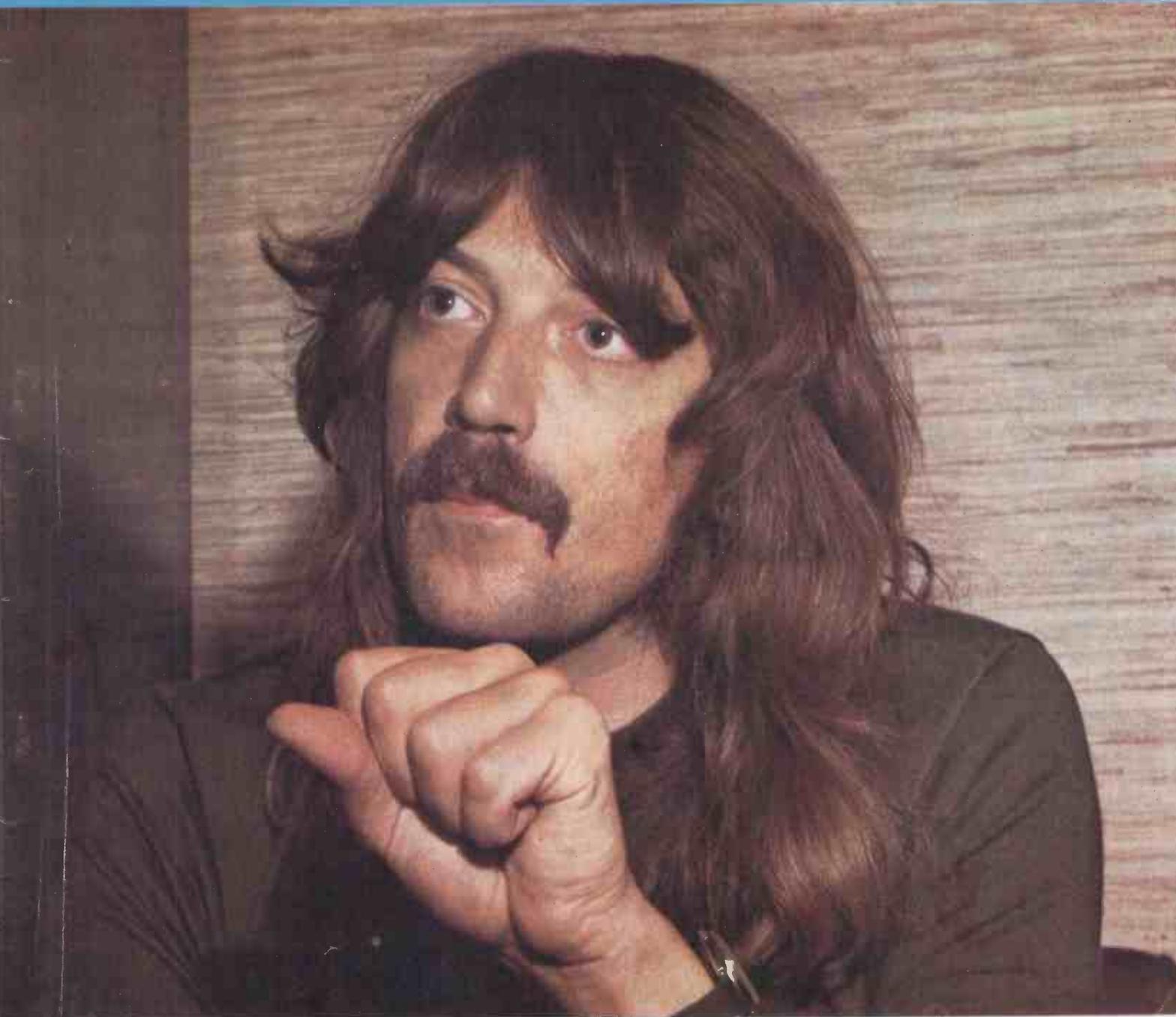


BEAT INSTRUMENTAL

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5' - 25 n.p.

AND INTERNATIONAL
RECORDING STUDIO



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Editorial

Since we last went to press some weeks ago, the Music World has been greatly saddened by the tragic and untimely deaths of two major figures—Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin.

Both of them were outstanding and talented artists, and can be considered to have been foremost among the small number of genuine influences on Rock music in the last decade. Jimi Hendrix emerged abruptly several years ago as a singer/guitarist of stunning calibre. With his unique brand of technique, feeling and showmanship, Jimi virtually originated 'Space Rock'. There soon appeared many guitarists who slavishly copied his phrases and tonality without ever achieving that total mastery of the instrument that was peculiarly Jimi's.

Janis Joplin first became known as the exceptional female vocalist who fronted Big Brother and the Holding Company; but her virtuosity soon outstripped theirs and, with her hard-living, hard-drinking image, she soon became a Superstar in her own right.

It is important to remember that the very vitality which is the essence of the Pop business can sometimes exact a dreadful price. To be 'at the top' of any chosen field is gruelling, but the Music Scene, with its endless tours, interviews and promotions, exerts a very special pressure which sometimes proves too much for any individual—no matter how talented. Jimi and Janis will be sadly missed.

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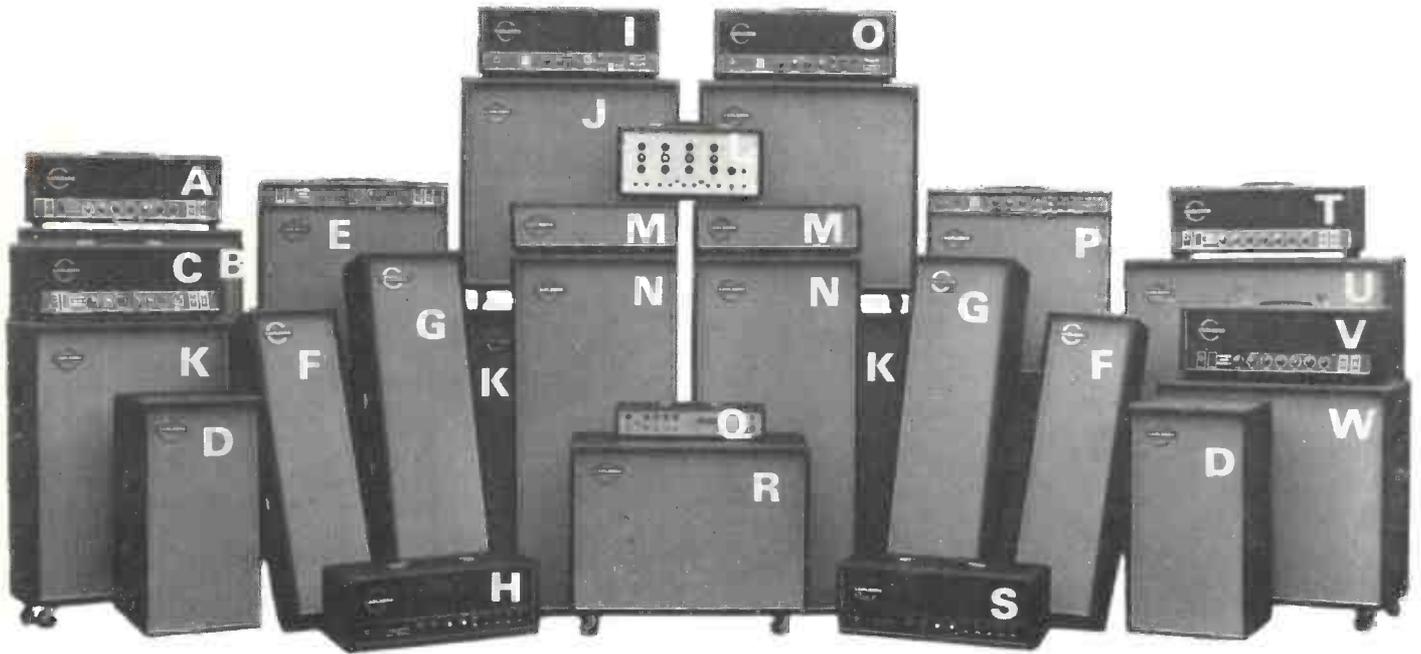
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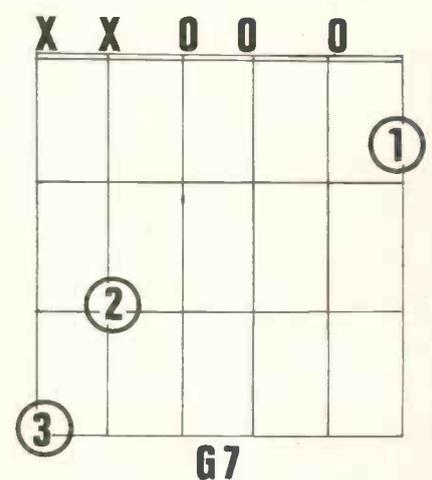
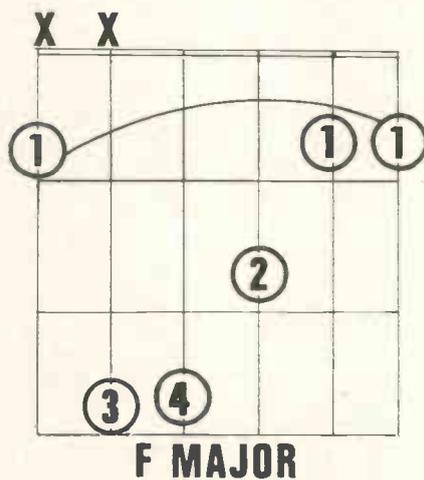
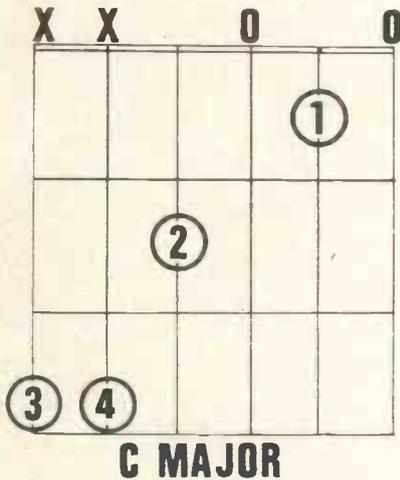


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7: Six-string chords

The majority of guitar tutors suggest that the first three chords a budding guitarist should learn are G Major, C Major and D7. In other words, the three basic chords in the key of G Major. Why then have I chosen the key of C Major? Especially as it includes the very difficult F shape? The answer is really quite simple—although many dedicated musicians would disagree. If you can master the very difficult F Major chord shape, then, when you start playing in other keys—such as A_b and B_b—you will find it so much easier. It's very hard to progress from the key of G Major, because you will still have to learn the F shape sooner or later.

What I'm going to do this month is to try and teach you the full, six-string versions of C Major, F Major and G7. If you try to play A_b, for example, which is only the F formation on the fourth fret, you will see the necessity of a full-sounding six-string chord.



You will see that with the chord of C Major, the six-string formation is achieved by placing the third finger on the 3rd fret of the 6th string, and the fourth finger on the 3rd fret of the 5th string. This makes the notation—starting at the top (E) string—E C G E C G. The G7 chord is even simpler. All you have to do is add your second finger on the 2nd fret of the 5th string, and your third finger on the 3rd fret of the 6th string. But now comes the complicated bit . . . the F Major chord.

To play this chord correctly, your first finger must cover all six strings at the 1st fret, with a special emphasis on the 1st, 2nd and 6th strings. The notation of the other three strings is obtained by pressure from the second, third and fourth fingers. As many people find this very difficult they cheat a little. What they do is this. They play the normal four-string version of the chord but remove their third finger from the 4th string and place it on the 3rd fret of the 5th string. The fourth finger is then placed in position on the 3rd fret of the 4th string. To complete the full six-string chord, they curl their thumb around the neck of the guitar and cover the bass (6th) string with it.



To help you practise these chords, I've included another simple exercise, this time designed to help you change chords more quickly.

PLAYER OF THE MONTH

RON WOOD

RON WOOD, guitarist with the Faces, started off on his musical career in the traditional manner—playing washboard with his two brothers in a skiffle group in West Drayton. His brothers were both keen on traditional jazz and that was the music Ron was weaned on. From trad he went straight into blues.

'I then started playing guitar with the Byrds,' said Ron. 'You remember when the Byrds came over our manager tried to make a thing about the similarity of names and get us some publicity. I then did a spell in Europe, mainly in Germany, with Creation, who were pretty big over there.'

Ron's next step was to join Jeff Beck's group, and he spent two and a half years playing in that unit with Beck and singer Rod Stewart. 'I played with a lot of really good musicians in that band. People like Nicky Hopkins, Aynsley Dunbar, Mickey Waller, and Dave Ambrose. I started off playing guitar alongside Beck but that didn't work out at all. Instead of leaving the group I decided to try playing bass which went well, so I stayed.

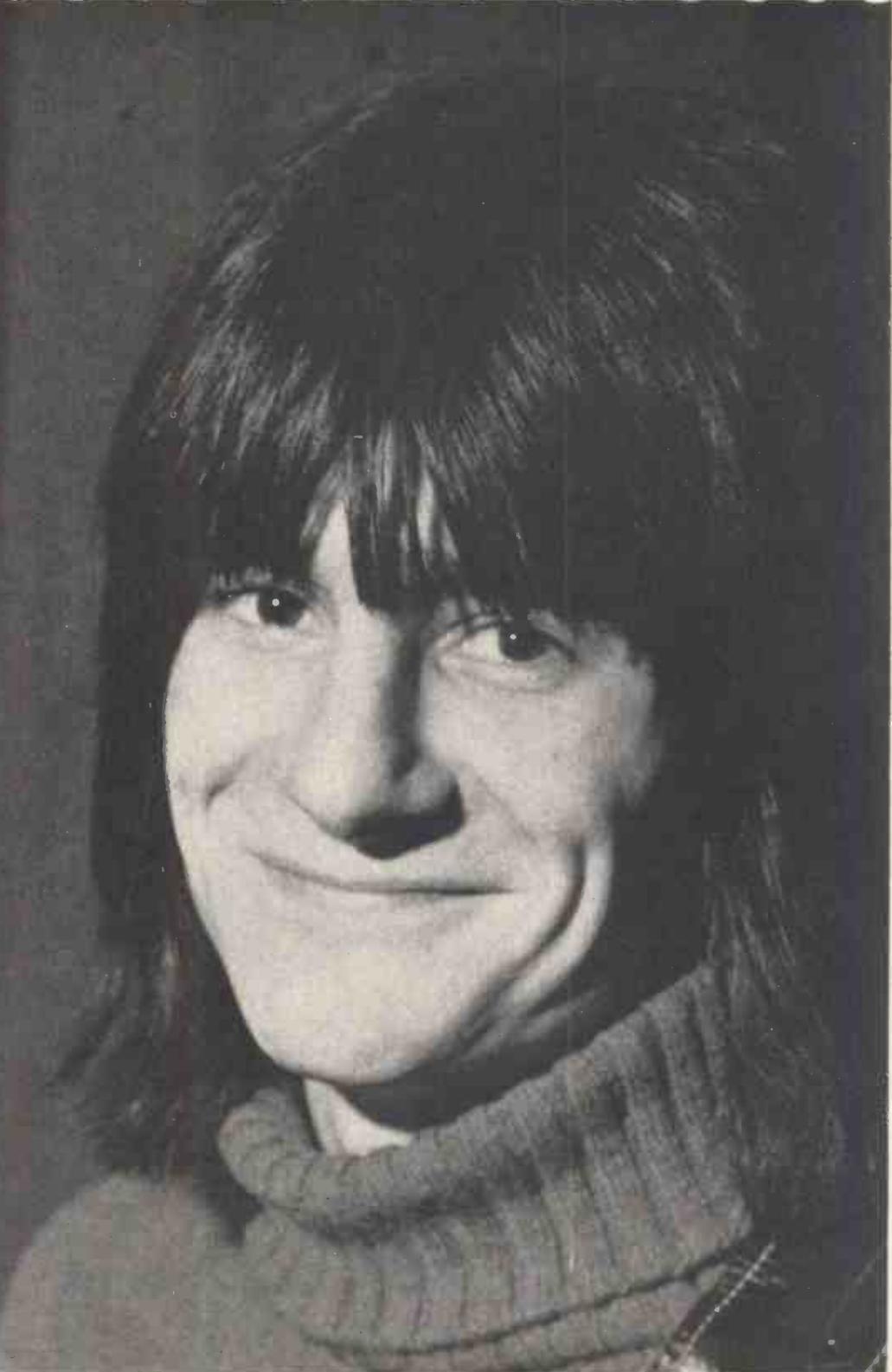
'That spell on bass gave me a different understanding of guitar when I went back to that with the Faces. Before I took up bass I was getting in a rut on guitar, but bass gave me new ground to build on. I got into the thing about what you don't play being as important as what you *do* play. I played both bass and guitar on Rod's two solo albums and Ronnie Lane and I swop round instruments sometimes, so I'm still keeping my hand in on bass.

'With Jeff Beck I got the driving along thing going and now I look on guitar with the same driving idea. I got into playing bottleneck after hearing the guitarist on Aretha Franklin's *The Weight*.

'I've also been getting into pedal steel guitar. I've been working at that for about six months and given another six I should be fairly fluent at it. I've got a double-necked seven pedal, but I'm using a four pedal for the States this time. I rate Buddy Emmons and the Burrito Brothers' Sneaky Pete on steel guitar. I'm going to try and meet a few of these guys next time in the States because I've just had this thing put in my lap and I've had to work it out for myself.

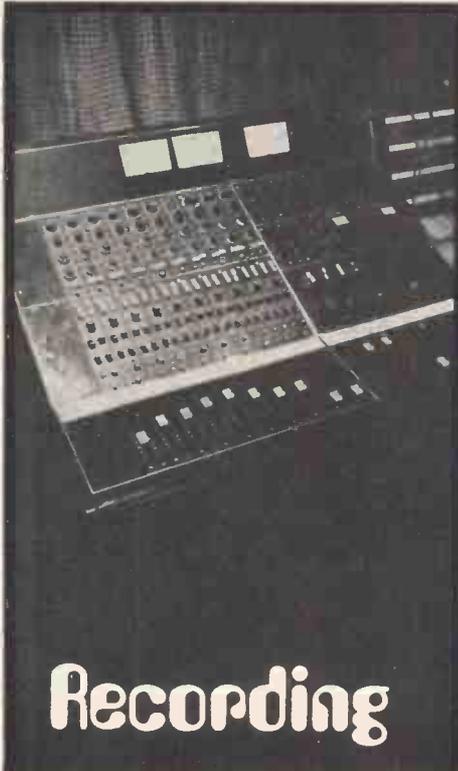
As well as playing, Ron also writes a lot with Rod Stewart. 'It's good writing material with the Faces. If you get an idea it is exploited and its best potential picked out whereas with Beck your ideas tended to get lost by the time he had played around with them and put his stamp on them.'

As regards the Faces, Ron is very happy with how things are going. He thinks they are improving all the time and is looking forward to their second album being released. Before the album, a single from it called *Had Me A Real Good Time* is released at the end of October.



Pye Quality

Let your ears be the judge



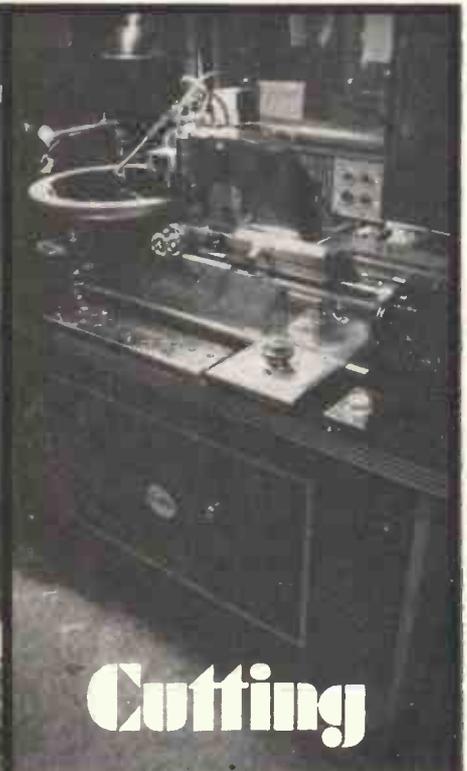
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Long John Baldry
Sammy Davis Jr
Petula Clark
Tony Hatch
Jackie Trent
Heavy Jelly
Mighty Baby
Judas Jump
Foundations
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Pickettywitch



Mobile Recording

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Humble Pie
Who
Delaney & Bonnie
Quintessence
Ginger Baker
Love
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SELF HELP

2: GUITARS AND AMPLIFIERS

IF there is any one instrument which typifies today's rock band it has to be your actual electric guitar — the greatest symbol of the Rock Era.

Happily, most guitars made today seem to be fairly robust. Since the Who, and others, began testing the solidity of instruments to their outer limits, the manufacturers had to take other qualities into consideration when building an electric guitar than mere electronic flash. Strength and reliability became a vital factor; truss-rods appeared; solid-state electronics made the wiring and pickups that much tougher, and improved cases made the whole instrument last longer.

Improved

All the same, guitars are no good without amplifiers — in most cases, that is. And amplifiers, although greatly improved over the last three years, are still by their very nature more inclined to be prone to the ever-present Gremlins.

Many of today's guitar stars carry spare instruments — this tends to solve many problems. Not all of us can afford to do that, of course (especially if your instrument happens to be an ultra-rare original Les Paul), so we will discuss only the repairable jobs.

Most problems on guitars are caused by one simple thing — moisture. To be precise, sweat. Sweaty hands are the cause of rusty strings, long-term faults in the internal wiring, and blemishes and gunge caked behind the frets on the fingerboard. After gigs and practice, therefore, always make it a habit to wipe the strings, pickups and tailpieces with a clean ab-

sorbent rag. Keep the instrument in its case whenever possible, as this keeps out the dust. Dust, as previously stated, is the arch-enemy of all delicate wiring.

Checklist

Check periodically that all controls are turning smoothly and without crackling or stiffness. The same goes for machine-heads, which could also do with a little light penetrating oil from time to time. Check, too, the alignment of the neck (by squinting down the fingerboard with the bridge at eye-level). If it is not perfectly straight, adjustments can be made on the truss-rod that is usually embedded in the neck. *Do not over-compensate.* Keep your leads and jacks in good condition, and change your strings regularly — they tend to corrode after some time.

Quality

The quality of modern amplifiers has increased tenfold since the shaky days of the mid-fifties. The use of transistorised components has taken a lot of the worry out of handling and transport. Some

amplifiers, however, still use valves, and these components should be handled with care. Remove all valves before undertaking long journeys. Keep amplifiers well secured in the van and cover with tarpaulin to preserve the externals. Carry a comprehensive kit of spares including valves, leads, jacks, fuses and soldering equipment.

