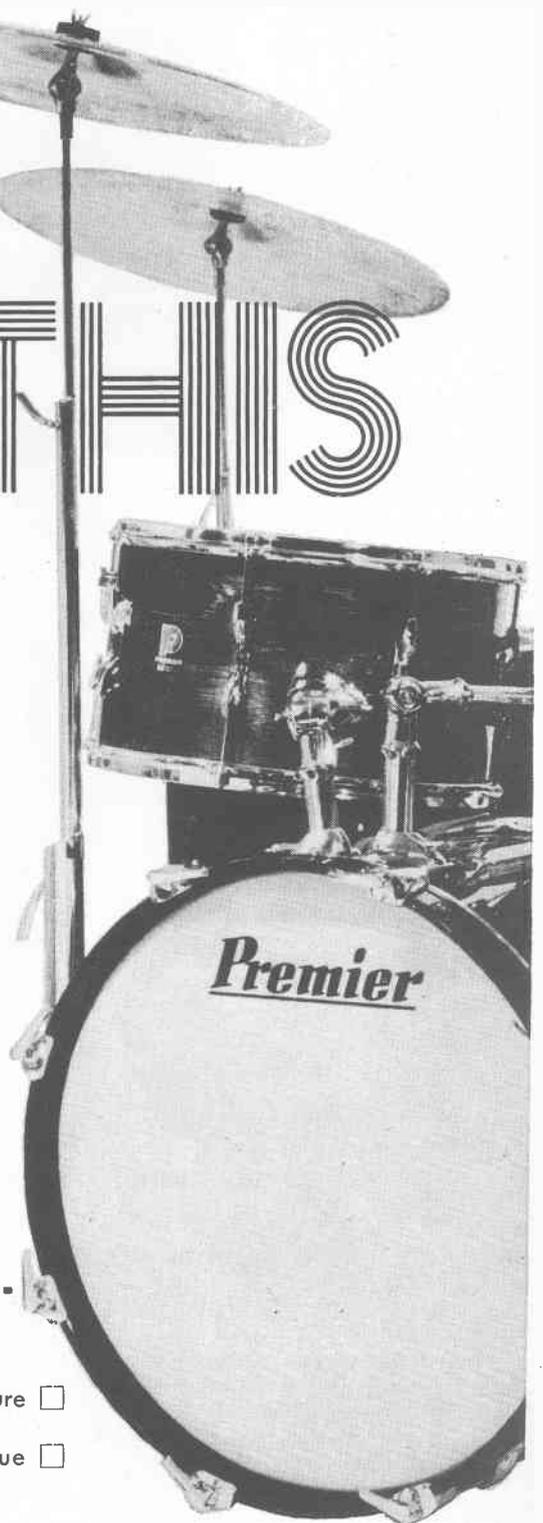
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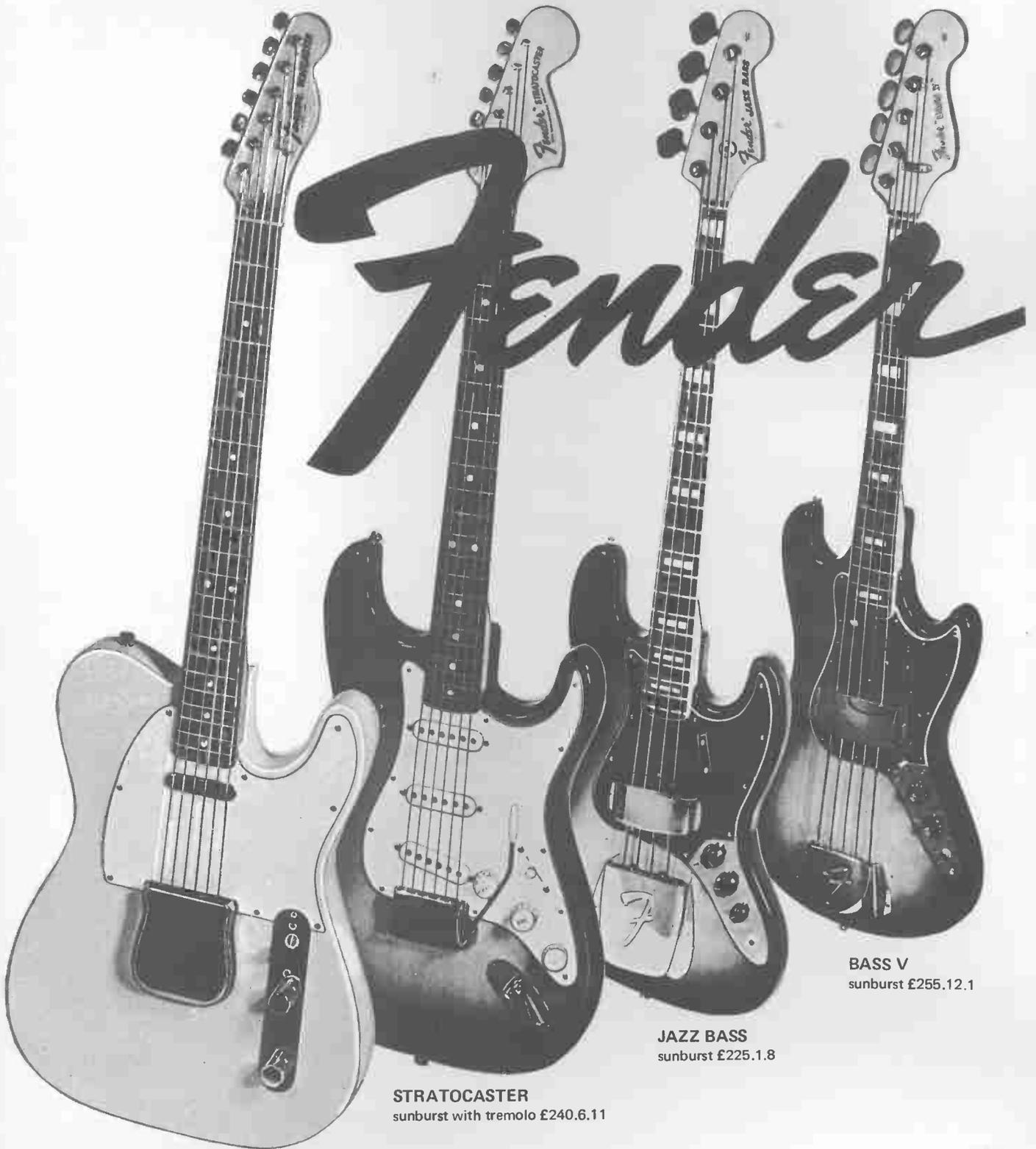
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GUITAR TUTOR

4: Tuning your guitar

Now that you've bought your first guitar, you will naturally want to be able to play it right away, but don't be surprised if the first sounds you produce are anything but musical. Every one of the top players experienced this the first time he picked up an instrument.

The first thing to realise is that the main reason your guitar sounds unmusical—quite apart from your being unable to play it properly—is that it is probably out of tune, so before you start trying to play you will have to learn how to tune it.

TUNING WITH PIANO

The simplest way to tune a guitar is by using a piano to establish the pitch of the open strings on the guitar. For those with some knowledge of musical notation, however, a word of warning: music for the guitar is written an octave lower than that for the piano. If you were to follow piano notation you would break all the strings by tuning them too high.

The strings on a guitar are referred to musically from the highest sounding (thinnest) to the lowest (thickest), and are tuned in the following order: 1st—E; 2nd—B; 3rd—G; 4th—D; 5th—A; and 6th—E.

You can find these notes on the piano by referring to the chart.

RELATIVE TUNING

Since many people don't have a piano, and since there won't always be one available anyway, every player should learn how to tune his guitar without one.

If you have nothing with a fixed tuning, you should adjust first string until it is neither so loose that it rattles when it is picked, nor so tight that it breaks. Place the second finger of your left hand immediately behind the fifth fret of the second string, and sound it, followed closely by the open first string, tightening or loosening the second string until both strings sound the same. If the vibrations of the second string are faster than the first string it will be too high, and if slower it will be too low.

Once you have tuned the second string, you then follow a similar procedure for the third string, except that this time you should stop the third string behind the *fourth* fret and adjust it until it sounds the same as the second string. For the fourth, fifth and sixth strings, place your finger behind the *fifth* fret of the next string down in each case.

Having completed this procedure for all strings, repeat the entire process to check that all strings are still in tune. If they are new, they almost certainly won't be in tune, as they stretch until the newness is taken out of them. This can be done by striking them sharply a number of times before retuning.

Tuning can also be accomplished with the use of a tuning fork, which gives you the pitch of one note, or with guitar pitch pipes, a set of pipes already tuned to the guitar's open string intervals, but is much more satisfactory if you practise tuning by yourself. Do it a few times and you'll be surprised how much quicker you'll be able to do it each time. Like everything else connected with the guitar—or with any other instrument for that matter—practice makes perfect.

Next month's chapter will deal with chords for simple song or music accompaniment.

Diagram 1

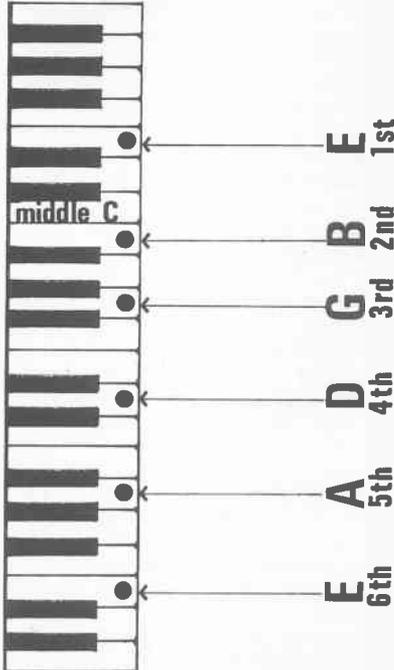
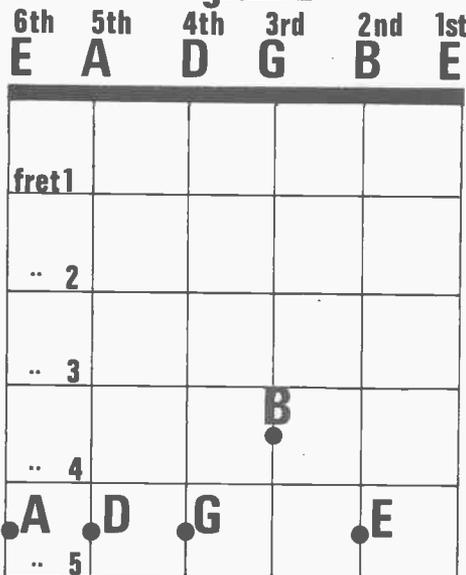


Diagram 2



PLAYER OF THE MONTH



B. J. WILSON

B. J. WILSON, drummer with Procol Harum, remembers first being impressed by drums at the age of eight, though it wasn't until the age of 12 that he picked up the rudiments of playing while in the Boy's Brigade. 'Then at school someone said, "Let's form a rock band", and I've never done anything else really.

'When I was 15½ I decided I was good enough to go professional (I don't know how I decided that), and I joined a group from Southend called the Paramours. They were meant to be professional, but they were just playing in a coffee bar. But I survived, it was good experience. It was about the time of the Mersey Boom; that lasted about three or four years.'

Then came a spell when B.J. giggled around, backing artists like Cat Stevens and Lulu, and on one occasion Millie, with a band calling itself George Bean and the Runners. 'But I didn't really know what I was doing at that time,' admitted B.J.

At this point came the proverbial break; Gary Brooker phoned B.J. and asked to audition him as drummer with Procol Harum, a position subsequently offered and accepted. B.J. joined the group shortly after their massive hit, *A Whiter Shade Of Pale* had wedged itself at the top of almost every chart in the Western Hemisphere, and the group was encountering problems. In the public imagination they became just another one-hit wonder, and never received the acclaim they deserved as a genuinely original and creative band, at least not in this country.

'It was partly our fault,' said B.J. 'At that time we were naive and easily led. After a record like that you need someone to put you in a direction; it wasn't bad management, it was simply mismanagement. Finally we went to the States, made a lot of friends, and had a lot of fun. Our first album did very well there. I still think it's a good record.' Like other British artists—Deep Purple, Van Morrison, James Taylor—it was only when Procol Harum went to the States that they found their public, and established themselves in their own right.

Beside his work with the group, B.J. has played on several sessions, including one for Leon Russell, and the one that produced Joe Cocker's remarkable *A Little Help From My Friends*. 'That was a fantastic session, it came right so quickly. Matthew (Fisher) and I were on two tracks of the first Joe Cocker LP. But on the whole, I don't like the way the supersession thing has evolved.'

B.J. has been playing the same kit for five years now, a Ludwig with three toms and three cymbals; 'I can play other kits but I don't enjoy them,' he says. As regards musical taste, B.J. says he likes it all. 'I listen to a lot of classical music; I get quite a lot of inspiration from that, the light and shade of it. As for drummers, I like most people who are well known. I like the two people who play with Dr. John, and my own favourite drummer is Kenny Buttrey. I judge people by how they are on stage.'

N.S.

COLOSSEUM'S organist Dave Greenslade started off playing piano in a youth club trio years ago with Jon Hiseman on drums and Tony Reeves on bass. They used to enter talent contests and win, but 'we were playing very bad jazz things. We didn't really understand anything,' says Dave.

He taught himself to play, although his father, who ran a dance band in the '30s, helped him a lot. Then a friend who was in a south London rock outfit called the Barons asked Dave to join them on organ. 'I wasn't into that rock rubbish,' says Dave. 'But I joined. I bought myself a Bird Contemporary dual manual organ that fell to pieces over the next four years. I carried it round the world, through Morocco on trains, it got dropped and so on.'

Then Dave came back to Britain and joined Chris Farlowe when he bought a Hammond L 100 which he played right up to the time he joined Colosseum, including his spell with Geno Washington which came between Farlowe and Colosseum. Now he plays a Hammond A 100.

Although Dave himself started out playing piano, he advises the beginner to start out straight away on a dual manual organ. 'I'm on to the piano again at the moment, but then I never stopped really. I compose most things on a piano or electric piano.'

'When I started playing organ I discovered you needed a completely different technique, and I think I took to it fairly quickly. I sussed it was going to be different but a lot of people still play organ like a piano.'

Power assisted organ

'For a start you've got sustain on an organ so you can move through shapes without breaking the sound. A film was recently made of Colosseum playing, and there are several shots of my hands, some of them in slow motion. I noticed I play with a continuous movement. I crab my way up and down the keyboards.'

'On an organ you can form a shape of other notes without ceasing to play the original, merging one into the other which is impossible on piano.'

'Playing organ is like driving a car with power-assisted steering—you get a false sense of speed and dexterity. I'm much faster on organ than on piano. If I have to play piano on record it takes me 20 minutes or so to rethink what I'm doing because of the different physical action.'

'You have got to learn your instrument first, and find out what it's capable of. My old Bird organ was very limited in its range of sounds which was probably a good way to start, learning to walk before you try and run.'

'For anyone who wants to learn the organ I would definitely recommend that they get a dual manual organ from the very beginning. If you learn on a single manual and suddenly find you can afford a two manual, you get in a hell of a state—so other organists who've done this tell me. You have to learn to separate your hands and the sounds. On a dual manual you can get a mellow layer on your left, separate from

'UNDERSTAND YOUR INSTRUMENT' says DAVE GREENSLADE of COLOSSEUM

your right. You can't do that on a single manual.

'I didn't have a penny to pay for my first Hammond, but I put the Bird in as a deposit and payed it off at £6 a week, at a time when we weren't earning very much with Chris Farlowe. But somehow I did it, and you have to make sacrifices to get things you really want.'

Would Dave advise the beginner to teach himself? 'Well, I don't know of any organ teachers, and the sort of person who might teach is probably going to be a little old-fashioned, working to a strict set of rules. Unless the person being taught has a vivid imagination he might well get bogged down.'

'The way I've done it is to listen. There's no substitute for listening and taking the bull by the horns and beginning to play. If you are in a band it's no good just listening

to other progressive bands, because you will just stand still. Listen to Graham Bond, the master organist, the man who has really understood his instrument. As for jazz organ listen to Larry Young. But listen to them all, and don't forget classical music, which can widen your scope considerably. I listen to symphonies, particularly Vaughan Williams. And of course you can learn a lot from listening to Handel or Bach.'

Finally Dave Greenslade made this offer to help readers just beginning to play the organ, or indeed at any stage of playing: 'I like to help other people if they feel I can do so. If you have a specific problem, then write to me c/o *Beat Instrumental* and I'll do my best to assist you.'

M.H.



STATESIDE REPORT



WHILE waiting for Blood, Sweat and Tears' next album *Fire And Ice*, big band enthusiasts might like to taste and try some records by a pair of bands that are laying down some interesting music along the same lines as B S & T.

The first is the Ides of March—headed by vocalist and guitarist Jim Peterik—a Chicago band that has been together professionally for four years. Peterik wrote all but one of the group originals on *Vehicle*, their first album for Warner Brothers that includes the superb title song that was a smash single in the U.S. On this particular song Peterik sounds so much like David Clayton Thomas, one wouldn't hesitate to give B S & T credit for the number after the first listening.

The seven-man band has an imaginative and adept four-piece horn section that works well with the rest of the ensemble. Particularly interesting is their work on *Dharma For One/Wooden*

Ships, a well-arranged piece that uses the horns effectively in bridging the two songs and manoeuvring the rhythms.

Perhaps less ambitious than the Ides of March, but lacking no imagination in the arranging department is *Illustration*, a 10-piece band on Janus Records. The vocals are shared by Bill Ledster, whose voice has traces of Tom Jones and David Clayton Thomas, and an unidentified female. The group's first album is a good one: tight playing, careful horn arrangements, and creditable singing.

John Simon

The production credits of John Simon account for a number of fine albums released during the last few years—records by Blood, Sweat and Tears, the Electric Flag, and The Band (including their new one due out this month) are a few. Warner Brothers has set Simon's impressive other side

—composing and singing—to record on the artist's first album, *John Simon's Album*. Simon worked on the songs for the LP during the last two years—laying down ideas, allowing them to settle, and then returning to make improvements. 'I wrote the songs, played piano, sang and produced it,' he says. And I decided to take the rap for the whole thing. The only objectivity I had was available from long periods of time when I didn't listen to the music at all. That way I was able to hear it fresh when I came back to it.'

Outside this album, Simon's writing has been somewhat limited, but one of his songs, *My Name Is Jack*, was a big hit for Manfred Mann. His singing, which we got a taste of on the *You Are What You Eat* soundtrack (another of his productions), is not unlike that of The Band or Randy Newman. He has a high-registered, lazy voice that is attractive for its innocent delivery. The sessions were recorded at several studios with a number of competent sidemen: Harvey Brooks' group and members of The Band in New York, Aretha Franklin's band in Muscle Shoals, and a few other sessions in Los Angeles. Simon prefers to be known as a musician and songwriter, rather than producer. 'That's always been much more important to me,' he believes. The performance on the *John Simon Album* supports his preference with convincing professionalism. He and his record may turn out to be the sleepers of the year, but it does look like we have another Randy Newman on our hands—and that's certainly heavy news for Newman enthusiasts.

Lee Michaels' fourth album was recently finished at Lee's

own 8-track studio (he calls it Lee Michaels' Record Ranch, Inc.) in Mill Valley, California. The working title is *Barrels*. For the session Michaels played piano, organ, bass, and sang; Frosty added drums; and Drake Levin played guitar. Michaels has been playing piano, rather than organ, in his recent stage duets with Frosty, but the keyboard virtuoso expects to switch back to organ again soon.

A new contract and company for the New York Rock & Roll Ensemble, the classical rocksters that released a pair of LP's on Atco. Their next album will be on Columbia and produced by John McClure, director of the company's Masterworks recordings. McClure plans to emphasize the classical side of their music, attracting listeners of both idioms in the process.

Association

The new Association LP was recorded during a performance at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. *Association—Live* is two records and contains many of their goldies: *Cherish*, *Windy*, *Along Comes Mary*, *Never My Love* not forgotten. They also do Dylan's *One Too Many Mornings*, their first single many years ago.

Leon Russel's old Asylum Choir partner, Marc Benno, is working on his first solo LP for A & M. Backup will be provided by Booker-T on organ, Larry Knechtel on piano, bass, organ; Jim Karstein, who played drums for Taj Mahal and Leon Russel; and Jerry Scheff, one-time bass player with Elvis.

