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RHYTHMS
WITH OSIBISA



TALK OF THE MUSIC WORLD

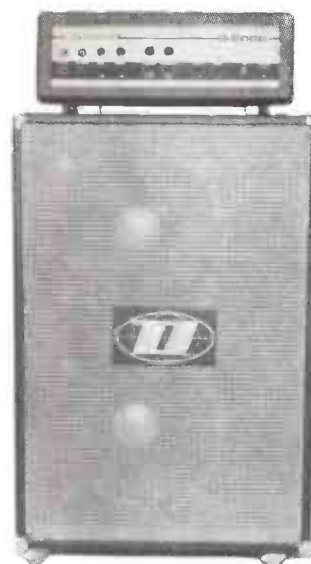
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No. 107

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EDITORIAL

When it comes to music – or, for that matter, anything else – I rarely find myself succumbing to the kind of feelings that base themselves around the general theme of 'those were the days'.

But, sorting recently through a collection of singles that extends right back to the start of the Beatles era, I found myself sinking further and further into the depths of nostalgia. I switched on the stereo and began to play through some of the titles that had come to light – tracks such as *Eight Miles High*, *Little Tin Soldier*, *Wrapping Paper*, *Strawberry Fields Forever*, *Hey Joe*... and many more.

And I realised that these singles, now some three or four years old, reached a level of musical and creative achievement that has remained unsurpassed by a majority of the chart material that is released today.

There are probably many reasons why the present singles market seems to be going through such an unexciting and depressed period. There has been a growing emphasis on the album as the medium for rock music; it's also true that the ordinary single – as opposed to the maxi – offers relatively poor value for money in comparison with the L.P. It's probably true that the album offers more scope for musical experiment – though I'd be inclined to match a lot of those old singles against many of today's album tracks. There's also, of course, the unfortunate fact that success in the singles charts tends to be taken as a sign that a progressive band is 'selling out'.

But that still doesn't explain why no one appears willing to get the single back on its feet – both musically and creatively. Those reasons for the stagnation of the market are valid only because no one seems prepared to disprove them.

The recent success of some bands in the charts – notably the Faces – have shown that the single is not a pop product to be ignored or dismissed. The charts once used to offer the means by which a new band made itself known. They once offered the majority of the record-buying audience means by which they became aware of the new developments that were taking place in music. Many of these first became apparent on single releases. And, apart from anything else, the singles market once used to produce some of those all-time great records.

It would be a great loss to the music world if the pop single as a medium for musical expression was allowed to disappear forever.

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STARS OF THE FACES

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NOT

AN incredulous look appeared on Ian McLagan's face a couple of seconds after I had managed to steer his conversation towards the subject of stardom.

He sat stiffly in his armchair and carefully worked out his remarks in his head before replying. He wasn't too sure whether I was referring to the Faces' status in life or the status of other performers. So, he worked out quickly that I was talking about his group's position and opted for the role of sceptic.

'A star? Me?' he asked. 'No! Never!

'I'm only really aware of being a thing called a star when my mum and dad come around to the house for tea and happen to mention how well the group's latest single or album is doing in the charts or how much publicity we've been getting lately. Mum and dad love reading about us in the music press so she can show the neighbours pictures and so on.

'I think all the publicity and the money we are reported to be making impresses them far more than it does me.'

IMAGES?

But how about that image? Another strange look crossed his face and again I felt as if I had unjustly accused him of perpetrating some horrific crime.

'I don't think I've got an image either. It's people like you who tell me I have. I definitely don't go along with all this business about being a star and having to have an image. There are only two members of the Faces who are stars and they are Rod Stewart and Kenny Jones. We all live well but not like stars.

'I suppose we all do have a certain responsibility and duty to the people who buy our records and come to see us whenever and wherever we play because of the money they spend. Records, let's face it, cost a lot these

ALL OF US ARE STARS... FACES

BY DEREK ABRAHAMS

days. But does the money they spend mean we've got to have an image as well? I don't think so!

McLagan admits, however, to once living on a cloud of stardom and that the taste of an image once did appeal to him. His admission came out as though he was once a music hall performer forced through changing times and styles to live a life of gleaning old newspaper clippings and pictures to remind himself of the spirit and glory of what once was.