In the event of malfunctioning or failure, take the following steps:

1. Check power sources. *N.B.—Disconnect at mains before doing this.*
2. Examine jack sockets and plugs for faults.
3. Listen for a hiss in the speakers. If not present, check speaker connections.
4. Replace any faulty valves. (Functioning valves should glow slightly.)

No liquids

If you keep liquids well away from live electricity, and take steps to eliminate the dust hazard, you *should* have no problems, however. If you still get a breakdown, and the above steps produce no result — well, plug in with the bass player, or something. And take your amplifier immediately to the dealer who supplied it. Guarantees are, after all, of some use.

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Most problems are caused by one simple thing—moisture



BRIDGET ST. JOHN

THE life of a solo singer, travelling the country with a guitar and a good stock of books, can get pretty tiring. Phrases about lonesome train whistles blowing aren't so romantic when you're stuck on Woking station at two o'clock in the morning—after playing a gig at Guildford Arts Lab, knowing that it's next stop Glasgow for another gig, and so on and so on.

Bridget St. John's been playing professionally—though I doubt if she'd particularly appreciate the word—for almost two years now. During that time, she's made a lot of friends, such as the irresistibly cheerful Andy who runs

Les Cousins in Soho, where she's a regular visitor, and the guy who runs the Penthouse Club in Scarborough who provides a bed and great hospitality for everyone who plays at his club, and then, of course, there are the growing number of people who enjoy listening to her songs.

All the same, it can get pretty tiring to be on the road on your own, even though Bridget wouldn't like to have to play every night of the week and doesn't. Of late, she's been doing more and more playing with other musicians. John Henry, a blind American concert pianist, is arranging songs with her, and Kevin Ayers and the Whole World from time to time take her along with them to sing. She appeared at the Le Bourget festival—that would have been really horrible without the band—and has been on Dutch television.

On her new single for Dandelion, *Money*, which Kevin produced and played bass for, there's David Bedford playing piano, Mike Oldfield on lead guitar and Steve Broughton (from the Broughton band) on drums, and everyone joining on the bop-shoo-wah style chorus. For anyone who thinks of our Bridget as a quiet introverted lady of gentle sorrows (which she ain't), *Money's* going to seem quite a dramatic step sideways. Recorded some time ago at Sound Techniques, release of *Money* has been delayed for some time by the uncertain future of Dandelion, but now that the Peel label is being distributed and manufactured by Warner-Reprise, it'll be one of the first releases of the revitalised company.

Well received

Up till now, Bridget's only had three records out. The first one, her album *Ask Me No Questions*, was well received, and a single from that, *To B Without A Hitch*, did reasonably well and, even though it's no longer in her repertoire, people still request it. Thirdly, Bridget sang four tracks on a remarkably good

album that managed to slip out with hardly any notice at all—*Top Gear*—a number of songs broadcast on the programme and also featuring some astonishing pieces by Ron Geesin. Released on the BBC label, Bridget sang John Martyn's *The River*, Joni Mitchell's *Night In The City*, her own *Song To Keep You Company* and a very moving version of the spiritual *Lazarus*.

Joyful

On stage Bridget stays seated and until recently, didn't say more than a few words between songs. She lets the songs speak for her, and it's hard to think of anyone less like the traditional 'entertainer' figure. Perhaps because of this, she sometimes gets labelled as a melancholy type. The rock single may dispel this misconception, but Bridget's songs are mostly pretty joyful. 'People may think I'm unhappy, but it's probably because when I'm singing I'm concentrating on what I'm doing. They needn't judge by my face, but by the words.'

'It's true that I used to wonder how someone like John Martyn (John was one of the people who convinced Bridget that she ought to be a singer) could write such beautifully simple, happy songs. He said it was just a case of being happy yourself and it'll come naturally. Now my songs seem to be getting happier all the time.'

John Peel once called Bridget his favourite lady singer in the whole world, along with Sandy Denny. Although Bridget hasn't suffered overnight stardom, more and more people are coming to share John's opinion, it seems. After playing at the Festival Hall this summer with Tom Paxton, Tom became a fan. When she appeared with Matthews Southern Comfort and Trees—again at the Festival Hall—several months back, the audience rose to its feet. All we need now is her new album.

GINHOUSE were formed from two other Newcastle groups, and have been playing together for just over two years. Since the group arrived almost an hour late for our appointment I had ample time to listen to the acetate of their first album, a mixture of close harmonies, tight arrangements and Beatle-ish lyrics, all done competently but with a lack of punch. This will probably be remedied, however, at a later stage in the album's mixing. When they did eventually arrive, lead guitarist Geoff Sharkey used the oldest excuse in the book. 'Had a bit of trouble with the van.' David Whittaker (drums) and Stewart Burlison (bass/vocals) confirmed the story. Geoff continued, 'when we came down here originally it was for a song contest in the Lyceum. When we won it . . . No seriously, we couldn't stay down here because I had another term to do at college.'

What did the other two do before you turned professional?

Stu: 'I was a mining engineer—not a miner—a mining ENGINEER, there's a subtle difference.'

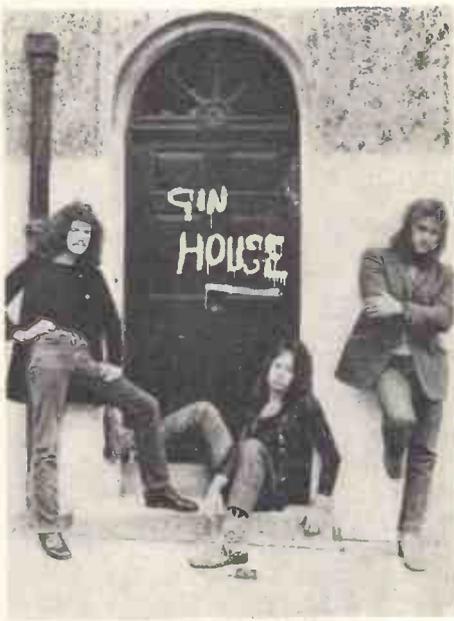
David: 'A butcher.'

Geoff: 'He used to come to gigs on his butcher's bicycle, then one night he didn't turn up . . . He got a puncture.'

David: 'Ha! Bloody Ha!'

Stu: 'Sometimes, when I was working late at the mine, I had to go to gigs in my overalls and boots. It used to look quite funny, me in

'The Beatles are still the greatest'



my kit and the others all dolled up.'

B.I.: 'What about records, the one I heard, when is it being released?'

Stu: 'That one, I think it's coming out in December.'

David: 'November, actually.'

Stu: 'Later this year. We are doing a tour of Germany and some television over there, it is so much easier for a new group to get a chance on the Continent than it is here.'

B.I.: 'Geoff, the lyrics which you write are rather similar to early Lennon/McCartney, how do you feel about this? Is this a deliberate take-off?'

Stu: 'No. We obviously have been subject to the Beatles' influences, but then everybody has. The Beatles are still the greatest group of all time, as far as we are concerned anyway.'

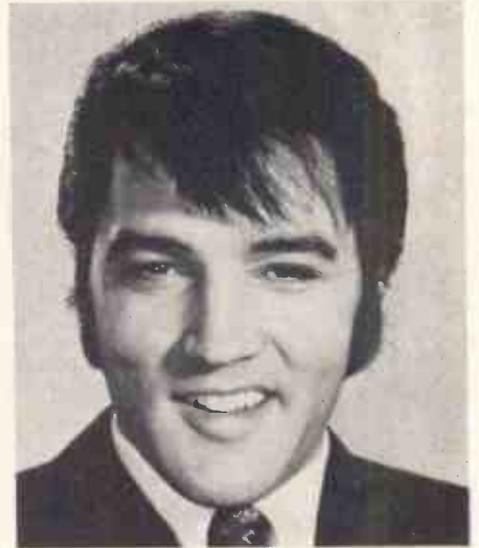
B.I.: 'Did you leave your wives in Newcastle, or did you bring them down to London with you?'

Stu: 'Geoff and I brought ours with us but old fatso over there can't find a bird to have him. We're really good friends, it's just that David is so stupid it is easy to make fun of him. Our first album was recorded in EMI's Abbey Road studios last May.'

David: 'Led Zeppelin have taken over from the Beatles as being my favourite group, and we recorded our album in April. We are filling in time now, waiting for the colleges to start their winter terms, that is the scene we go for. Clubs and things are O.K. but colleges are so much better.'

ROCK AND ROLL

GIANTS



THE 'KING'

OVER the past months we have covered most of the giants of rock, but no such series would be complete without Elvis. Other artists have contributed to rock, written great songs and made great records, but above them all Elvis inevitably towers.

Not only did Elvis sell more records than anyone else on the rock scene, he was number one rock hero. He caused riots with the kids, angered parents, old ladies and guardians of the public good, and generated great controversy with his gyrating hips. His act was branded obscene, incredible though that now seems, and the older generation looked on him with horror. A lot has been written about the significance of the rock revolution. Well, Elvis was that revolution personified, and he was hero-worshipped and attacked accordingly. When *Jailhouse Rock* showed at British cinemas, seats were ripped out, bottles were thrown and police leave was cancelled.

Until the Beatles came along, Elvis was the biggest thing pop music had ever known, and as Elvis advanced, so others followed. Hundreds of singers set out in imitation of him, though some like Cliff Richard moved in their own successful direction after starting on an Elvis kick. When Elvis slowed down his rock and started concentrating on ballad material, others followed yet again. And even today, Elvis's return to live shows has contributed to the revival of interest in rock.

As well as being the first and the biggest of the teenagers' rock heroes in the '50s, he was probably the last really big star in the traditional mould.

Elvis has always kept aloof and his fans know very little about him. He lives a secluded life, well protected by bodyguards and high fences, and an interview with him is a rare thing indeed. Between Elvis and the public stands his manager Col. Tom Parker, the man who has guided Elvis all the way from hard, sexual rock into schmaltzy ballads and appallingly bad films (as befits a lovable all-round family entertainer) right back to rock in Memphis night clubs. What Elvis Presley himself thinks of all these changes remains very much a mystery.

No U.K. appearance

Unlike the other rock stars, Elvis has never made a live appearance in Britain. Over the past 14 years repeated promises have been made and hints have been dropped that he might well come soon, but he never has showed up. Now it seems very unlikely that he ever will. In view of this his continued success is amazing. Perhaps it is because the '50s needed a hero and Elvis fitted the part.

But, in addition to all these factors about teenage revolution and hero worship, Elvis Presley is, and always has been a powerful and expressive singer. Even in his early days he always combined fast rock numbers like *Hound Dog* and *All Shook Up*, with ballads like *Loving You*, *Love Me Tender* and *I Love You Because*. People who said that Elvis couldn't sing had obviously never listened to him. His voice has always been full and really powerful but also capable of softness and drooling romance.

His succession of incredible records was itself incredible. Just think back to *Heartbreak Hotel*, *All Shook Up*, *Don't Be Cruel*, *Wear My Ring Around Your Neck*, *I Need Your Love Tonight*, *Teddy Bear*, *One Night*, *Hound Dog*, *Jailhouse Rock*, *King Creole*, *Blue Suede Shoes*, *Baby I Don't Care* and many many more. After these hits came Elvis's spell in the army but when he returned to the record scene he produced more great records like *His Latest Flame*, *Good Luck Charm*, *Mess Of Blues* and *I Gotta Know* as well as quieter releases like *Are You Lonesome Tonight*, *It's Now Or Never* and the dreaded *Wooden Heart*.

These slower records marked the beginning of Presley's decline as a rock singer. He started going straight and tried to become 'respectable'. The result was a flow of dreadful records that continues to the present day, with the odd goodie like *In The Ghetto* in between, and all those nauseating films. The brains behind Presley killed him as a rocker, so that now, even though he sings his old songs again, he seems to have lost the 'it' that he had. Watching him sing on his TV spectacular he seemed to be thinking 'This is where I twitch, this is where I go "uh-huh"'. He just can't rock like he used to.

So much has been said and written about Elvis that there is little point in repeating the details about him that everyone has read a hundred times. It is also practically impossible to say anything that has not been said before. All you can say in conclusion is that of all the rock and roll giants, Elvis was the Giant among Giants.

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QUADRAPHONIC home music systems will undoubtedly play a major role in the enhancement of rock music judging from the two experiments with rock bands and four channel reproduction broadcasted in the San Francisco area in recent months. The experiments were conducted by two stereo radio stations on the FM band in conjunction with a local television station which supplied the colourful visual account of rock groups like the Grateful Dead, Quicksilver, and Swamp Dogg. Only the listeners who were fortunate enough to own two receivers and four speakers were able to appreciate the experience of quadrasonic listening and realise its obvious advantage over stereophonic reproduction. The intensity of these live performances was elevated to a point where the listener could actually sense a band enveloping him in his own living room; the four-channel separation made it possible for each instrument to be observed in semi-isolation.

A new ballroom in the San Francisco area called Pepperland is pioneering yet another facet of quadrasonic listening. By scientifically arranging speakers in various areas of the seating area the club is able to enhance the separation of a performance without affecting a group's playing. The ballroom is reportedly ideal for freaky ensembles.

Active Train

Sea Train, who recently emerged on the West Coast after a lineup shuffle, are presently very active on the touring circuit, laying down the calibre of playing that both the audiences and reviewers have found pleasing. Donald Kretmar, Roy Blumenfeld, and John Gregory, the splendid vocalist with the original band, are no longer with the group. Replacing them are Lloyd Baskian on organ and vocals, Larry Atanamuik on bass, and Peter Rowan, best known for his outstanding composing and singing with the defunct



Earth Opera, on vocals and guitar. Violinist Richard Greene and flautist Andy Kulberg remain from the original ensemble.

Mike Nesmith is a name that has been drawing considerable attention in the States through serious gigging around the nation. Previously a member of the Monkees, the factory band designed for the teeny-bopper crowd, Nesmith has since gone in an artistic direction with his own First National Band. Together for more than a year, the First National Band have put together some fine

country-pop-folk things including their *Magnetic South* LP for RCA and a successful national hit in *Joanne*. The country-flavoured trio has Nesmith on guitar and singing lead with O. J. 'Red' Rhodes, pedal steel guitar, and John Ware, drums, accompanying.

Santana

Santana's second Columbia album, *Abraxas*, recorded in San Francisco at Wally Heider's studio, is now on the market. The Jefferson Airplane just finished a new LP

at the same studio. A John Lee Hooker - Canned Heat album of old Hooker tunes produced by Bob Hite will be out on the Stax label shortly. Two records of concert material by the Byrds comprises the group's new LP set, *Untitled*. Two Dylan numbers, *Positively 4th Street* and *Mr. Tambourine Man*, are included as well as three familiar Byrd standards from a few years back — *Rock & Roll Star*, *Mr. Spaceman*, and *Eight Miles High*. Personnel in Johnny Winter's latest group, composed of members of the late McCoys, are Rick Derringer (vocals, guitar), Randy Z (drums), Randy Hobbs (vocals, bass). Their first album together is *Johnny Winter And . . .* on Columbia. Now on the Columbia label, the Rascals have begun work on their next album minus drummer-singer Eddie Brigati who left the group because of business pressures. Capitol is experimenting in the US market with a 3-LP package deal at a slightly reduced price; their first rock offering is Steve Miller's *Sailor*, Quicksilver's first LP, and *Music From Big Pink*.

Steve Miller is starting up a new band. David Crosby is using friends from the Airplane and the Dead as session men for his upcoming solo LP.

New albums on the American market include *To Bonnie From Delaney* (includes their hit *Soul Shake* — Atco), *Ritchie Valens* (collection of his oldies in MGM's G.A.S. series), *Bill Haley's Greatest*



His (the originals — Decca), *Tony Joe* by Tony Joe White (Liberty), *Uncle Charlie And His Dog Teddy* by the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band (Liberty), *Indianola Mississippi* by B. B. King (ABC), *The Original Human Being* by Blue Cheer (Philips), *Right On Be Free* by

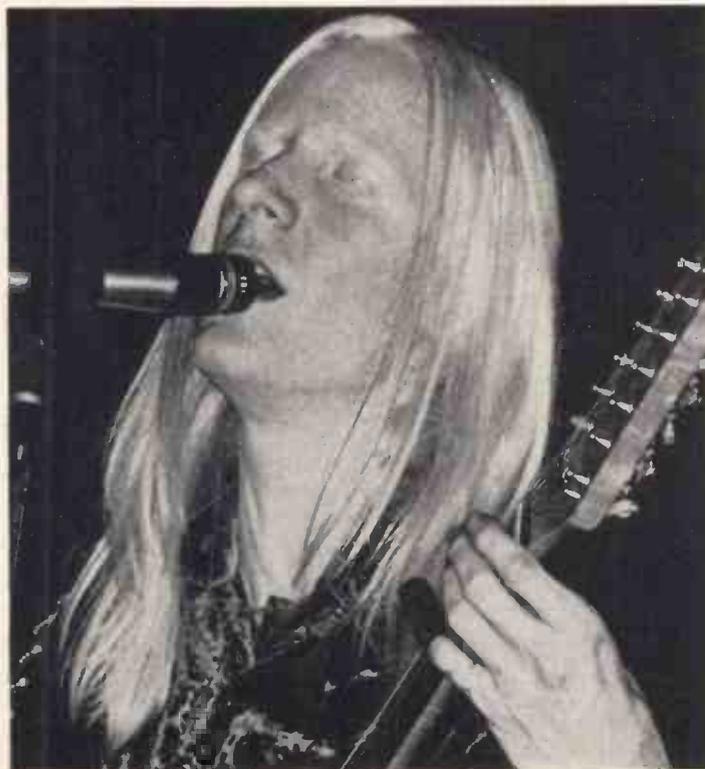
the Voices of East Harlem (Elektra), *1+1+1=4* by Sir Douglas Quintet (Philips), *Fun House* by the Stooges (Elektra), *Satisfied* by Mother Earth (Mercury), *Little Bit Of Rain* by Fred Neil (Elektra), *Trouble In Mind* by Mance Lipscomb (Reprise), *The Use*



Of Ashes by Pearls Before Swine (Reprise).

Vanguard has just released a line of interesting 'best of' 2-LP collections by four of their popular groups and artists: Ian & Sylvia, Eric Andersen, Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band, and John Hammond. In addition they've amassed two records of previously released blues

material by James Cotton, Otis Spann, Junior Wells, Johnny Young, Buddy Guy, J. B. Hutto, and Homesick James on a collection entitled *The Best Of The Chicago Blues*. New from Reprise are two sides by the late great Otis Redding and Jimi Hendrix recorded at the historic Monterey Pop Festival in 1967.



BI's CHART FAX

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

Ain't No Mountain High Enough (*Ashford/Simpson*)

Diana Ross

RP—Ashford/Simpson. S—Tamla Motown. MP—Jobete/Carlin

Band Of Gold (*Dunbar/Wayne*) Freda Payne

RP—Holland/Dozier/Holland. S—American

Black Night (*Heck/Deep Purple*) Deep Purple

RP—Deep Purple. S—De Lane Lea

Black Pearl (*Spector/Levin/Wine*) Horace Faith

RP—Swern/Arthey. S—Chalk Farm

Close To You (*Bacharach*) Carpenters

RP—Daughtry. S—American. MP—Carlin

Don't Play That Song (*Nelson/Ertegan*) Aretha Franklin

RP—Wexler/Dowd/Martin. S—American. MP—Carlin

Gasoline Alley Bread (*Greenaway/Cook/Macaulay*)

Hollies

RP—Richards. S—E.M.I. MP—Cookaway

Give Me Just A Little More Time (*Dunbar/Wayne*)

Chairmen of the Board

RP—Staff. S—American. MP—Gold Forever Music

Love Is Life (*Brown/Wilson*) Hot Chocolate

RP—Most. S—Orange. MP—Rak

Make It With You (*Gates*) Bread

RP—Gates. S—American. MP—Screen Gems

Me And My Life (*Blakeley/Hawkes*) Tremeloes

RP—Smith. S—C.B.S. MP—Gale

Montego Bay (*Barry/Bloom*) Bobby Bloom

RP—Berry. S—American. MP—United Artists

Paranoid (*Black Sabbath*) Black Sabbath

RP—Bain. S—Island/Regent. MP—Essex International

Ruby Tuesday (*Jagger/Richard*) Melanie

RP—Schiechercy. S—American. MP—Mirage

Still Water (Love) (*Robinson/Chapman*) Four Tops

RP—Wilson. S—Tamla Motown. MP—Carlin

Strange Band (*Whitney/Chapman*) Family

RP—Family. S—Olympic. MP—Dukeslodge

Tears Of A Clown (*Cisby/Robinson/Wonder*) Smokey

Robinson and the Miracles

RP—Wonder. S—Tamla Motown. MP—Jobette/Carlin

The Wonder Of You (*Barker/Night*) Elvis Presley

RP—..... S—American. MP—Leeds Music

Which Way Are You Going Billy? (*Jack*) Poppy Family

RP—Jack. S—Decca. MP—Burlington

You Can Get It If You Really Want (*Cliff*) Desmond

Dekker

RP—Kong. S—Jamaica/Chalk Farm. MP—Island

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

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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.

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Tel: 242 9944

THE lights that dotted the control board in the dark studio at Golden State Recorders gave the appearance of a glittering evening sky. Suddenly the calm was shattered by an ear-splitting boom, and the walls of the room vibrated with the shock. The thunderous roar continued for several seconds before fading into silence.

The lights flashed on, and behind the console Leo de Gar Kulka pushed back his chair and stood up. His amplified voice filled the room.

'What do you think of that, eh?'

'I got that in 1963 in Burbank at two o'clock one morning. I happened to have my stereo mikes and equipment at home—we had been working with quadraphonic sound at the time—and there was a fantastic thunderstorm. I stuck everything out the window and it wasn't more than a minute or two later when lightning hit a telephone pole a block away. That crack is just unbelievable.'

The exhibition over, Kulka led us upstairs to his office. The first thing we noticed was dozens of 45 RPM's, all produced or engineered by Kulka over the years, that covered the hallways. As he ushered us into his office, Kulka pulled up two chairs for us, sat back on his cushioned easy chair behind his cluttered desk, and began to tell us about the many experiences that led to his present role as owner and chief engineer of Golden State Recorders in San Francisco.