Dewey Martin, drummer with the old Buffalo Spring-



The Ides of March: same lines as Blood Sweat and Tears

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field, had very little success with his New Buffalo Springfield, a group he put together shortly after the dissolution of the original Springfield. A short period as a solo artist for Uni Records followed the Springfield venture, and then Martin got together with Bruce Palmer, the first Springfield bassman, and discussed joint possibilities. They decided on a band and a name—Medicine Ball—and then proceeded to cut an album with sidemen Randy Fuller (rhythm guitar) and Buddy Edmonds (pedal steel guitar). At the time of this writing, Martin and Palmer were making preparations for the live debut, but weren't sure of their assisting personnel.

CSN & Y

Added to the Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young group, replacing Greg Reeves and Dallas Taylor, are bassist Calvin Samuels and drummer John Barbata, once a Turtle. The band's latest single, getting very little airplay on commercial stations due to the

controversial lyrics, is *Ohio*, a commentary by the group on the tragic shooting of four student protesters at Kent College in Ohio. Written by their guitarist Neil Young, the song is loaded with potent lines like 'Tin soldiers and Nixon's coming, We're finally on our own. This summer I heard the drumming, Four dead in Ohio. . .'. Rather than 'getting involved', many stations played the platter—not *Ohio*, but *Teach Your Children*, the B-side. Due for release later this year are a Nash-Crosby LP together, a Stills album with Jimi Hendrix and Ringo Starr, a Greg Reeves solo album, and a CSN & Y live album recorded at Fillmore East.

Van Dyke Parks, considered by some critics to be a genius composer, has put together a new single for Warner Brothers, his first recording for the label since his initial album of early 1968. Oddly enough, it's not a Parks' composition—but a number from a musical of the late '30s written by Harold Arlen. It's called *The Eagle And I*, a

good ecology single says Parks.

The next Creedence Clearwater Revival album, *Cosmo's Factor*, will feature, among a number of Fogerty originals, a 10-minute workout with *I Heard It Through The Grapevine* and a rendition of Elvis' *My Baby Left Me* that uses a stand-up bass—just like the Presley original.

The Beach Boys have a number of projects in the works including a film of them

shot by Andy Warhol a few years ago in Southern California. The score for the film will be written by Brian Wilson and performed by the group. *Add Some Music*, the next Beach Boys' LP on their Brothers Records label, was due out in April, but Reprise, their distributor, has been sitting on it for some unknown reason. Also on the agenda are solo LP's by each of the Beach Boys, which makes for a nice news item, but . . .



The Association: two records of live music

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A couple of months back, Matthews' Southern Comfort and Bridget St. John headed a concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. Third on the bill, and relatively unknown, were a group called Trees. They didn't stay unknown for long. The capacity audience were quickly won over by the group's fine performance, and critics were full of praise for the new band. A number of people likened them to the Fairports, in the nicest possible way, but it seems to me that Trees, while basically an English Rock Band in the Folk Tradition, are originals. Apart from that, they play beautifully tight, exciting music of considerable complexity.

The singing is done by Celia Humphris, an ex-drama student, dancer and survivor of operatic training. She doesn't dance on stage, but her voice, clear, powerful and expressive, is a good vehicle for the group's material, much of which is written by Bias Boshell, one of the most inventive bass players I've heard, and a trained musician to boot. David Costa, a withdrawn figure on stage, switches from his amplified Martin acoustic to 12-string to banjo, and is also responsible for the excellent cover painting on the group's first album, *The Garden Of Jane Delawney*, released a couple of months ago by CBS.

The drums are played by Unwin Brown, much-travelled son of a diplomat and ex-bank clerk, who can play equally convincingly on quiet numbers or heavy rave-ups. On lead guitar, playing a unique Les Paul copy, is Barry Clarke. Yet another happy veteran of Bert Weedon's *Play In A Day*, he is probably the most exciting guitarist to emerge over the last year, sounding like a cross between Jesse Edwin Davis and Richard Thompson. For all of them, Trees, which was formed about a year ago, is the first real band they've played in. And it wouldn't do to forget their amazing manager, fast-talking, suave Nick Harris, who joined them in February. They have no

agent to get work; the tireless Nick fixes it up.

Evidence of how the group are increasing in public esteem is provided by their having, on the day I went to David's Chelsea flat to meet them, no less than three bookings on one night. It was one of the rare occasions when all of Trees were in one place at the same time. Barry said that they don't do a great deal of rehearsing, finding a suitable place to do it being the problem, and can get along very well by taking a week off every once in a while and disappearing into the traditional group's country retreat and working out enough songs to keep them going until the next time.

One of the first things they wished to make clear was that 'we aren't a very interviewable group' and spoke of another journalist who left their company in much confusion a few days previously. 'The thing is that we don't have any big attitudes to burning topics of the day,' said Unwin. 'You won't get any quick witty answers from us.' (I did, however, get a cup of tea and some strawberries). 'People,' said Celia, 'seem to find it hard to believe that all we want to do is just play the music we like and have a good time.'

Having a good time on stage means playing well, and Trees are sure that the only way they can do that is to

have an audience who respond. 'To get through to them is absolutely the most important thing,' said Celia. 'Like most people, we can only give as good as we get. The best has to be brought out of us, I think.' That evening I went along with the band to a gig at Kingston Polytechnic. When they started to play, a few people were scattered around the hall. A lot more were in the bar. After they'd done a few numbers, people came streaming in. I heard people around me who were highly impressed. When they'd finished, a cool handful had become a throng, yelling for more.

Trees are a tightly-knit group. They weren't assembled by some Svengali manager hoping to amass quick wealth, but had all been friends for some time when, all having musical experience and ambitions, they decided on becoming a band. This closeness shows itself in the difficulty outsiders seem to have in getting to know what they're talking about, conversation largely consisting of obscure private jokes. 'I don't think we could ever get anyone as a replacement if one of us left,' said Celia. The closeness also shows in the music. Trees' songs are meticulously and precisely arranged, yet such is the sympathy between them that the whole thing seems as easy as pie. Anyone attempting to jam with them would be left helpless.

One of the advantages of having everything worked out is that Trees' music is able to shift, just like that, from one feeling to another. Their songs, in particular the incredible *Streets Of Derry*, cover a wide range of emotions for so young a group. For any group, they have remarkable musical maturity and a striking lack of posture and pretence. As far as I'm concerned, I enjoyed listening to them as much as I have any group over the last few months. They're nice people too, and it's hard to see how they can fail to develop into one of our best bands. A lot of us are eagerly awaiting the next album.

R.S.

TREES



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BIG BAND BLUES



KEEF Hartley is one of those names which has been around for years without quite clicking in a big way with a wide public. From the ill-fated Artwoods, through a year of drumming with John Mayall and now with his own outfit for over a year, Keef has built up a reputation without being really big. His band's first two albums, *Halfbreed* and *The Battle of North West Six*, weren't massive sellers either, but at last Keef is finding things happening for him. And the key to this seems to be the Keef Hartley Big Band that has taken the imagination of a lot of people. After all it's not every bandleader who can make a big band an economic proposition.



Dave Caswell, who has taken over from Henry Lowther

and reeds) who really want to play his kind of music. 'There has always been a nucleus of enthusiasm carrying the band along,' says Keef. 'Now that nucleus has gone up from three to five.'

Running a big band also means organisational hang-ups for the group's office. For instance it's not too difficult to book six or seven people into a hotel overnight at short notice, but when you have to deal with 18, things can become very awkward. There are also transport problems of course. 'It's hard getting seven people to an airport on time with their passports,' says Keef. 'Again with 18 it's impossible. Someone will always be late, and so miss the plane, so we always fly by charter plane now.'

These are just some of the problems associated with running a 13-piece band, which as Keef says centres round a nucleus of five.



Miller Anderson on guitar —one instrument among many

Apart from Keef, the brass players Dave Caswell and Lyle Jenkins, that means guitarist and singer Miller Anderson and bassist Gary Thain. These five also go out as the Keef Hartley Small Band, and in fact the big band idea started more or less by accident.

'We started off doing *Halfbreed* with organ, guitar, bass, drums and vocals. I had worked with Henry Lowther in the Bluesbreakers and I suggested to him we could use some horns. He listened to the tapes and came back with brass arrangements on some numbers using two tenors and two trumpets.'

The second album was conceived with brass there from the start, and Keef used seven horns on that one. 'While we were

Keef's new album, *The Time Is Near*, is released in July, featuring the small band. 'We used no extra musicians this time at all, apart from a roadie on organ,' explained Keef. 'Before, we've always said: "Here's a bunch of numbers, now what's the best way to do them?"' This time there was a much easier atmosphere with Dave and Lyle. Henry Lowther is a great musician but when he was with us he was involved in other things at the same time which cut down the number of rehearsals he could make, although he never missed a live gig. With the new band rehearsing is so easy because there's no-one looking at his watch to see if it's time he was off to play at Ronnie's. All the numbers on *The Time Is Near* can be



Hard blowing from Lyle Jenkins on tenor

'It's been working steadily for quite a while now,' says Keef. 'But there are hang-ups of course. There has been a tendency for people to use our band as a benevolent fund, so they can play with other experimental bands like Mike Gibbs and Mike Westbrook. You see, we are experimental too but because of the nature of the pop or underground scene or whatever you want to call it we have travelled up the scale and are able to pay more money.'

'Sometimes these people think they can take it easy and that's when you've reached danger point. With a 13-piece band there might be three or four who are not that interested and you have to watch that all the time because it shows.'

'The trouble with brass players is that from the very beginning they have always been influenced by jazz, and they think our outfit is a second best to jazz.'

And that is why Keef is happy to have found Dave Caswell (trumpet) and Lyle Jenkins (tenor



'It's hard to get seven people to an airport' says Keef, 'but with eighteen . . .'

doing that,' he says, 'Blood Sweat and Tears' big album came out and so did Chicago's. Four months later ours was released and everyone said "Ah ha! Blood Sweat and Tears and Chicago!" But eventually we got hardened to the criticism and let it run off our backs.'

Then BBC producer Jeff Griffin wanted Hartley for a show and wanted horns as on the album. He called the show the Keef Hartley Big Band and it stuck, or rather developed from there. Eventually came a tour. 'We were really worried because no one else was on the bill. It was the first time the big band had gone on stage and we were also on tour for the first time. But we did it and it worked out well. We've been working well since that time.'

played on stage though not as fully as on the record, but then they don't need to be because the two things are very different.'

So things are going well for Keef Hartley. With a reshuffled band and new enthusiasm, everything running smoothly, the time could well be near for Keef Hartley to break right through and get the recognition he deserves.

M.H.





Progress Report

BY the end of June, the final arrangements for the first British Song Contest were well under way.

It was necessary to appoint a publishing company to handle all the songs entering Phase 2 of the competition so that every recording manager would have an equal opportunity of hearing the numbers.

We have therefore asked Mitch Murray and Peter Callendar to handle this all-important part of the contest. They are, of course, very well known songwriters in their own right and have been responsible for over two dozen big hits. Right now, their number *Goodbye Sam, Hello Samantha* is in the Top Ten. So, obviously, they know what they are doing and must be excellent judges of a commercial number.

Standard of entries

But they have several other very important qualifications. They have a very young and fresh approach to the whole business and appreciate all types of music—ballad, country and western, rock 'n' roll . . . the lot! They have also given a great deal of their time over the past few years to promoting the cause of British songwriters. And, finally—and probably most important of all—they have the confidence of British recording managers.

Publicity for the competition is being handled by Tony Barrow International. Tony, of course, was the Beatles' press officer for many years and is known to almost every music journalist in this country and overseas.

The big promotion for the contest, though, will not start until we get near the final in September. As I said last month, the problem of sorting out the 'possibles' from the hundreds of demonstration discs which have been sent in has been extremely difficult.

However, on June 30, the judging panel got down to the task of deciding which songs should enter Phase 2.

When we were planning the contest originally, one little gremlin did creep into the discussions about the contest from time to time. Namely: Were most good songwriters tied up under contract to publishers already? If the answer was 'yes' the standard of entries which we would receive would be unsuitable to offer to our A & R men, who, are demanding a pretty high standard these days.

I am very pleased to say that this gremlin was completely killed long before we came to the final judging because, as I said last month, a very high percentage of the entries were well produced and very worthy to be considered as possibles.

The system of judging was absolutely straightforward. Each 'possible' song was played twice and, in some cases, three times if any of the member of the jury was in anyway doubtful about his decision. Then each jury member gave the disc he had just listened to so many marks out of ten.

If anyone was particularly impressed with a particular disc, he added a star to his marks. Naturally, there were disagreements, but it was all done by a straight democratic vote and, in the end, there was remarkably little contradiction.

Cross section of songs

I am not going to name the numbers this month as it is always unwise to announce things too soon. But all the details will be given in full in next month's **BEAT INSTRUMENTAL**.

I would like to make one last point and that is that the judges had to choose a reasonable cross-section of songs. We had, for example, a very large number of country and western style. It would not have been wise to have presented recording managers with just country and western songs, so it was a good job that they didn't all top the voting list. Fortunately, there was no difficulty over this as normally one song was obviously much better than all the others in its group.

Everyone who asked for their disc to be returned and enclosed a stamped, addressed envelope should have received his, or her, entry back by the end of July, so if anyone hasn't done so, if they would like to write in we will look into the matter.

The exceptions, of course, are the lucky writers. They, of course, will already have completed a contract and no doubt be anxiously awaiting the professional recording of their song.

Next month we will be printing the names of the songs which will be going into the final, to select the winner of the £1,000 prize.



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Abraham, Martin and John (*Holler*) Marvin Gaye
RP—Whitfield. S—Tamla. MP—Mellin.

All Right Now (*Frazer/Rodgers*) Free
RP—Free. S—Island. MP—Blue Mountain.

American Woman (*Bachman/Cummings/Peterson/Kale*)
Guess Who
RP—Richardson. S—American. MP—Sunbury.

Back Home (*Martin/Coulter*) England World Cup Squad
S—Pye. MP—Martin/Coulter.

Cottonfields (*Ledbetter*) Beach Boys
RP—Beach Boys. S—American. MP—Kensington.

Goodbye Sam, Hello Samantha (*Murray/Stephens/Callander*) Cliff Richard
RP—Paramor. MP—Intune.

Green Manalishi (*Peter Green*) Fleetwood Mac
RP—Fleetwood Mac. S—De Lane Lea. MP—Fleetwood.

Groovin' With Mr. Bloo (*Gentry/Nauman/Laguna*) Mr. Bloo
RP—S. James. MP—Dick James.

Groupie Girl (*T. J. White*) Tony Joe White
RP—White. S—American. MP—Combine.

Honey Come Back (*Webb*) Glenn Campbell
RP—Delroy. S—American. MP—Keith Prowse.

In The Summer Time (*R. Dorset*) Mungo Jerry
RP—B. Murray. S—Pye No. 1. MP—Our Music.

It's All In The Game (*Dawes/Sigman*) Four Tops
RP—F. Wilson. S—American. MP—Warner Bros.

Lola (*Davies*) The Kinks
RP—Davies. S—Pye. MP—Davray/Carlin.

Question (*Haywood*) Moody Blues
RP—Tony Clarke. S—Decca No. 1. MP—Tyler.

Sally (*Hines/Towers*) Jerry Monroe
RP—J. Rae. S—Selecta. MP—Keith Prowse.

Up Around The Bend (*Fogerty*) Creedence Clearwater Revival
RP—Fogerty. S—American. MP—Burlington.

Up The Ladder To The Roof (*Vincent/Dimirie*) The Supremes
RP—Wilson. S—American. MP—Jobete/Carlin.

Yellow River (*Cristie*) Christie
RP—Smith. S—C.B.S. MP—Gale.

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STUDIO SPOTLIGHT

PACIFIC RECORDING STUDIOS

by Ray Rezos & Marty Arbinich

IT'S well-known that Bill Graham, America's leading rock *entrepreneur* and founder of the blossoming Fillmore Corporation, is a staunch perfectionist. One would expect a man of Graham's position to be most selective in the choice of recording studios for his two labels, Fillmore and

San Francisco Records.

It's no accident that Graham chose Pacific Recording Studios of San Mateo, a neighbouring town roughly 20 miles south of San Francisco. Though it is one of the youngest studios on the West Coast, Pacific (which is in no way affiliated with the Pacific High

Recorders of San Francisco) is one of the most professional. It is handled by three men who take a great deal of pride in their craft—owner Paul Curcio, studio manager Bob Liotta, and head engineer Steve Kimball.

All three grew up together in Miami, Florida, and were involved to varying degrees in music and electronics. In 1962, while in high school, they played together in a rock and roll band.

Kimball, the electronics enthusiast of the group practised recording techniques, taping the band in his living room on a home tape recorder. 'I was into electronics ever since I was five years old,' recalls Kimball, 'I started repairing radios at seven, built my first PA system in the third grade, and had a 10-watt radio station on the air when I was 10.' By the time he was 19, Kimball was operating a television station in Miami; later he got into the recording field with Miami's Criteria Studios.

In 1966, while Curcio and Liotta were converting an empty warehouse into Pacific Recording Studios, Kimball was busy with other projects on the East Coast. It wasn't until three years later that Steve rejoined his old colleagues, replacing Ron

Wickersham as head engineer at the studio.

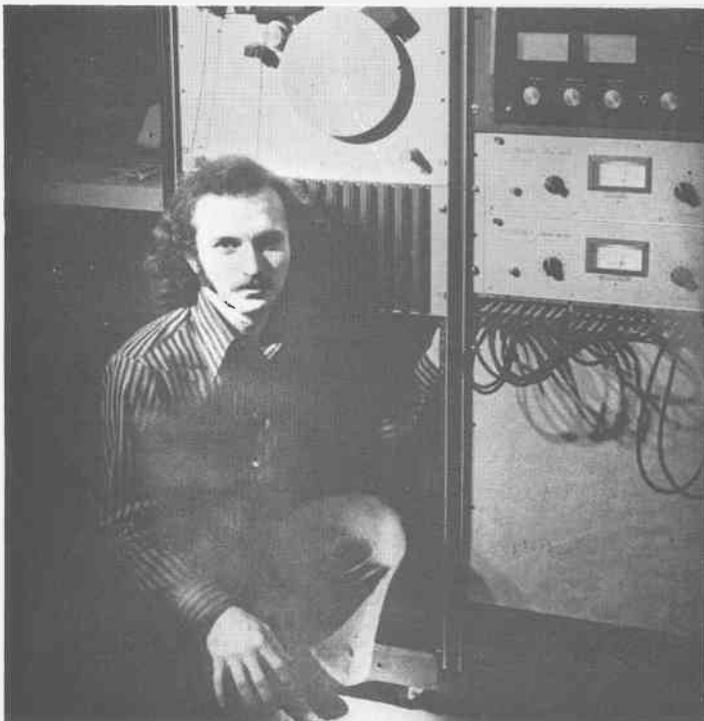
Curcio's crew, working on a small budget, had to do all the construction work on the studio themselves. 'We put up the walls, the paneling, we painted, we did all the carpentry work, everything we could handle,' says Liotta. 'We brought in professionals only when it was above us. Like putting hinges on doors. We did our own hinges and couldn't open our doors.'

The doors are working smoothly now, and the groups have been coming in and out regularly. They started recording local groups in late 1967, using mixers in lieu of a console.

Sixty People

These early sessions, done while the studio was still under construction, were primarily experimental — to test acoustics and improve sound conditions.

It wasn't long before groups like Blue Cheer, the Grateful Dead, and Aum were doing LP sessions at Pacific. However, Curcio and Liotta did not consider the studio fully equipped until the installation of their \$80,000 Quad-8 console, which followed the signing



Head Engineer Steve Kimball with Dolby unit and McIntosh amps



Studio Manager Bob Liotta and the \$80,000 Quad-8 console

of the big Fillmore contract with Bill Graham in late 1969.

The console, which features several relatively new concepts, is designed so that all machines are controlled from the board. 'Once we put the tape in the machine, that's it,' says Liotta. 'We can do all our recording, overdubbing, punch-ins and punch-outs right from the console, and all 16 tracks can be panned and monitored individually. The whole thing is to make it easier for the producer and engineer to work.' Ron Wickersham, Fred Catero (Fillmore's engineer) and Kimball all worked with the Quad-8 people in designing the board.