'When I was in the Small Faces I was a star and I did have an image. I was told to have one and I suppose I just believed it after a while. But it didn't really matter then because the whole make-up of the music industry and the personality of the fans was so different in those days.

'But it wasn't only me that liked to think about stardom. All the other members of the group liked it too. We were very popular, probably more so than a lot of other groups around at the time and I suppose everything just went to our heads.

'Unfortunately, we didn't see a great deal of the fortune we were making. I think, though, that some of the people that used to have connections with us did quite well.'

NOSTALGIA

McLagan joined the Small Faces after the departure of Jimmy Winston, who, it is believed, went in for an acting career. It is McLagan's keyboard work that can be heard on some of the records the group had released on the Immediate label.

'Ah! Immediate! Thereby hangs a tale.' He plunged deeper into the pool of

nostalgia and for a while didn't say anything. He looked at me and I looked at Kenny Jones who was just about to dash out to investigate reports of a parking ticket on the windscreen of his Rolls-Royce. Jones had just returned from a month's holiday in South Africa and was looking very bronzey-bronzey. He managed to stay for a while to tell me his holiday tales.

Jones had obviously been fully versed on the political situation when in that distant land of discriminatory practices. But he had come to his own conclusions.

'Conditions for the Black man are definitely looking up out there,' he said. 'There really needn't be any colour bar at all but Parliament is run by the Afrikaaners—there are two-and-a-half-million of them—and they are the ones who practise segregation. If the million or so English people got into power I'm sure everything would change. The English population is increasing every year so perhaps one day the politics out

there will change. The kids don't like what's happening anyway.'

He said The Faces would like to play out there if they were asked to, and a visit wouldn't even have to mean that they'd be forced to play in front of white audiences only.

Swaziland, which is only about 250 miles from Johannesburg, is a free-country and a concert could be staged there in front of a totally integrated audience.

**'The Faces
were created
to play and
play—non-stop
if necessary'
—McLagan**

'All we'd have to do would be to advertise the concert in, say, Cape Town or Johannesburg and play in Swaziland, I don't think the Musicians' Union would like us to play in South Africa anyway. If we did they'd probably ban us from working here and in America.'

From what I gathered, The Faces are known in South Africa but are not regarded as a particularly big band. A visit by the group would obviously be a challenge because of all the fresh ground to break. The land for them has been tilled time and time again throughout the rest of the world.

'South Africa has its own groups. The biggest one at the moment call themselves The Hawkes and are a fairly heavy outfit. The kids out there are definitely going in the right direction even though they may be a little behind the rest of the world. They still have things like hippie communes. I also noticed that not many of the music fans speak very much. It's sometimes very difficult to get into conversation with them.'

Until the time of the interview with McLagan and Jones neither had touched a musical instrument for about six weeks and a couple of gigs at the Rainbow Theatre in Finsbury Park, North London, were looming up.

'We haven't played there yet,' said McLagan, 'so we



don't know what the acoustics are like. We've heard a lot of different stories about the place and the audiences they get there. I hope everything goes all right for us.'

The Faces probably play more gigs than most bands around. According to McLagan that's what they are all about - to play. They are immensely popular in America as everyone already knows, but whenever the group have just finished a tour there they have to take about a week off to recover.

'It's really hard touring America,' said McLagan. 'Between every gig is a two hour flight through God knows how many time changes. It really wears us out. We'd much rather play here but there just happens to be more money in America.'

COMMAND

Getting The Faces to the point of being able to command £2,000 or more for one gig has taken a lot of hard work. It also took a long time. Their story goes back to the time when they were known as The Small Faces and others made up part of the Jeff Beck group.

Don Arden managed the Small Faces at the start of their short but glorious career. He was probably most responsible for creating their star image in the first place. On leaving Arden for various



Ronnie Lane, an old Face

reasons, they joined Harold Davison, but he shelved them in favour of groups such as the Rolling Stones, the Hollies and the Dave Clark Five. After more management and agency hassles they found themselves under the wing of Andrew Oldham and Tony Calder's Immediate company.