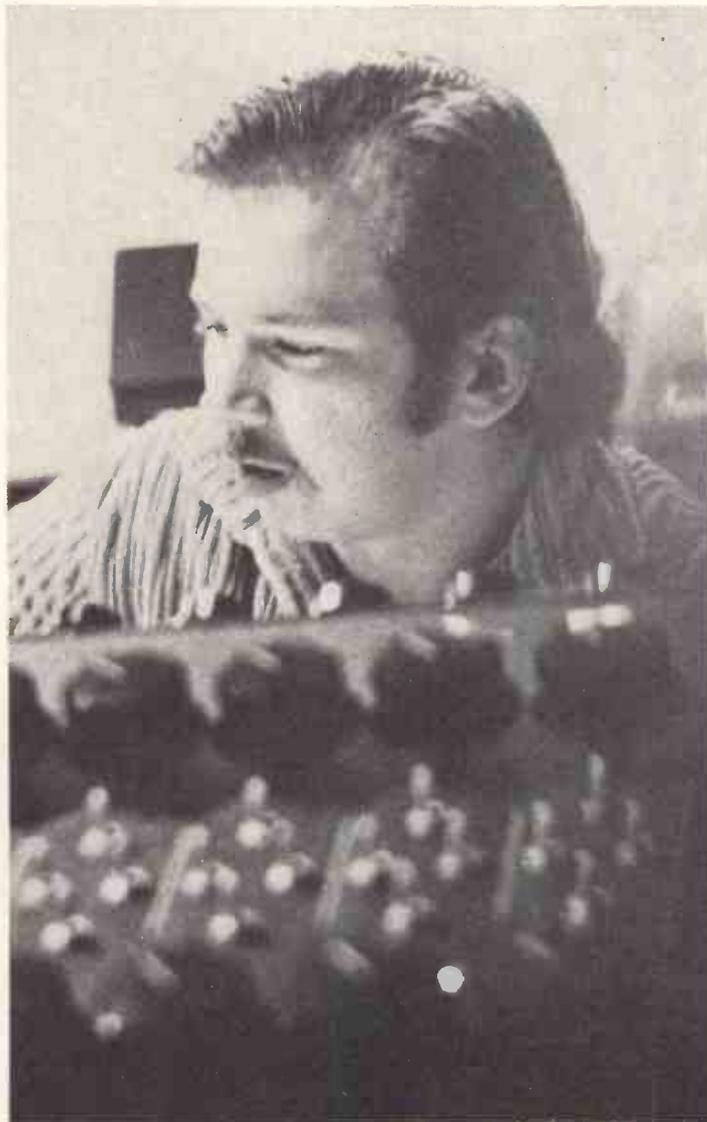
Transistor pioneer

Kulka's career started shortly after being discharged from the Army at the close of the Korean War. In 1958, after spending several years working as an engineer and technician in the Los Angeles area, he opened Sound Enterprises, his first studio, in Hollywood. 'In 1960 the studio was renamed International Sound. It was one of the largest in Hollywood at that time, and one of the first that went into multi-channel recording. We had the first solid-state mixing console, which was unbelievably quiet. At the time people were telling me, "Transistors don't sound good—have you ever listened to a transistor radio?" But it worked out very well for us there, and we recorded a lot of big names in the early '60s.'

During his stay at International Sound Kulka engineered 14 of his 18 million sellers, including *Green Onions* by Booker-T & the MG's, *Bongo Rock* by Preston Epps, *Alley Oop* by the Hollywood Argyles, *Tan Shoes And Pink Shoelaces* by Dodi Stevens, Sam

STUDIO SPOTLIGHT

GOLDEN STATE RECORDERS SAN FRANCISCO



Mike Larner, studio technician

Cooke's *She's Only Sixteen*, and *Second Time Around*, Frank Sinatra's first million-selling single for Reprise.

A disagreement with business partners caused Kulka to leave International Sound and look for a new place to work. 'I came to San Francisco because I always liked the area. Initially I worked in the San Francisco area as an audio electronics designer, but a lot of my former clients from Los Angeles would ask me to either produce them or record them. After a while I got sick and tired of commuting to L.A., so I started checking out the studios in this area. To my surprise I found that there wasn't a studio in the area that I could call professional. Yet I saw more talent in this area than I had ever seen in my life. There were more clubs and dance halls here than any place in the world, yet there were no good studios. Herb Haas, my associate, and I decided this would be a good place to go into business.'

It took Kulka six months to find a suitable location. By June of 1965 he had converted a warehouse on Harrison Street into Golden State Recorders. His first Bay Area clients were a number of the young West Coast rock bands, most of them under contract to Tom Donahue's Autumn label, that preceded the first wave of the San Francisco Sound: the Beau Brummels, the Mojo Men, the Syndicate of Sound, the Vejtables, Sly (Stone) Stewart, and the Great Society with Grace Slick.

Out of those early sessions came such hit singles as *Laugh Laugh* and *Just A Little* by the Beau Brummels, *Dance With Me* by the Mojo Men, and the Syndicate of Sound's *Little Girl*. During the years that followed just about every major San Francisco band has worked with Kulka at Golden State.

Kulka's experience at playing music and working with all types of musicians has made him understanding of musicians' needs. 'I feel for the musician,' he says. 'I know the strain he goes through in trying to record and put his best effort forward. And I think that anything that disturbs an artist in his mind takes him away from his creative job.'

'In the past it was a little different. The music was all written and scored out beforehand. You called in a bunch of session men, and they sat down, read the score and went 'wham bam, thank you mam,' and you had four sides in the can.'

'Now the musician comes into the studio and he has to think about what he is doing. He has to improvise, he has to practically compose and arrange his music

right on the spot. And anything that distracts him shouldn't be in the studio.'

Kulka believes his studio has the relaxed, informal air conducive to productive sessions. 'We try to make everybody feel at home. It gets to be sort of a family affair. We bring dinner in and have a little picnic while we're doing sessions.'

'An engineer from Deutsche Grammophon once called Golden State a "creative barn". The name fits.' Says Kulka: 'Some people come in here and say "why don't you fix your place up here, paint it, put tile on the floor and all that kind of stuff".'

'My personal opinion is that all that stuff never gets into the grooves. I'd rather put my money into better equipment. We have old rugs here, and if they get dirty we just throw them out and get some other old carpeting. If someone spills a cup of coffee, it's not a major catastrophe. The musician can feel more comfortable.'

The size of Kulka's main workshop, Studio A (45' x 45' x 20' ceiling), also adds to the comfort, in addition to giving the sound a place to go.

'Golden State is a large studio,' he says, 'but it doesn't feel big when you're working in it. It's like having a king-size bed, and being able to lay out and stretch your legs apart without falling off the bed.'

Think big

'I'm a firm believer in a large space. A studio has to be big, it's got to have the cubic footage. In my estimation, if you don't have a 20-foot ceiling, you can't get a decent sound, especially for something loud, like brass or electric guitar.'

Studio A is constructed of two 'live' sides and two 'dead' sides in addition to an absorbent ceiling. The walls are set at slightly irregular angles to eliminate standing waves, and there is a specially designed platform around the entire studio which acts as a sound sponge for low frequencies.

Yet a lot of the sound in the studio is reflected back down to the floor so that the musicians have no trouble hearing themselves and each other. 'This is a problem you often find in other studios,' remarks Kulka. 'The musicians can't hear each other and consequently can't mesh together very well. Here they feel like they are playing in a concert hall, and they can turn their amps up to full volume without causing the sound to leak into other channels or mikes.'



Herb Haas: paperwork



Kulka in his office

'As a result, a guitar amplifier can have a sound you only get with the distortion of having the volume up to ten. In other studios, when you turn your amp up to ten, you won't hear anything else.'

Golden State also houses a smaller studio, Studio B, that measures 25' x 35' x 9' ceiling. Though most of the work is done in Studio A, the smaller studio is occasionally used for rehearsals and demos.

Kulka, who does almost all of the engineering at Golden State, has developed a good rapport with most of his regular clients. In the studio he helps the musicians get the most out of their instruments and amplifiers. He has no objections to their assistance in the control room as long as it doesn't get out of hand.

'We had a case here with a classical violinist who played a Stradivarius,' recalls Kulka, 'and between takes he came into the control room and started fooling around with my board. I could tell he didn't know what he was doing. So, being a violinist myself, I went into the studio, picked up his Strad and started playing it. He came charging into the studio and shrieked, "Leave that thing alone, don't you dare touch it." So I put it down and said, "You know what, I'll make a deal with you. I won't play your violin, you won't play my control board".'

Kulka is justly proud of his control board, which he designed and built along with George Bahr, an electronics engineer, in late 1964. They came up with designs then which are just today being utilised on a wide scale. It was originally designed as an 8-track board, but was modified for 16-track work in 1969.

'We're satisfied with 16 tracks,' says Kulka, 'and we're not planning on 24. Multiple-channel work is highly overated. If you're creating to a point where you don't know what to add next, then multi-channel systems can be a big help. Otherwise I think it's a crutch more than anything else.'

'After all, it takes a pretty lousy engineer to ruin a good song. If the song has it, if the music has it, if the vocal says something, an engineer really has to screw up the session to ruin it. But with a bad piece, you can stand on your ear, you can record it on a 24-track machine with the Oakland Symphony Orchestra and the Beatles thrown in, and it would still be a song.'

The recorders used by Kulka at Golden State are all Ampex products: the 16-track MM 1000, an 8-track MM 300 ('a highly modified machine') and a 4-track AG 40. He records exclusively with Agfa tape, a German import

he is very pleased with. 'This tape has an excellent resolution and a signal-to-noise ratio that is ten decibels better than any American tape. As a result we can do away with the Dolby System and achieve the same signal-to-noise ratio. It gives a real clean sound—and that's why the recordings we have made have a clarity that is quite unusual.'

Since Kulka started importing Agfa, a number of studios, Elektra's included, have discovered its capabilities. Kulka now handles distribution of Agfa tape for the entire West Coast market.

Kulka has need of only three assistants. Herb Haas is his business partner and handles the paper work; Mike Lerner, who's been with Kulka for a year and a half, takes care of building and maintaining equipment; Vance Frost, a college student, works in the studio part time as a technician.

Skillful personnel and competent equipment are a key to excellent recording. Kulka feels he has the necessary combination to lay down a clean master. 'Our masters are of such a quality that they do not need equalising. This makes it easier for the disc-cutting engineer to preserve the sound that we captured in our studio.'

'Obviously the engineer that masters the record has no idea what we were striving for in the studio. His job is just to cut so many discs per day. We give him a master tape that has 1000 cycles reference tone at maximum level at the head of it and instructions to master one-to-one. Then all he has to do is put that tape on the machine, read the reference tone, adjust his dials accordingly, put the needle down, and go! The result is that the discs that come out of here sound just like the master tape, which is something you don't often find.'

Over the last few years Kulka recorded a number of well-known groups and artists, many of whom have returned again and again. Mike Bloomfield and his friends, including Nick Gravenites, Sam Lay, and members of the revitalised Electric Flag, use Golden State exclusively. Both Bloomfield LP's, *It's Not Killing Me* and *Live At The Fillmore*, Nick Gravenites' *My Labors*, and Sam Lay's *In Bluesland* were all produced in Studio A, with the exception of the concert recordings. Kulka engineered the remotes at the Fillmore. At press time both Bloomfield and Gravenites were laying down tracks with Kulka for up-coming solo LP's.

The studio portion of Quicksilver Messenger Service's *Happy Trails* album was recorded at Golden State, as was Big Brother's *Coo Coo* b/w *The Last*



Kulka: 'I'll match my sound against any studio!'

Time single for Mainstream and the studio material on their *Cheap Thrills* album. In July Big Brother returned for a new LP, accompanied by Janis Joplin on two numbers.

Other rock artists that have used Golden State's facilities are Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead,

the Sons of Champlin, Mad River, John Stewart, the Other Half, Country Weather, and several other artists affiliated with Kulka's production company.

Kulka also did the mixing for the two live Great Society albums recorded at the Matrix. 'That was done on a Roberts four-track

recorder,' he says. 'We equalised it and echoed it. In its original form it was a horrible mess. We have a few goodies up our sleeve.'

Besides the studio operation Kulka also has a publishing company and a production company that guides the recording futures of a number of young bands and artists in his fold. When he feels they're ready for the studio, Kulka records demo tracks for prospective record companies, and eventually negotiates contracts for the recordings with interested companies.

Originally Kulka tried to release his groups' singles on his own label, wait for the record to break, and then turn it over to a major label for national distribution. However it turned out to be an unsuccessful venture. 'It took so long for the other label to step in and take it over,' recalls Kulka, 'that we lost the record in the process.'

'Last Spring we put a record out called *The Rainmaker*, a Nilsson song, which we did with a group called Contact. We released it here locally, and it got very good airplay, and just when we got the interest of another label, another group released the song back east. So we don't do it that way any more. It's been death on us.'

While we were at Golden State we had the opportunity to see Kulka working with one of his artists, Cgemmay Panamo, a singer-guitarist from British Honduras. The band Kulka is most excited about is Gold, a group he discovered almost two years ago. 'They've been playing quite a few gigs lately, in fact they're booked every weekend. We just finished an album with them, and we already have several offers from recording companies.'

What with running his production and publishing companies in addition to operating Golden State, one would expect Kulka to have very little time for other projects. However, Golden State's chief executive had enough time to accept a part-time instructing position at San Francisco State College, where he lectures a course in Audio Control. The course includes a tour of Kulka's studio and the opportunity for each student to operate the control board.

As we were leaving Golden State Recorders we asked Kulka if he had anything to say to prospective clients. He told us: 'I want them to know that if they come over here, all they have to worry about is what they're playing, because we've got the engineering side of it covered. I'll match my sound against any studio—anywhere.'



STUDIO PLAYBACK

Dave Hadfield, owner of **Maximum Sound Studios**, has been appointed Studio Manager of **Majestic Studios** at Clapham. The operation of the two studios will therefore be integrated to some degree. Also useful will be **Majestic's** capacity for live on-stage recordings.

Manfred Mann has — after many group changes — recorded his *Chapter Three* album; engineering honours to Dave.

Fat Mattress also spent some time in **Maximum** laying down tracks for a forthcoming LP. Engineer: Dave Hadfield.

Britain's best actor — according to *Time* magazine, anyway — is Nicol Williamson. And Nicol, breaking his Shakespearean mould, has been in **Maximum Studios**

recently, recording an LP of ballads and suchlike. Apparently, deathless prose is good for a Studio vocalist — breath-control-wise!

Dave Hadfield has been producing some material for **BBC Children's TV**, and is also currently negotiating to record **Mark/Almond**. He has also produced and engineered the film theme for '*Kelly's Heroes*', which is, of course, on current release.

Trident Airforce

A very 'eavy month for **Trident**. They have now installed their second fully-operational 16-track machine in the re-mix room, complete with sufficient extra Dolbys to cope with the increased loading. As mentioned in last month's *Play-*

back, George Harrison has been finishing off his solo LP for **Apple** — self-produced, of course. **Ginger Baker's Airforce** did a couple of daylight sorties in **Trident** as well. They did their own production of their up-and-coming LP, and relied on the talents of **Roy Baker** on the engineering side. Roy has really had a fulfilling month; he also engineered some tracks for the U.S. group **Stone Ground** (to be released on **Warner Bros.**). Production/Engineering team of **Gus Dudgeon** and **Robin Cable** have been doing their skilful necessary on **Elton John's** new LP, in addition to recording some film music for a forthcoming **Paramount** picture.

Jack Wild ('*The Artful Dodger*') has also been in **Trident**, recording a new single; deskwork on this occasion was by **Dave Corlett**.

Marquee Studios re-opened on September 31 after completing their extensive expansion programme.

In the two months the studio has been closed the

studio team have been hard at work. **Gery Collins**, Managing Director, commenced at **Marquee** in 1967 primarily as a balance engineer and has made it his aim to create an efficient, flexible and pleasant atmosphere in which to record.

Marquee Studios can now offer a luxuriously appointed, air conditioned, acoustically planned music studio and control area, a 24 channel desk, 16-8-4 track and complete **Dolby** facilities.

The engineering staff consists of **Phil Dunne**, who has worked both here and in America, **Colin Caldwell** and **Gery Collins**. Artists to use the new studio include **Tangerine Peel**, **Doris Troy**. Some **Disco 2** live recordings from the **Marquee Club** have been successfully completed.

D L L Purple

Louie Austin has been engineering some mixing tracks for a forthcoming **Canned Heat/John Lee Hooker LP** at **De Lane Lea** this month.

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Louie also did the desking for the now-nearing-completion Deep Purple LP, to be issued on Harvest by Christmas. Ex-Ryan twin Barry — plus his group Verge—have also visited De Lane Lea this month; Barry produced his new single and some album tracks, and the engineering was done by Louie Austin. Deskworker Dave Siddle and Producer Des Champ collaborated on a single for Deep Feeling; Patrick Meehan Jr. and Louie also teamed up for a re-take of the new Black Widow album—hopefully for issue next month. The same duo also used their expertise on a LP for a group named Probe, also recently in De Lane Lea's Kingsway basement Studio.

Over at Sound Centre, the recently re-formed Bee Gees have been producing some of their own material for a forthcoming album. The engineer on this occasion was John Stewart.

Les Reed has been doing some things (recording-wise) with Chapter One at Wessex Studios this month. Also in—King Crimson, working on



Baker's Airforce: Trident sortie



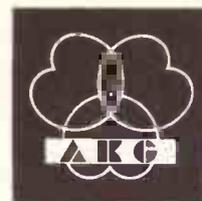
Bee Gees: Recently re-formed

their new LP, which was co-produced by Bob Fripp and Robin Thompson. Robin, as the electronics wizard, also did the necessary deskwork.

The Life Guards marked time for a while in Wessex as well. Arthur Fruin organised the production side of things, while Mike Thompson did the engineering. Clodagh Rogers (a sight for sore Irish Eyes) has also been busy recording at Wessex, and the London Studio has also had the exotic presence of a band of Hawaiian musicians, led by a Honolulu gent by the name of Jack de Melo, who makes a point of visiting Wessex every three months—plus his group—because he cannot get a satisfactory sound anywhere else. *Apropos* of that, Wessex director Roger Thompson reckons that 40% of his Studio's work is for overseas groups—mostly American.

New pips

A heavy reconstruction month for Orange. They have recently installed a brand-new 8-track Ampex machine, plus sufficient extra Dolby



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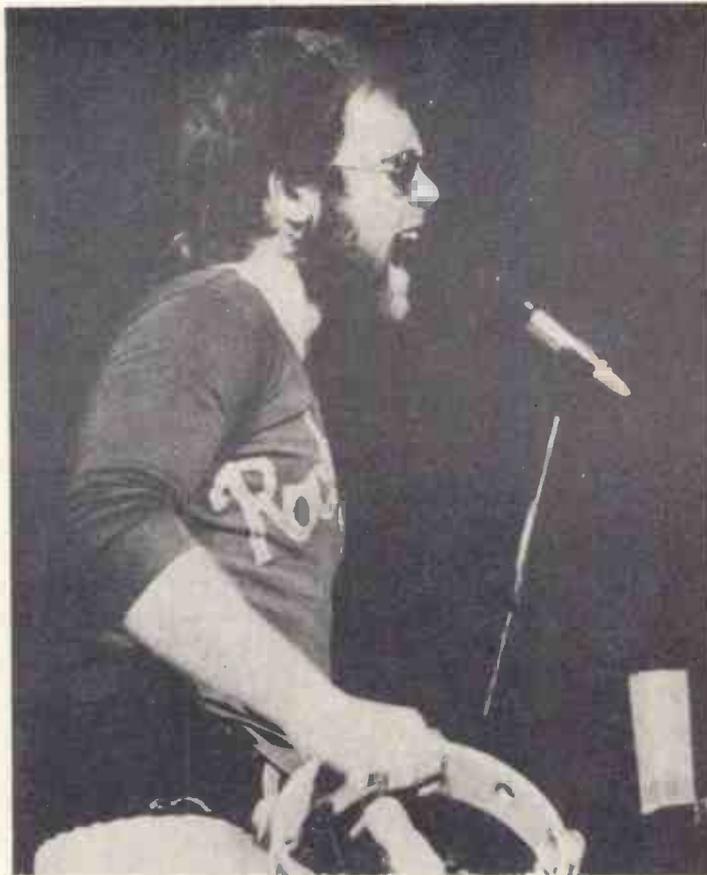
'Weve pulled down the director's office and sacked them and built a new control room in there.

We've bought a Scully 8 track, torn the desk apart and added some superb Dick Sivettenham, Helios Electronics bits'.

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units to cope with the increased facilities. Also, there have been extensive modifications to the console — again, to bring it up to 8-track standard.

They have been busy on their own productions this month, including a new single — as yet untitled — for John Miles; his own composition, in fact. Albums have been completed by the Johnny Young Four and Country artiste Brian Golby. Orange also did two live albums from a country show at the Top Rank Suite.

Some slight price changes: 8-track facilities now cost £20 per hour, 4-track costs £15, and Stereo and Mono cost £10 and £8 respectively. There are no overtime rates. Orange are open 24 hours of the day at the same prices.

Trend Studios have started to record artists for a new series of R.T.E.'s 'Like Now' Pop show. Trend's studio manager John D'Ardis recorded his own compositions with a group called Spice for an LP.

There have been a lot of groups recording singles; among them were Thin Lizzy (whose lead singer was formerly with Skid Row), The Regal Showband, The Mighty Avons, Alice and Gregory.

The Studio plans for the future are, to make extensions to the present premises and enlarge recording facilities for 16 Track.

Pye Studios have been very busy this past month. Studio Two was closed, due to the installation of a 16-track machine; accordingly, Studio One has taken the brunt of the sessions. (Studio Two has in the meantime now been re-opened).

Back to Studio One: Trifle have been busy recording material for a new LP, engineered by Jeff Calver and produced by John Shrouder. Laying down tracks for the Dawn label, Terry Everett has been engineering Heron's recent work. Producer on this occasion was Pete Eden. Some more album stuff got laid down by Titus Groan, Demon Fuzz and Atlantic Bridge. Barry Murray was the producer on all three

occasions and the deskwork was all down to Howard Barrow. Also in Pye—Young Blood and Jimmy Powell, laying down material by courtesy of engineer Dave Hunt and producer John McLeod.

Advision

Advision's engineer Martin Rushent has been worked off his feet this month. Firstly, he did the deskwork on Doris Henderson's (formerly of Eclotion) new singles. These were produced by Jimmy Horowitz, and are to be issued on Warner Bros.

Martin also engineered Long John Baldry's new single, which is destined for the Pye label. Production honours again to Jimmy Horowitz. Thirdly, the tireless Mr. Rushent performed the necessary electronic wizardry on Fat Mattress' recently-recorded backing tracks for a forthcoming album; the Mattress did their own production.

Dozy, Beaky, Mick and Tich have also been into Advision, recording their new single. The engineer on this occasion was Eddie Offord. Eddie also engineered Brian Auger's Oblivion Express when they were in recently to record their new LP—which will be issued via Brian's own label, *Nasty Productions*. Brian, incidentally, did the production work himself; as he did on a single for Mogul Thrush (formerly Brother-

hood). Engineer for the Thrush was Eddie Offord.