Kimball is very satisfied with Pacific's choice of recorders; all the equipment is Ampex—two MM 1000 16-track machines and MR-70 2- and 4-track recorders. 'They handle tape very well,' remarks Steve. 'I have never been able to damage tape on these machines. We'll probably go Ampex in our next studio too.'

Expansion plans call for another smaller studio or a dub-down/mix-down room to be added at the same location. 'It will be a while

before we start the project,' states Liotta, 'because we do everything as we can afford it. Our present studio is pretty well booked, and as soon as we can sit back, and realise some of the profits from this, then we can start expanding.'

He also stressed that though expansion will follow eventually, the present studio is large enough to accommodate all prospective clients. 'Melanie was in here a while back with the Edwin Hawkins Singers and their entourage,' he told us. 'That was close to 60 people, to say nothing of the instruments.'

Remotes

Among those who have recorded at Pacific's facilities are Linn County (*Till The Break Of Dawn*), Santana (first LP), the Chambers Brothers (*Love, Peace, and Happiness*), Blue Cheer (*Outside-Inside*), the Grateful Dead (*Aoxomoxoa*), Womb (first LP) and *Bangor Flying Circus*. All the Fillmore LP's have been done there, including Elvin Bishop's, Cold Blood's, Lamb's *A Sign Of Change*, and Aum's *Bluesvibes and Resurrection*. Melanie recorded there with the Edwin

Hawkins Singers, and Linda Ronstadt and the Jerry Hahn Brotherhood have also used the facilities. Santana, the Chambers Brothers and Taj Mahal (who were the first to record on the new console) all thought enough of the studio to return, and of course, all the Fillmore groups will be coming back. At present all the recording is engineered by Kimball with the exception of the Fillmore groups, which are engineered by Fred Catero, and certain Columbia acts.

Though the studio does not specialise in remote recording, Kimball and Catero are qualified remote engineers. Their biggest problem at present is transporting the equipment. 'Our first 16-track recording was a remote for the Dead at the old Avalon Ballroom,' recalls Liotta. 'We had to haul our MM-1000 up three flights of stairs. That was really a drag.' He mentions, however, that if the crew can continue to produce quality remote recordings, they will definitely do more. Besides the Grateful Dead, the studio has done remotes for Santana and Lamb.

'The Lamb remote was really beautiful,' says Kimball, who worked on the project with Catero. 'How-

ever it wasn't released because it lacked continuity and didn't fit in with the rest of the album.'

The Lamb album, incidentally, was the only time the studio has seen fit to use their Dolby unit. Explains Kimball. 'The noise ratio is so slight in the 16-track machine and the console that Dolbys aren't really necessary for most recordings.' In addition to the Dolby, the studio has two live EMT echo chambers and a grand piano and harpsichord available to clients.

Atmosphere

But the most important thing Curcio, Liotta, and Kimball try to provide at Pacific is a comfortable atmosphere. 'We're trying to create a place where the artist can work without feeling cooped up in a sterile atmosphere,' notes Liotta as spokesman for the three. With the combination of dedicated personnel, quality equipment, and good vibes, Pacific Recording studios has been able to satisfy some of the most demanding clients in the recording business — Bill Graham included.



Steve Kimball at the console



Bob Liotta in the control room

□ THE A & R MEN



JOHN FOGERTY

THERE'S been an increasingly strong tendency over the last few years for groups to place the emphasis on such "qualities as composition and quality of improvisation. Rock is getting older, and gone are the days where the 'sound' was all that counted. That magic rock sound. But it's interesting to see that one of the most successful bands, Creedence Clearwater Revival, have relied on their sound, pure and simple, to get where they are.

Such memorable singles as *Proud Mary*, *Bad Moon Rising*, *Green River* and *Willy And The Poor Boys* get among the closest to the old rock sound. Like the rock giants, singles seem to represent the best of Creedence. John Fogerty is the leader of the group, the manager, the songwriter, lead guitarist and singer. What they are doing now is the fruit basically of his brain. Some people call it swamp music.

Although under different names, Creedence have been at it for ten years, John still has the same heroes now as he did then. Two names stick out: Carl Perkins and Howlin' Wolf. And although John until recently had never left his native Los Angeles except for one trip north, he has since joined the Mississippi area studios to

study total production techniques. Carl and Wolf were all part of his picture of what he loosely terms the Mississippi myth; people like Fats Domino and Jerry Lee Lewis came into it, even the *Maverick* TV show, which leads into *Proud Mary* the riverboat. *Mary* was the first Fogerty composition to make it as a single.

Susie Q, the old Dale Hawkins song, was the first hit, however. Said John, 'The whole idea of *Susie Q* was that with someone else's song I could worry about the sound mainly. We'd already been playing it for seven or eight years, so all I had to worry about was the production end.'

Fogerty has a clear picture of what he wants. Based on a hard beat, guitar licks and his rasping voice, 'we are trying to keep our music as simple as possible.' He believes that psychedelia took musicians too far away from the all-important roots—hence the Revival—and sees his music as 'an art form, but it is not arty'.

Procedure in the studio is fairly constant. 'We record a basic track first, on four tracks so that we don't have to spend a lot of time getting a balance.' The voice is dubbed on later; though, singing live when the backing track is recorded, they sometimes get a ghost vocal which, if

anything, adds to the whole. As far as his distinctive voice is concerned, 'I believe in not using any equalisation or anything. A little echo, sometimes, for effect. But even for the drums and stuff, we try and make everything sound as natural as it does in person.'

'Just when we're sitting down and practising'—which often means five days a week, as they only play week-end gigs when possible—'we should be able to set up a mike in front and record it. We don't spend hours and hours getting the sound this way and that. Ninety per cent of the time, it's just straight through.'

Up till now, Fogerty's productions haven't been revolutionary. It's just that he's so good at what so many others have failed—getting a good crisp rock sound, using the basic format of a four-piece group. He has no plans to expand his scope at present and record more than a group.

'I leave that door open. So far I haven't really composed anything that I would find a need for it. I'm not going to just suddenly say, "Wow, it would be neat to have violins and stuff".'

And as for bringing his talent to recording other people, he said, 'I'm not in a real hurry to do that. I think eventually . . . but it's not a big wild drive of mine.'

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studio playback

Irish news

At Eamonn Andrews' studios in Dublin, Candy Divine from Australia who is at the moment appearing in Gaels of Laughter 1970 at the Gaiety Theatre has been recording tracks for an LP which are jazz influenced. Also in the studio were the Nevada Showband, the Mighty Avons, the Monarchs and country and western group the Hootenannies.

3 organ albums

Brothers Malcolm and John Jackson of Jackson Recording have been hard at work producing and recording for their own Adrythm label.

The first of the month's completed albums featured Harold Smart playing two Thomas organs and the second featured Keith Beckingham with a selection of Sinatra hits, played on his Hammond. Jonny Macaulay the Irish folk singer who recently had a

hit in his homeland with *Omagh Girl* has again used Jackson's facilities to record *Whispering Shannon* and *Destination Donegal* for his follow up single.

A group of the Creedence Clearwater Revival type which gives Malcolm a great deal of listening pleasure is the John Victor Blues Band, which he has been recording this month. The composers of the Hollies last hit *I Can't Tell The Bottom From The Top*, were also recording demonstration discs of their songs in July.

Prior to going on a well-earned holiday, De Lane Lea's Martin Birch recorded Fleetwood Mac for a new album on the Warner Brothers label, which the group are producing themselves. Ex 'Mac member Peter Green has also been into De Lane Lea's Kingsway studio, this time accompanied by his African Friends, and again for release on Warner Brothers.

With his usual backing



At Regent Sound Studios, Black Sabbath have been recording their second album for release on the Philips' Vertigo label mid-September

group, the Fish, still in the States, Country Joe has been into the studio to lay down some tracks with some as yet unidentified 'friends', this session being recorded by Louis Lea, the newest member of De Lane Lea's engineering staff.

King Witch—Alex Saun-

ders—has been back to Tony Pike Music Ltd laying some more black magic on black plastic. Another famous Alex, this time Alex Campbell, has now finished recording the long awaited Anthology Album for release on Tee-Pee Records.

Tony Pike has been getting an album of Rock-n-Roll music put together with the help of his regular session men, and Owen Gray's latest long player, *Sugar Dumpling* is also in the bag for Parma Records.

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Vic Keary of **Chalk Farm Studios** has a hit record to his credit this month, he was the engineer on *Love Of The Common People* by Nicky Thomas. Eddy Grant has been recording, both for his own Torpedo label and with the other Equals for a future album. Yet another Trojan artist in the Farm this month was Jackie Edwards who was completing work for a forthcoming single.

number 2 studio is available as a rehearsal room and for demo recording. Recording rates for eight track are 10 gns. an hour, and groups in to record so far include Black Sabbath, Love Sculpture and Shaking Stevens and the Sunsets.

The Hollies, Consortium and Flying Machine are said to be considering compositions from **Venus Studios** in Whitechapel Road. Most of the studio's work over the



Charles Ward at the control desk of Future Sound

'Muscle Shoals in Britain' is the idea behind **Future Sounds**, established by brothers Charles and Kingsley Ward just outside Monmouth.

A special feature of the studio is its location in an old country house with grounds so extensive that a landing strip is projected for the near future. Also, in view of the nature of the premises, accommodation for groups can be provided to enable them to 'get it together'.

Originally a straight demo studio, Future Sounds are now fully equipped for professional work with a Leavers-Rich eight-track machine, EMI and Philips stereos, a 16-channel eight-track console by Rosser electronics, and a complete range of ancillary equipment. Future Sounds'

last month has been concerned with demo discs for local groups.

Another studio kept busy with demo discs for as yet unknown bands is **Progressive Sounds Studio**, out in Leyton, East London, who have been well booked.

At **Advision Studios**, engineer Eddie Offord has been busy working on album sessions for two bands descended from the Nice. Lee Jackson was into the studios with his new band, Jackson Heights, and laid down several tracks of 'nice country songs', for B&C Records, with Lee himself now mainly on vocals. Also into the studio was Emerson, Lake and Palmer (ELP), described as an 'incredible band' by studio manager Eddie.



The Pye Mobile Recording Unit leaving for Eastern Europe

Pye Studios have had an exceptionally busy month. Firstly, NBC of New York have booked 50 sessions there and have been cutting LPs. Artists in to record include Mungo Jerry, who were laying down tracks for a forthcoming LP on Dawn Records, this session being engineered by Terry Evennett and produced by Barry Murray. Barry was

also in with a jazz group called Atlantic Bridge, engineer here being Howard Barrow.

John Schroeder has been producing several artists, among them Status Quo, Quiet World, Caterpillar, and Tony Fabian, the engineer on all of these sessions being Alan Florence. John McLeod has also been busy producing the

London Pops Orchestra, with Ray Prickett engineering, and the Laurels, a night club group, engineer on this session being Dave Hunt. Ray Prickett was also engineer on a block session for MCA records. Other activities at Pye include new tracks cut by Tam White for Middle Earth records, an LP being recorded by a group called

Made in Sweden, and the final reductions on a Louis Bellson LP with engineer Howard Barrow.

The Pye Mobile Unit is still busy recording Blood Sweat and Tears on their tour of Eastern Europe, and have also been booked by the Grateful Dead for a solid three day session down in Sussex.

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Zappa with Mothers

Trident Studios have had a roster of artists working on their albums, and these include two American visitors: Frank Zappa has been in with his new Mothers of Invention working on an album which he will produce. The other Stateside guest is Doctor John, who will again be producing the tracks he cut, the engineer on this session being Roy Baker. Roy also engineered on a session for ex-Nice drummer Brian Davidson, who was in with his new band, and also for Mike Snow (ex-Ferris Wheel), who was into the studios.

Three bands into Trident to cut new albums were Van Der Graaf Generator, Bilmus, and Genesis, the last having now finished their sessions. Engineer for all of these three bands was Robin Cable, with John Anthony producing. George Harrison has now finished his sessions at Trident, with various 'unknown' 'friends', but due into the studios shortly is Jeff Beck, who will be produced by Mickie Most and engineered by Ken Scott.

Dallas Boys back

Up in Birmingham, Hollick and Taylor have been recording a 50 piece male voice choir, and also backing tracks for a forthcoming Dallas Boys album. The Boys hope to be back in the studio later this month to complete the tapes.

I.B.C.'s diary reads a little like an extract from *Who's Who* in music, and this month has been no exception.

Michael Claydon has been the engineer on the New Seekers' latest tracks produced by David Joseph with Shel Talmy. Mr. Claydon has also been responsible for engineering; Jimi Horowitz's next album for Abigail Music to be released in France on the Polydor label; an album by Malcolm Anthony produced by Marvin Conn for the Philips' Nashville label; the Wallace Collection on their next to-be-released album, recorded on 16 tracks for EMI

and the Peddlers for a future CBS release.

Bryan Stott has now completed engineering a new album by Rare Bird for B and C records, Bryan has also laid down tracks by Manfred Mann Chapter Three for Vertigo release—and Petula Clarke.

P. P. Arnold has also been in the studio with her producer/husband Jim Morris, Ossie Byrne has been producing his new discovery Cressida and Pete Townsend has now almost completed producing a new LP for Thunderclap Newman to be released on Track. Also recording for Track were Terence Stamp and The Third World War.

Jon Hiseman's Colosseum, Labi Saffre, Up With People, Colin Peterson's Humpy Bong, John Rowles, Jackie Edwards and Chris Farlow have all been laying initial tracks for inclusion on future albums.

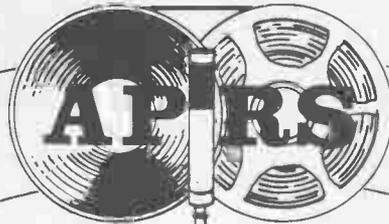
Strawberry Studios of Stockport have had a busy month recording Scaffold and the Fourmost for a new T.V. show.

Harvey Leslie has been setting up his own section, to be known as the Hit Factory and specialising in production for Philips and Pye. Producer Clive Selwood and bandleader Sid Lawrence have finished records for Dandelion and Philips respectively.

New control room

A new control room and reduction suite are nearing completion; also expected to be in operation soon is the new eight-track recorder. However, one of Strawberry's four-track units proved sufficient to give Hot Legs a hit with *Neanderthal Man*.

Recorded Sound Studios are now recuperating from their busiest month ever, working up to 20 hours a day and never less than 12.



ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL
RECORDING STUDIOS

APRS HIGHLIGHTS

The Association of Professional Recording Studios held a successful exhibition over 12th and 13th June this year. Here we take a look at some of the exhibition highlights.

AKG

'Very well received' from the AKG range on display were the C45IE FET condenser microphone, and the B224D system microphone.

The C45I is already in widespread use in sound and television studios throughout the country, and has maintained its popularity. The basic preamp of the C45I may be used with directional, omnidirectional, or superdirectional capsules, and also with a four or six channel multi-power battery unit.

The B224 double system dynamic microphone, whose standards are likewise attested to by its success in the fields of broadcasting and sound recording, also went well. This double system mike uses two frequency systems, one high and one low, to give an ultra flat frequency response, not unlike a condenser micro-

phone.

SHURE

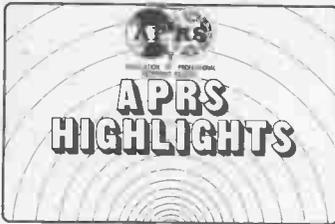
Shure Electronics Limited concentrated mainly on their studio series of professional broadcast microphones, and since each model in the Shure series has been designed for one specific purpose, there was no single microphone which can be said to have topped the popularity polls.

Models of microphone for hand, boom, and stand operation were on display, covering unidirectional, omnidirectional, and bidirectional types. As expected, the newly introduced SM53 unidirectional microphone was well received, this model meeting the exacting standards demanded by today's professional recording industry.

The Shure range of electronic microphone circuitry was also on display, and particular interest was shown



From the AKG range the B224CS (left) & CMS microphones



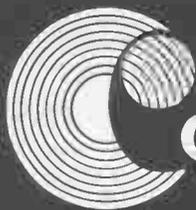
in the Model M67-2E professional microphone mixer, designed specifically for studio application and remote broadcasting. Other models in the range of electronic circuitry include Model SE20, a stereo transcription pre-amp manufactured for quality disc reproduction in studios; and the M62 Level-Loc Audio Level Controller which will give a constant output, despite considerable variations in the input signal; all of these models cater for the purely professional market.

CALDER

Calder Recordings, of Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire, had a very successful exhibi-

tion of their range of Calrec microphones, and in particular there were a large number of enquiries about their 1000 series of professional microphones. This superb microphone, available as an omnidirectional or a directional cardioid model, has been manufactured for 12 months now, though it is only recently that the professional market has been properly approached. With many quality features, the comparatively cheap price of the Calrec 1000 is due to the fact that it is British made, and avoids the import duties on foreign equipment. Another advantage is the 48 hour turn-round service offered by Calder, which also extends to other models in the range.

There was also a lively interest in the remainder of the Calrec range of microphones and accessories, and demand was maintained for the low-priced 600 model, which is favoured by many groups and clubs in the North for its reliability.



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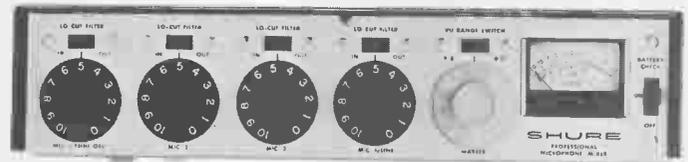
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(1)



(2)

(3)

(1) *Shure M672-E Professional Microphone Mixer*

(2) *Shure SM50 Microphone*

(3) *Calder CM850 Microphone*

(4) *Calder CME54 Microphone in kit form*



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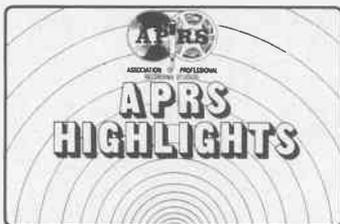
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BAUCH

From the extensive range of recording studio equipment exhibited by F. W. O. Bauch of Cockfosters, equipment by Neumann and Studer proved to be the star attraction.

In the Studer range, the A-80 eight track machine, on display for the first time, was extremely well received. The A-80 features fully electronic controls, utilising integrated logic circuits to circuit relays, as well as a high precision electronic tape control. Two tape regulators, acting on both spooling motors, are used, which are also employed in high speed action. The capstan motor is a servo motor, resulting in very low

wow and flutter figures, and there are controls for stepless speed variations in high speed spooling.

The tape tuner is electronically controlled, with the digital readout, which can be remotely positioned. All operating modes can be remote controlled. Separate self-sync amplifiers are provided, located next to each channel amplifier, which are provided to VU meters. The machine also has switchable equalisation NAB/IR, and tape speeds 7½ and 15 ips. The stereo ¼ inch model of the A-80 costs £1,673 complete; the eight track model costs £5,320; and the 16 track model £9,800. All prices complete.

Also in the Studer range, the O89 mixing console type 002 attracted favourable attention, while from the Neumann catalogue the Automatic Computer Controlled Neumann Disc Cutting Mastering System went down exceptionally well. This system includes the BMS 66 disc-cutting lathe, the VG 66 amplifier rack, the SX 68 stereo cutter head, the SP66G control rack.

Bauch also exhibited a comprehensive range of Neumann microphones and EMT electronic equipment.

TELEFUNKEN

The sole exhibit on the Telefunken stand, albeit a highly successful one, was the Magnetophon M28A, a professional model that attracted much attention, highly priced though it is at £575.

Features on the M28A abound. Its head assembly is interchangeable, the heads being manufactured by a process that renders them replacement or adjustment free during the normal running life of the machine. Modular construction and solid state electronics are employed throughout the machine, facilitating maintenance and repairs; and tape transport controls are relay operated by fingertip control illuminated push buttons, which electrically interlock.

Mixing facilities on the M28A must rank among its

finer features. They are extremely comprehensive, the machine having four inputs which may be mixed in various ways. Two of these inputs are balanced, being suitable for use with moving coil or condenser microphones, while the other two are suitable for use with record players and other like sources, although they may be modified for microphone use by the simple addition of transformers. Each input has a slide attenuator and a preset level control, with a two channel monitoring and VU meter amplifier.

Other features of the M28A include three motor tape transport, giving extremely stable speed control at 3¾ and 7½ ips, while indirect drive ensures that even at slow speed, a large diameter capstan with a heavy flywheel may be employed to give speed constancy.