I.B.C. Studios of Great Portland Street have totally re-equipped their Studio 'A' with new 16-track Ampex machines, to complement their existing 8-track facilities. A new 16-track custom-built desk is on order, and will be included in the set-up by Christmas. Re-furbishing of the 'A' Studio necessitated new acoustic treatment, with special anti-bass baffles on the walls in a delicate and tasteful shade of Regency Green.

Prior to the closedown, James Royal was in IBC, finishing off an LP, to be issued on Philips/Nashville; the album was produced by Dave Mackay and engineered by John Pantry.

The New Seekers have also visited IBC; the reason being their new single—which is currently riding high in the U.S. charts. This particular tracking job was engineered by IBC's Studio Manager Mike Claydon, and was produced, again, by Dave Mackay. Rosetta Hightower finished off her LP, to be issued on CBS. This album was produced by Ian Green and was engineered by Damon Lyon-Shaw.

Helios 'berry

The Stockport, Cheshire studios of Strawberry have been graced this month by a rebuilt 8-track desk. The

necessary work was done by Helios Electronics; in addition, Strawberry have purchased a new Scully 8-track machine. The first titles cut on the new machine were to complete the Hotlegs' new album, which is due to be released on Capitol in the USA shortly. The LP was produced by Hotlegs themselves, and they also did the artwork for the sleeve. The sessions were engineered by Eric Stewart and Peter Tattersall.

Tangerine Studios have spent about £20,000 in the last month on re-equipping and re-furbishing their Dalston apparat. The bulk of the bread was devoted to a new 8-track Cadac desk, and, to further improve the control room, new acoustic treatment was applied to ensure that the sound from the speakers is completely true and authentic.

On the recording side, Raw Material have been in, cutting an LP for the Evolution label. Producer on the occasion was Ed Welch, and the engineering was performed by Robin Sylvester. Robin also desked the recently-completed LP by Frank Ricotti, highly-rated jazz vibes player; the producer was Stuart Taylor. Peter Bardens and Robin got together to produce/engineer Marsupilami's first LP, recorded at Tangerine this month. They spent over 90 hours on the album, which is destined for the Transatlantic

label.

Tony Rockliffe did the engineering on a single by Baskin and Copperfield, to be issued on Rama. Also at Tangerine — Love Affair, laying down tracks with Ken Street producing the material.

Incidentally, owing to a misprint last month we inadvertently printed Tangerine's address as 510 Kingsland Road. This should, of course, read: 570 Kingsland Road, Dalston, London E.8.

A progressive trio with the name of Funeral Service were among the artists recording in the Rickmansworth studios of Jackson Recording. Other performers were the Luton group, Pretty Poppet, and a reggae band, the Avengers, managed by Jack Flash. Folk singer Peter Cox and session organist Brian Dee have also been cutting some grooves for forthcoming release, the latter on Jackson's own Ad-Rhythm label.

Since sound effects wizard Barry Gray (remember the great sounds behind the TV puppet series like 'Thunderbirds'?) left these shores, Malcolm Jackson has been acting as agent for the sale of Barry's equipment.

Due to a misprint in last month's *Focus on Recording Studios*, Lansdowne Studios were stated to have facilities for a maximum of five musicians. This should have read: 55 musicians!

Our apologies to Lansdowne.

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THE PRIVATE WAR OF ERIC BURDON



LAST month saw the triumphant return to these shores of Eric Burdon—late of the Animals and *House of Rising Sun* fame. The two week visit was designed to coincide with the release of his new Polydor album, *Eric Burdon Declares War*. Although recorded almost a year ago, the album is still where the band are at—musically, at least.

Following a week's very successful engagement in London's Ronnie Scott's Club and a free Hyde Park concert, the band and its entourage of roadies (one of whom happened to be the ex-lead guitarist of the Old Animals, Hilton Valentine), public relations people and press-men left London in a chartered British Rail carriage for a four hour trip to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Even before the station platforms were out of sight, the well-lubricated throats of War had broken into song. This happy state of affairs did not last long however; the Sunday papers had been brought out; Jimi Hendrix had died a couple of days before so this was the time for the 'plastic papers' to cash in on his life—and death.

The initial shock had obviously been felt by every member of the party, but to read 'inside' stories using Jimi's name to moralise on the 'horrors' of drug use were just too much for everyone to take; thus the atmosphere in the compartment became very heavy and resentment for Fleet Street's scandal sheets was openly voiced.

As we approached Darlington an opportunity arose for me to have a few words with Eric and Lee Oskar (harpist extraordinaire). I asked Eric first of all about the amount of truth in the rumours we have all been hearing of his hard times in the poorer areas of New York.

'You're probably right about the rumours—when nothing is heard of anything or anybody, you always get somebody who make up their own stories. I wouldn't go as far as saying I was hard up, I lost my sense of direction for a while. Man, I was

having a good time. War were a group before I ever found them, so I had nothing to do with the name.'

Since several members of the group were armed with guns (toys) I asked about Eric's own armoury—if it really existed: 'Guns are nice things, the only thing is that they mean so much to the wrong people.'

'I got really hung up about that gun trip I was supposed to be on, you listen to the words, man—they're our brothers, the whole damn world is full of our brothers, I don't want to kill anyone in particular. All I want is to do what I want to do. It's simple, isn't it?'

While Eric went off to replenish his drink, I cornered Lee and asked him about his past and how he came to be part of War.

Too organised

'Originally I came over to England from Copenhagen about 1965, the idea was that I should be a star and then go home. While I was playing around London an offer came of recording in America, there were lots of promises of money and big contracts but things were too damned organised over there. At first it was good, I played with Flag (Electric Flag) on most of their records and backed just about anybody else on the label that wanted me. As I was saying, though, the scene got to be a drag, so I had a choice of playing what I didn't believe in—or splitting.'

'It was fine living on the streets around L.A. I played for fun all over the place—yeah, in the streets. About 18 months ago I met Eric and we talked about starting a band. Then about two or three months later we found War and Bee Bee (Dickerson the bass player from Hawaii).'

Eric returned—suitably equipped with a bottle of white wine. I asked him if War were chosen as a backing group because of their musical abilities, or if there was another motive.

'There will be a complete organisation centred round



Eric: *The whole world is full of our brothers*

us. I am on this record as the lead singer, but as we get on one of the others will take over, so that we all have records out. They are good players, all they needed was exposure.'

I queried if he had noticed two ex-Animals in his London audience who had remained motionless through most of the act while the other people present were visibly grooving.

'Man, I don't care who comes to see me play, I don't care what they do when they watch me, if they join in it's even better, as long as they don't screw everybody else up!'

The last question I was able to ask (before our friends from the BBC commandeered my interviewee) was if having a black group wasn't just a rather more subtle way of taking an ego trip—a big fairy Godmother act?

'Look, man, they are just good cats, that's all, no more than that!' Arrangements were made to continue our talk on the return trip to London, so I got back to my warm beer in the corner.

Arrival in Newcastle was unhassled, although autograph hunters did manage to get a few scribbles before Eric drove off in his New York-registered Corvette to visit his mother.

Due to a slight mix-up with taxis, however, the lovely dinner which Mrs. Burdon (Senior) had cooked for us in her council estate home was a little rushed so that we could get to the City Hall in time for the performance.

To those few people who were fortunate enough to see both the Ronnie Scott's and Newcastle spots, Eric Burdon and War proved that their act was not bounded by any differences in taste between the two audiences. Numbers such as *Spill the Wine* and *Tobacco Road* remained the high spots, but the Newcastle punters missed out on the full-length version of *Mother Earth*. They need have no fear, however, because all are on the album. One particular point in the act which aroused the emotions of the northern fans was during *Spill the Wine*—when Eric poured a

bottle of Newcastle wine (Brown Ale) over his head!

The interview arranged for Monday morning's return trip to London never came to fruition; BBC had contacted Eric overnight and had persuaded him to fly back to London to record a

tribute to Jimi Hendrix. When the press, etc., learned of Eric's planned early departure it was decided to come south overnight—the result being that I spent most of Monday morning asleep in front of my office typewriter.

S.H.



War during cease-fire

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INSTRUMENTAL NEWS



This month saw the official opening of AIR Studios in London's Oxford Street. Many celebrities, including Dudley Moore—pictured above talking with AIR's Chairman George Martin—Cilla Black, Mike D'Abo, Lance Percival and Quatermass toasted the company's success.

A studio by studio run-down of AIR's facilities will be featured in next month's Studio Spotlight.

G and P Music

A new company has just begun operations in Northfleet, Kent. **G and P Music Ltd.** is the joint project of 23-year-old Roger Gunkel of Chatham and 22-year-old Adrian Potter of Gravesend. Both have been connected with the Kentish music business for several years, and opened this company in an effort to produce speaker cabinets at a lower price, and better quality where possible, than the 'established' manufacturers. Already G & P boast that they can build any type of cabinet to

order within a week.

A sampler album of tracks laid down by bands in the G & P stable should be available in South-Eastern record stores early next month.

Rickenbacker

Guitar Village is a new shop recently opened in the heart of London's West End, at 80 Shaftesbury Avenue.

Catering for every need of the discerning guitarist, the shop is a Main Agency for the Rickenbacker range of American guitars, which for some time have not been available in this country.

Starting at £125 brand new, the range of solids are good value and the two pick-up de-luxe bass with stereo and Grover machine-heads is accepted by professionals as being one of the finest available.

An extensive range of second-hand American electric guitars is always carried in stock, together with a comprehensive selection of folk, jumbo and classical guitars, amplifiers, strings, spares and accessories.

Manager Ken Achard and Nidge Tannerhill also offer a complete repair service and are willing to accept part exchanges and easy payments.

Address changes

D. H. Baldwin Co. have moved from their Romford factory. U.K. Sales Manager Gerry Brandon tells us that the GB 10 Organ will no longer be manufactured in this country. All further models will be imported from the Baldwin plant in Canada. For Baldwin Organ owners, the Organisation is now located at: *D. H. Baldwin Co., Metrostore, London Road, West Thurrock, Essex. Tel: PURfleet 6825.* Baldwin Burns Guitar and Amplifier owners with service problems are advised to contact the *Arthur W. Walker Group, Fillybrook House, 127 Fillybrook Road, Leytonstone, E.11 Tel: 01-556 6988.*

From D.C.5 to Vox



Rick Huxley, until recently the bassist with the Dave Clark Five, has joined the staff of Vox as Group Liaison and Technical Representative. Rick will service the trade, advise on sales promotion, and give advice and help to established groups (and to those who will be established within the next few years).

Genesis Creation

Nolan Amplification of 30, Holloway Road, N.7 — the manufacturers of many of the speakers and amplifiers which are sold under other companies' trade names — are stepping up their own campaign for recognition. Genesis Creation were so impressed by the quality of their 'straight' Nolan gear that they had a

new kit built to order, the speaker cabinet of which contained two 12", two 15" and four Midax Horn speakers.

Marshall to Park

Mr. Jim Marshall, head of Jim Marshall Products, of Bletchley, has joined the Board of Cleartone Musical Instruments Ltd., the Birmingham-based manufacturers of 'Park' amplification equipment and accessories.

Macari

Macari's Musical Exchange have been dealing with so many servicing queries and professional orders in recent months that they have now been forced to open a new shop. The shop has been opened at 122 Charing Cross Road (the site was previously occupied by Hambro's Book shop).

In the words of the Manager Jimmy Ward, 'since the other shop (102 Charing Cross Road) will still be open for the usual sales and demonstrations, we are going to have

this as a sort of 'service-centre' where groups can bring their equipment for repairs or servicing, and call to collect them in a day or two. Of course we will have gear in stock, but the emphasis will be on fast, expert servicing.'

10 channel Venus

Venus Recording Ltd. of 85 Whitechapel Road, E.1 (the parent company of Nobel Music Ltd. (publishing) and Orbit Records) have a special low-price recording offer running at the moment. For the price of £3.10s.0d., tape, copy tape and editing services are thrown in. Venus Recording Studios are fully equipped for 10 channel mixing.

Radios

The servicing of Hitachi Radios, is now carried out by Hitachi Sales (U.K.) Ltd., Park House, Coronation Road, Park Royal, London, N.W.10, telephone number 01-965 9861.



Part of South-Eastern Entertainments new shop.

South Eastern Entertainment Agency Ltd have been established at 375 Lewisham High Street for many years, during which time they have supplied top groups and musicians with instruments of all types.

Sales have been increasing at a considerable rate over the years, and recent develop-

ments demanded additional space with which to cope with the demand. No. 377, adjacent to the present shop, has been taken over to deal with electrics, amplification, portable organs and allied accessories. No. 375 will continue with acoustics and the folk scene, drums, educational instruments, etc.

MARSHALL LAW 2

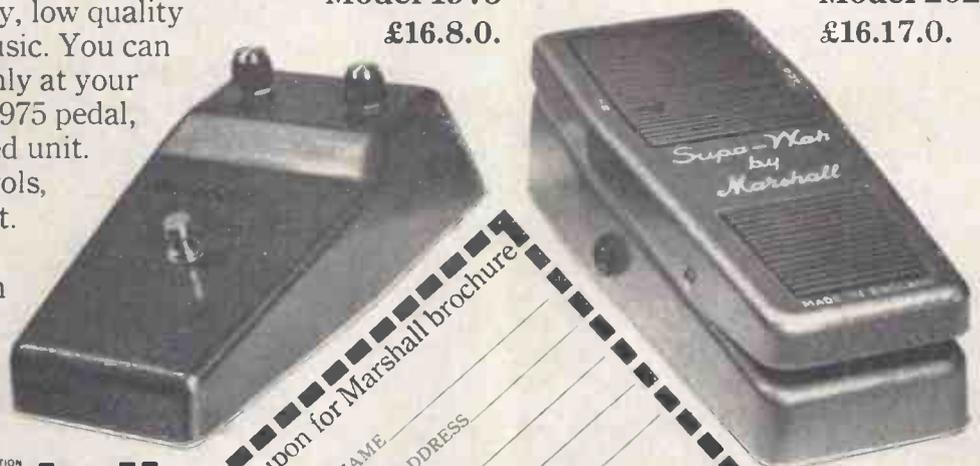
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MOTT THE HOOPLE

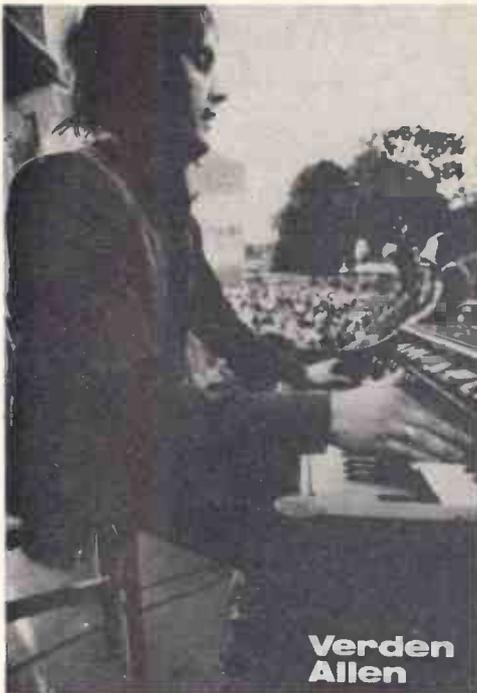
SOME years ago there was an American author living in Southern Europe who wrote a book in which a little individualist called Mott made a collective journey on behalf of a lot of other people, and was 'last seen two miles from Heaven . . .'. An English musician and songwriter called Guy Stevens read it, liked it, and took both book title and philosophy to some friends of his . . . end product—*Mott the Hoople*.

Line-up-wise they are something like the original Procol Harum: pianist/vocalist; organ; guitar; bass and drums.

Also like Procol Harum they have a personal guru/lyricist as a full member of the group—emotionally, at least.

Modest

Collectively, they are five widely-travelled and experienced musicians from Herefordshire. They have made two albums (the more recent of which, *Mad Shadows*, has been well received), and are modest about their recent success. They are: Ian Hunter, piano and vocals; Mick Ralphs, guitar (he and Ian write the songs). On bass there is Overend Watts, on organ, Verden Allen, and on



Verden
Allen



Mick
Ralphs



Overend
Watts



Ian
Hunter



Buffin

drums—a gentleman named Buffin.

Mott the Hoople have recently returned from a tour in the United States, where they performed extensively on the Eastern seaboard before crossing over to work some extra time in California. Diplomatically deadpan about American politics, they nevertheless have strong views about the US musical culture.

'Musically—the US is great,' said Ian. 'The organisation of gigs is terrific, really polished. The promoters over there are really into what you are doing—not like England, where they're only in it for the bread.'

U.S. gear

MTH are also enthusiastic about American equipment. So much so that they invested in a load of American stuff before finishing their eight-week tour: a Ludwig custom-built kit, and plenty of Acoustic amplification. Bassman Overend described his

particular unit as 'a completely radical design', with in-turned speakers and special baffles. Ian Hunter has an American-built RMI electric piano. This, plus Mick's Les Paul Junior and Verden Allen's M100-plus-Leslie, completes the group.

Mott the Hoople have been together for one year last July, though, as you might expect, they have all been playing professionally long before that. Their music has rough edges, as they will admit. They describe their musical approach bluntly.

No technical giants

Ian: We're not into the technicality bit. There's plenty who are—Ritchie Blackmore, Alvin Lee . . . they've all got their own complete scene—we like it—but our approach is different.

Mick: We like playing from the balls.

Ian: Not so keen on the Technical Giant bit.

Mick: Alvin Lee's like a

skilled fitter. It's fascinating to watch and you really admire it, but you don't really, well, feel it.

Ian: Rory Gallagher has a big following.

Awkward

Mick: There's so many really great musicians doing creative things. Leon Russell, Joe Cocker . . . Rita Coolidge, all of that group of people . . . the Faces are a good band. You can see they're enjoying what they do.

Ian: We believe in having a good time on stage.

Mick: You've got to. We're five of the most awkward bastards. We'd never survive unless we did something like that.

Their influences range from Booker T. (preferred by organist Verden), to Mick's choice of Leslie West of *Mountain*. They appreciate the progressive and the competent, and they like Ringo 'cos he's good and solid. Buffin also likes the work of Jim Capaldi, while Ian con-

fesses himself an admirer of Leon Russell and Roy Young. They all admire Guy Stevens—the sixth member of Mott the Hoople, their guru and producer.

Mad Shadows

They recorded *Mad Shadows* in two studios, Olympic and Island (although remembering with warmth their former harbour—Future Sound—in Monmouth). *Shadows* was engineered by Andy Johns and produced by Guy—as was their first LP.

They consider themselves 'well-known unknowns' and have strong views about some of the posier London clubs. These are considered Hype Centres, and are despised. All the same, they like what's happening around them. They feel their music is getting better. They're optimistic. The speed at which things have happened has left them a bit breathless. In a little over a year, Mott the Hoople are on their way.

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KELLY JAMES is a 25-year-old entertainer from Glasgow. One must describe Kelly as an entertainer rather than merely a vocalist, although he does employ his strong voice to good effect on some old Elvis songs, since impersonations take up nearly 50% of his stage act. At a recent concert in London's Lyceum advertisements for 'Pot' and skits on various 'Pot' stars had the audience in fits of laughter. Not only does Kelly sound like the so called King but in the stage lights of the Lyceum, he also appeared very similar.

Influenced

'I have worked at lots of things, but always in the entertainment field. When I was very young my parents took me to live in New York. My father was in Vaudeville there, and by the time I was eight I was doing a song and dance routine with him. From New York we moved across the border to Toronto, that's where I met a bunch of people who really influenced my future. Neil Young (Crosby, Stills . . .), David Clayton Thomas (Blood Sweat and Tears) and Bruce Palmer (Buffalo Springfield) all went through school with me.

KELLY JAMES



Following two years in the Guards I went south to L.A. where I worked as a bit-player in movies for a year (*Blue, Hombre* and *Last of the Secret Agents*) but due to a technical hitch about my work permit I got deported back to Canada. I started up a horse ranch in the foothills of the Rockies, which my father looks after for me while I'm over here.'

Bover disc

Earlier this year Kelly recorded a tribute (?) to skin-heads, but none of the record companies in this country would release it, the official explanation for not releasing the records was given as: 'Liable to cause unrest within certain factions of the public.' Kelly's first album also posed a problem, 'It is difficult putting a visual act on record, the only thing I could do was to put interludes of humour between tracks. Television is about the best media as far as my act is concerned, but nothing can compare with live concerts.'

Kelly's most successful gig to date was probably the one he did in the Royal Festival Hall with Roy Harper. 'I like the audiences in England, but the country is too political for me to stay here for long.'

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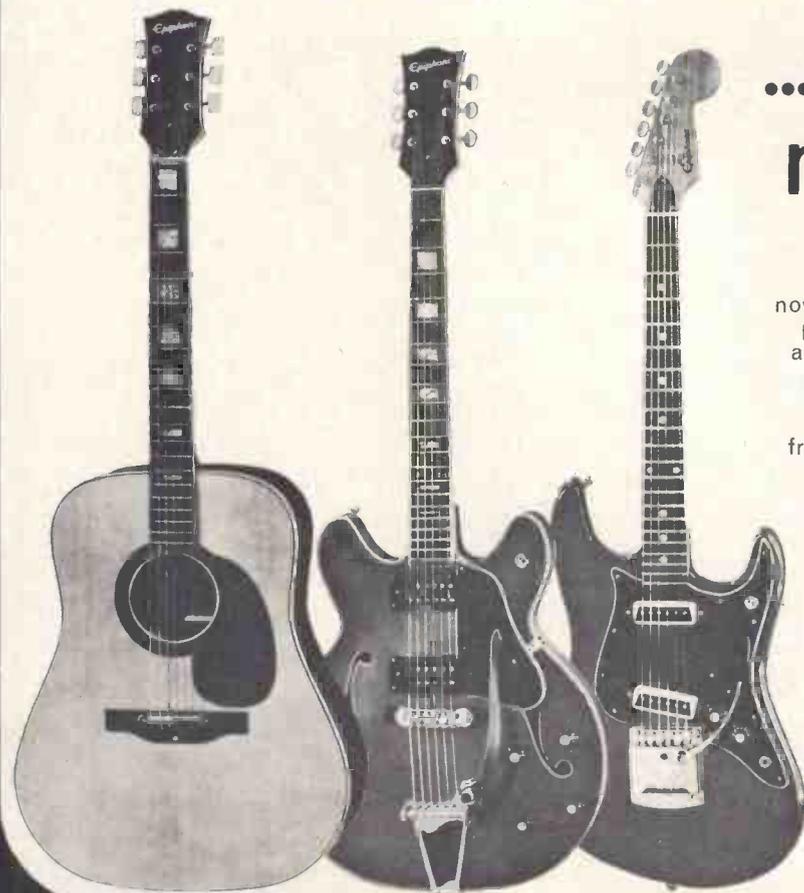
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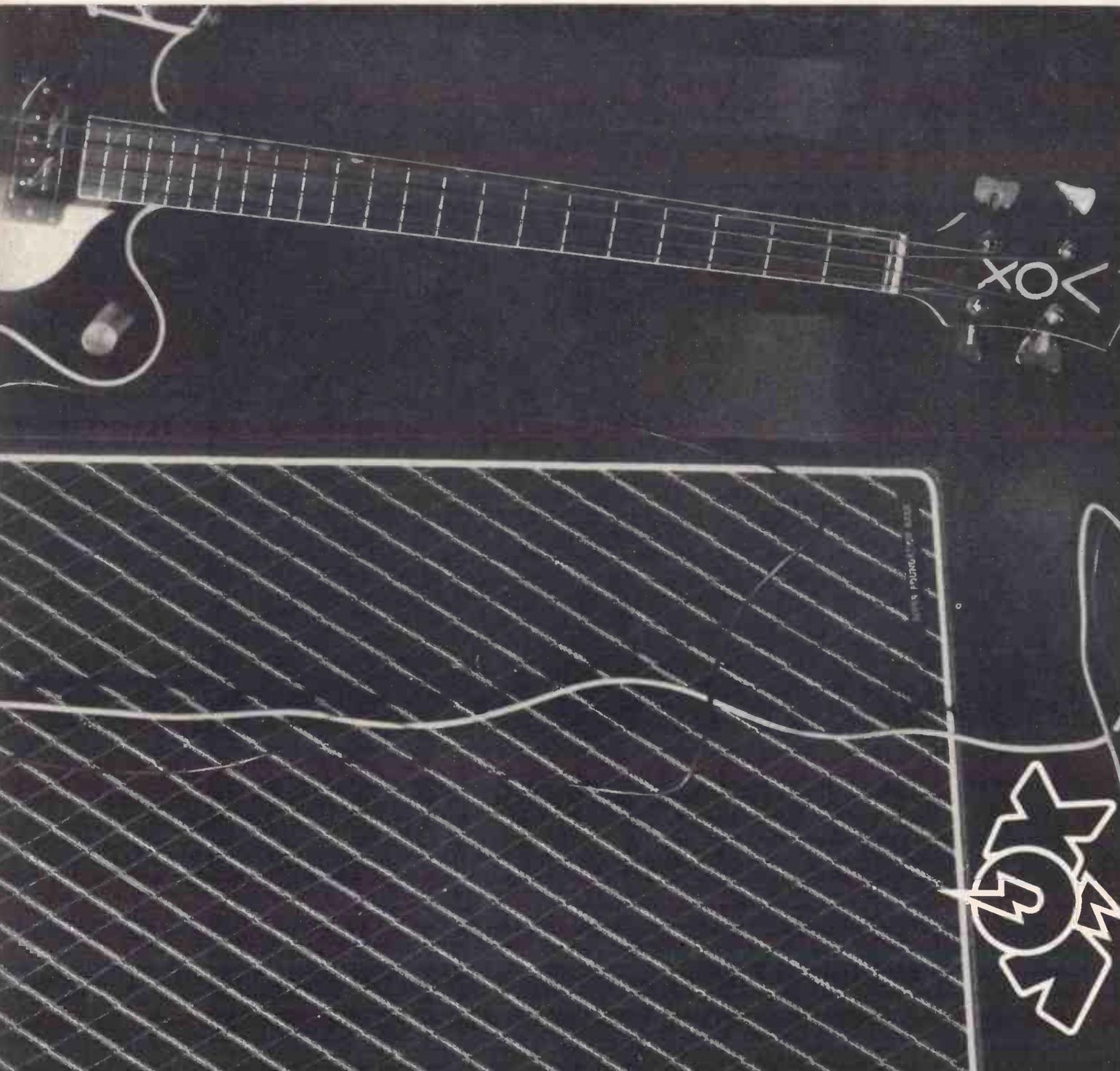
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DEEP PURPLE

DEEP Purple, since their formation from the debris of the Artwoods, Lord Sutch and others have become increasingly recognised as one of the most progressive and forceful of all British Hard-Rock bands. Always experimenting, always pyrotechnical, the group have gone from strength to strength since their highly successful LP *Deep Purple In Rock*.

I finally caught up with organist Jon Lord at the Kingsway basement studio of De Lane Lea after more than a week of missed appointments and crossed lines. He amiably agreed to break off the pre-recording warm-up session that was in progress and while the *BI* photographer manipulated his apparatus, Jon and I discussed Deep Purple's present role in the Rock world.

Fairly recently, Jon, Deep Purple have become known as something of a controversial group — especially in regard to Classical Music. Where do you feel Deep Purple's present musical direction is going? Is it going to consolidate this marriage of styles?

No, I feel we're moving away from it now because it was never intended to be part of the direction of the group; it was merely an experiment. As you know, we did experiment with classical themes in the beginning — and with classical chord structures in the music, but it all

got a bit soulless . . . planned, you know? We wanted to get a bit more freedom into the music so we don't normally use any form of classical music now — except maybe in our solos. I love classical music; I love the way it's worked . . . all those chord sequences, so I often use that sort of effect in my solos. The actual group now is trying to develop into being good at what we're best at — which is what we call Rock 'n' Roll. The Concerto was originally intended to be an experiment. What happened was it caused an awful uproar . . . which was very nice, of course . . . and that really started us off.

Consolidation

So you see your direction as trying to consolidate your Rock basis?

Yes. And trying to move out from there, rather than getting into other things without any sort of basis at all.

The classical venture was an experiment, then. Do you foresee any other experiments which Deep Purple are likely to get themselves into?

Yes. There was a thing last week with the BBC which we did under much less of a cloud of publicity. We had been asked to do it by the BBC a year ago.

Was that the Gemini Suite?

Yes. It was really a bee in my bonnet — this thing with classical orchestras — and the rest of the group were kind enough to indulge with me.

You've been compared as an organist with Keith Emerson — for obvious reasons, how do you relate your playing to his?

Keith has a very, very excellent technique. I mean, almost unbelievably excellent, and as such, I'm a great admirer of his. I consciously try not to copy Keith . . . the thing is, we both arrived at the same sort of idea at around the same time. I remember we once did a gig with the Nice. I'd heard of them but I'd never seen them. We found to his surprise — and to mine — that we were both doing similar sorts of things. I don't say that I'm a better organist than Keith, because I'm not. At least, not technically. In that, he's a superior player. What I do feel is that I have more feeling — more soul, if you like — in my improvisation.

I remember you were quoted some time ago as saying that you were going to use less of the Leslie speaker in your playing. Do you still feel the same way about Leslies?

Yes, think I do. I found that I was *using* it, rather than *playing* it . . . you know, switching the rotor on



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and off to get effects, and things like that. . . . It's very exciting to hold one note down and switch on — very exciting — but it's not playing; I've found it doesn't fit into a Rock idiom.

What equipment are you using now?

Four Marshall Horn cabinets and a 200-watt amp with my C3; direct connections with the organ. What I'm going to do is to make up another 200-watt amp . . . the organ is putting out around 280 watts at source . . . basically, though, I've got the sound that I want. And I've got a sound that mixes well with the rest of the group.

100% satisfied

Have you changed any equipment within the group?

No. We're still all-Marshall. I'm getting a Fender electric piano for use on the stage. I won't be using it immediately — work it in gradually — but I feel the need for another sound within the group. It's possible that as time goes by we may try some different instrumentation within the group for one or two numbers, but it's hard to say just now. At the moment we're trying to keep what we've learnt. Because we learnt a terrific amount with *Deep Purple In Rock*, it took six months to make that album: we think it paid off, really. I can honestly say that it's the first album we've been 100% satisfied with; it gave us a hell of a lot of confidence. During that long time we learned a lot about ourselves and our music and our sense of direction. I suppose it's our basis now for our whole sound and our whole way of working.

No ego-trip

How do you feel the States has influenced you?

We try very hard *not* to be influenced by it. We didn't want to come back from America all spaced out, saying 'Oh Wow', and start playing long introverted ego-trip numbers. We're very extrovert, really. We like to excite an audience, get involved with them. The trouble over there is because of this accent on 'Getting into the music, Man', you tend to get some incredibly boring groups, who receive some excellent criticisms over there, and yet we find them rather boring . . . competent, and quite nice, but rather boring.

You don't feel that about British groups?

No, I don't. I feel that British groups at least make an effort somehow that is more concerned with projection, with putting themselves across.

Which British groups do you respect?



**'We've now reached
a point where we
are perfectly
happy and
content . . .'**

East of Eden, for instance, really put an effort into it. Matthew's Southern Comfort, as well. They're American-influenced, alright, but it's done from an extremely English point of view. I don't think the Bonzo Dog could have evolved in America, nor could the old Nice: because of their musical discipline. This is one thing that British groups do have, a sort of discipline. Sometimes it can get a bit soulless, but on the whole I think it's preferable to the American alternative.

Do you believe in musical discipline?

Yes. You take the great symphony writers like Beethoven . . . they wrote within an incredibly strict framework . . . you know, it must have a first subject, a second subject, a dominant key . . . and it must have an exposition based around the theme — that's just the first movement! But look what they produced . . . incredible music, through putting themselves into a restricted formula, and then expanding from there. It's often like the restriction on a painter. A piece of canvas, some oils and a brush are his restrictions, and he works within those limits, and extends beyond them. Working against a restriction — for me — often produces greater things than getting rid of all boundaries. Free form jazz means absolutely nothing to me. Because there *are* no boundaries.

Natural development

What is the guiding musical philosophy of Deep Purple?

We believe in experiment and excitement within the framework that we have set ourselves at this particular moment in time. That will change . . . we will extend, obviously. We'll get older, get different influences; we've now reached a point where we are perfectly happy and contented to develop naturally. We were trying to develop un-naturally before. We would grasp all sorts of different ideas at once . . . like a child in a garden full of flowers: he wants them all at once. When Ian (Gillam) and Roger (Glover) joined, something very nice happened within the group.

What are your present recording plans?

We're starting a new album, to be released, we hope, just after Christmas.

At De Lane Lea?

Yes. And Martin Birch is doing most of the engineering. We like this place — seem to have got it together with them.

Any plans for tours in the near future?

Starting in the New Year, we're doing a sort of round-the-country concert-hall thing, but first we're doing tours of Germany, France, Scandinavia and England between now and Christmas.

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THE evolution of the group instrumentalist has taken a few unexpected turns over the last decade. Gone are the days of skiffle bands with their bare minimum of equipment: washboards, tea-chest basses and acoustic guitars. We have seen not only a revolution in music, but also in gear. The tea-chest plucker became a bass player, the guitarist now plays an electronic instrument fully equipped with wah-wah pedals, fuzz units, etc., and the pianist of yesteryear has become the 'keyboard' player of today—complete with organ, piano, and very possibly a Mellotron or synthesizer as well.

The drummer has not been left behind. His developments as an instrumentalist can be traced from the ignoble washboard—through a basic snare-drum-and-crash setup—to the full group percussionist of 1970. Nowadays, a drummer will have a minimum kit consisting of: one or more bass drums, snare drum, two or more tomtoms, hi-hat, a couple of crash cymbals and possibly other exotica like congas, marraccas etc.

Let's face it. Drummers are a breed apart. Lead players have their own image and drummers have theirs—often more basic and uncomplicated than the extroverts out front. Likewise with equipment. If you view a group's gear on stage, it is highly likely that your attention will be held by the multi-coloured 200 watt juggernauts that dominate everything (unless, of course, you happen to be a drummer). The chances are that you will totally overlook the untidy collection of chrome-and-laminate that sprawls dead centre of the stage. Unfair, maybe, but true. Drumkits tend to be taken for granted.

Nevertheless, percussion equipment is built to standards every bit as exacting and precise as those of the Electronic branch. Fittings are tooled and machined to careful thousandths of an inch; skins and heads are the final product of hundreds of hours of painstaking research; even the humble drumstick is lathe-turned out of a piece of selected wood—which is itself carefully scrutinised for flaws and knots that might affect future lifespan.

In fact, so demanding are the manufacturers that it is true to say that apart from the disposables—such as sticks and heads, a properly cared-for drumkit will outlast most amplifiers.

However, percussion equipment does not begin and end with the orthodox drumkit. The percussion family is a fully-fledged branch of the concert orchestra. For example, it is not generally known that pianos, tubular bells and the concert harp are members of the same clan. Granted, not many groups have *too* much to do with concert harps (although John Mayall has been known to experiment on-stage; and Blinky Davison of the now-defunct Nice used a set of gongs in *Ars Longa Vita Brevis*. What is not realised is the design of concert instruments—and the breakthroughs attained—directly affect the modern drum-kit.

Many drummers who have been playing for over ten years will remember when plastic heads were unheard-of. Calfskin was what you used, and if somebody spilled a pint over the snare—well, it was all over, Baby. At least,

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until the skin dried out. The appalling drudgery of changing heads has now also gone for ever. (At one time, you had to soak the piece of calfskin for hours in the bath, then carefully 'lap' the soggy stuff to a wooden hoop). Yet the advent of the plastic drumhead was first brought about by the orchestral 'Tymp', which normally takes more overt punishment, and which is also more often played out-of-doors, where drum and drummer are at the mercy of the elements.

The same research has affected the group drummer even more directly. There was a time when a pair of sticks was good for one number, but precious few after that. Recent developments in laminated wood, plastic—and even metal—have greatly increased the robustness of these vital parts of a drummer's equipment. Drumsticks are still comparatively fragile but, let's face

it, they have to be. In a collision between drum and stick, which do you *want* to win? If drumsticks were made of tungsten carbide, for example, they certainly wouldn't break; (however, you'd certainly get through a lot of snare-drums in an evening!). Other developments have been made: fast-action footpedals; quick-release dampers; and high-g geared tuning keys. Not to mention improvements to the hi-hat and to 'crash' and 'sizzle' cymbals.

In the following pages we examine some of the newest developments, some of the products of the constant research that the Percussion Industry is undertaking for the benefit of drummers everywhere.

BEVERLEY

New Beverley stands, hi-hat and snare drum stands will be in the dealers' shops by December of this year. The main problem with drummers' stands is that they tend to move during the course of a performance. Beverley engineers have been looking into the problem for many months and have now come up with the 'perfect solution'. Based on a popular design, the new stands have the unique feature that they will not move at all whilst

being played, regardless of the surface on which they are standing.

Also from the Leicester-based company is the fabulous Panorama 22 drum kit — complete with twin bass drums, floor tom-toms, mounted tom-toms, cymbals, hi-hat and cases for the drums. A very special feature of the Panorama 22 is that each bass drum has ten fittings — to ensure perfect and accurate tensioning. The smaller brother to the Panorama 22 — the Panorama 21 — is also available with single bass drum and floor tom-tom, plus two mounted tom-toms.

Beverley feature their model '21' snare in the exciting Galaxy 21 kit. The '21' is Beverley's special all-metal snare drum.

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Panorama 21	191	19	1
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percussion equipment as well. They supply drums (one of their customers is Charlie Watts) in both single and outfit form, and design their various kits with a particular musical form in mind: for beat music, there are the *Rock 'n' Roll* and the superb *Black Hawk* outfits; for jazz, the *Progressive* and the *Name Band*. All kits and drums are beautifully made and finished, and Gretsch even offer a gold-plated all-metal snare drum! Top of the list, however, is the double-bass-drum arrangement of the *Avant Garde* kit, which is available in a variety of Pearl, Sparkling and Satin Flame finishes.

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Progressive Jazz (20" Bass Drum)	386	0	0
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Black Hawk (22" Bass Drum)	493	0	0
Avant Garde (20" Bass Drum)	603	0	0
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GRETSCH 18" Bass Drum Heads	9	18	0
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Ludwig S-330 outfit

LUDWIG

One of the most illustrious names in modern percussion is undoubtedly that of the Ludwig company. Their drums have always been highly popular with groups and solo percussionists, and there is a good case for titling them the 'prestige' kit of the Rock Era. One of their most popular kits is the S-320 with the normal four-drum line-up, including a 22" bass drum. Standard with the 320 is the S102 all-metal snare drum, with its powerful attacking sound. The S-320 kit is available in a choice of pearl finishes.

Also in the snare drum line from Ludwig is the famous *Acrolite*, featuring the 'Acousti-Perfect' one-piece beaded metal shell, eight self-aligning tension castings and triple-flanged hoops; this drum is supplied with Ludwig Weather Master mylas heads.

For cymbals, Ludwig recommend the Swiss Paiste 'Formula 602', which comes in 14" hi-hat, 18" crash and 20" medium ride sizes for all Ludwig kits.

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with 18" x 15" bass drum	81	13	0
64			
with 20" x 15" bass drum	95	9	0
B64			
with 22" x 15" bass drum	97	18	10
C64			
with 18" x 15" bass drum	94	17	6
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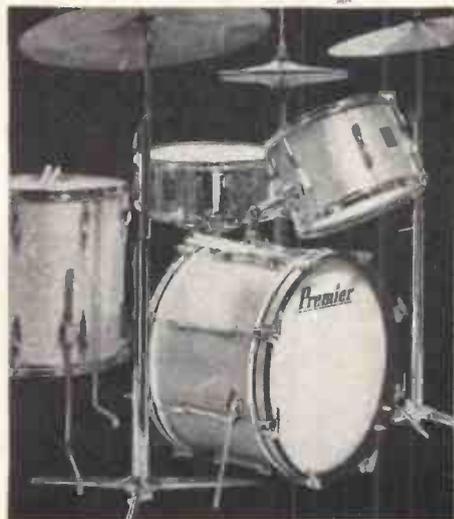
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Premier are, of course, one of the greatest names in British Percussion. Always to the fore of advances in the Industry, they are noted particularly for the excellent quality and strength of their drum fittings. Shown for the first time at the AMII Trade Fair in August was the new 'left-handed' Premier kit in the special 'V' finish. The metallised 'V' finish looks like brushed chromium, and is complemented by the '37' snare drum with a real brushed-chromium finish.

The Premier 202 outfit features the well-known 2001 snare—which is claimed to be the most advanced wood shell snare drum in the world. The 202 kit also features Lokfast stands, hi-hat and holders—also 5-star Super Zyn cymbals. Also new in the snare-drum

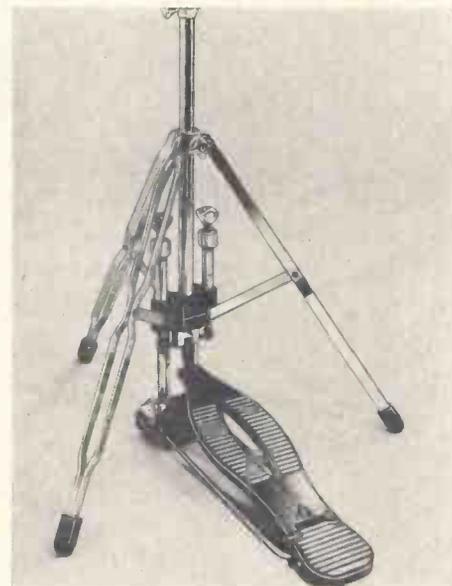
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(Incidentally, a new edition (No. 41) of *Talking Drums*, Premier's own drummer newspaper, has just been published, and is available free of charge from all Premier dealers.)

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Hi-Fi 14" x 5½", metal	29	2	8



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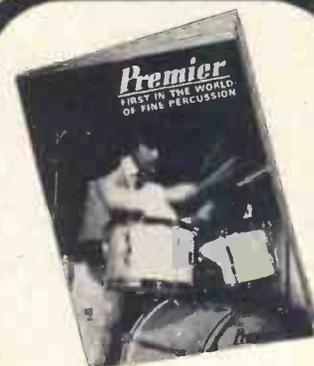
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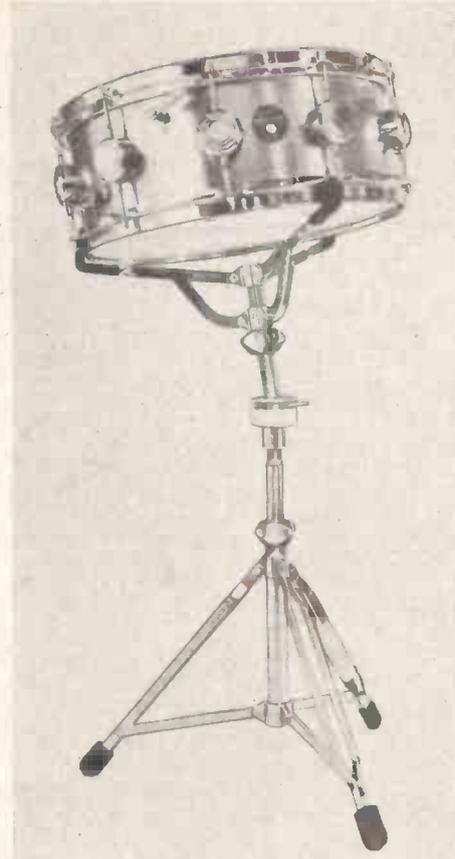
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Rose-Morris are a large and very flexibly stocked company, whose range of instruments and accessories is incredibly vast and comprehensive. And, naturally enough, Percussion is not overlooked. Rose-Morris offer many complete outfits—including their 222 Top Group outfit—and, of course, individual drums, accessories, cases, cymbals and sticks. The Top Group kit, which is available in a wide variety of finishes, is comprised of: 5020 20 in. Bass Drum, a chromium-plated metal snare drum, floor tom-tom, two mounted 14 in. tom-toms, two crash cymbals and a hi-hat. Also featured is the 'Big Band' series of outfits.

New from R-M is the 'Headmaster' see-thru bass drum head. The heads (including the batter head) are completely transparent. To match the thus-revealed footwork, Rose-Morris suggest the 'Autocrat' footpedal, with its smooth ball-bearing action.