Other versions of the M28A the M28B and M28C, are available also, these having tape speeds of 7½ and 15 ips and without mixing facilities and the monitoring and VU meter amplifier.

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● **Relay-operated transport control** operated by illuminated push buttons requiring only fingertip operation.

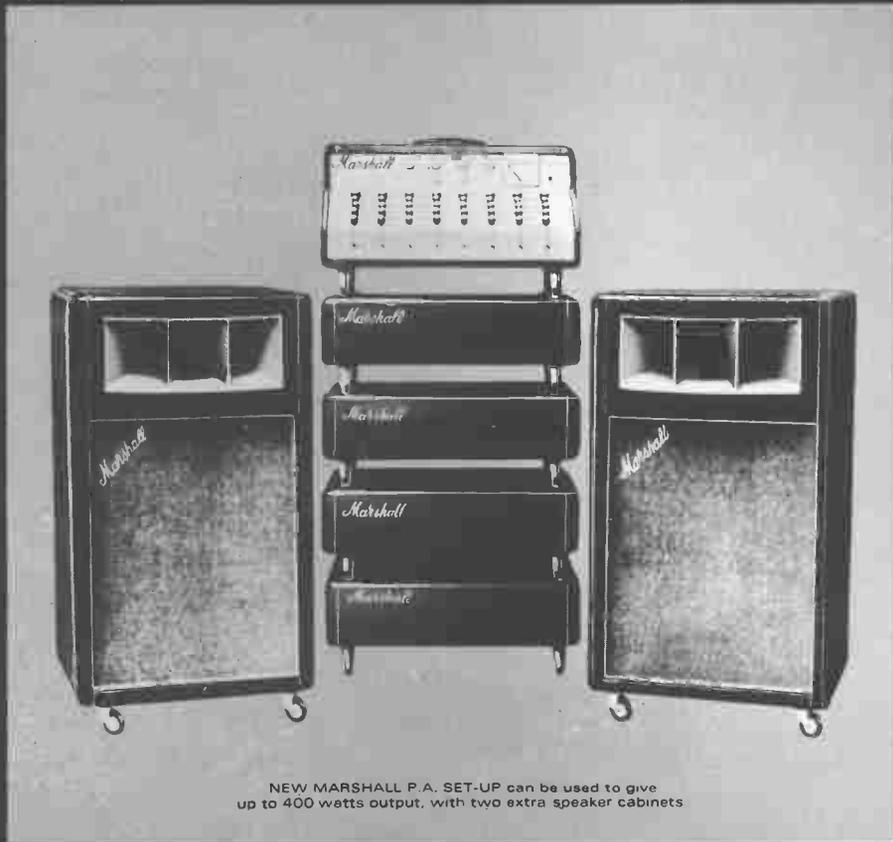
● **Interchangeable head assembly** comprising half-track, stereo, erase, record and playback heads, is mounted on a single rigid plate fixed to the main chassis. It is normally not necessary to replace or adjust heads during the normal life of the machine.

● **Two-channel monitoring and VU-meter amplifier** can be switched to two modes. In the 'before-tape' mode the amplifier is connected to the output of the mixer, while in the 'off-tape' mode it is connected to the output of the replay amplifier. Two large VU-meters calibrated to international standard are provided.

Broadcast-studio versions Models 28B and 28C are provided with tape speeds of 15 and 7½ ips, but have no mixing or monitoring and VU-meter amplifier. Model 28B is equipped with full-track heads. Model 28C has two-track heads and track selector switch.

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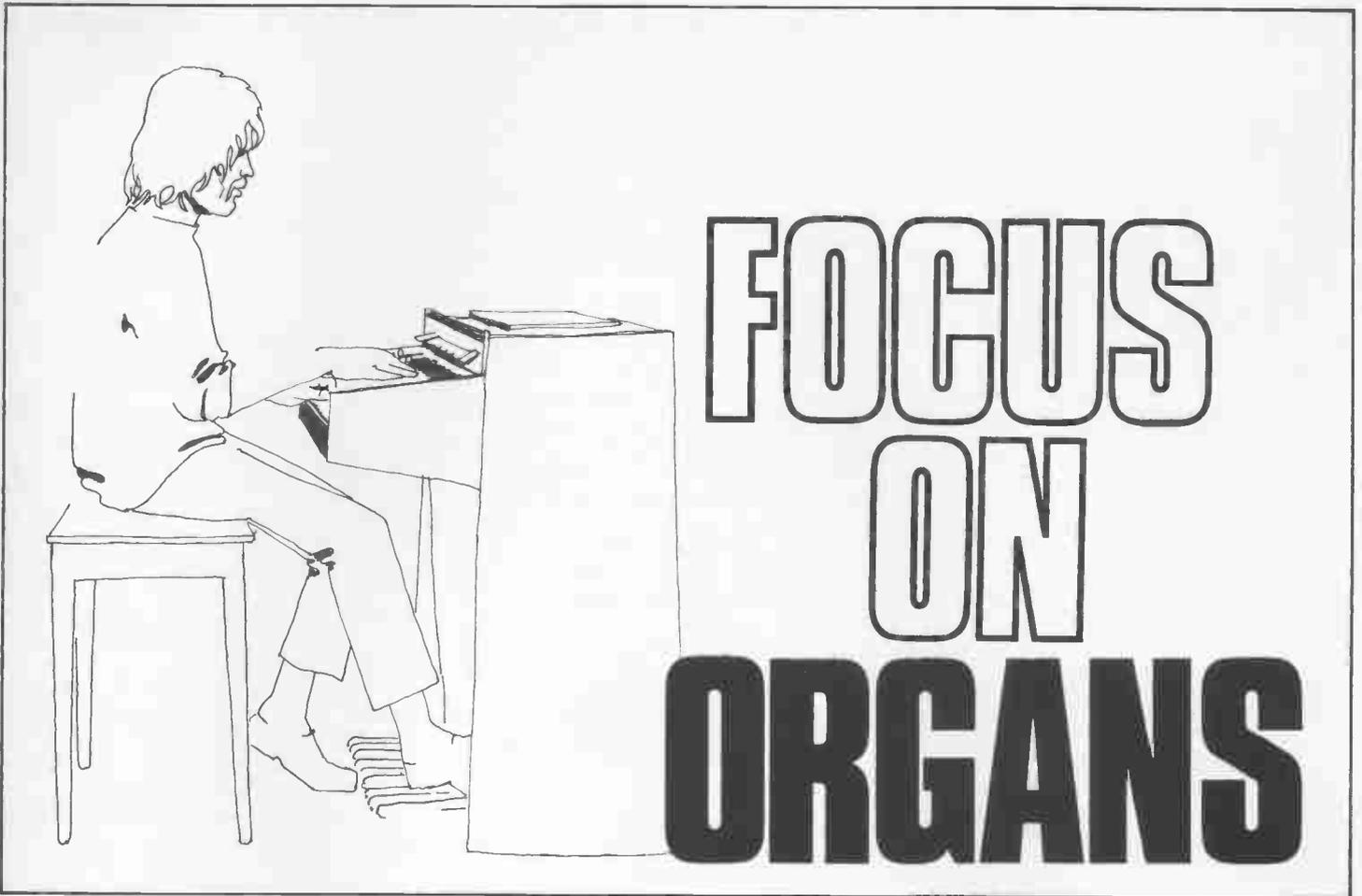
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B.I. 8/70



ORGANS are here, very much a basic part of any group line-up and are now almost as established as drums, or even guitars themselves.

Today the organ has largely lost the mystique it once had. The days of *House Of The Rising Sun*, and the simple excitement generated by the *sound* of the instrument alone have faded. More is required in 1970 than the ability to hold a few chords, or to waffle a few riffs around a 12-bar. Just as the evolution of the guitar produced, by cause and effect, the Guitar Star, so, several years on the most exhaustive testbed of all—professional use by professional musicians—have brought about the emergence of organ virtuosi: artists like Keith Emerson, Jon Lord, Al Kooper, Garth Hudson, and many others.

But has the instrument kept pace with the talent?

The organ, with its vast and complicated array of manuals, pedals, pipes, pistons and stops, has traditionally been the most complex and demanding of musical instruments. Almost every instrument has been a unique installation, the design of which was dictated by several conflicting factors: the size and shape of the building, the acoustical properties of the auditorium, and the amount of

money available. The organist, therefore, had to cope with differing console layouts and a totally dissimilar tonal characteristic every time he sat down to play an unfamiliar instrument.

The rise of the electronic, mass-produced instrument changed this altogether. The use of miniature components meant several things: the instrument was portable, it was relatively cheap, and therefore ceased to be the exclusive property of a minority of adherents. It fell under the public eye *via* the increasing use of the instrument by professional band-musicians.

Little change

Today's instrument is largely the same, in conception, as the early pre-war experiments in electronic and generator organs. The most significant development has been in the replacement of valves by transistors—with all the obvious benefits in weight-saving and reliability. Yet it is interesting to note that, apart from the use of transistors, the organ companies are still producing what is virtually the same instrument, in concept, as their early series. Their energies seem to have been almost exclusively devoted

to Packaging the Product, and what improvements *have* been made are usually of a minor nature, e.g., built-in wah-wah, built-in Leslie, increased portability facilities, etc.

Developments

Other instruments similar to the organ have been developed and threaten to take its place. The Mello-tron, for example, has become a byword among musicians. Although beset with early teething problems (and by virtue of its price commanding a limited market) it is not only less expensive than many modern organs, but in concept has come far closer to what the organ should always have been—the Advanced Musical Instrument capable of endless varieties of sound and effect, transforming the organist into something more than a mere musician.

There are many other examples. The Moog, for instance, has come a long way, and doubtless has farther to go. But it too, has taken a refreshingly new look at the business of making music. At present, portability is the obvious drawback, apart from the price. But it cannot be long before a Gig-Synthesizer is available to the group musician on modest terms.



Rosetti Sapphire II



Rosetti Tornado III



The Hohner Planet 'N' being played by Brian Chatton (left) and Rod Mayall of Flaming Youth

Basically there are two types of organ; the electronic and the reed, the former being by far the most popular.

The electronic organ is as the name implies, a box containing rows of transistors—although valves are still used in older models—resistors, condensers, rotating wheels and other electronic gadgetry all designed to give an ever increasing range of tones and pitch at the flick of a switch, press of a button, pull of a drawbar, etc. Almost all the electronic models on sale now have built in pre-amps and quite a large proportion have built in speaker units also, a few having twin speed rotary type speaker units, and even built in tape recorders.

The reed organ works on the same principal as the piano-accordion, vibrating reeds producing the sound, but even reed organs have given way to progress, electric motors now supply the air, gone are the days of the organist's son or best friend sitting behind the scenes with a large pair of bellows.

HOHNER

HOHNER, one of the world's most famous musical instrument makers, have a large selection of organs in their Farringdon Road showrooms, but we shall concentrate on the ones most likely to appeal to groups and instrumentalists.

The Hohner Symphonic 360 (£399) is a self-contained console model consisting of two manuals each with 44 piano keys, a 13 note pedal board, 19 voice controls and a 15 Watt amplifier. Both manuals have three

voices: 16', 8' and 4' on the upper and 8', 4' and 2' on the lower.

The model rapidly gaining in popularity is the Hohner Symphonic 410L, like the 360, is a two-manual, each having 44 keys and a total of 23 voices with a 13 note pedal board. There is a built in Leslie two-speed speaker and a 25 Watt transistor amp as well as a swell pedal. The 410 with bench retails at £499 and the 410L at £599.

New models

There are also two recent introductions to the Hohner range, these are: the Hohner Symphonic 600, a two manual cased instrument with 49 keys on both the sloped upper 6 voice and the lower flat 4 voice boards, all voices except 'mixture' have two stages of intensity. A 13 note pedal board and a foot swell are also included in this very portable kit, Hohner Orgaphon amplifiers are recommended.

The other new item is an electronic piano, outwardly very similar to a conventional piano but using the electronically amplified tuning fork system to produce the sound.

The recommended retail price of the electric piano is £255.

ROSETTI

DUE to the success over the last 12 months of the Tornado portable organs from Rosetti, the range has been increased by adding two further models under the name of Sapphire. Consequently, the electronic organ section of the Rosetti catalogue now offers four models:

The Tornado III; a portable organ with a suggested retail price of 115 guineas, is a three octave, fully integrated portable electronic organ with its own built-in amplifier, and constitutes a good self-contained instrument for both home and outside use.

The Tornado IV; a portable with a suggested retail price of 149 guineas; this is a four octave model, also with fully integrated circuits and own built-in amplifier and expression pedal.

The Sapphire I; with a retail price of £168, is a single manual console with fully integrated circuits, built-in amplifier and reverberation. This is also one of the more attractively styled models on the present market.

Finally, we come to the Sapphire II, with a retail price of £259. Similar to the Sapphire I but with two manuals incorporating, again, fully integrated circuits and built-in amplifier and reverberation.





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ROSE-MORRIS

ROSE-MORRIS are responsible for the Gem range of electronic organs, the most popular of which is the Imperial Duo; a two-manual instrument with 49 keys (C-C) on each deck, the lower with three footages and the upper with five plus tremolo, legato, percussion and sustain, additional features of this extremely attractive looking organ are detachable foot swell and pedal board, separate volume controls for percussion effects, reverb, sustain, vibrato and one of the most important points for a group player; it all breaks up into two carrying cases, a very good buy for anyone willing to pay £430 for an organ.

Gem have two models which they refer to as Home Organs—a misleading title as both are very suitable for group use; the Jumbo-Gem with 49 keys, six voices, built in amplifier and two 8" speakers as well as the normal vibrato and swell pedals. Smaller but otherwise very similar is the Gemini with a 37 note keyboard, one 8" speaker and amplifier. At £99 15s. 0d. this is designed to interest the young group with limited finances.



The Imperial Duo, most popular of the Rose-Morris range

SOUND SENSE - Lane

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JENNINGS

JENNINGS ELECTRONIC INDUSTRIES, the Dartford based company who have been building organs since 1950, have two models, the J.70 and the J.71, on sale at the moment, although a third piece should join their ranks by the end of this month. This will be a console unit with built in Twin Speed Speaker Unit and sell for something under £500.

All three instruments cover the entire frequency range from 16' to 1' pitch including all fractional footages. With the exception of the pitch controlling drawbars all manual controls are operated by flick tabs. A 'walking bass' is built into the bottom octave of the lower manual (the J.70 is claimed to be the world's only three-manual portable), band-pass filters to change the tonal character, independent footage selection of attack percussion and provision for manual control of a dual speed pulsation unit to obtain chorale and normal vibrato are standard on all three models. A Jennings Organ Amplifier and P.O.1 Mark II type twin speed Loudspeaker Unit is recommended for use with both the J.70 and J.71.



The Jennings J.71 3-manual portable organ

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Panther 2200

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Elka Consolette

This wonderful instrument has 16', 8' and 4' voices, reverberation, and its own built-in 10 watt amplifiers. The small console that packs the big orchestra sound.



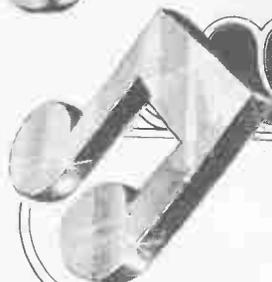
Panther 2100

Little brother to the 2200. 49 notes C to C. 12 voices. The tiny organ with the big sound.



Elka Minuette 910

Size for size and price for price the most versatile and sophisticated console organ in the world. Two manuals, 13 note pedal board, sustain on manuals, independently controlled reverberation on each manual, drum effects on pedals and lower manual, a really wonderful range of voices, and two built-in 15 watt amplifiers.



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B.I. 8/70

SELMER

SELMER have a range of 20 organs, selling under two brand names, Lowrey, and, of course, Selmer. In this article we shall take a cross section of models most popular with groups, beginning with the very small and portable Companion Major, a 37-key and 12 Chord-Button single manual retailing at £26 6s., just over half the price of the Dixie Melody (£49).

The Dixie Melody is a single manual with 37 keys, tabs for 8' string, 8' dispoison and vibrato. A 5-watt amplifier driving a Hi-Fi 8" speaker is built in with the tuneable generators and solid state amplifier, a collapsible stool is available as an optional extra.

Popular with more affluent groups, the Panther 2200 is a two manual unit with adjustable swivel stand for comfort when playing seated or standing, the upper manual has 44 notes compared with the lower 37; voices are: 16' Bourdon, 8' flute, strings, brass, reed, 4' flute, string, reed and mixture/percussion. 8' Diapason, cello, sax and horn. There is also a 13-note pedal board as an optional extra.

The last of the Selmer range we shall study here is the Elka Minuette 910, one of the more sophisticated organs in its price range incorporating two manuals (44 notes), 13-note pedal board, two 15-watt amplifiers, sustain on manual and pedals, percussion produced piano, spinet, harpsichord effects and independently controlled reverberation on both manuals. Drum effects are available on pedals and lower manual.

Two new developments on the range which deserve a mention: On the 'K' models there is a built-in Cassette Recorder enabling the player to record as he plays, play with a backing tape, or gain a double tracking effect. The other new item is the AR4 'Button-Box', an automatic rhythm at the flick of a switch, up to four of the eight Latin, seven American or three Traditional rhythms (or mixtures) may be played together.

HAMMOND

SINCE its introduction in 1935, the Hammond Organ has been acclaimed by the world's finest musicians. Hammond have a large range of organs—15 in all, many of which incorporate the famous Tone Wheel Generator, thereby alleviating tuning difficulties. The basic models are, of course, available in many different finishes—from Oak to Black Vinyl.

The model L.100 has proved very popular in the group world, usually used with a Leslie Tone Wheel Generator, incorporating tonebars and Hammond percussion and will produce what the makers refer to as the Hammond sound.

The Hammond T Series offers a somewhat more sophisticated specification and the model T.202/1, incorporates a wide variety of percussion voices, string bass tones for the pedals, built-in two-speed Leslie Speaker and rhythm unit.

Many top line musicians are currently showing a preference for the larger console type organs, such as the Hammond A.100. This model incorporates two 61-note keyboards and a 25-note pedal board with four sets of tonebars, touch response percussion, etc. The A.100 incorporates built-in amplification but a separate Leslie Tone Cabinet may be fitted.

Hammond have also introduced the X Series ranging from the HX.100, which is supplied complete with two matching tone cabinets, to the X.77 which, known as the 'Entertainer' utilises an exclusive multi-channel Leslie Tone Cabinet, and the incomparable X.66. The X.66 (recommended retail price £5,500) incorporates realistic percussion voices, including glockenspiel and piano. Orchestral voices can be superimposed above the normal tonebar settings or used independently, therefore, offering the broadest possible versatility.

A recent introduction which should interest the Hammond enthusiasts who cannot afford the X.66, the Cadette model, which has two 44-note keyboards and a 13-note pedal board and retails at under £300.



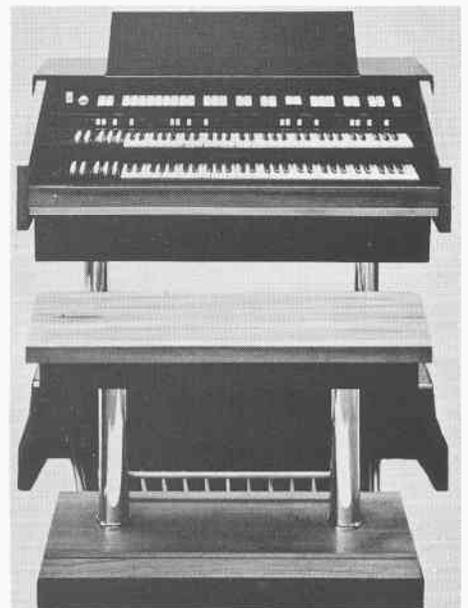
The Selmer Panther 2200



The Selmer Companion



The Hammond Cadette



The Hammond HX100

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BI's AUGUST COMPETITION

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Today's music is classed under dozens of headings, most of which have sprung up over the past ten years. Almost anyone would agree that Johnnie Cash could best be described as a country and western singer. What we want you to do to enter for our August competition to win that £250 organ above is to decide which of the following descriptions best fits the ten groups listed below as they are NOW. The descriptions you can choose from are: Rock and Roll (R & R), Folk Rock (FR), Underground (U), Head (H), Country & Western (C & W), Commercial (C), Rhythm & Blues (R & B), Folk (F), Teeny-Bopper (TB), Progressive (P), Jug Band (JB), Blues (B), Jazz Rock (JR), Country Rock (CR), Bubble-gum (BG).

- | | | | |
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TO ENTER

- 1 Study the list of groups above and decide which of the descriptions, Country & Western, Rock & Roll, etc., best describe each one.
- 2 List your answers on the pre-paid reply card which you will find inserted in this issue of BEAT INSTRUMENTAL. There is no need to write out the description in full. You can use the abbreviations which have been put in brackets after each description—e.g. for Rock and Roll, just put R & R.
- 3 Write your name and address—in capital letters, please—in the appropriate space on the readers reply card, together with the instruments you play.
- 4 Tick any catalogues you would like from the instrument manufacturers or other advertisers listed on the card.
- 5 Post your entry to arrive at our offices by 1st September 1970. DON'T FORGET TO AFFIX A 4d. STAMP TO THE CARD.
- 6 Each reader can only send in one entry.
- 7 The judges decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into after the competition.
- 8 The winner of the £250 organ will be given in the October issue of BEAT INSTRUMENTAL & INTERNATIONAL RECORDING STUDIO.

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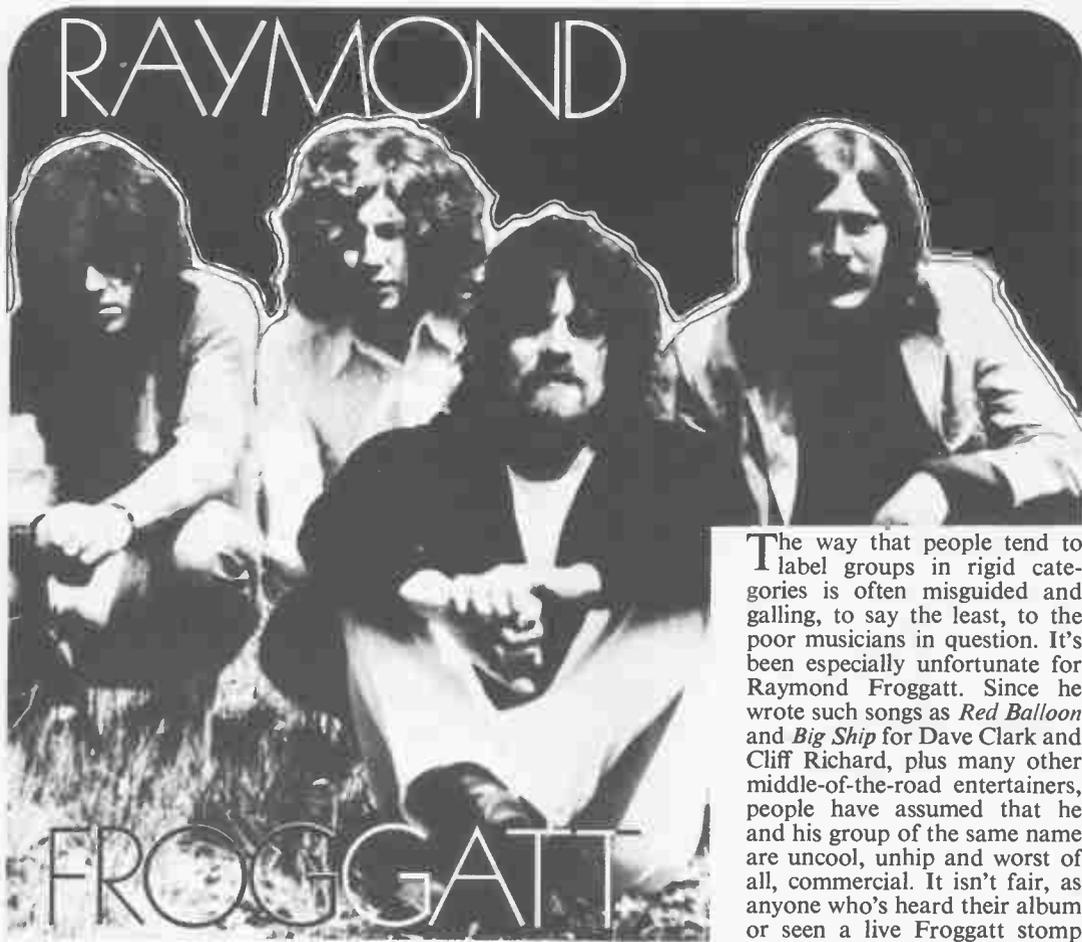
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will agree. While perhaps not threatening Zappa, Raymond Froggatt play good solid stuff, a mixture of their own songs spiced up with Dylan and Byrds numbers.

The band was formed six years ago in Birmingham, where they are still based, and the four original members are still together and the best of friends. Raymond plays guitar and sings, Hartley Cain plays lead guitar, Lew Clark plays bass and does the arrangements, and Lenny Ablethorpe is on drums. They recently made it to London to record one of their frequent radio spots—they reckon to do a broadcast once a week on average—so I seized the chance to have a talk with them.

The way that people tend to label groups in rigid categories is often misguided and galling, to say the least, to the poor musicians in question. It's been especially unfortunate for Raymond Froggatt. Since he wrote such songs as *Red Balloon* and *Big Ship* for Dave Clark and Cliff Richard, plus many other middle-of-the-road entertainers, people have assumed that he and his group of the same name are uncool, unhip and worst of all, commercial. It isn't fair, as anyone who's heard their album or seen a live Froggatt stomp

First of all, the dreaded problem of Image. The Froggatt crew don't appeal exclusively to either straights or heads. 'A lot of people carry the wrong impression of us,' said Lew. 'They've got to see us live.' Said Raymond, 'Our main concern is to get over that we aren't a bunch of squares and that we aren't a Dave Clark sort of band. We just do what we want to do.' The group have had seven singles out, none of which really caught on, though they've had big hits on the Continent.

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Their version of *Red Balloon*, to which they refer by its correct name of *Callow-la-Vita*, came closest, but distribution problems held it back. Their one and only album, *The Voice And Writing Of Raymond Froggatt*, has sold steadily over the year it's been out, and though it was recorded getting on for two years ago, and the group have improved considerably, it stands up well. Their version of *Corrina Corrina* bears comparison with both Dylan's and Taj Mahal's masterpieces.

Their new single, *A Matter Of Pride*, was released on the day of the interview. Written, as usual, by Raymond, a lot hangs on its success. Unlike many, the band believe that a hit single is what opens doors: 'Getting a record in the top ten is the break. People know who you are and are more likely to accept what you do. It would also get us on television and would give us more control as to what and how we do our recording.' The immediate future hinges on the single, but the group have songs ready to do their second album as soon as they can get time in the studio.

Even after six years, at least three of which were spent in dire shortage of money, the band

have kept their enthusiasm for music and have resisted the temptation to cash in on crazes. They realise they could have gone underground with long 12-bars, significant lyrics and blues grunts, but as Lew says, 'We've never sunk to that; we think it's best to stick to what you're good at. The result is that we get much more appreciation wherever we play. Things are better now than ever before for us.'

This doesn't mean that they don't experiment. They've done several concerts with an orchestra, Lew having written the parts, including one at Ronnie Scott's a year ago. 'I'd conducted other musicians before for records, so I wasn't too worried about it. The acoustics were great, a lot of people came to hear it, everything went beautifully. When the strings were playing you could have heard a pin drop.' With Lew conducting, John Weider stood in on bass. Another Froggatt innovation was, believe it or not, a mighty electric 18-string guitar, sounding somewhere between a harpsichord and a sitar, which Hartley designed and built.

Apart from their undoubted musical expertise, one of the group's strongest assets is

Raymond's songwriting talent. Anything he writes is quickly gobbled up by other artists. 'I'm lucky,' he says. 'I can always think up melodies, whether they're good or not, which come to me very easily. I suppose,' he says, 'it's a sort of gift from God. I've never had any formal training.' Lew once attempted to explain the mysteries of musical theory to him, 'but I got bored after the first lesson. I think it can often be a disadvantage anyway—you tend to stick too closely to the rules. You can do what the hell you want if you don't know what you're supposed to do. And nowadays musicians will try to play anything you put before them, which is tremendous.' At this point Lew remembered the time when he wrote a part for violas in the wrong key: 'Even though it sounded totally diabolical, we couldn't get the session men to stop. They thought it was what we were trying to do.' Unlike their fellow-Brummies the Moody Blues, Froggatt and Co. prefer to use trained musicians rather than grapple with other instruments. 'You get the best then, don't you? We can play guitars, bass and drums best, so that's what we do.'

Raymond's long-time hero has been Bob Dylan, but he surely isn't a copier. 'At one time I used to actually try and write for other people, the Euro-vision contest and things like that. My publisher, who thinks Des O'Connor is a gas, used to keep getting on to me to turn out that sort of songs. I did it just for him really.' What does Raymond think of the sort of songwriter who keeps churning out nice, bland ditties like sausages? 'These writers are important even if they aren't the most progressive-minded people in the world. They write purely as a business, and they do it well, so I can't knock them. Their songs are important to a lot of people. But as far as I'm concerned, I think it's a duty to go further than that. I know I've changed and developed a lot over the last couple of years. The songs for *Wishgiver*, the new album, are a lot more sophisticated than before.'

And while the group are certainly getting more sophisticated altogether, they don't go flying above their audiences' heads, and it's working out. 'We're just going along on our own way. What we want to keep on doing is to play the music we like.' R.S.

CARLSBRO & KEEF HARTLEY ENTERTAIN



THE GERMANS

During their recent visit to Germany, The Keef Hartley Band played to thousands of people at a vast open air concert.

The photograph shows a general view of the scene from the rear of the stage.

As usual their amplification equipment was powerful enough and entirely reliable, and the manufacturers (Carlsbro Sound Equipment, of Mansfield, Notts.) should feel proud of the praise given to it by Keef Hartley.

LED ZEPPELIN



Michael Putland

WHEN Keith Moon suggested to a newly formed group of four musicians, of whom only one was well known, that they call themselves 'Led Zeppelin', he can hardly have known that within months the group would have acquired a reputation to rival that of the Who themselves. Yet never was a group's name to prove more in keeping with their colossal reputation and the overpowering intensity of their music. If there were to be a visual depiction of Led Zeppelin's music it would surely be nothing other than the gigantic conflagrating airship that occupies the cover of their first album.

When Led Zeppelin first formed, no one could have foreseen the impact that the group would make on the contemporary music scene. Here was ex-Yardbird Jimmy Page, admittedly a guitarist with a considerable reputation, but with three players virtually unknown to the majority of rock music fans, and who together had formed yet another loud and raucous British blues band where there were already too many for the scene to support. Their early gigs in Britain attracted scant attention—they were branded as 'just another blues group', or 'a second Cream', and it was not until the group toured the States in early '69 that their reputation began to grow, and grow, and grow. Until by the time their first album was released in the spring of '69, the group was being acclaimed as 'the heaviest rock band in the world'.

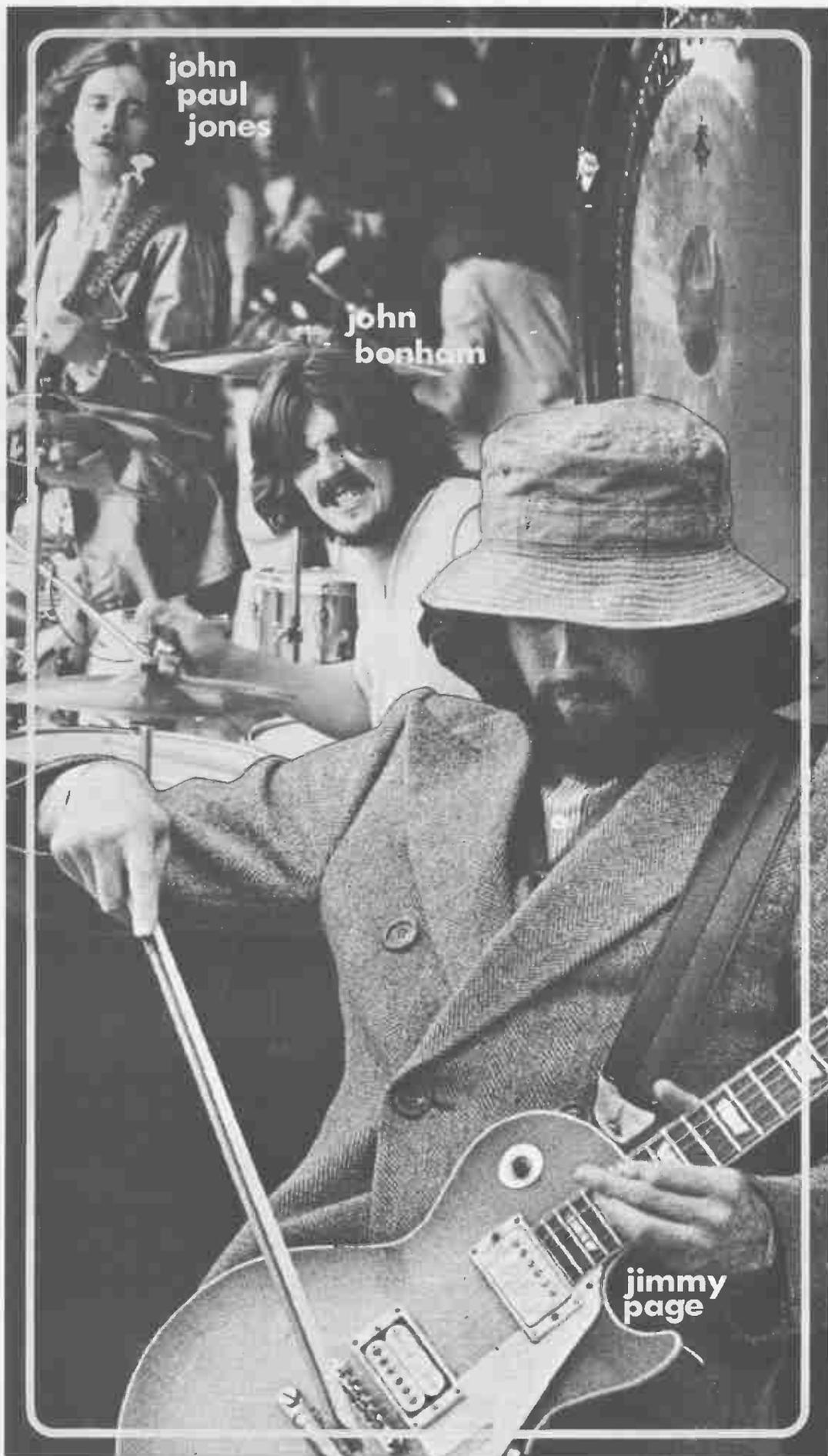
What is the quality that has projected Led Zeppelin from virtual obscurity to being the world's greatest rock band inside a year, selling more records than even the Beatles—last year alone 5,000,000 were sold. I talked to drummer John Bonham while he made a brief but explosive visit to the nation's capital, to delve a little deeper into the musical identity of the band. Far from being the self-conscious superstar that one might expect, John proved to

be open, likeable, and uninhibited, unaffected by the burden of superstardom. Playing obviously remains his focal point, the activity against which the wealth and fame are still measured. I asked John how it felt to be selling more records than anyone on the planet?

'Great! Led Zeppelin was the first time I ever made money from my playing. Before that I used to play in a group called Robert Plant and the Band of Joy, and I also backed Tim Rose when he was over here. I've been playing about four years now—I used to borrow from my Mum and Dad and do labouring sometimes to make a living. You just have to keep your morale up and hope when you're in that position.'

Fortunately, John Bonham's hope was rewarded when Led Zeppelin crashed into the musical world, and he was able to realise some of his ambitions, like playing a drum solo at Carnegie Hall, New York, and purchasing his very own Rolls Royce. Despite this, music comes first. 'When you start playing you have things you want to reach, but by the time you've done them the thrill's gone. Once you pass that stage, you're back into your music—it's what you start from and what you get back into ...'

Unlike many of the more famed bands, Led Zeppelin are still playing regular concert dates, both in this country and throughout the world, and it was this, coupled with the quality of the albums, that John thought was the real key to Led Zeppelin's success. 'The album is nothing without you playing to promote it. The people had a product they could go and see performed on stage, and then go and buy next day in the record shop. Supergroups and that are getting out of hand, with all the breakups and so on. There's an audience, and you can't go on stage and play for yourself, not when you're charging admission.'



Michael Putland / Barry Plummer



Barry Plummer

'This all comes to you courtesy of Mr. Cow and Gate.' Robert Plant at Shepton Mallet, and overleaf the rest of Zeppelin

But though their extensive touring has undoubtedly helped to put *Led Zeppelin 1 and 2* into practically every album chart in the world, John also pointed out the arduous of life on the road; irregular hours and meals, endless hotel rooms and plane flights, plus the various unpredictable incident. 'Anything to do with the hotel part of touring I don't like; there are times when you sit down and say "I wanna go home". It's not the playing—I could do that all day. There was once in Indianapolis when there was almost a fight in the hotel bar—these blokes were taking the mick out of our long hair, calling us sissies and so on. Which is ridiculous.'

Talk of hard touring also brought us into conversation about the problems of life as a rock group, and the pressures of living on top of each other. 'We're pretty easy going with each other, we don't look for trouble. I don't think that four blokes can live together on their own, like some supergroups who

go to a cottage to get it together. You've got to be together, but not every hour of the day. If they decided to enjoy each other's music and respect each other, it would work. Everyone in Led Zeppelin is completely different, and that helps.

It also pays not to take what other people say about you too seriously. They say you're breaking up and so on, but it's not true. We're only just starting, we've got so much to do. We want to play in England for a start and do more concerts here, and then we may be doing a tour of Japan and Australia.'

Reassured that the world's finest rock outfit is definitely *not* making any plans to break up and pursue their own private musical fantasies, we got down to talking of their actual music, and the shape of things to come from Zeppelin. 'When we first formed we got branded as a second Cream, but I don't think we sound anything like them; if people had listened to the records they'd know that. We've been

recording the new album, *Led Zeppelin Three*, which should be out soon. We can record quite quickly; a lot of the tracks we do are two or three takes (note: *Led Zeppelin One* was made in three weeks). It's very difficult comparing this album with the others, there's a lot of acoustic stuff on it, and I've written a couple of heavy things by way of complete contrast. But we all contribute. If you start off with a bare guitar riff you still need rhythm and so on.'

Viking country

John still lives near his native Birmingham, just outside in viking country, Worcestershire. He doesn't like London; not just the hustle and hassle of big city life, but the bored and trivial gossip of the swinging London Rockelite. 'I'd go out and get p—d,' he said, 'but not down the Speak-easy.' John has been described as the extrovert of the group, and while he's quite settled, with a wife and a

little boy at home, he obviously needs a lot of outgoing energy to propel a group like Zeppelin. He plays 'a big kit, with a snare drum that sounds like a tommy gun,' and it sounds great.

Zeppelin recently played their first live gig in Britain since they returned from globe-trotting; at the Bath (Shepton Mallet) festival. It was an incredible performance and the group played for nearly three hours, roaring through standards like *Whole Lotta Love* and *Good Times Bad Times*, and earning themselves no less than five encores. Robert Plant got everybody to sing the *Lemon Song*, and Jimmy Page, dressed like a Somerset yokel, played some very earthy guitar, which the 200,000 strong crowd obviously appreciated. All of which made Robert Plant say how glad he was that the band was back on home soil after their taste of a troubled America. The crowd let Zeppelin know that they were glad to have them back.
N.S.

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What's happening in the world of jazz? B.I. looks at two players who may be altering the course of modern music



Valerie Wilmer

TONY WILLIAMS

THE critics seem to have flushed the great jazz meets rock controversy out of their system for the time being, and Chicago, Blood Sweat and Tears, Colosseum and others are somehow managing to go on their way very successfully without identification labels. But while the fuss drew attention to these bands, one incredible pioneering band, going way beyond either rock or jazz, popped up at the wrong time and didn't get spotted by most. It's the Tony Williams Lifetime, formerly a trio with Williams on drums, Larry Young on organ and John McLaughlin on guitar. Recently Jack Bruce joined the band for a record, which means that they won't be unknown for long.

At present the group can be heard only on a double-album set recorded in May last year, *Emergency!* on Polydor, which was made as a trio. Very much a drummer's album, the emphasis is on heavy, complex rhythms with inspired improvisation by Young and McLaughlin on the patterns laid down by Williams.