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'Top Group' 20" Bass Drum, flame	each	190	14 0
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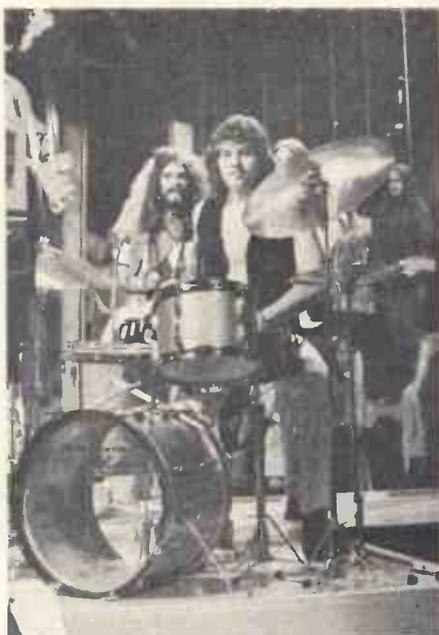
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	£	s.	d.
5050 Nordic Bronze			
422 Snare Drum, anodised aluminium	23	13	6
5422 Bass Drum (22" x 14" shell), complete with felt dampers, spurs	52	6	0
512 Tom-Tom (12" x 8½")	21	5	6
513 Tom-Tom (13" x 9")	22	18	0
5228 2 Tom-Tom brackets	12	18	0
516 Tom-Tom (16" x 16")	36	15	0
5055 Pagan Red			
423 Snare Drum, wood shell	22	13	10
5420 Bass Drum (20" x 12" shell), complete with felt dampers, spurs and telescopic cymbal arm	51	5	7
513 Tom-Tom (13" x 9")	22	18	0
5228 Tom-Tom bracket	6	9	0
516 Tom-Tom (16" x 16"), complete with legs	36	15	0
5060 Arctic Steel			
423 Snare Drum, wood shell	22	13	10
5420 Bass Drum (20" x 12" shell), complete with felt dampers, spurs and telescopic cymbal arm	51	5	7
512 Tom-Tom (12" x 8½")	21	5	6
5228 Tom-Tom bracket	6	9	0
514 Tom-Tom (14" x 15"), complete with legs	32	11	1

SLINGERLAND

One of the great names in percussion is undoubtedly that of Slingerland; this is the make favoured by the world's greatest Big-Band drummer—Buddy Rich. Slingerland have named one of their outfits after him, and call it the *Buddy Rich Outfit 80N*. Available in five beautiful finishes, the 80N comes complete with 22" Bass Drum, 'Buddy Rich' Snare Drum, two 16" x 16" floor tom-toms, mounted tom-tom, cymbal stands, and all necessary accessories. Also from the American company (in their outfit line) is the *4N Joe Cusatis*, with bass drum, snare, floor tom-tom, mounted tom-tom, cymbal stands, cow-bell and holder and all bits and pieces, including one pair of sticks.



Bev Bevan with RM see-thru kit



Premier 'SOS' outfit



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Hayman drum kit

Slingerland specially feature their metal-shell 'Sound King' snare drum, with its solid brass shell and triple chromium-plated finish.

On the more orthodox side, they present their *Philharmonic Grand Pedal Tympani*, with de luxe copper bowl and ball-bearing clutch.

DRUM OUTFITS	£	s.	d.
Buddy Rich Outfit, Pearl finish	542	0	0
Joe Cusatis Outfit, Pearl finish (with 9" x 13" tom-tom)	395	0	0
METAL SHELL SNARE DRUM			
Sound King Snare Drum, Chrome 14" x 5"	80	0	0

ZILDJIAN

Possibly the most venerated name in the world of cymbals is that of Avedis Zildjian, who have been in the cymbal and gong business since 1623, which is probably some kind of record. The name Avedis Zildjian has been a by-word for quality cymbals, therefore, for a long time. Every cymbal is hand-made, and is aged for three to six months before it leaves the factory. Not content with their name alone, however, the Avedis Zildjian company have been doing some more experimenting and have come up with three more high-quality products — *Flat Top*, *Pang*, and on the 'sizzle' side, they did some acoustic tests with their *Trio* model, which came through well. The 18" Flat Top is a ride cymbal, with a wealth of bell-sounds on the cup. The Pang cymbal (20") is a 'dark-sounding' Crash Ride model. The cup is reduced and the bow has been tapered to a perfectly flat edge. The Trio sizzle cymbal was developed after Avedis Zildjian discovered that three rivets mounted close together produced the delicate brush response needed for light combo work.

	£	s.	d.
7397S Swish, 22" (56 cm.)	43	10	0
7386 8" (23 cm.)	5	10	0
7387 10" (25 cm.)	9	5	0
7388 11" (25.5 cm.)	11	13	0
7389 12" (31 cm.)	15	0	0
7390 13" (33 cm.)	17	10	0
7391 14" (35.5 cm.)	20	0	0
7392 15" (38 cm.)	22	10	0
7393 16" (41 cm.)	25	0	0
7395 18" (46 cm.)	30	15	0
7396 20" (51 cm.)	36	15	0
7397 22" (56 cm.)	43	10	0
7390HH 13" (33 cm.)	35	0	0
7391HH 14" (35.5 cm.)	40	0	0
7392HH 15" (38 cm.)	45	0	0
7383HH 16" (41 cm.)	50	0	0

NOEL REDDING is no longer with *Fat Mattress*; he hasn't been for a long time now, but listening to the band's latest album one couldn't tell which tracks he had played on. 'That's the problem of releasing LP's which have been recorded over a long period of time—Noel was with us when we began recording but left before we got it finished,' that's how Eric Dillon, percussionist and one of the founder members, explains the credits on the sleeve of *Fat Mattress With Guest Noel Redding*. 'It's difficult to explain why we split with Noel,' Eric continued, 'when we started off and made our first record everybody was dead enthusiastic and keen to get the band on the road. The actual split had been getting sort of unavoidable. Noel was beginning to enjoy life too much. To put it nicely, he wasn't turning up at gigs and when he did, he didn't really put too much into them. The audiences were beginning to cotton on that all wasn't well with us, in fact we were doing ourselves more damage than good. One night last Christmas we were talking in a New York hotel room about the way things were going. James Leverton and I both came to the same conclusion so we just packed up and came home that night. We were home here before anybody in New York had missed us.'

Weekend hell

'America is a nice place to play, but it takes such a long time to do a tour over there because most of the gigs are at weekends. So we end up hanging about for five days a week and working like merry hell at weekends. The audiences are very critical; you know if they like you—they clap. If they don't they go to sleep or read programmes or something. Over here audiences tend to clap whatever the band does on stage.'

The album (which was recorded in Olympic and Maximum sound) was released on October 22nd and the single *Black Sheep Of The Family* has now been on the market for almost six weeks.



FAT MATTRESS

Four tracks have now been prepared for the next album, but it is unlikely that this will be released before March or early April. 'I think the time I spent with Humperdinck probably did me a lot of good—not necessarily musically—but it *did* teach me discipline. When we were on tour we sometimes had two or three orchestras and conductors each week. That really takes a lot of getting used to!' Eric is fortunate in having a professional teacher for a father. 'He is still really into music—the other day he drove all the way up from Falmouth to London just to buy a 16-inch cymbal—that's more than most other drummers would do nowadays. That reminds me actually of one time a guy came up to me in a club and offered to buy my kit. You know, if you saw my kit . . . it's held together by dirt and elastic bands! I just couldn't work out why anyone would want to buy it. You know what he said? . . . it looked good!

'Once upon a time I had all the gimmicks—a light on each drum and all that sort of thing—but how anyone can just buy a kit just because it looks good beats me.'

Nick Weaver (the organist) popped in for a few minutes

to get away from the hassles of preparing his equipment for a weekend trip to Scotland. 'Clubs are more my scene than big concert halls. It's easier if you're close to the audience instead of stuck up in the front like some sort of Tin God.'

Demons out!

As for a message in the songs—'We make music, that's what we're good at. We wouldn't dare do anything political on stage—anyway we aren't well enough qualified to do that sort of thing—more to the point, I don't reckon any of the other bands who do it know what they're on about either! There are a couple of bands who've made a reputation by going on about "Demons" I guess they do it 'cause they can see a ready market for anyone preaching revolution: they commercialise on anti-commercialism. If they learnt to make music . . .'

Following a pop festival in Switzerland and a tour of America, English audiences will again be given the opportunity to voice their opinion of *Fat Mattress*; which, considering the talent and experience involved, is likely to be enthusiastic approval. S.H.

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□ THE A & R MEN

Five years ago, a large part of EMI's A & R staff left the parent company and, along with a colleague from another company, formed A.I.R. Studios (more familiarly known as Air London). They were George Martin, Ron Richards, John Burgess and Decca's Peter Sullivan.

John Burgess gained a great deal of his A & R experience during his time with Norman Newell, where he helped to produce artists like Shirley Bassey, Johnny Mathis and John Barry. Later on he became a producer in his own right and had big successes with Manfred Mann, Peter and Gordon, Adam Faith and Paul Jones—among others.

'I first joined EMI in 1951 and went through various departments of theirs, including Press, Dealer relationships and Promotion—I even did a spell in the factory, learning what *that* was all about—this was down at Hayes, in Middlesex. When the whole shebang moved up to town, I went with them to Castle Street. I left EMI to join Capitol Records in 1957, then spent two years at Capitol when all their big artists were around, like Tennessee Ernie Ford, Frank Sinatra . . . two fantastic years. I was with them as Sales Promotion Manager.

'At that time — 1959 — Norman Newell asked me to rejoin him at EMI. So back I went, and then they moved from Castle Street to Manches-

ter Square where they are now. I left EMI in 1965 to form AIR.'

Formation

How did Air London come to be formed? 'We were all at Castle Street when I first joined, each of us producing or deputising for another producer: George Martin with his assistant Ron Richards, Norman Newell and myself, and Wally Ridley, whose right-handman was Peter Sullivan. We had all served from being assistants to handling productions on our own, eventually becoming A & R men in our own right. Except Peter, who left Wally to join Decca.

'The trouble was that although our work was beginning to get known internationally, it didn't make a drop of difference to our pay packets each week. So the four of us got together to form our own independent company.

'When we left EMI—and when Peter left Decca—the Artists that we were recording stayed with us. We didn't receive a salary, we received a royalty of the records. And, of course, we did far better financially. You can only do *so* much with money these days, and we decided to put most of it into a studio.

'When we formed AIR there were four of us, and we all had a function. George Martin was Chairman and Spokesman for the Company. Ron



JOHN BURGESS

Richards took over the publishing side, Peter became responsible for Press and Publicity, and I took over the Accounts and Administration—besides normal production work, of course. We carried on like that for a year and a half, and then we decided that we needed more people, so we took on an Exploitation Man and an Assistant Producer. Naturally our previous location (101 Baker Street) was too small, so we moved here (Oxford Circus).

With all the admin work, does he still get into the studio? 'Oh, yes. I look after the Pipkins, and I handle Roger James Cook—he's the lead singer with Blue Mink—as a solo artist. I have a number of other artists of slightly lesser renown, but these are my personal pigeons—between administration duties!'

'65 glamour

John feels that the great period of Pop was the 1964-5 era. 'There was more overt glamour then. We were all with big companies and as a consequence we were able to relax more when making records. When you're spending your *own* money, you tend to get a bit uptight. You think "Oh God, another extra hour of overtime. That's £200 down the drain." When you become independent, then you're spending your own money and, believe me, that makes a lot of difference!'



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2000 A SPACED ODYSSEY

AS soon as I heard the surprise announcement of the invention of the first successfully operational Time Machine, I was determined to become the first British musical journalist to report the Rock scene of the year 2000.

The announcement was made the day of the AMII annual seaside barbecue. We were eating limp sausages and drinking warm cider. Jimmy Young interrupted his programme to give the news flash, but I don't think anyone noticed. (May be something to do with Jimmy's radio style.) Anyway, I noticed. I got to the first telephone I could reach and began hassling.

Four weeks later I was back in my office and dictating madly into my trusty cassette player. . . .

PART ONE: THE SYNTHOMULTIQUANTALSIMULATOR

I got to the Encapsulation office around ten o'clock. I remember there was a sign on the door saying 'We Use Orange Equipment'. There is no need to go into the details of the journey. The daily newspapers have killed that particular experience stone dead by now. I fed in my punched card and we were off. When we got to the year 2000, I disembarked, finally found my way to the Pneumotube station and arrived at my destination without too much hassle. My interviewees were waiting for me at the giant studio complex on the south bank. I was greeted by a tall, well-set-up chap with a green beard. He had a small clear plastic disc in his ear.

'Welcome to the year 2000!' he said, spraying my hand with a small aerosol and then shaking it. 'My name is Haep. I am the leader of our musical group.' I didn't care much for his way of speaking; it was a bit high-pitched.

I cleared my throat. The aerosol was a bit on the high-powered side. 'What is the name of your group?' I asked politely.

'7023/66/A,' he said. I raised my eyebrows. 'We ran out of names about 15 years ago,' he added, looking sad. There was a pause.

'Can I see your instruments?' I asked, to give him a break. He brightened up immediately. 'Of course,' he said. 'Please come this way.' He led me to a moving floorway.

As we sped along I noticed a number of what looked like plaster portrait busts, mounted reverently in illuminated alcoves. Lennon and McCartney were there, and I could have sworn there was one of Tiny

Tim. Haep bowed his head humbly as we passed under an arch inscribed with the words 'In Dolby We Trust'.

Haep's instrument, when we got to it, was called a synthomultiquantal-simulator. Haep called it Cynthia for short; I could see his point. It was large, as you might expect, and resembled nothing more than a huge oblong block of clear plastic with moving coloured lights inside. That was one view — the audience's. When you walked round to Haep's side you could see that there were keys (similar to organ keys but smaller, and glowing with soft blue light) set in the side of a sort of console. Pedals, too, and a whole battery of footswells and foot-switches. Above and on three sides of the operator there were dials, lights, knobs, meters, tabs, keys, levers and drawbars in great and astounding profusion.

Haep let me sit down on the operator's couch and watched while I tried the controls. I soon discovered a few basics: there were no keys, for a start. What had appeared to be a keyboard was in fact an optical illusion created by projectors mounted in the sides of the console. Pressing the 'keys' changed their colour from soft blue to angry red — as a volume guide; not only that, but soft, lush chords filled the auditorium with pulsing resonance. The sound seemed to come out of the floorboards and walls.

'Quite right,' said Haep, when I questioned him. 'The walls and floor are speakers!' I must have looked stupid because he went on: 'I am told that in the year 1970 one was forced to use pluridirectional speaker systems. Most inefficient, and a shocking waste of power. Ours is by far the better system. Every recording studio and

Nitespot in the country is equipped with a similar arrangement.' I thought he was putting me on, and he must have noticed it. He suddenly looked a bit brought down.

I gave him another break. 'Incredible!' I breathed, fervently. He cheered up immediately. I then asked him about some of the other controls.

'This meter gives the strength of the transmitted signal,' he said, pointing to a large dial on my left. 'Cynthia transmits to the Receiver Complex in the ceiling,' he explained. 'This Complex controls the wallamps — compensating automatically for crowds and acoustic changes, of course.' (Of course, I agreed.)

There was a small TV screen at my right hipbone. 'That monitor gives you visual contact with the Robot Roadie.'

It let it pass.

'What's this red knob for?' I asked, pulling it. Somewhere a couple of dogs started barking. Apparently I'd shifted the 'tonal mode' into a higher frequency — one beyond the range of the unassisted human ear. 'Very useful for cueing emotional responses,' smiled Haep.

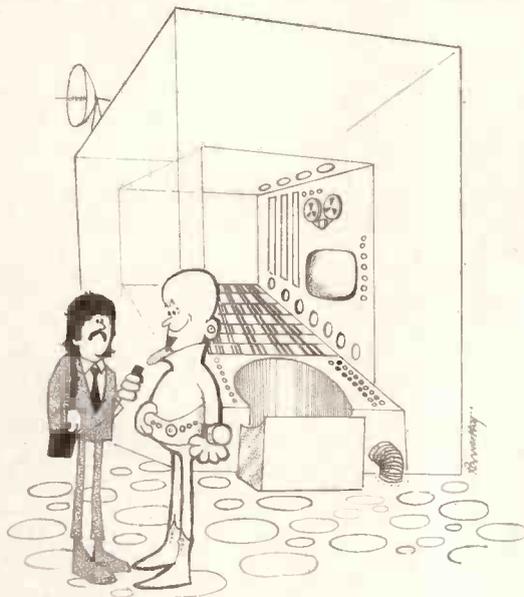
Lots of other keys and knobs did similar things, according to him. There was a setting that was guaranteed to start a fight, one that would always make people cheer and dance, and one that would make them want to go home. I could see the possibilities.

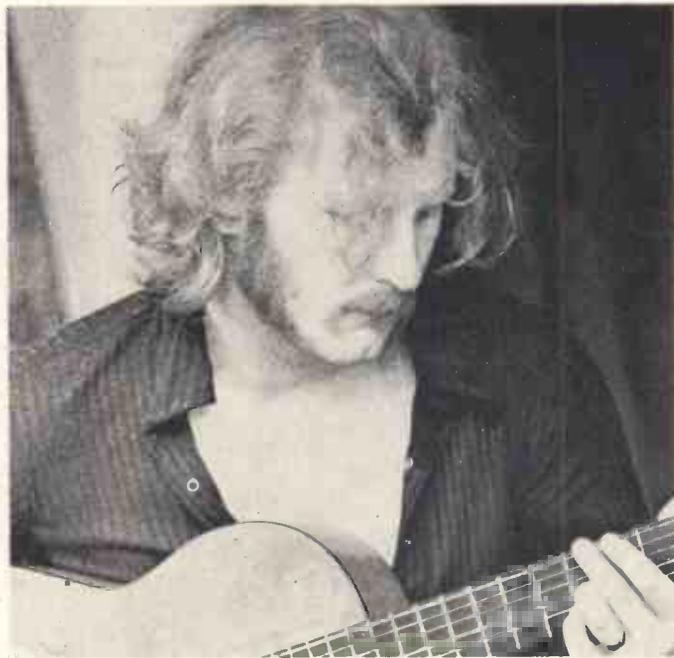
'Do you have trouble with promoters?' Haep asked me. 'Some of ours really Moog you about — mess you around with phoney auditions, and stuff like that.' I told him that we shared one problem at least.

I asked him about something that had been bugging me: the plastic disc in his left ear. 'Oh! that,' he smiled. 'Don't you have these? I thought they'd been invented by 1970. It's for inter-group communication, of course.' He touched a small throat-mike that I hadn't noticed. 'And,' he added, 'to get our cues from the Robot Roadie.'

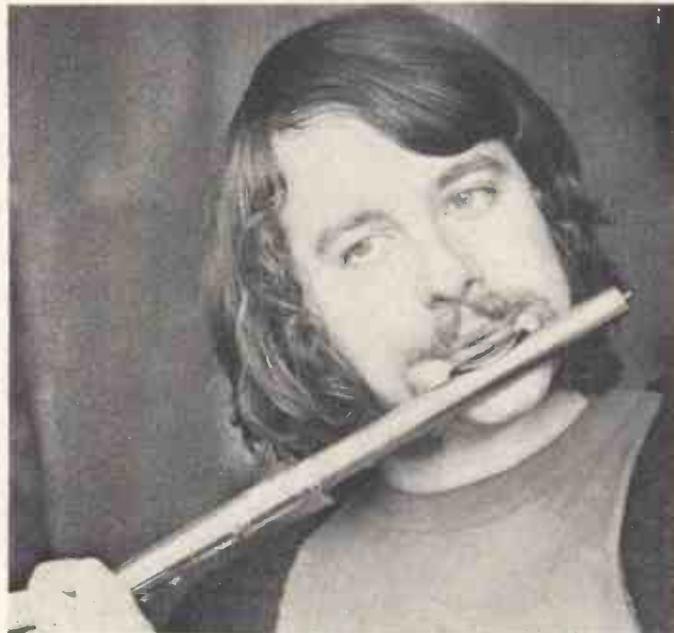
This time I couldn't let it pass. 'What,' I asked, slowly, 'is a Robot Roadie?' Haep grinned mysteriously and, I thought, in a rather smug way. He leaned forward and pushed a button. There was a loud bleep and a tracker antenna on top of the Cynthia vibrated and began to scan a 360 degree arc. The swing doors at the end of the room opened.

Next Month: The Robot Roadie.





john mark / johnny almond



mark/ almond

an interview with john mark

'WE are all going to have houses in the country; mine will have a big recording studio in the basement so we can get our music done without too many outside pressures.

'I couldn't really say when I began playing guitar seriously, probably when I was about 15 or so. Early on my one love was the sea and boats. My father was a sailor so it was a foregone conclusion that I should go to sea as well. In effect, that's what I did, but without the formalities of join-in the navy; what I did was go down to the south of France and sail luxury yachts back to England for wealthy business men. They would sail off down to the Med and stay there for a few weeks, then they'd discover that they didn't have time to sail home—or they'd be too tired or something—so they would fly back and I would bring the boat. If work wasn't available I would work a passage to Japan or Australia and back. It was while I was on this boating kick that I began to play guitar and sing for money instead of just plain enjoyment, well I had always taken my guitar along, so it was a sort of natural progression that when I was skint I should try and sing for my keep. It is quite surprising how much bread you get from tourists when they are on holiday in a foreign country. At night I'd go into a cafe or hotel and ask if I could sing, then have a little collection afterwards—I always earned enough for some food, a bed and a drink.

say we took it. Shel Talmy produced the thing for us—it was the first one he had produced in this country since he came over from the States—that turned out to be the beginning of a good friendship. Gradually my enthusiasm changed from singing to production and arranging; in fact, I was getting into the production thing so much that Fontana were phoning me to do arrangements very frequently. I did Wally Whyton and quite a lot of albums for other people known in the folk-circles.

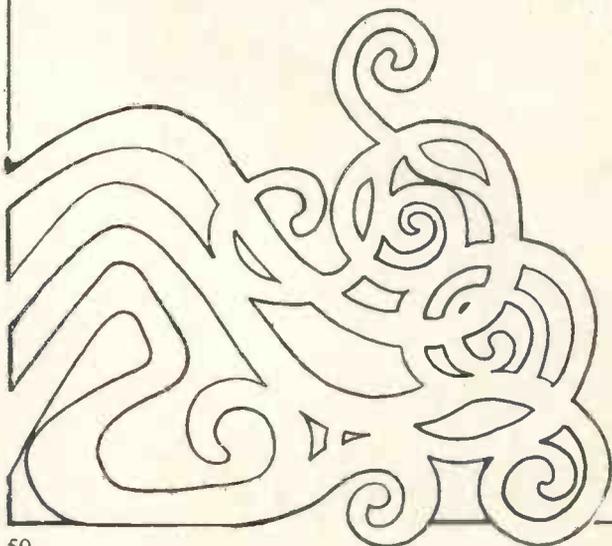
faithfully freaking

'Marianne (Faithfull) came along and I began working with her. Everything went well for a while until she began freaking—that was just too much so I split and went to the West Coast.

'Alan and I got together again with Nicky Hopkins in LA to form Sweet Thursday. We all had great hopes for that band, but we had some real bad luck with our recording company: Tetra Grammaton were a new label just starting out when we joined; they did a good job on the album—it got played on all the radio stations and the kids went for it—but right at the critical moment when we could have released the thing and had an immediate hit, Tetra went bust. We waited for months for that thing to come out, but it never did. Six months later Crosby, Stills and Nash brought out an album of the same type of sounds as we had done. The really ironic thing was that the cover on their album was the same as the cover on ours had been. No, we weren't sore—it's like one of those things, you know, when people reach the same conclusions about the same problems, but do it completely

folk circuit

'I was singing with Alan Davies (now with Cat Stevens) on the folk-club circuit here in England when the writing thing got going. Fontana offered us a recording session, needless to



independently, that's how it was with Crosby, Stills and Nash and us, if you know what I mean.

'Mayall and I started out at more or less the same time so we kept in touch on and off. I hadn't heard from him for about two years, then one night out of the blue, he phoned up and asked if I would like to come round for a blow. We socialised a bit and had a play together then again from the blue he asked me if I'd like to play with his band. Apparently he had sacked all his previous band the week before and in two days time he was due to go on tour. Quite honestly, I was very busy recording at the time, but the idea of going on the road with Mayall appealed to me, so I cancelled everything and went. Mayall is a great guy—really straight. He's got a bit of a reputation for being a bad boss, but he is a really good leader. I remember once we were doing a concert in the Boston Tea Gardens (USA). The kids wouldn't sit down and the cops didn't want to move them back in case they started a riot. None of the other stars would dare go on stage in case there was trouble with these kids at the front. John just got up, went on and told them off like a bunch of babies, you know a sort of "I'm not going to play until you lot get back and sit down." The cops came in and tried to get them back, but the old chant about Police Pigs started up again, so Mayall stood up there in the front of the stage and told them to shut up, the cops were there to help, they weren't pigs and nobody would get beaten up. Everything quietened down and we got the biggest reception of the concert. I left Mayall after *The Turning Point*, but we're still the best of friends.

'The music I play now with Mark/Almond is a fair way off Blues but it still has a message. The album we are going to do in LA next week is sort of centred around the city—not an opera or anything like that, just a set of songs about our environment. *Tramp and the Young Girl* probably typifies the theme best, it's about a tramp and a girl both committing suicide at the same time

in different parts of the river, but both for the same reasons—lack of love. There are a couple of things I would like to straighten out with the kids today—this Police Pigs bit—is just the thing to say at the moment. It annoys me when a guy in a band, who, let's face it, is in a position to influence the kids, misuses his powers and starts raving on about blowing up the government and all that sort of thing. I mean we all want changes, but blowing up the system we've got doesn't get us anywhere; the sickest bit of all is that half the bands who do that sort of thing are only doing it to make their own name. A week or two in Vietnam would do a lot of them a lot of good. I don't support war but it sure would get a hell of a lot of things straightened out for the kids. Basically that's the story behind our latest song. "Have you ever crawled on your belly where the corpses lay," that's the line that started it all—it just came to me and the rest of the song centred around that.

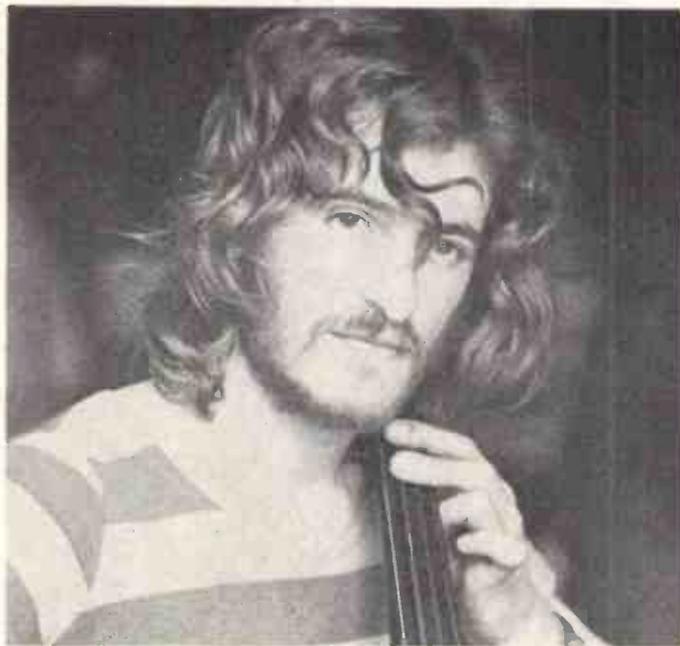
discipline

'Most days we rehearse from two to eight p.m., we're working hard at the moment really, it's the only way to do it. I learnt a lot from Mayall about running a band, but then I guess so did Keef (Hartley) and Jon (Hiseman). Even when I feel like writing a song I have my own disciplined way of doing it. I sit down in front of my desk with my manuscript paper, my smokes and my coffee—sometimes I sit there for an hour before I even begin to do anything and I never start writing before two in the morning.

'Fatty Almond is really the joint leader of this band, but none of us need the money so we're all doing exactly as we want to anyway. Fatty still does records on his own which is a good thing in fact we all like what we are doing, so for me that's great.'

Since this article went to print Mark/Almond have changed their recording plans and are not now going to Los Angeles, but are recording in studios here in London.

S.H.

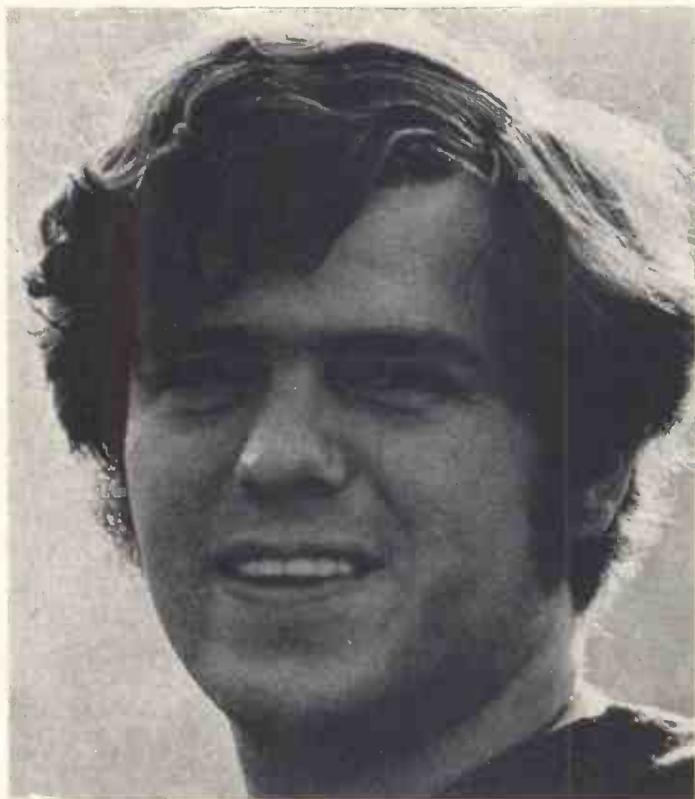


roger sutton / tommy eyre



PROFILE

TIM ROSE



IF you had to choose one word to describe American singer / composer Tim Rose, it would have to be *competence*. The man positively radiates it; competence, solidity and professionalism.

Just as well, really. The interview had been arranged, much to my trepidation, to take place at about 3,000 ft. over southern England. Tim had plans to hire a light aircraft and tool around for a few hours. If I had any feelings of cowardice when I was invited for the trip, I hid them manfully (I hope). I was happy not to find a singer-turned-flyer — rather the reverse, in fact. Tim Rose was a navigator in the US Strategic Air Command before he was demobilised and drifted in a

more musical direction. He holds both private and commercial licences (which seemed to impress the authorities at the airfield) and is considered a more - than - competent pilot.

Unfortunately, we didn't get off the ground. By the time we'd driven out to the airfield in Buckinghamshire, had lunch, and had gone through the hassle of hiring the 'plane . . . joining the Flying Club ('Because of the insurance, old chap') and checking out the procedure, a dirty brown haze had obscured visibility down below non-flying conditions. Tim took it manfully and even I was disappointed.

Tim Rose is no stranger to our shores. In 1968 there ap-

peared *Morning Dew*, a very heavy record for that period of lightweight music. Brooding and forceful, it established for Tim a position of great respect here in Britain as well as the USA. Asked about his influences, he proved, as you might expect, rather on the conservative side of the Rock spectrum:

A lot of people today think that all rock musicians are just walking around with their fingers up their backsides and a joint in their mouths. That's not true. That doesn't include the backbone of Rock music.

Who do you consider to be the backbone?

Well, there's Peter Townshend of the Who . . . and I think that Paul McCartney is basically a pretty straight-ahead cat. And there's Zappa . . . I mean he's weird, but as a person he's very calm and polite and quiet where you'd expect him to sit there and twitch . . . make faces . . . of course, he records people who do that!

Tim also likes the genuine eccentrics among musicians in Britain. He likes Sutch because he's out front; he likes Arthur Brown for the same reason. As I said, Tim is very professional and prefers the folkier, bluesier, harder side of modern rock. Jerry Lee Lewis holds a great deal of fascination for him.

In England until 15th October, Tim is spending a good portion of his days at Island Studios in Ladbroke Grove, laying down some of his dark, deep material for an album to be released shortly — hopefully before Christmas. Musicians featured on the album are Phil Dennis (playing

piano and doing the arrangements), and Mr. Session Drummer himself, Clem Cattini. Production is by Shel Talmy. Tracks include: *Where Do You Go To My Lovely*, by Peter Sarstedt, and the Bee Gees' *Message To You*. Asked about the differences between recording techniques in the US and England, Tim wasn't too sure that there were so many—technically, at least.

I don't think there's too much difference in the basic approach. I mean, they've got the same equipment, more or less. Where the difference is . . . is in musicians.

English are better?

Neither are better. Neither is better than the other. There's just a way of playing that's typically American, and a way of playing that's typically British. A national characteristic. All the Islanders would like to believe that everything started in America with the Beatles. Things were moving before that.

He's very patriotic, though paranoid about your-actual-American-tourist. He takes great pains to avoid the Middle West's numerous hosts of 'World Travellers'. Nevertheless, you can see he likes his country. He likes England, too (he's been here four times), but his nostalgia is for America. Having seen more of the world than most, he's slightly impatient with what he sees as a lot of younger-generation hype. A professional himself, he has no time for people who don't try their hardest.

It's only by trying very hard that you reach Tim Rose's level of competence.

A.T.

your queries answered

Wah-Wah

Dear Sir,

Quite some time ago I bought a Vox Wah-wah pedal. Ever since then I have found it makes swishing noises when I operate it. Are they supposed to make these noises, or is there something wrong with it?

RICHARD HUGHES,
Pevensy, Sussex.

● This is a phenomenon common to all footpedals. As they are, in essence, tuned amplifiers, the operation of the wah-wah changes the frequency of the tuning. Generally, however, this noise is small and unobtrusive. Possibly your amplifier gain is turned too high? If you feel the noise to be excessive, bring the footpedal to our showrooms in Charing Cross Rd., and we will be happy to check it for you—Vox Sound Equipment Ltd.

Danecaster

Please settle an argument. Is there such a thing as a 12-string Telecaster? I am positive that Ron Wood (of the Faces) was using one three years ago when he was with the Birds at a gig with John Mayall at Norwich University. I stand to lose face if I'm wrong.

STRAT OWNER,
Norwich, Norfolk.

● Sorry, Strat Owner, but you've lost face. The guitar that Ron used when he was with the Birds was a hybrid called a 'Danecaster', made up from a Dan-electro 12-string neck and a Telecaster body and pickup assembly. Jim Marshall put it together for Ron.

Stereo phones

Dear Sir,

I have a stereo set-up that uses two separate amplifiers, as opposed to one amp and two speakers. My problem is: I want to be able to use stereo headphones. Where should I make the connections?

SAM HILTON,
BFPO 44, Germany.

● You are going to have to buy, or make, a junction-box with connections to each amplifier/speaker. Make sure it is properly matched to the output stages—i.e. check that the impedances correspond; otherwise, you might blow your headphone-speakers apart! The junction-box should be fitted with a jack-input for the headset.

12-string warp

Dear Sir,

I have a 12-string acoustic guitar but the neck is warped quite considerably. I would be grateful if you could let me know of any firms who will replace the

neck, and the approximate charge to expect.

R. M. THOMAS,
Luton, Bedfordshire.

● You don't say what make of guitar you have, or whether it is cheap or expensive. Most firms who supply guitars usually carry a line of spares, but replacement necks may have to be ordered. Most reasonable 12-strings are fitted with a truss-rod in the neck, which is designed to be adjusted in the event of a warp. Try adjusting this. If no truss-rod is fitted I suggest you contact the dealer who supplied the instrument, or, failing that, write to the company who manufactured it.

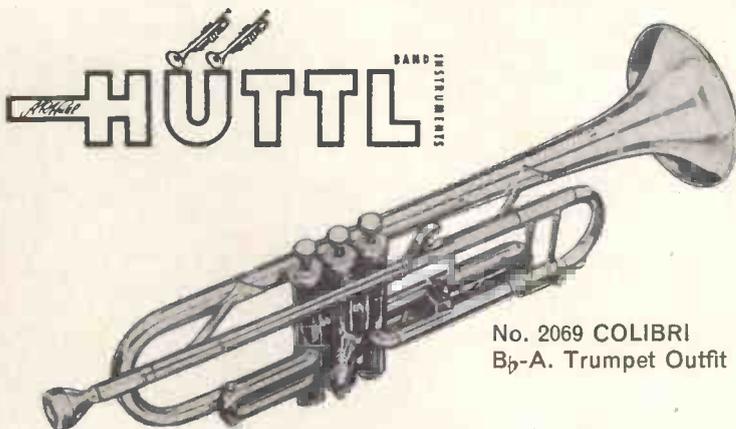
200 watt eardrums

Dear Sir,

I have recently read reports which say that loud amplification can harm your ears. As I play a 200 watt stack, and am always right in front of it, am I likely to mess up my eardrums?

EDGAR BARBER,
London, E12.

● Recent tests have shown that excessive noise can harm your eardrums. Each person has a different threshold of noise, of course, but a genuine 200 watts of power is certainly nothing to fool with. If you are in doubt, have your hearing checked by your local doctor.



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BLACK SABBATH



BLACK SABBATH are very proud of the fact that very little work was put into the making of their latest LP, *Paranoid*. 'We did the title track (which is also their latest single), in about ten minutes—virtually a straight run. The whole record only took a few days to produce, said Bill Ward (drums).

Feeling

'That's just the way we work,' continued Tony Iommi (lead guitar), 'everything we do is what we feel at the time, sometimes we can play a song and it will be loud and heavy and yet at other times it could be gentle. With LP's especially, when we have a few songs to record we go into the studio and cut them, then we sit around and think up some more.'

Crap

'It's not like filling up the record with old crap,' interrupted Bill again, 'it's just that when we have been in the studios for a while, the

inspiration seems to be easier, new ideas just flow out.'

Warrior

Originally it was intended to call the album *War Pigs*—that's why there's a photograph of a crash helmeted warrior on the sleeve. Most of the tracks are the sort of heavy sound which has made Sabbath famous, but there is one very noticeable exception, *Planet Caravan*, a rather distant 2001-ish track. The rest of the record, in common with most others of this type, needs to be listened to at high volume in order to appreciate it as it was intended.

When I asked Tony why volume was so important to the music, his reply was, as one would expect, rather straightforward. 'It's just the way we are—heavy music like ours gains a lot of the weight from volume. There's an old barn in Wales where sometimes we go to rehearse, actually it's a room belonging to Future Sound Studios. We played so loud one night that a lot of the tiles on the

roof cracked and fell off.'

Ozzy continued, 'I don't know why we haven't recorded there yet, they have enough equipment up there and the guys know what they're doing. I guess it's all part of the system—we record in London, Island and Regent to be precise. There is no reason why we shouldn't record in Wales, it really is an incredible place to work things out, no hassles, only space—we can go and piss about in the fields if we want to, that's the way it should be everywhere—open and free.'

Mystical

Ever since Black Sabbath's conception and their first rise to fame they have been tagged as being a dark and mystical band. 'That's not true, we've never really done anything devilish, well . . . perhaps Tony has sacrificed a few too many virgins in his time, but nothing you could really call wrong.'

One point which all four feel strongly about is that

not enough people listen; not to them, in particular, but to anyone.

Hair

Tony puts it into words for the others, 'So many people hear little pieces of conversations, shows, news and things, then turn round and re-tell it all wrong. Did you see "Hair"? Well that's what I mean, everyone goes to see "Hair", they hear the songs and the music and they see the dancing but very few actually realise what the whole point and message of the show is.'

Sabbath's fame did not come overnight, although it did come rather more rapidly for them than for many other new groups. In late '68 and '69 they travelled from Birmingham up to Cumberland three or four times per month because that's where the majority of their fans came from, it's still the north-west which supplies a vast number of Black Sabbath's followers, but the rest of the country is fast catching up.



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THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT

SOME months ago a debut album by an 'unknown' group exploded on the English market. With a surrealistic sleeve and a contents devoted to extraordinarily good music, this LP has already gone a good way to carving out a niche for the musicians responsible—Quatermass.

Freaky series

When one listens to the music—especially via stereo—the name is apparent. If you remember, *The Quatermass Experiment* was the name of a BBC science-fiction series in the middle '50s that scared the pants off many. The music of the group is like that series: broody, fierce and sometimes a little frightening.

Lynch-pin of the trio is bassist/vocalist Johnny Gustafson, who has been in the business so long that he can remember topping the Beatles' billing in the Liverpool Sweat Cellars of the '50s (when he was one third of the Big Three—possibly the first of the heavy trios). Much water has flowed under the proverbial bridge since then. Periods spent with the Merseybeats, the Johnny Gus Set (his own band) and a-sessioning have broadened his experience and talent to a point where a concrete chunk of success became inevitable.

Pete Robinson (keyboards) is one of those fortunate people who have had formal musical training (Royal Academy) to draw upon for inspiration. Pete spent several years playing with Chris Farlowe and P. J. Proby before moving into session work, where he found the

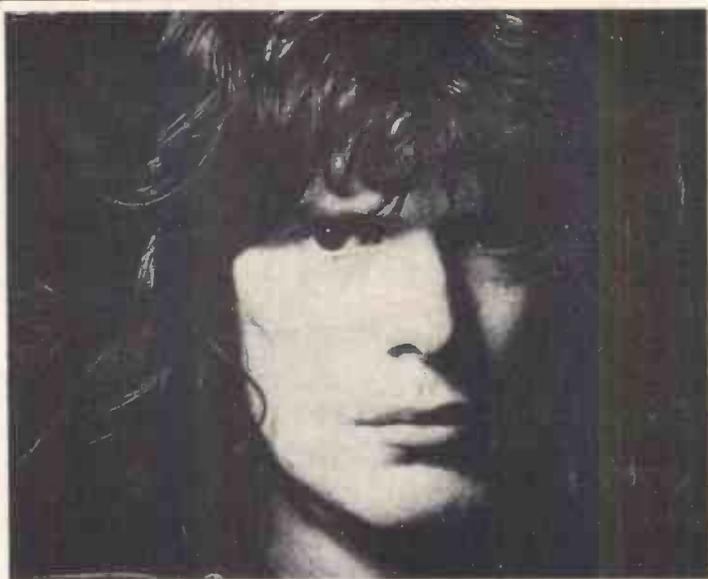
third member of the as-yet-unformed Quatermass—drummer Mick Underwood. Mick, like the others, made his name through his impeccable sessioning.

Episode Six was the meeting point. Following personnel problems, the original group had persuaded Pete and John to join. However, problems still plagued the group to such an extent that Pete, John and Mick decided to leave, or, as Pete put it: 'It had got to a stage where the three of us were doing the playing and the work while the others sat round drinking tea. Rather than carry passengers, we left and formed Quatermass.'

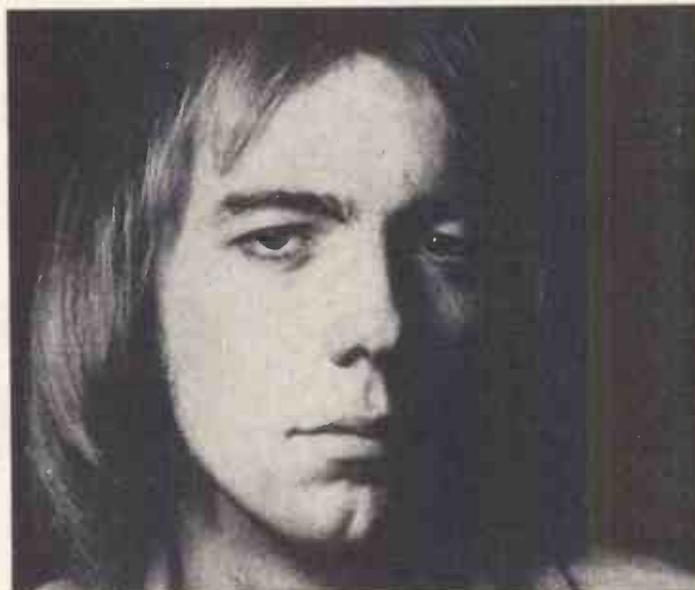
All the tracks on the first album, which was recorded at EMI and Advision, were written either by members of the group, or by Steve Hammond of Fat Mattress. Their next LP, to be released—hopefully—in December or January, will be recorded at Air Studios in Oxford Street.

Progressive

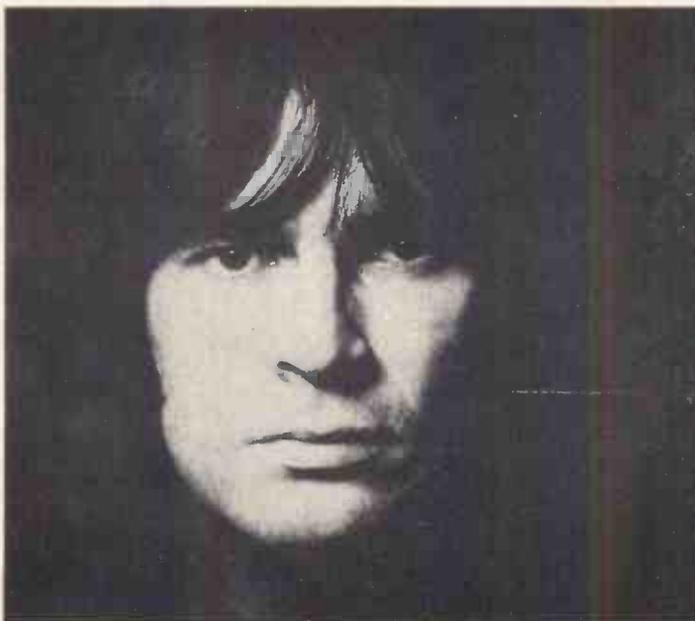
The first LP is doing really well in the US at present, getting plenty of FM airplay from the progressive DJs that America seems to produce without any effort, (when is Britain going to get a progressive FM station?), but here, as yet, needle-time has been conspicuous by its absence. They feel a bit sad about this, but in my view it's the British fans who are losing out. Hopefully, things will change soon, and suburban ears will be treated to a dose of some of the heaviest, most musically progressive Rock to come out of our shores in a long, long, time.