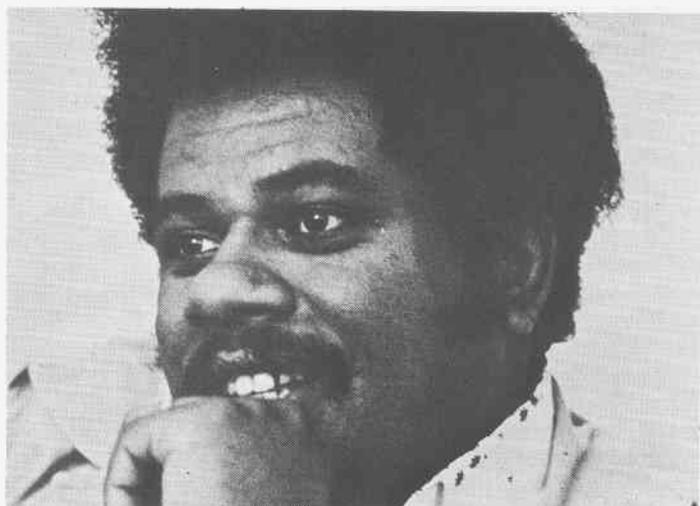
Williams says, 'To me it is the best of everything, like a combination of the last 15 years, of everything I've learned. I don't care what people call it. If you like something, don't hide from it, do it! My idea was to create my own audience where I didn't have to compete with any musician's concept, and not let rock, not let jazz or any other form dictate my musical development.'

Jack Bruce said, just after Cream packed up: 'What I'm

playing is just a sort of jazz. I couldn't play with Miles Davis or anything—I couldn't even jam with people like that—because the music that's happening here is a sort of local thing. It's not like American Jazz; it's just our version of it.' But the Lifetime's second album, *Turn It Over*, to be released in mid-July shows that Jack, if not playing with Miles, which seems to be on the cards anyway, can add an awful lot to the music of a Davis veteran. He fits in perfectly.

McLaughlin and Jack are both products of that amazing English scene which, if you go back ten years or so, included Graham Bond, Dick Heckstall-Smith, Jon Hiseman, Ginger Baker and many other heavies who tried to inject a bit of life into the cool, watery British jazz of the day. They seem to have ended up playing good rock but the Tony Williams lifetime is a product of hands across the water. Two American leaders have joined forces with two British front-runners. The only possible flaw in the Lifetime is nothing musical. It's just that Williams chooses to use the spoken word to get his message to the world, which would have sounded a lot less pretentious had it been sung.

Nonetheless, the music is a revelation. If you want to hear something which is, in the words of San Francisco critic Ralph Gleason, 'absolutely unlike any other instrumental sound I have ever heard . . . wild, mysterious power', then have a listen to the Tony Williams Lifetime.



Valerie Wilmer

SONNY SHARROCK

Sonny Sharrock is a free guitarist, what some people would call an avant-garde player. He comes from just outside New York City, has been playing now for 11 years, since he was 19, and has been singing for longer still. He used to be lead voice in an all black vocal harmony group, one modelled on outfits like the Platters and the Dells, which is pretty far removed from the music he's involved with now. Which is the avante-garde of jazz, or free music, depending on your use of labels.

I talked to Sonny about his music while he was staying on London *en route* to the Montreux Jazz Festival, where he was playing with Herbie Mann and the Family of Mann. Sonny played on Herbie's latest album, *Stone Flute*, a record that has been riding high in the US album charts for the last few months, and which has just been released in this country by Polydor; it's the sort of jazz that rock fans like. 'My own music isn't like that,' explained Sonny. 'I'm a free player—free music doesn't use chord changes or time, if you're playing time you're not playing free. I don't play lines, I like to start off with a sound. I play things simultaneously. I'm not even sure how I do it.'

To explain more fully what free music is, Sonny talked of some of the musicians who play it, 'There are only a handful of real free players, people like Pharoah Saunders and Archie Shepp, Milford Graves and Sonny Murray are the only free

drummers—Tony Williams and Elvin Jones are both fine drummers, but they play time. There are no other free guitar players that I know of; I'm the only one.'

Anyone who has listened to a record of free music will know that it is anything but easy listening; in fact, it's likely to sound a discordant and meaningless jumble of sounds, not even music in fact. Sonny explained that this is because it is primarily black music. 'African music is thousands of years old, and it's very rhythmic, so why bother to play time when it's been so fully explored? Coltrane shattered chord sequences. What free players have done is to drop all white American music, all European influences on what they play. Free players use *energy*, for example Elvin Jones, though not a free player, has this *energy*. I don't think rock music has it, rock is not physical music.' (Unfortunately Sonny had never witnessed a performance by Pete Townsend.)

Evidently free music, whether solely the prerogative of black players or not, isn't for everyone; and Sonny doesn't expect it to be. He doesn't like over-compartmentalising music ('There must have been some cat in the past laying labels on things and breaking it all up'), and is still an avid collector of R & B records. 'I just want everybody to do what they can,' he said. And if you want to sample what Sonny can do, then you might try to listen to his album, *Black Woman*, which is available on import on the Vortex label.

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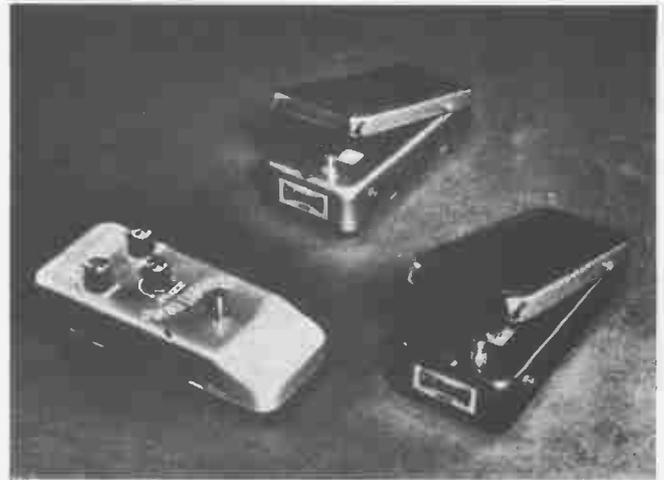
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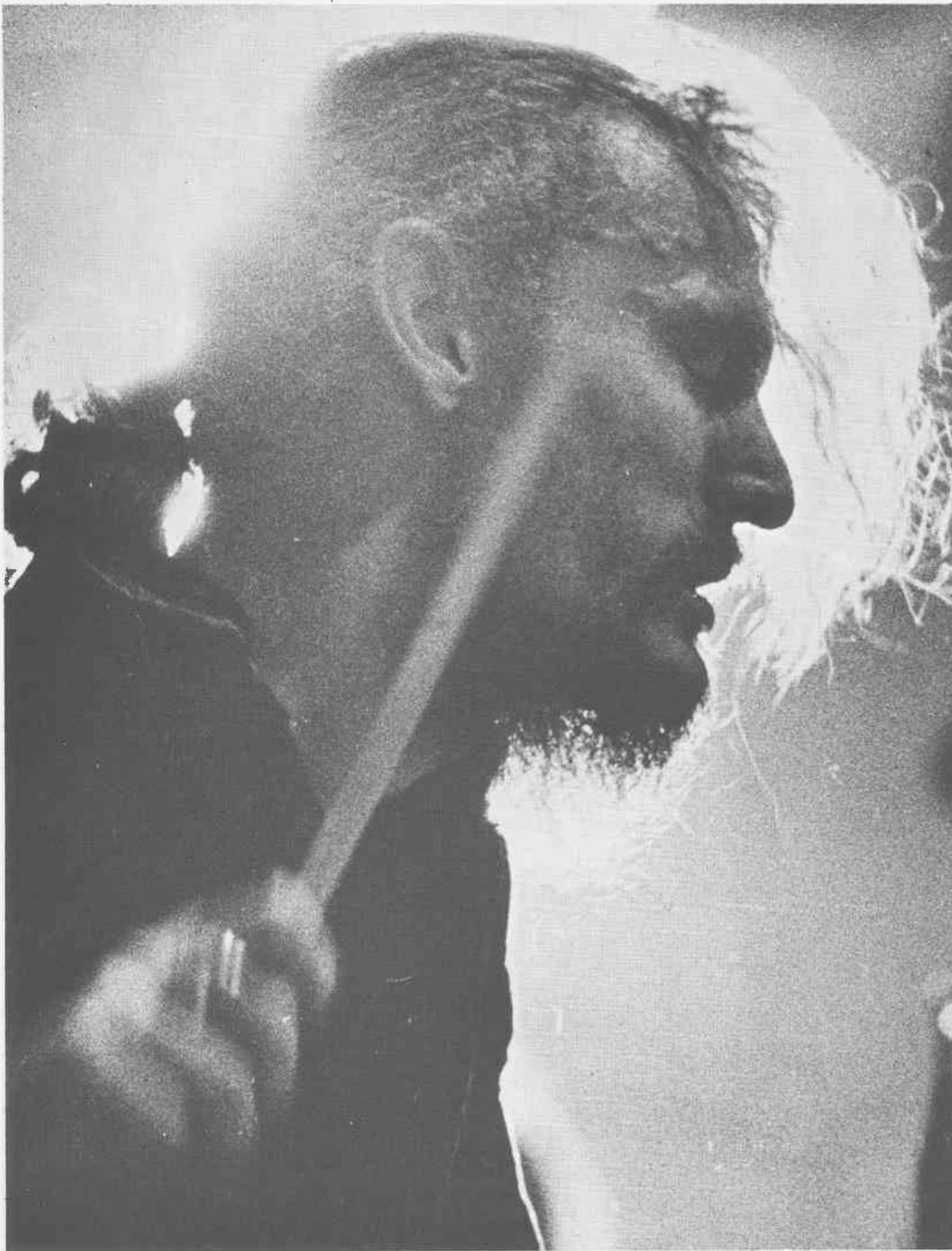
'It's in the bag' says Kenny Clarke



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Well, you see, it's like this. 'Most so-called supergroups are launched on a wave of totally unwarranted publicity, are monumentally incapable of actually appearing on a stage, and can only be guaranteed to drive you to total boredom in a matter of weeks (or months) with their unending story of splits and "disagreements on musical policy." **HOWEVER**, every once in a while a supergroup that deserves that ridiculous title happens along out of nowhere, actually appears on stage and goes on tour, and continues to flourish as much as *six months* after its birth. Ginger Baker's Airforce are one such band—a supergroup with a difference.'

The difference is just that. Airforce are off touring the United States, are working on a third album, and are still together even though the band originally started for one specific gig at the beginning of the year. They also deserve the title supergroup because that is the only way to describe an outfit containing names like Baker, Ric Grech (who looked like becoming superdupe of the supergroup fad), Graham Bond, Harold McNair and Denny Laine among others.

Even so, Airforce haven't totally escaped the supergroup's standard fate. A lot of people have been disappointed by their live performances, which appear to vary greatly in togetherness, while their first album, a live recording, has generally disappointed the listeners, and has even been described as diabolically bad by people who aren't prone to say anything nasty about anything. This proves

once again (if it needed proving once again which I doubt) that putting a bunch of good musicians on one stage does not automatically produce good music.

But with another album already recorded, Airforce may yet prove that it can produce the good music one would hope for, and while few people have raved about the band a lot have enjoyed its performances. The band themselves, however, are fairly happy with what they've done, as singer and guitarist Denny Laine told us.

'The group has gone through a lot of changes to get as far as it has musically,' said Denny in a hectic interview conducted while he gathered clothes from all corners of his flat to pack away to take to America. 'It's not going to change much more now, I think, and everyone is pretty satisfied. It was only started for a couple of gigs but it has developed from there because everyone enjoyed it so much.

'We've got much tighter and looser too if you know what I mean. They are all real professionals so there's no real problem getting together because everyone has been through all that before with other bands. The band isn't petty because there are too many people in it for that. I think it is mostly smaller groups where people get on each other's nerves.

'Airforce is something new for me. It's not going to last for-

ever, but I want to be part of it because of the music. It's great fun and it is an outlet for me, a release. After all the thinking I've been through over the past three years it's great just to be playing again. The people in the band amaze me because there is a lot that hasn't come out yet. The potential is really fantastic.'

The personnel who hope to realise that great potential are as follows: Ginger on drums; Denny singing and playing guitar; Steve Gregory on organ; Graham Bond, Harold McNair, and Bud Beede on saxes; Ric Grech playing bass; Diane Bond, Aliko Ashamen and Catherine James who are all singers; Remi Kabaka singing and African drums; Speedy Aquaye and Rocki Djidjornu also on African drums.

While the group are on their two-month long US tour, they are taking two weeks out to work recording their third album in Capitol's New York studios, and a film of the tour is to be made by Joe Masso, a friend of the group. 'I want to work in an American studio,' said Denny, 'and I'm looking forward to meeting their engineers and seeing what happens.'

Meanwhile, the second album has been completed and should be released soon. Unlike the first one, it is studio recorded at Trident with Denny, Ginger and Graham as co-producers. Looking back on the first LP Denny said, 'We just did the first live for a start off. We are obviously



Ric Grech: ex-Family, ex-Blind Faith. Almost the superdupe of the supergroups

a lot more together now because we are more in to what we are doing.'

Some of the tracks on number two are written by Ric, some from Harold McNair, some from Denny and Ginger, the rest being variations on established numbers, including *Sunshine Of Your Love* and the old Drifters song *I Don't Want To Go On Without You*.

I asked Denny if it wasn't hard getting numbers worked out with Ginger Baker being the centre point of a very large band that includes so many individual musicians. Denny replied, 'Ginger has got a very alert mind and knows not to complicate things unnecessarily. So it's really very easy to work out arrangements. It's really just very simple music with a lot going on underneath, which makes it sound more complicated than it is.'

Airforce of course, sees the old Bond-Baker combination working again and I wondered how this worked out now, some years after the time of Bond's Organisation. 'Ginger and Graham get on all right together but everyone needs everyone else,' said Denny. 'The one with the best idea and the guts to come out with it is always the best leader and Ginger is the organisational leader because

he knows best. After all, he has had the experience of the Cream and all that. Personally I couldn't take on all that responsibility.'

As to the future of the band, Denny said there were no definite plans for anything after the American tour. 'I don't know what happens then. I've been working with Alan White, an old friend of mine who played with the Plastic Ono Band in Toronto, and Trevor Burton. We've been recording together for quite a while. I'd like to take a couple of caravans round the world with the three of us. I'd like to do a moveable show and live away from cities as much as possible. They really aren't the life for me.'

Airforce has been going six months now and before that Denny spent a lot of his three years since leaving the Moody Blues travelling round the world. He spent a while in the Canary Islands playing with local guitarists and then stayed in Spain where he stayed with a gypsy guitarist called Dingo and his family. 'They are all really poor but they are really into their music. They really get into their surroundings. But then it's a different land and there's more to come out than there is out of Brum I suppose.'

M.H.



Bond back with Baker, now on saxes. Denny Lane on guitar

INSTRUMENTAL news

Oh me! Oh my!—Love that Humble Pie



Barry Plummer

What's been baking inside Humble Pie? No, the group haven't broken up, aren't in the highlands getting it all together, and haven't been doing any supersessions in Nashville with the rock star elite.

Instead, the group have signed a recording contract with A & M Records for what is described as 'an extraordinary amount of money', following the bankruptcy and dissolution of their former record stable, Andrew Loog Oldham's Immediate label. The group have been into the studio to record their first album for A & M, on which they've been collaborating with production man extraordinaire Glyn Johns, and the record should be released at the end of July.

Humble Pie also hope that they'll be giving the States another slice of their meaty music in early autumn, when they'll be doing a tour over there, and in the meantime they are gigging around the green and pleasant British Isles, 'to see people and play to them—that's what the band's all about.'

Tony Palmer's visual Rock

Tony Palmer, the producer of such famed films as *Rope Ladder To The Moon*—a story based on Jack Bruce; *All My Loving* and *Cream*, a 50-

minute film featuring the groups' final concert, has also recently completed films starring Mathews' Southern Comfort and Fairport Convention.

Guitar guide correction

In *Beat Instrumental's* Guitar Guide, published last month, the price of the Vox semi-acoustic VG2 guitar was mistakenly given as £81 15s. 9d. The correct price of this guitar is £51 15s. 9d.

Stolen gear

Mr Dick Denny of Jennings Industries had a load of instrumental gear stolen from his car when he played at King's Country Club, Pevensey Bay, on Thursday July 2. Included were a Gretsch Country Gentleman guitar, a Shure microphone, a Jennings Growler, and a case of sheet music. Personal possessions were also taken. Anyone who may be able to help Mr Denny to recover his property should contact him at 35 Frimpstead Road, Erith, Kent.

Jennings Goin'

The Herbie Goins are sampling that wonderful Italian sunshine for the next couple of months or more, between a host of Club engagements.

Two days before they left England, they travelled down to Dartford and collected over £1000 worth of Jennings Equipment and loaded up for the long journey overland by motor coach—nothing smaller would accommodate their line-up, which includes a Jennings Pulsation Unit, Organ Amplifier, 100 watt

Bass Amp, a 100 watt Lead, a 100 watt P.A. Amp, four 4-speaker Columns, etc.

Cambridge Folk

The Cambridge Folk Festival is to take place again this year on July 31 and August 1 and 2, and will be headed by the Pentangle. Held in the grounds of Cherry Hinton Hall, the festival will spotlight traditional and contemporary folk music from Great Britain, Ireland, and the United States, and included in the bill are Stefan Grossman, Mike Seeger, Ralph McTell, Jo Ann Kelly, Bridget St. John, Third Ear Band, and the Pentangle, who will also be performing as solo artists.

The festival has become a sort of unofficial convention for Britain's folk enthusiasts, and besides the big names, there is also a chance to see young, up and coming artists in the folk club tents.

Slim Harpo dies

Slim Harpo, the well-known American blues singer whose album *Slim Harpo—He Knew The Blues* was released this month on the Blue Horizon label has died following a sudden heart attack. Songs written by Harpo have been more popular in this country than the man himself, his best known recordings here have been *I'm A King Bee* and the Johnny Cash classic *Folsom Prison Blues*.



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Be Glad — for the song has no ending



The first London showings of a new colour film of the Incredible String Band take place between June 29 and July 12 at the Hanover Grand Cinema in Hanover Street. The film, entitled *Be Glad*, runs for 50 minutes and includes a sequence shot on

location in Wales. Seats cost 10s. The String Band also have a double album released on Polydor at the end of July. Called *U*, it is the music to their mystical pantomime of that name, performed earlier this year at the Roundhouse.

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BLODWYN PIG are one of the few outcrops of group split-ups who not only have been successful in their own right, but have kept their original line-up, concentrating on improving and expanding existing ideas.

Formed some 18 months ago when Mick Abrahams split from Jethro Tull, Blodwyn Pig features Mick on lead guitar and vocals, Andy Pyle on bass guitar, Ron Berg on drums and the redoubtable Jack Lancaster on flute, saxes, electric violin and anything else that doesn't bite when you pick it up.

With a very successful first album, *Ahead Rings Out*, which was issued over a year ago, and a second, *Getting To This*, still enjoying good sales, things still look good for the Pig, but they had nevertheless gone through a period of internal strife brought about by delays in their departure on a second tour of the States.

When the confirmation of their tour finally came through, we found Jack and Mick in understandably cautious mood, still with fingers crossed against anything going wrong at the last moment.

However, they were more than pleased to discuss the progress of the Pig to date, and Mick it was who ventured the first comment.

'Musically, the band's better than ever, the sound is tighter and ideas are flowing more easily.

'Our first album, was more raw than the second, and represented everything we did in our stage act at that time, whereas *Getting To This* had a lot more in it: lyrically it was better, the production was better and we had a lot more time to do it in.

'Some of the tracks on the new one couldn't be done on stage. *Send Your Son To Die*, for example, was essentially a three-part harmony piece with a

big band backing which would be impossible to reproduce on stage with our line-up.'

However, Jack's *San Francisco Sketches* is among those which will be included in the live act, although it's been retitled *Variations On . . .* as a concession to the absence of harmony and multi-tracking.

Commenting on his West Coast sound on this suite, Jack described it as 'a blast from the past'. Although his tastes in sax players range from Parker and Getz to Zappa and Coltrane, Jack sees his own musical development as something apart from them.