Pete Robinson



Mick Underwood



John Gustafson

SONGWRITER OF THE MONTH

MARK WIRTZ

MOST people remember *Sam and Grocer Jack* as being excerpts from *A Teenage Opera*. It's also a fair bet that most people remember the names Keith West and Mark Wirtz as being those of the *Opera's* originators.

Before the much-hyped album of the opera had been completed, Keith left Mark's company to form his own group—Tomorrow (anybody remember *My White Bicycle?*). Unfortunately for the opera, Keith's departure was badly timed, because, although the greater part of the story had been recorded, the expense and trouble involved in re-recording everything with a new vocalist was just too much for both Mark and EMI.

With all hopes for releasing 'the greatest-ever pop production' (as EMI phrased it) put aside, 27-year-old Mark went into semi-retirement. Business interests which had grown with the hit 'excerpts' and occasional productions, were the only things to receive his attention for over two years. Gradually plans for another 'monster production' began to take shape in Mark's mind, the musical score was written but lyrics of the right type were proving difficult to find.

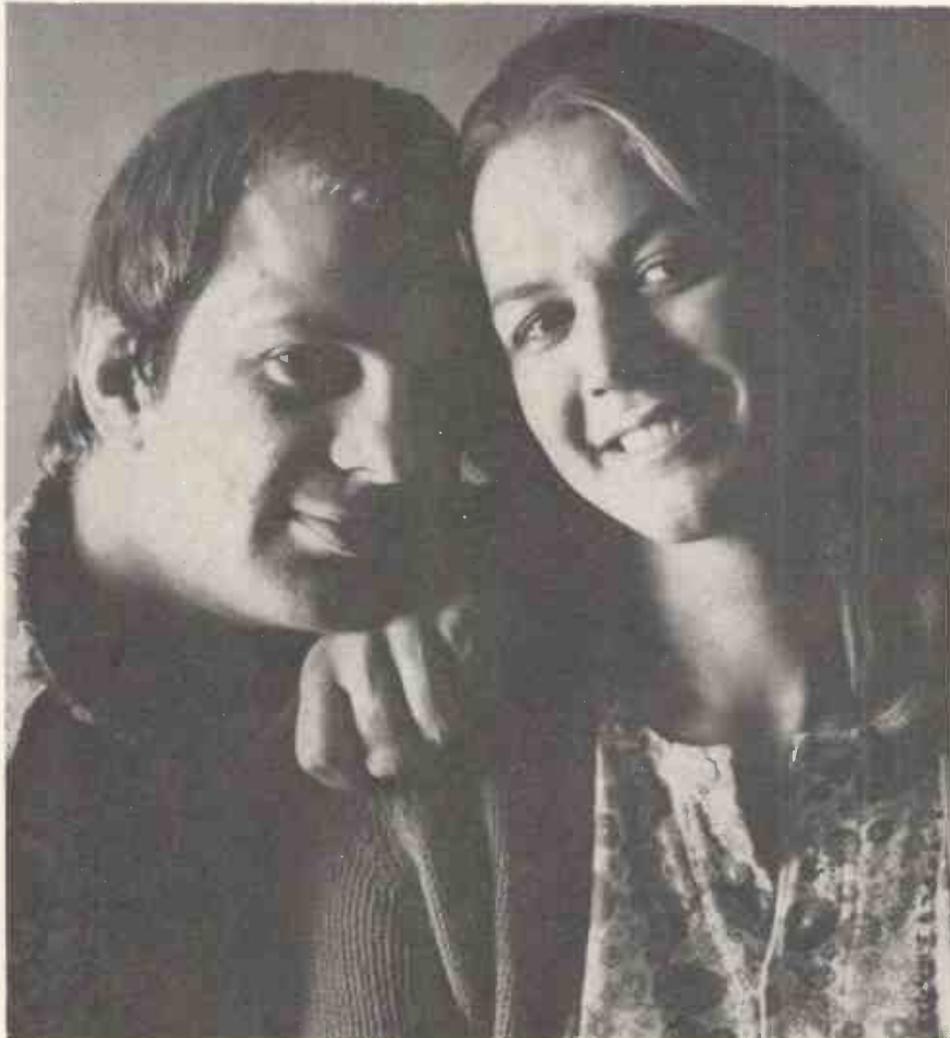
Philwit and Pegasus

Mr. Wirtz is very obviously together (as they say on the radio), because not only did he find good lyrics, but he found one of the most attractive lyric writers in London—22-year-old Maria Feltham. Together they completed the lyrics and music for *Philwit and Pegasus*, all that remained was to find a singer, or group of singers, who could do justice to the material. This time it was London's vast reservoir of session-men which supplied the talent; Peter Lee Stirling, John Carter, Roger Greenaway, Chas Mills and Guy Fletcher were recruited for the recording. As Mark puts it: 'It is so much better to hire singers to fit the music instead of having to write songs especially suited to one singer.'

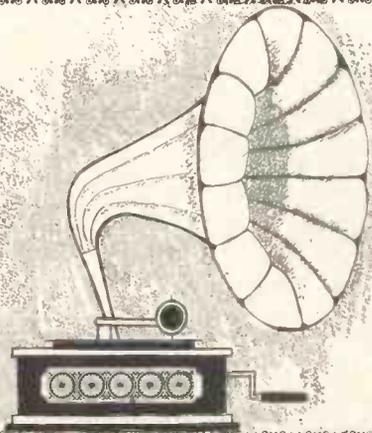
As with *Teenage Opera*, *Philwit and Pegasus* employed a 60-piece orchestra and choir to produce the sounds, 'there is no story connecting each track, at least not in the same way as on *Opera*, but all the songs on this album are written from a common viewpoint—a young loving couple's reflections and feelings on everyday life'.

The album was released on the Chapter One label on 8th October and promises to be another hit for Mark.

It would be nice if all England's young ambitious record producers treated themselves to a copy—they could learn a great deal about how a well-produced album sounds. S.H.

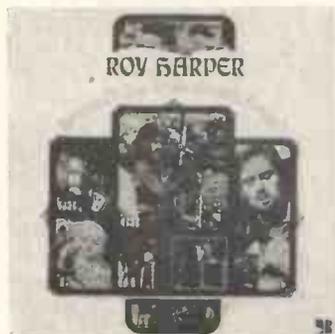


ALBUM REVIEW



RETURN OF THE SOPHISTICATED BEGGAR

ROY HARPER
YOUNG BLOOD SYB 7



A re-release of *Sophisticated Beggar*, this time in stereo; Roy's acoustic guitar is accompanied by two friends, 'whose names cannot be mentioned because of label hassles.' As with all records this of type you either dig it or you don't; either way the instrumental breaks and mournful wailings *do* improve after a couple of listenings. Production leaves room for improvement but on an album such as this, lack of polish adds to its authenticity.

LIVINGSTON TAYLOR



WARNER BROS. WS 3006

Livingston Taylor has obviously been brought up on a diet of elder brother James, music. Livingston produces rather more melodic forms of country ballad than James: and is joined on this album by Peter Carr (guitar), Paul Hornsby (keyboards), Bob Popwell (bass) and Johnny Sandin (drums). The outstanding tracks are *Sit on Back*, *Carolina Day* and *Thank You Song*.

Fairly average production, but the record has a certain pleasing quality—due to the choice of an innocuous format.

WEASELS RIPPED MY FLESH

MOTHERS OF INVENTION
BIZARRE RSLP 2028



Frank Zappa has always had his own little corner of the scene: bizarre, morbid and often blackly perceptive. The question is, therefore, why *Weasels* (which has the most horrid sleeve ever seen in these offices) should be such a disappointment. The answer lies on the back cover: 'Aspects of our work from 1967-9' says Zappa, and it is

difficult to avoid the impression that he has released on this album all the tracks that were not considered good enough for the Mothers' previous LP offerings. It is not particularly horrible; just disorganised, disjointed and faintly boring.

A TIME BEFORE THIS

JULIAN'S TREATMENT
YOUNG BLOOD SYB 2



A cosmic experience in the form of 12 chapters, spread over two records. The story is about the arrival of Man on an unknown Planet—'was there a higher civilisation here before in early history? There could have been a disaster so horrible that hereditary memory has carefully obliterated all trace of its existence from our minds.' A triumph of production making full use of voices, effects and instruments.

STAGE FRIGHT

THE BAND
CAPITOL EA-SW-425

They are possibly Rock's most musicianly musicians. Gentle, poetic and always very well played, their music seems to have been consoli-

dated on this record (although the Manson-like sleeve photographs *could* give the horrors).



Robbie Robertson composed all the tracks, and he sings on most of them, too, accompanied by Manuel's piano, Levon Hulm's drumming, Danko's bass and Garth Hudson's nostalgic and disciplined Lowrey Lincolnwood—and occasional accordion. Stand-out tracks include: *All La Glory*, *The W. S. Walcott Medicine Show*, and the title track *Stage Fright*. The Band just seem to keep getting better and better. And, to one who witnessed their getting booed by the folk 'purists' (in the days when they were backing Dylan on his first Electric tour) this album serves as an appropriate two-fingered salute.

HANDLE WITH CARE

SAMPLER
PROBE SPSS 1

A note on the bottom of the LP sleeve says that Probe is 'turning-on the People'. With two tracks from Steppenwolf, B. B. King, Freedom, Bush, James Gang and Three Dog Night it's not too difficult to be 'turned-on'. All

the tracks are heavy rock—not of the freaky variety but with a hard musical rhythm. With so many good things included it is difficult to pick one for special mention, but then at a price of 16s. 6d. who wants to pick?

THE MAGIC SHOEMAKER

FIRE
PYE NSPL 18343



'Concept albums always tend to tire the listener after a dozen or so hearings' it says on the sleeve; unfortunately, *The Magic Shoemaker* doesn't need that much time to become rather wearisome. The concept of the album is, however, interesting; songs on a theme, performed by the group, and interspersed with snatches of composer Dave Lambert's narrative of the story-line to a coachload of kids. A pity it doesn't come off. The blame can be laid on the production, which is too shrill and grating for easy listening, and which tends to irritate after only a few tracks.

PAUL BRETT SAGE

PYE NSPL 18347



Nice one, this. Guitarist-singer/composer Paul Brett has got together with flautist Nicky Higginbottom, bassist Dick Dufall and drummer Bob Voice to come up with this sensitive and tasteful LP,

entitled simply *Paul Brett Sage*. The music is gentle and lyrical, consisting mainly of Brett's voice and insistent acoustic guitar, with the flute hovering always in the background. Echoes of Donovan here, and some touches of Pentangle, too. Most of the tracks are excellent, especially *Little Aztec Prince* and *The Tower*. Credit, too, to Cyril Stapleton for the production, and to the anonymous re-mix engineer responsible for the stereo.

AS YOUR MIND FLIES BY

RARE BIRD
CHARISMA CAS 1011



This is the second album from Rare Bird, and what an advancement it is for them. The first side contains four tracks, all of which are pleasant listening, with the possible exception of the second, *Down on the floor*. It is the second side which makes this album stand out from the mass; one theme runs through all three tracks (or should they be called movements?). The introduction is a little similar to Nice, but, after that everything is new. A choir is employed in places to give that little extra 'distance' to the strong voice of Steve Gould. Just a word of warning: don't listen to *Vacuum* while suffering from 'morning-afterness'!

AT HOME

LAMBERT AND NUTTYCOMBE
A & M, SP4250

A refreshingly beautiful album of songs from the West Coast duo of Denis Lambert and Craig Nuttycombe. The boys had a big reception on their recent British debut gigs and create the type of close-harmony sound which first

made Simon and Garfunkel famous. All the tracks were written and recorded by Denis and Craig at their home in Sausalito, except for the ever-lovely *Mr. Bojangles*.



ALONE TOGETHER

DAVE MASON
HARVEST SHTC 251

Considering that Dave Mason was at least partly responsible for writing a great number of Traffic's numbers, it isn't really surprising that the first track could very well be part of a Traffic album.



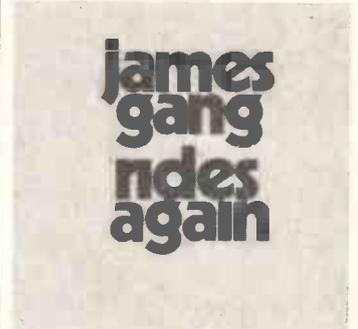
Jim Capaldi plays his rather unique form of drums (probably one of Traffic's most underrated characteristics) behind Dave's vocals and guitar solos. One point which is immediately noticeable about the overall sound of this biscuit is a remarkable similarity to the Eric Clapton solo album. This is not quite such a coincidence as it appears, for, halfway down the list of credits are those two ever-present names, Delaney and Bonnie Bramlett.

JAMES GANG RIDES AGAIN

THE JAMES GANG
PROBE SPBA 6253

The James Gang have for a long time been a 'group's group', having gained quite a number of fans from the few punters who appreciate technique. This album shouldn't disappoint Gang fans... Joe

Walsh has retained his heavy basic singing style, and uses it to effect on many of the tracks, but singing is not what has made this band better than many others in the same bag: instrumental solos are original and bottle-neck/pedal-steel breaks are excellent, especially on the last track of side one, *Closest*



Queen and *Cast Your Fate To The Wind*. For a change from the predominantly heavy rock of side one, the second illustrates that a rock band can work just as well acoustically as on electric. The track of the album is very definitely *Ashes, The Rain And I*, a gentle number backed by orchestra and acoustics.

LED ZEPPELIN III

LED ZEPPELIN
ATLANTIC DE-LUXE 2401 002

So this is the group that toppled the Beatles from top spot as the world's most popular group! That's a very heavy title to keep off the ground. *Zeppelin III* is the first wax offering since the band received the title, and thus is the album which will be compared to *Sgt. Pepper*, etc. Whereas volumes I and II were original and heavy this album does not progress, but merely moves along in the same groove—forgetting for a moment that this is automatically destined for the LP chart's number one position.



The opening tracks on each side *Immigrant Song* and *Gallows Pole* are with *Tangerine* and, to an extent, *Hats Off To (Roy) Harper*, the only ones which deserve to be on an album with such great advance sales.

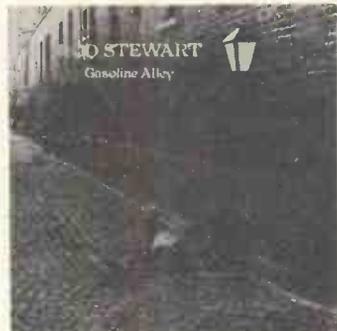
THROUGH A WINDOW
HARD MEAT
WARNER BROS. WS 3008



Flute and keyboards have joined the line-up since Hard Meat's first attempt to break into the album market. Some very pleasant sounds are created by the quintet; one in particular being what sounds like a 6-string acoustic played through a wah-wah/P.A. The band's last single *The Ballad of Marmalade Emma* and *Teddy Grimes* is included, but doesn't really stand out as being the album's best cut. *New Day* and *Smile As You Go Under* are equally as good.

GASOLINE ALLEY
ROD STEWART
VERTIGO 6360 500

This is the second album from Faces' lead singer, who still says that he would much



rather be a hit as a member of the group. Ironic, really, that Rod's solo albums should sell so much better than the group's. Most of the Faces are in fact present in one form or other throughout the biscuit. The title track, *Only A Hobo*, *Country Comfort* and *Lady Day* are the most memorable numbers.

GOING HOME
VARIOUS ARTISTS
WARNER-REPRIS WS 1874



A real value-for-money package. Not as well priced as many other 'sampler' LPs (43/9), but then not every other has such an impressive line-up; for a start there's Joni Mitchell with her *Big Yellow Taxi*, Arlo Guthrie's *Creole Belle*, the Mothers of Invention with *Directly From My Heart* and the Association with *Along Comes Mary*.

AFTER THE GOLD RUSH
NEIL YOUNG
REPRISE RSLP 6383



One quarter of Crosby Stills, Nash and Young busts forth with yet another gro-oo-vy biscuit to gladden the hearts of all of us who don't live in the Golden State. Neil's self-produced tracks are all very well handled, and his penchant for large, tasteful backing behind his large, tasteful voice is here vindicated. His version of Don Gibson's *Oh, Lonesome Me* is really beautiful—as it should be, being the only non-Young composition on the entire LP.

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From L. to R. Mr. J. A. Cochrane, Anthony Tyler, Editor of *BI*, Mrs. Persin, Mr. Persin Sr., Charles Woods, Advertisement Director of *BI* and Barry Persin

On Friday, 16th October, Mr. J. A. Cochrane, Managing Director of Henri Selmer & Co. Ltd., presented a Selmer Panther 2200 Organ to the winner of BEAT INSTRUMENTAL's August Win-an-Organ competition, Barry Persin of Reading.

In making the presentation, Mr. Cochrane congratulated Barry on being the winner of a competition in which over 2,000 entries were received. He described the Panther 2200 as the successor to the world-famous Panther Duo, offering a complete specification at a realistic price, including a wide selection of voicings, percussion and vibratos.

He also congratulated Sean O'Mahony, Managing Editor of *B.I.*, and Charles Woods, Advertisement Director of *B.I.*, for their foresight and initiative in organising a competition that stimulated music to such an extent.

The Giant Kinetic Wardrobe of Roger Spear



There have been few breakups in the group world which have left such a forlorn gap as the demise of the late Bonzo Dog Band. With their zany English music hall humour, gross musical take-offs, and irreverent pokes at rockdom, they have proved irreplaceable.

As has been the custom, members of the group have been forming their own personalized bands — Viv Stanshall shaved his head and came out with his short-lived Big Grunt; Neil Innes disappeared to get his outfit together (shortly to make a public appearance); and Roger Spear duly formed his group, the Giant Kinetic Wardrobe, the main difference here being that Roger's accompanists are robots — which makes it a pretty unusual band.

'I've been building robots and machines for years,' explained Roger. 'I used to have them in the Bonzo Dog in the early days in the pubs, but when we went on the road we couldn't carry them around.' Roger did manage to carry a fair assortment of

masks, explosions, costumes and similar japes, however, working overtime to boggle the audience. We were sitting in Roger's workshop (a sort of electronic-and-props Aladdin's cave) and strange inhuman faces leered from all sides while pieces of fibre glass corpses littered the floor. Weird machines mounted up around us, and a small boy (Roger's son, in fact) charged beneath our feet, pulling out instruments which he proceeded to blow at an alarming volume.

'We decided to break up the Bonzos at Christmas '69,' continued Roger. 'We had six weeks of gigs to do and then oblivion. Viv started his Big Grunt and asked me to join. We went up North to do colleges and so on. At first, I wanted to leave my robots and machines by themselves, but I thought I'd better qualify it with a show. I hadn't occurred to me I could use them in a stage act before.'

With the ill-fated Big Grunt fading out, Roger was left on his own, and the Giant Kinetic

Wardrobe was miraculously constructed and set on its rumbling course. 'I had to build a robot that was a backing group first of all,' said Roger. 'This was the mainstay of the group, then I added the others (three or four) who each had one or two aspects of human function. Then I also had all my gadgets to use on stage.'

Roger's act is itself a masterpiece of construction, calling for some lightning timing. Supported by the main robot, who has tape-recorder intestines and who talks, sings, waves his arms, rolls his eyes and cracks bad jokes, Roger goes through his musical repertoire. Saxes, unlikely looking trombones, and the electric leg are all played, and are punctuated by general outbursts of comedy and Doo-Dah madness. The finale has the whole band literally blowing its mind and bubbles.

'Musically, I can't relate to anything after the Wall Street Crash,' admits Roger. 'When I first saw the Bonzos I couldn't believe that anyone was that

bad; they were playing trad jazz in those days. It was great: I didn't like the pop stuff we were doing toward the end so much.

'I play sax and harmonium, so I have to design things that are versatile. The next robot I build will probably play an instrument, the drums most likely, and I want to build one that can walk. Then I shall go on from there.'

In the meantime, Roger will be on the club/college circuit this autumn, where he feels he goes down best. He will also be supporting the Who on a gig or two. This summer has seen him at lots of free concerts, along with other regulars like *Formerly Fat Harry*. He hopes one day to use all the machines that line his workshop in his act, or in some sort of display.

If it should pass your way, take a look into the Giant Kinetic Wardrobe yourself. It's certainly a laugh, and there aren't many bands you can say that for.

N.S.

LETTERS

New talent

Dear Sir,

Beat Instrumental is a very good magazine, and you cater for the serious lovers of 'Pop' music very well. There is one point however: Where is all the new talent that England is supposed to be full of? About 90% of the personnel of the so-called 'new' groups emerging at the moment have been in other groups before. The whole business is turning into a closed shop, comparable with 'the old school tie' idea, where people only make it if they know the right people. Obviously then musicians who have been in other groups must know quite a few of the right people and

thus start with an advantage over new groups, which quite possibly produce better, or at least, fresher music.

L. B. Tandy,
Lusaka, Zambia.

Jimi Hendrix

Dear Sir,

Anybody who has had anything to do with the Pop scene during the last few years must have been greatly saddened by the tragic death of Jimi Hendrix. It's always a bad time when a Giant goes, and Jimi's death was not made any easier to bear by the snide allusions and general cashing-in of the popular Press. Until the inquest took place, every jumped - up journalist in Fleet Street was

falling over himself to get in a moralistic little sermon about drugs, pop stars and Jimi Hendrix in particular. When the results of the inquest were made public — showing that Jimi died of an overdose of one of the few legal drugs — only one major paper had the decency to at least partially retract some of the nasty hints it had been dropping over the previous few days. If some First World War general, responsible in his day for thousands of unnecessary deaths, had died, he would have had a respectful obituary a yard long and would probably have been buried in Westminster Abbey.

Disgustedly,
Arthur Dawson,
Chester, Cheshire.

Classy nudes

Dear Sir,

Over the last couple of months I have noticed a marked increase in the number of advertisements used in *Beat Instrumental* which show partially, or completely naked

girls. Now that your publication has increased its price to 5s., I think the standard of these photographs should also be elevated. I mention that B.I. is still the best 'inside' publication on the music scene, but at your new price — please let's have some nice girls in the advertisements.

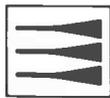
J. T. Lyle,
Thurso, Scotland.

Musical standards

I am really fed up at reading letters that harp on and on about how fast Alvin Lee plays, or whether he's better than Eric, etc. Surely guitarists and other musicians should be judged on the basis of how much *music* they play? This is the only standard worth using, and as such will always be a matter of personal preference. Good musicianship can be improved by — but never replaced by — good technique.

Yours,
D. F. Mallett,
Slough, Buckinghamshire.

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