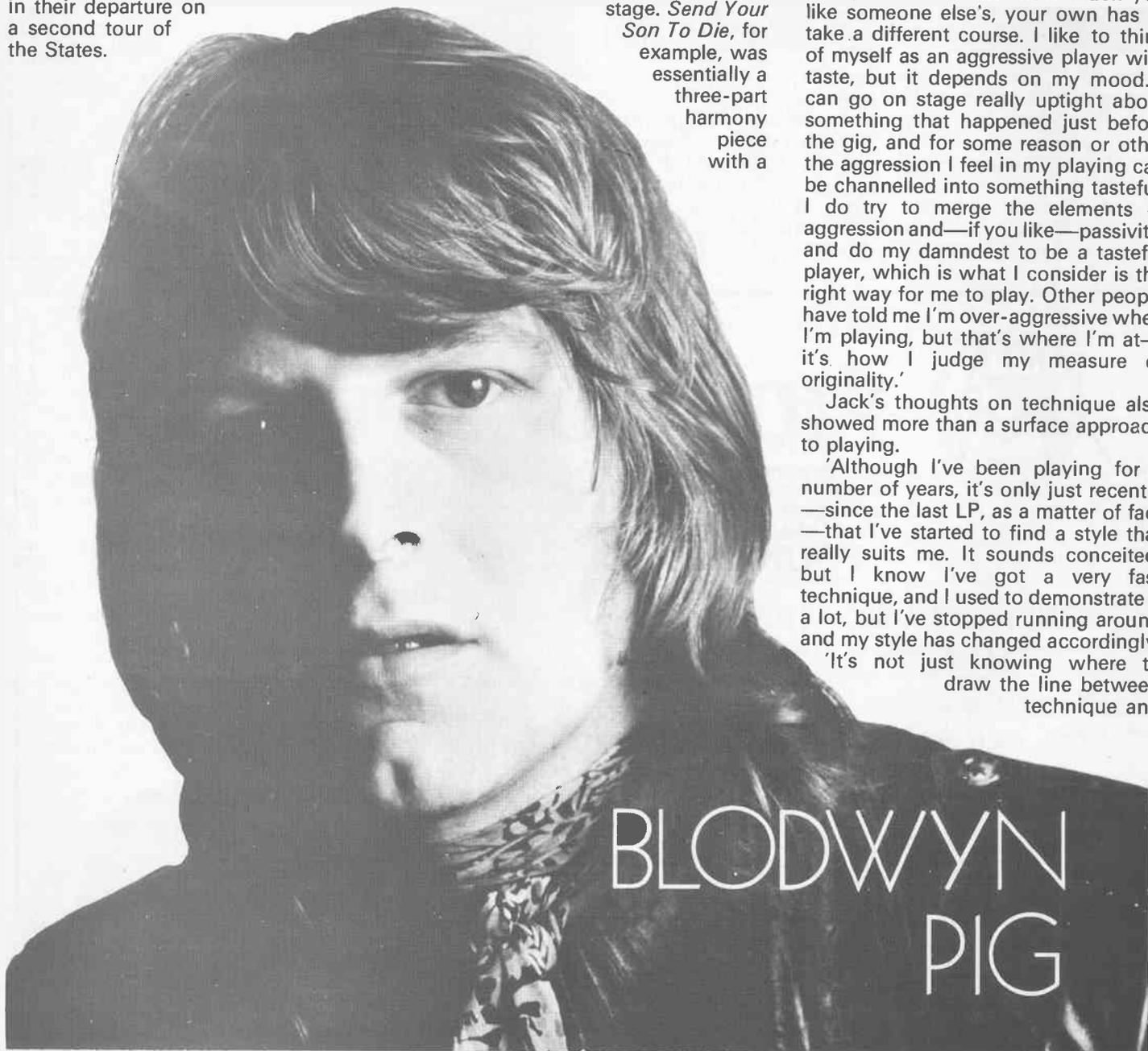
'Your character comes out in your playing, and if you affect another style you're not being realistic.'

'Your style has to come through so many different influences,' agreed Mick, 'and no matter how much you like someone else's, your own has to take a different course. I like to think of myself as an aggressive player with taste, but it depends on my mood. I can go on stage really uptight about something that happened just before the gig, and for some reason or other the aggression I feel in my playing can be channelled into something tasteful. I do try to merge the elements of aggression and—if you like—passivity, and do my damndest to be a tasteful player, which is what I consider is the right way for me to play. Other people have told me I'm over-aggressive when I'm playing, but that's where I'm at—it's how I judge my measure of originality.'

Jack's thoughts on technique also showed more than a surface approach to playing.

'Although I've been playing for a number of years, it's only just recently—since the last LP, as a matter of fact—that I've started to find a style that really suits me. It sounds conceited, but I know I've got a very fast technique, and I used to demonstrate it a lot, but I've stopped running around and my style has changed accordingly.

'It's not just knowing where to draw the line between technique and



taste. I think I'm developing a style of my own, whereas before it was just a conglomeration of all sorts of influences. The general run of my playing at one time was I suppose just running up and down the chords at breakneck speed, splitting them up and playing the scale, etc. I learned the traditional way, in that sense, and it's a great way to play, but it can also be a bit of a handicap in the type of music we're playing. 'Let's face it, I started with palais bands and modern jazz groups playing standards—and by standards I mean soloing on Charlie Parker and Monk tunes.'

Mick, on the other hand, showed how his completely different musical background had nonetheless brought him to a common ground with Jack.

'I had no musical training at all. It's strange, because Jack is trying to get out of all his orthodox playing and I'm trying to get into it, to get knowledge of things like chord structures which I could use in conjunction with what I have now. I was into the free thing probably before Jack, but we're at the same level now, and while we're both going in the same musical direction we're each trying to gain knowledge of two completely different things.'

Different or not, Jack Lancaster and Mick Abrahams have given the pop world perhaps the best example yet of a strong two-man front line which does not fall apart in a battle of the giants but is mutually complementary despite the apparently incompatible backgrounds of both individuals.

Currently, the Pig are getting things together for their third album, and the break in the States should provide them with even more ideas. The success of the Pig's last US tour augurs well for the present one, and guarantees them an even stronger place in the American roster of top British heavies.



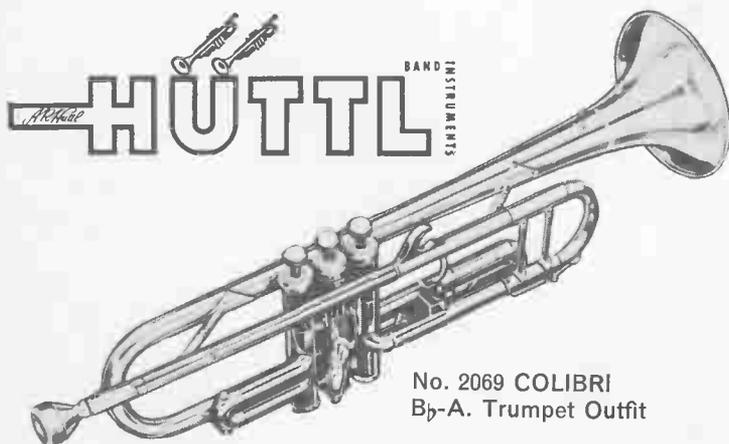
Left to right: Jack, Mick, Ron, Andy. Improving and expanding existing ideas.

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ROCK AND ROLL

GIANTS



CHUCK BERRY

AT different times according to fashion, Chuck Berry has been known as the king of rhythm and blues and the king of rock and roll. For Chuck Berry was both in at the beginning of rock and thousands of bands round the world played a staple diet of Berry tunes. But Chuck Berry was for many people the route through from rock to urban blues and beyond and back.

Chuck has written over 20 classic rock and roll hits and has set the style and pattern for many of today's top recording groups. The Beatles have of course, recorded Chuck Berry numbers, and their style of playing was strongly influenced by Chuck. The Rolling Stones too, especially Keith Richard, have been greatly influenced by Chuck Berry, and their first record was of course, Chuck's *Come On*.

But more than that, Chuck Berry was the first and possibly the greatest all-round pop/rock personality. Not only does he play that characteristic guitar style that has been the jumping off point for so many guitarists, he is also a singer and composer. He was also the first person to write decent lyrics in a rock context. He has a preoccupation with speed, cars, girl friends in cars, flashing neon lights, and the rock hero and he puts this preoccupation down vividly and usually amusingly. A lot of people talk now of the poetry of rock, and Chuck Berry in songs like *Maybelline*, *Johnny B. Goode*, *Roll Over Beethoven*, *You Can't Catch Me*, *Memphis*, *Sweet Little Sixteen* and many of his other best songs can be said to be the first to have written it.

Chuck — full names Charles Edward Berry—was born in St. Louis, Missouri, the son of Henry and Martha Berry who were members of the Antioch Baptist

Church choir in St. Louis. His mother was a soprano and his father a bass in the choir. Chuck has three sisters, all of them musical: Thelma, a pianist, Lucy Ann a leading contralto and pianist, and Martha who occasionally sings with him on record as on *Come On* and *Go Go Go*.

Chuck attended Simmons Grade School, Summer High and Poro College in St. Louis. At Summer High School he was assigned to the bass section of the Glee Club which preceded his first decision to take up the guitar. He started off like most budding guitarists with a second hand Spanish guitar and a fistful of instruction books.

By 1952 he had started his own group, the Chuck Berry Combo, and was undecided whether singing, photography or hairdressing would be his career. While on a long contract at the Cosmopolitan Club in East St. Louis, Illinois, he flew to Chicago and visited the famous night spots, and became acquainted with Muddy Waters, who continually encouraged Chuck in his efforts towards recognition. Berry said he wanted to make a record somehow and Muddy Waters advised him to see the late Leonard of Phil Chess of Chess Records.

Shortly after on May Day 1955 Chuck had his first session in the Chess brothers' studios. *Maybelline* hit the charts soon afterwards, and this, his first ever recording effort, was awarded the Billboard Triple Award for the biggest selling R and B record, the most played R and B juke box hit, and the most played R and B radio hit.

That year Chuck started working in the country's major theatres, night clubs and auditoriums with major R and B tours. Like Johnny B. Goode he thought maybe he'd see his name in lights and it

all began to come true.

Through 1956, '57, and '58 Chuck's fame and glory spread, and he toured with practically every artist from Elvis Presley to Ray Charles. Soon his first film part came along, singing *You Can't Catch Me* in 'Rock, Rock, Rock', following this singing *Oh Baby Doll* in 'Mr. Rock and Roll'. In the third film 'Go Johnny Go', three songs were featured: *Johnny B. Goode* over the credits, *Memphis* on a TV broadcast and *Little Queenie* in a juke box rendezvous. 'Jazz On A Summer's Day', the documentary film of the 1958 Newport Jazz Festival featured Chuck performing *Sweet Little Sixteen*.

Then Chuck disappeared from the record scene due to a spell in prison following a race/rape charge. But groups kept playing his material, for he had written so many good rock songs. Then in the early '60s Chuck was rediscovered, as the Beatles, the Stones and other groups swept upwards on the R and B wave. Suddenly everyone was digging Chuck Berry again, and Pye International released his old Chess recordings that had previously been issued in Britain on London.

Now Chuck is enjoying a new lease of life in the States as well in the current rock and roll revival over there, but he continues to be popular here, as shown by his reception at last year's Albert Hall Pop Proms. He has recently re-joined Chess records after an absence of three years.

So the beginner of the guitarist god-cult, the power force of so much rock and roll, is back with the company that started him off. Perhaps out of all the old rockers, Chuck Berry's lasting popularity is the greatest and the least tarnished with generous helpings of nostalgia.

your queries answered

Ostrich guitar

Dear Sir,

I was recently fortunate enough to see Family, and the guitar played by John Witney fascinated me. I had seen one before, used by Pete Townsend of the Who a few years ago. Please could you tell me where I can buy or at least get information about this type of instrument?

M. BURGESS,
Keswick, Cumberland.

● Gibson manufacture a double neck, ostrich type, guitar, although this is not listed in the Gibson catalogue it can be produced for special orders. Information may be obtained from: Henri Selmer & Co. Ltd., Woolpack Lane, Braintree, Essex.

Lead to bass

Dear Sir,

Can you please tell me if it is possible to convert a six-string lead guitar to a

six-string bass simply by fitting the appropriate strings, or must pick-ups, etc., be modified? Assuming this is possible, could a Fuzz-box or Wah-Wah Pedal be used?

KEVIN B. MARSDEN,
Farnborough, Hants.

● In theory there is no reason why a lead guitar could not be converted to a six-string bass retaining the use of Fuzz etc., but in practice the strain of bass strings would probably prove too much for the instrument's neck, perhaps warping it, making it impossible to keep in tune.

American power

Dear Sir,

I understand that American electricity supplies operate at a different voltage to those in Britain. As my group is hoping to make a short tour of Canada and the States soon, will it be necessary for us to purchase new equipment, or can our existing gear be modified?

S. ROSE,
Cardiff 5.

● American voltage runs at between 110 and 115 volts. Most amplifiers have a built in voltage selector somewhere in their circuit. If this is difficult to find, the manufacturers will advise you on its position, or if the gear needs further modifications.

Trouble with dirt

Dear Sir,

I have been having trouble with the drawbars and pedal on my organ, such things as crackling and intermittency on the controls. Is there anything that I can do to correct this?

E. M. GILMARTIN,
London NW3.

● You should try cleaning the controls on your organ. This may be done with either a brush-on or a spray cleaner, but be sure to get the right liquid, otherwise you might get a deposit left on your controls. The cleaner is obtainable from your local radio/electronic shop, who will advise you on the correct type.

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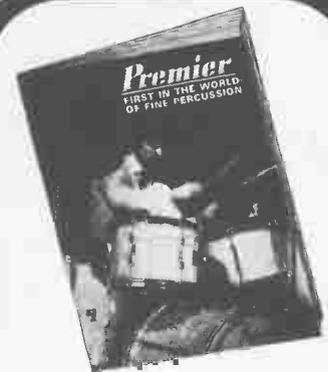
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IN the great Beat Boom of the early sixties, when the Beatles and the Rolling Stones precipitated a veritable avalanche of hopeful young rock groups on to an arid musical plain populated only by clean-cut young men singing of their high-school bah-habies, there came to light a group who rapidly distinguished themselves not only by their unusually long hair and far-out dress, but also by their raw and insinuating musical style. They were the Kinks, and with songs like *You Really Got Me* and *All Day And All Of The Night*, they captured the mood of the kids. Since then, there have been few groups who have produced hit singles as consistently as the Kinks, and though they have had one

personnel change, when bassist Pete Quaife left to form Maple Oak, the driving force of the group has remained constant in brothers Ray and Dave Davies.

Although in the public imagination Ray and Dave tend to be confused, they are both distinct personalities and have different functions in the group. Ray is the lead singer, the one who pulls faces, and who writes the group's material, while Dave has made several single discs, like *Death of A Clown*. It is Ray who has been responsible for penning almost all of the Kinks' hits, from the early numbers to their recent hit *Lola*.

Like their contemporaries, the Who, the Yardbirds, and the Rolling Stones, the Kinks were a product of the British

Art School, which seemed to have a singularly successful and yet - to - be - repeated output of talent at this time. Ray Davies attended art school at Croydon and Hornsey, where he played in a few bands prior to becoming involved with the Kinks. 'I got a lot out of school, and things developed from that,' remarked Ray. 'Music was just carrying on from what I'd started at school.' The Kinks' music in those days was elemental Rock and Roll — songs like *Lover Not A Fighter* and *Bald Headed Woman* — mixed with their own droning love chants, things like *Tired Of Waiting*. 'We still play basically Rock and Roll,' said Ray. 'My early influences were people like Muddy Waters and Arthur Smith, the guitar player.'

The group has always been controversial — appearances on 'Top of the Pops' earned them the distaste of parents everywhere, while the trendies have never quite forgiven them for making so many hit singles. In fact, it wasn't until the release of *Arthur* last year that the group found favour with the 'progressives'. However, in the States the group has long had an underground following, and were about to fly out to the East Coast when I spoke to Ray.

'We're not as taken for granted as we might have been; more people than I imagined knew us when we went back, though things vary enormously over there. *Village Green Preservation Society* and *Arthur* weren't intended to be progressive as such, but they earned us a following in the States. The last time we were over there we worked with Danny of Danny and the Juniors. That was great; you could tell it was him, Danny.'

The Kinks are now working on their next LP, which will again be written by Ray. 'There won't be so much overdubbing as on the last one. We still get undoctored sounds, and we use acoustics, which we can't use on stage.'

Ray's songs are perhaps the Kinks' most distinctive feature; songs which send up straight English suburbia and its inhabitants, songs like *Plastic Man* and *Waterloo Sunset*. 'They're songs of affection rather than nostalgia,' said Ray. 'There was the bloke who was offended by *Plastic Man* though (laughs). I write my songs because they should be written.' Ray and brother Dave originate from London's Highgate, where Ray recently moved back into after a spell out. He professes to enjoy riding the tubes ('or rather it's interesting when I do'), though he also likes going out into the fields. He is basically quiet, though with a half-grin on his face most of the time, as if he has a secret which he's enjoying. He seems fascinated with what it means to be human, and does not like pretence, either from the bowler heads or the dedicated followers of fashion. 'It worries me when I go to play the Sunderland Locarno, and it's called the Fillmore North. I preferred the Sunderland Locarno.'

And the future? Well, it's certain that Ray will continue to write his songs and that the Kinks will go on recording them. Ray is getting into producing, and has bought a four-track machine of his own. He also wants to see *High School Confidential*, one of the great films of the rock era. 'There are a lot of things that interest me, but I don't benefit from talking about them until I've done them,' Ray smiled.



MEIC STEVENS— AN ORIGINAL TALENT

Meic Stevens first remembers singing when he was four years old, by which time he'd already been painting for a year, and had only 15 years to go before he began writing songs and playing guitar.

Meic was born in Pembrokeshire, Wales during the war, and his family ancestry includes several Welsh poets, methodist ministers, and one itinerant harp player. By the time Meic was 19 he had dropped out of art school and was in London with his guitar, to which he was inspired by Lonnie Donegan ('how many were but won't admit it?'). By 1965 he was in Manchester and had a single out which sold 12,000 copies. 'But I couldn't get on TV—Donovan had it all sewed up, there wasn't room for two Dylan imitations.' Meic and Dylan have been compared since then, but Meic says, 'I've been going as long as Dylan, but I haven't been recording for so long.'

A year of drunken obscurity followed the single, and Meic was back in Wales, where he still lives, works, and raises a family. His main concern now is with Wales and with the Welsh culture, and within that country's borders he is certainly the leading musical talent. He has made six Welsh records, 24 tracks in all, and his last record there sold a thousand copies on the first day. He has also appeared on Welsh TV more than 200 times, has been sponsored by the Welsh Arts Council, has written an opera for Harlech TV, and has done a series of programmes for schools.

Now Meic has an album out in English called *Outlander* on the Warner Brothers label, but it's been a struggle to get this far with record companies, as Meic

related.

'I sent my tapes to Apple when they started, but they didn't have a tape recorder, so I came up to London on the back of a pickup truck with my own machine. The tapes were made with packets of porridge for percussion—nothing ever did become of that, Apple weren't interested.

'Then I also got a reply from RCA two years after I sent them tapes, which was just after I'd started recording for Warner Brothers. My album *Outlander* was written five years ago for the most part; the producer rejected the more recent stuff, and I now have all this material left.

'I want to put something back into Wales, where artists like Mary Hopkin and Tom Jones don't do anything. The Welsh are fighting to retrieve the rags of their culture, it's sad. Dylan was staying in Wales last year with a guy called David Liphthoff, and the Incredibles used to have a cottage there as well, a few miles from mine. It's really a great country.'

Meic is already making another record, and will have another single out soon. His last single, *Old Joe Blind*, was one of the most underestimated single releases of the year, but alas had no air plays. His other plans for the future include starting his own record company for Wales, for which he has a special concession from Warner Brothers. You will also be able to see a full length documentary on his work on BBC's *Omnibus* one of these days; it's halfway to completion at present. It should be interesting to see this Welsh wizard at work.

N.S.

SONG- WRITER'S COLUMN

IF you have already read the report on the first British Song Contest you will know that the songs to enter Phase 2 have been selected and the writers have already exchanged contracts with the official publishers.

Lots of nasty remarks have been made over the years about music publishers. They are often depicted as small, grasping, balding, middle-aged men out to screw the last farthing out of poor innocent young songwriters.

I am sure these gentlemen do exist and, indeed, I have met some of them myself, but in the main, music publishers do a very difficult job, very well indeed.

The one major disagreement that I have always had with them is that they tie up a song for many years, even though they don't succeed in doing anything at all with it. And if the writer approaches them after five years and asks them if he can have the copyright back again—if necessary even paying back the small advance he received—the answer is 'No, we never do that.'

This, to me, has always been one of the great abuses in publishing and I have always admired the efforts of those who have tried to stop this silly practice.

The only sensible way for a music publisher to act is to ask for the copyright of a song he believes has possibilities, for a reasonable period.

If, when that period is ended, he has not succeeded in doing anything at all with that number—in other words, he hasn't succeeded in getting it recorded by anyone—then he should let it go. It is ridiculous to file away numbers just for the hell of it.

The contract which Mitch Murray and Peter Callendar, the official publishers of the first British Song Contest, will be exchanging with the successful writers is the official one approved by the Songwriters Guild. It is extremely fair—the most important clause being that if the publishers are unable to obtain a major recording of the song within two years the copyright returns to the writer.

I personally will always go on campaigning to try and get every music publisher in this country at least to adopt this contract.



LIVE CREAM
POLYDOR SUPER 2383 016



What remains to be said about Cream? Except to repeat that they were one of the most phenomenally successful rock combinations ever formed, and that their music turned on many people. It also turned the tap on many many dollars and pounds, which is why Cream albums never quite seem to dry up. *Live Cream* is a beautiful sample of the group's stage work; they could jam with spontaneity and ease, building up to several climaxes within a number. Recorded fairly early on in the life of the band, *N.S.U.*, *Sleepy Time Time*, *Sweet Wine* and *Rolling and Tumbling* are all here, plus one studio take of *Lawdy Mama*, from which *Strange Brew* was obviously derived. Cream live.

SING BROTHERS SING
EDGAR BROUGHTON BAND
HARVEST SHVL 772

The Edgar Broughton Band are not a combo that play music to share with the family in the front room; songs about child molesters, nymphs, and

the imminent apocalypse are not to everybody's taste. In fact, Edgar's material is primarily dramatic, and is better heard live than on record. There are some straight heavy rock numbers here, but mostly it's Edgar's eerie chanting with the band providing weird effects and harmonies. Made with more thought than *Wasa Wasa*, *Sing Brothers Sing* upholds the band's reputation as one of the further-



out outfits on the contemporary scene.

BAND OF GYPSIES
JIMI HENDRIX
TRACK SUPER 2406 002

Rumour has it that Hendrix didn't want this album released — it certainly isn't a polished piece of work like *Electric Ladyland* — but providing people accept it for what it is, Jimi needn't worry about *Band Of Gypsies*. Basically, it's a one-off jam session between three black blues/rock musicians, recorded live at the Fillmore East this January, with Billy Cox on bass, and Buddy Miles providing the percussive power. Recording quality could have



been better, but it's adequate. Jimi is still one of the giants of the electric guitar, and though he isn't as freaky here as he can be, his funky soulful playing can still show some of the current 'blues' players the way home. Buddy Miles is extremely solid (unimaginative?) on drums, and Billy Cox's basswork fits in nicely, although the vocals could have been better. Nevertheless, a welcome release from a too-often forgotten artist, and one which shouldn't lose him any friends.

PARACHUTE
PRETTY THINGS
HARVEST SHVL 774

The Pretty Things have obviously been through some



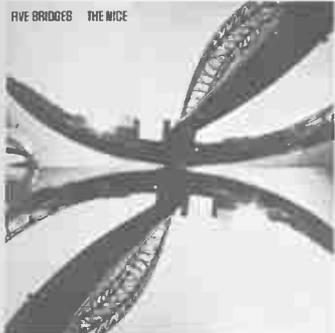
changes since the days of *Rosalyn* and Bo Diddley, and it's good to see them with an album back on the market. *Parachute* is something of a mixed bag, and while it isn't perhaps different enough to be remarkable, the group nevertheless perform with competence and style. The Things have thankfully retained some of the raw energy of the early days, and make very efficient 'progressive' rock music, with some vocal harmonies added by way of contrast. One worth a listen.

FRIENDS ETC.
AUDIENCE
CHARISMA CAS 1012



A pleasant album of mid-weight rock from an emergent four-piece band. Howard Werth (guitar), Keith Gemmel (saxes), Tony Connor (drums), and Trevor Williams (bass), have obviously taken trouble to make this album a product of their own collective head, and while it's a little weak in places, it does have a sense of togetherness and individuality. Keith Gemmel's woodwind is particularly nice, and the band do a delightful job on the instrumental *Ebony Variations*.

FIVE BRIDGES
THE NICE
CHARISMA CAS 1014



Final offering from the Nice, for better or worse now broken up. Side One consists of the *Five Bridges Suite* itself, commissioned by the Newcastle Arts Festival. It's a rather clumsy attempt at a classical/rock fusion, which has little overall cohesion for a suite, though for a live recording the standard of sound and playing is quite high. More successful is the second side, which has hunks of Sibelius, Tchaikovsky, and Bach being given the Emerson/Eger treatment, though even here the orchestra does little but get in the way of Emerson's organ acrobatics. Final cut is a studio take, *One Of Those People*, which is nice enough but oddly out of place here. It's a pity the group couldn't give us a more together farewell present than *Five Bridges*, for they must surely have been capable of it.

AFFINITY
VERTIGO 6460 004

An interesting new band from the Ronnie Scott stable, Affinity play a tight and together music that has more in common with the grooves of jazz players like John Patton and Jimmy Smith than with the heavy rock of bands usually associated with the 'progressive' music scene. Particularly impressive is the



organ and keyboard of one Lynton Naiff, but the rest of the band back up well. Out front is the voice of Linda Hoyle, a young lady being tipped for great things. She does have a fine voice, but her penchant for the traditional finger-snapping jazz vocal style is a matter of taste.

THIRD EAR BAND
HARVEST SHVL 773

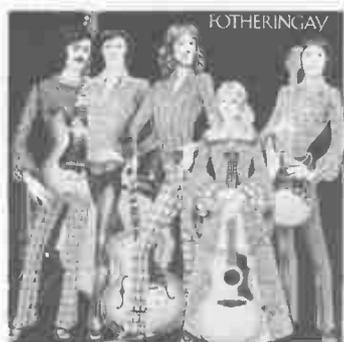
More weird and wonderful sounds from an unusual and uncompromising quartet of musicians, Glen Sweeney



(percussion), Paul Mimms (oboe), Richard Coff (violin), and Ursula Smith (cello). The instruments are western, but the music is primarily eastern in its inspiration. The band play four pieces here; *Earth, Water, Fire and Air*, consisting of a groundwork of percussion above which the other three instruments weave together their strands of sound to create an overall texture of sound which you explore at your leisure, rather like studying a painting. Obviously not for everyone, but worthy of a place in today's music scene.

FOTHERINGAY
ISLAND ILPS 9125

Promising debut album from a group who have obviously discovered their direction after some faltering first steps. Fotheringay seem to play the music that Fairport Convention discarded when they adopted their present format — lighter and more folksy than the heavier, more traditional fiddling Convention. Most of the material here is Sandy Denny and Jerry Lucas originals, and particularly good are *Ned Kelly* and *Peace In The End*, with a nice version of the traditional *Banks Of The Nile*. Sandy's singing is fault-



less, and the rest of the group play together well, though there is room for some chunkier and more inspired instrumental work.

FAT ALBERT
ROTUNDA
HERBIE HANCOCK
WARNER BROTHERS WS 1834

Herbie Hancock has for a long time been one of the Blue Note jazz *avant-garde*, but like fellow musicians Tony Williams and Miles Davis, his music now has as much

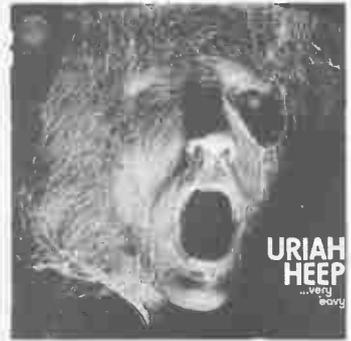


currency with rock fans as jazzers. Now playing electric piano, Herbie offers things quiet and moody like *Jessica* as well as funky numbers like *Fat Albert Rotunda* which give the band a chance to blow freely, and Joe Henderson on tenor takes some particularly exciting solos. Herbie's own playing is clean and rhythmic throughout, and the composing and arranging credits also go to him.

URIAH HEEP
VERTIGO 6360 006

Heaviness is an elusive quality — it's about time that groups realised that sheer unadulterated decibels are in themselves a guarantee of nothing except headache. Uriah Heep are a new and obviously very proficient rock band, but they would have been better off devoting their

energies and talents to something a little more subtle and a little less eclectic than this rather ordinary album, which is distinguished mainly by its production. Volume, stolen riffs from truly heavy bands, and a monster-hype campaign do not a supergroup make; groups be warned. If you're looking for heaviness, then there are probably several albums by Beck, Zeppelin, Who, Mountain, Velvet



Underground, Cream, and Deep Purple that you don't have in your collection.

EXTRAPOLATION
JOHN McLAUGHLIN
POLYDOR 2343 012

Two sides of very listenable contemporary music from a quartet of top British jazzmen, led by guitarist extraordinaire John McLaughlin. Unlike so many jazz guitarists, McLaughlin knows how to use electronic effects to advantage, and he can put many rock guitarists to shame with the fluency of his lines, and the 'choppy' style of playing that he exhibits here. John Surman on sax is as brilliant as one might expect, and the rhythm section of Brian Hodges (bass), and Tony Oxley (drums) provide a full backing.



(LP Reviews continued overleaf)

RECORDS CONTINUED

SIT DOWN YOUNG STRANGER

GORDON LIGHTFOOT
REPRISE RSLP 6392



Gordon Lightfoot has never made the impact in this country that he has in Canada, from where he originates. He is a competent folk guitarist/singer, and an exceptional songwriter who is responsible for *Early Morning Rain* amongst others. The songs on this album are no exception—they are thoughtful, mostly sad, and the title track is particularly moving. John Sebastian plays on several tracks, and other guests include Ry Cooder and Randy Newman, though there is still a tendency for the cuts to sound 'samey'.

AN EVENING WITH WILD MAN FISCHER

REPRISE RSLP 6332

Make no mistake, this is an important record, and one that cannot be simply ignored. Let us hearken to Frank



Zappa, who produced this record and who writes in the liner notes thus: 'Please listen to this album several times before you decide what Wild Man Fischer is all about. He has something to say to you, even though you might not want to hear it.' Wild Man Fischer is a West Coast freak who sings his songs for dimes on Sunset Strip, and much of this album was recorded 'live' there. Wild Man has been committed to a mental institution twice, and some people would say he was mad, but as you wince your way through these four sides, Wild Man's own logic becomes increasingly valid. The album is a contemporary archive, a devastating, if sometimes humorous, insight into the schizophrenia of 20th century American society. Listen to *The Wild Man Fischer Story*.

THE BEST OF LORD BUCKLEY

ELECTRA 2410 002



The late Lord Buckley, Royal Holiness of the far-out and Prophet of the Hip, is perhaps more responsible for today's 'hip' language than any other single person. His comic monologues still have freshness and humour today, even though the recordings here were made almost 20 years ago. And this really is the best of Buckley, *The Nazz*, *Marc Antony*, *Jonah*—all these pieces are here, and more. Other 'comedy' records usually pall after a few plays, but Buckley . . . well, he's immortal.

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WE'RE a travelling band,' says Tony Newman of his new group May Blitz, which in a remarkably short time and with the minimum of hype has been drawing appreciative audiences all over the country.

And if travelling is the way it's done, Tony is one man who knows all about it through his experience on the road with, in the early days, Sounds Incorporated, and, just prior to forming his new band, with Jeff Beck in the States.

In their present form, May Blitz have been going for only three months with Tony on drums joined by two Canadians, James Black, lead guitar, and Reid Hudson, bass guitar.

Formerly with West Coast 'name' bands, James Black provides most of the band's material, and in his writing shows a reflective side influenced mainly by his predilection for Nature and the country. However, the band's numbers are usually the result of a very close working relationship: James lays down the lead, and the boys work out the arrangements together.

Their first album, *May Blitz*, has just been released on Philips' Vertigo label, and gives several examples of the Black introspection, but the other side of his personality—the dynamism he shows on stage, is reflected in numbers like *Fire Queen*, a high spot of the group's live act.

However, although the boys are understandably proud of their album, they feel that it doesn't truly represent the full range of the band's capabilities now, bearing in



mind the group's short period of existence and the pace at which they've been working, and they can't wait to start working on the second album.

'We've progressed so much since we first started,' says Tony, 'to the extent that almost every gig is different. We used to be slightly regimented musically, but now we're much more free. When we play we know what's good and what the audience thinks is good. We're a young band and we find we can't afford to be self-indulgent. We give the audiences what they want, but it's really gratifying that it's exactly what we want too.'

'We prefer concerts because we feel that our music is the kind that needs an attentive audience. Also their reaction can tell us a lot about ourselves and what we should be doing. I love the atmosphere at concerts. It's great feeling the heat coming from the crowd—the good vibrations.'

'Although I hadn't been on the road in this country for about three years, I found that the crowds hadn't changed. We get a lot of nice people coming up to us at gigs—people who know what it's all about—and they've offered constructive criticism and become good friends.'

On recording, Tony feels he knows exactly what he wants, and this is the main reason why the album was self-produced. But he admits that there can be snags.

'You can have the best engineer in the world, but if you can't communicate with him, you end up accepting something only half as good.' Which is why Tony had nothing but praise for Trident's Barry Ainsworth, the engineer on their album. 'He knew exactly what we wanted as soon as we asked for it.'

For the next album, the group have got it worked out that they'll

spend much more time on material, and they've found a hotel out of London where not only will they be able to rehearse undisturbed, they'll also be surrounded by the country atmosphere that inspires James's writing.

The first album is always a milestone in any group's career, for it gives them a chance to reach the widest possible market, but as has been remarked above, May Blitz intend to continue travelling as much as possible, as they feel that only in this way can they acquire the experience to progress.

So far, the band have covered virtually the whole of England, most of the Continent, with festivals in France, Belgium and Holland, and are contemplating a tour of the States towards the end of the year.

As Tony puts it: 'We intend to see the world because we need the experience only travelling can give.'

D.M.



Matthews' Southern Comfort as they are today: left to right Ian, Mark and Andy

WHEN a member of an established band leaves to form a new group, it's often assumed that he has it made, and that it's merely a matter of making a few token appearances, releasing an album, and watching the coffers fill. In fact, this is rarely the case for all but the superstarred, superhyped groups (how well named was Blind Faith), and there's invariably a lot of hard work before an outfit has properly 'got it together'.

Ian Matthews left Fairport Convention last autumn to form Matthew's Southern Comfort and to pursue his own musical direction, but it's only recently that Ian and the rest of the band feel that they have it together. 'We've improved tremendously in the last few months,' said Ian, 'and there's no problems with the band now, everyone does their bit. It's great.' I was talking to Ian and lead guitarist Mark Griffiths in the cafe owned by Cat Stevens' father, and Ian and the group were about to take a well earned holiday after several months of being on the road, during which they'd brought their brand of electric country music to audiences the length and breadth of the British Isles.

'We finished a tour with Ten Years After a while back,' continued Ian, 'and that was very successful, especially since we were sandwiched between two heavy bands, playing to a predominantly TYA audience. We went down really well in Southampton and Birmingham, though it was a bit dodgy in Newcastle, with people shouting out for reggae!'

There have been a couple of personnel changes since the group was first formed last year, and the line up is now Ian (vocals, guitar), Mark Griffiths (lead guitar), Carl Barnwell (rhythm guitar, backing vocals), Ramon Duffy (drums), Andy

a second
spring for
matthews'
southern comfort

Pyle (bass), and Gordon Huntley (steel pedal guitar). With continual work, the group have inevitably tightened up, and their blend of four guitars and three voices is now fuller, more balanced, and better arranged. The group has also expanded its range of material, and beside the country-rock material of people like Arlo Guthrie, James Taylor and Ian and Sylvia, there are also several numbers

by the band themselves, with Carl and Ian both writing more.

'We're trying to get a new number every week,' explained Mark. 'We're not sure whether people heard them all. On the new numbers everyone's there from the start to add their piece; Ramon and Andy aren't just filling in on numbers we did with the old band.'

With their personnel problems

finally settled, the group have just released their second album, appropriately entitled *Second Spring*, on the UNI label, and Ian was enthusiastic about it. 'The first LP was just me and some people, but this one is the band proper. Basically, it's our stage act of a month ago, but even our stage numbers are better now. There are also a couple of things that people haven't heard before.' One of the numbers is the all-vocal *Blood Red Roses*, a truly remarkable *tour de force*, and one of the highlights of their recent stage act. It's also possible to hear the talents of 40-year-old Gordon Huntley, who is undoubtedly the finest steel player on this side of the Atlantic, and there are some superb guitar exchanges between him and Mark on conventional lead. Their sound is full-blooded country rock, which moves along with an infectious funkiness, and some very fine vocal harmonies, contrasting with Ian's incisive vocals.

Apart from *Second Spring*, some of the group have also been busy playing on a new album by songwriter Pete Carr, and Gordon in particular has been busy doing session work, for Elton John amongst others. Ian has also been doing more producing, and produced *Second Spring*.

The future for the band looks full. 'We still haven't been right round the so-called circuit,' said Ian, 'and we may do more concerts. We did the one with Trees and Bridget St. John at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, which sold out. There's also the prospect of us doing an American tour; at least, I've seen letters from America. We want to get new numbers together, and to continue working. What else can we do? It's just a matter of doing the rounds.' N.S.



Left to right: Gordon, Ramon and Carl. 'We want to get new numbers together and continue working' says Ian

LETTERS

Thank-you Zella

Dear Sir,

I have read many times in 'B.I.' about groups complaining about various recording studios in which they have made demo discs, and have been treated badly because of their status. The names of these studios you have not printed for obvious reasons. Here is a letter about a studio which treated a group well, I hope you will print it.

CELESTIAN of Bristol wish to thank Mr. Johnny Haynes and Ian Parsons of Zella Recording Studios, Birmingham Ltd. in their help in recording and producing an excellent demo LP.

We hope this will be printed in order to repay them for their help, consideration and toleration in helping us.

Barry Webb,
(lead guitar, Celestian),
Bristol.

But surely all such critics are missing the point. Music is a highly *emotional* experience—not an intellectual exercise.

To accuse Alvin Lee of self-indulgence merely because he uses 'technique' to communicate begs the question as to where music is at. It's up to the individual musician to express his feelings with the tools he has at his disposal.

Lack of technique obviously inhibits expression of a certain kind within certain recognised structures. But technique too can also be an inhibiting factor in that it can widen a player's 'terms of reference' to the extent that it obscures his concept of simplicity.

My belief that this is not the case with Alvin Lee comes with the conviction that, technique aside, basic sincerity is apparent in everything he plays.

D. J. Kenny,
Preston.

Sincere Alvin

Dear Sir,

Since when has Alvin Lee restricted himself to 12-bars ('Interminable Alvin', July issue), and, even if he did, what does M. Caldicott think Messrs. Clapton, Beck and Page built their reputations on?

If the same M. Caldicott were sufficiently extra-aurally dehydrated, he would recall that it has for many years inevitably been a prerequisite of the *critique* cult to put down automatically any manifestation of musical 'technique' as evidence of lack of taste. The reverse, of course, applies equally. In answer to cries of 'no technique' about Thelonius Monk, for example, the pundits extolled his sensitivity, his 'soul', his 'elan', etc.

North vs. South

Strange to note that by far the largest numbers of what one might term 'Blues and Grit' singers hail from the North. There's Paul Williams (Juicy Lucy), Tam White, Paul Rodgers (Free), Rob Palmer (Alan Bown), Jackie Lomax (Heavy Jelly), Mike Harrison (ex-Spooky Tooth), Joe Cocker, Eric Burdon, Maggie Bell (Stone the Crows), and so on.

So far, the South seems only to have produced Chris Youlden (ex-Savoy Brown), Rod Stewart (Faces), Peter Ross (Black Cat Bones), Terry Reid, Chris Farlowe and Cliff Bennett (Toe Fat).

John Hensley,
Long Eaton, Derby.

Ed.—You forgot Mick Jagger in your Southern list.

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