NO MORE TWINKLE

Then everything started going wrong for the 'stars'. The twinkle surrounding them dissipated and McLagan, Steve Marriott, Ronnie Lane and Kenny Jones found themselves loaded up with debts of about £10,000. They were proverbially skint so they split up.

Also around this time, but on the other side of town, Jeff Beck's group was also on the verge of break-up. His group included Ronnie Wood and Rod Stewart.

'We already knew Woody and somehow everyone got together at my flat in Earl's Court. We didn't have anything better to do so we started decorating the place. We didn't even think about the debts that were hanging over us at the time,' said McLagan. 'Creditors kept knocking at the door all the time. There was one who just wouldn't go away so I ended up throwing a pot of piss all over him from the balcony.'

'Woody had tried to form his own band after he split from Jeff but I don't think he had much success with the musicians that came his way. So one day he phoned Laney to find out what was doing and to find out whether everyone could meet for a strum and a loon about.'

McLagan said he remembered vividly the first time they all got together to play. Woody, as he is known (McLagan adds a 'Y' to the end of everyone's name, henceforth Rod Stewart becomes Stewarty and Kenny Jones becomes Jonesy) had just switched from playing bass to lead guitar and he was still working himself out.

'When we first began playing together we all thought Christ! I hope he's not listening to what we're playing.



Another star of our show

You see, we all thought that he was the great superstar with lots of money and lots of experience from having played with Jeff Beck. The funny thing was that he was hoping that we weren't listening to what he was playing. He was also thinking that we were the great stars and he was just as skint as we were. We found out all this later on.'

Stewart also managed to find some time to sit on in the jam sessions.

'Eventually we managed to work something out and we all decided to form a group. Rod wasn't with us when we decided to get together but he used to appear sometimes for a lark about.'

The larking about has continued since then. The Faces are famous for being one of the truly great looning bands in the country.

'If we didn't lark about so much the group would probably fall apart,' said McLagan.

WORRY ABOUT ROD

'We were a little worried about asking Rod to join anyway because we didn't want to get into the situation where he would be the front man and we would just end up playing behind him. We had gone through all that with Steve Marriott in the Small Faces. I'm not knocking Steve, because I

think he's a great performer, but I think we just all let him take all the credit for everything.

'Eventually Kenny asked Stewart to join but not before we had tried to do the vocals ourselves. We were quite pathetic at singing so it was a case of having to get a singer.'

So the group was formed but more important was the fact that they were still broke, still had debts and still had no one to manage them. Just as they were confused about these facts they were even more confused about all the contracts that were filed away in various lawyers' offices. For example, Lane, McLagan and Jones were still, for some reason, signed to the defunct Immediate label, Stewart was signed to Mercury and Wood had his own problems.

GAFF-MASTERS

Billy Gaff, the other half of the Masters-Gaff organisation came to the rescue.

McLagan continued his story: 'I was down The Speakeasy one night with a few people celebrating the fact that we at last had another band but nothing else, when I got talking to this geezer who said his name was Billy Gaff. I went into a great long story of our problems and he said he would come with us to our solicitors' office the following



Rod Stewart, another old Face but a new star

day to sort it all out. Our wonderful solicitors had been sitting on the case for about two years and were doing absolutely nothing about it. The same morning there was an exchange of letters and we were let out of our contract. I'd never seen anything happen so fast. It was just beautiful to watch Billy at work.'

The Faces, with the exception of Rod Stewart, are now signed to Warner Records. Stewart is still with Mercury. He appears on their records by courtesy of that company and they are allowed to help him out on his records. This way everyone saves a lot of money, especially Stewart who must surely be pounds in on session musicians' fees.

When The Faces were signed to Warner's they received a large advance and this enabled them to clear up all their debts. The group has now paid back all the money through the sale of records and are now receiving royalties regularly.

'The money was very useful because it meant we could buy some gear to go on the road with. We had no amps, no PA, no transport, no nothing, but our very personal stuff,' McLagan said.

McLagan spent his money thus: A Hammond B 3 organ costing £1,200, plus two Leslie cabinets at £700. He also bought a Hohner Pianette for £120. And that was only for starters.

Through the regular royalty cheques the group are now able to plan home studios to work out future albums and so on.

STUDIOS

McLagan's studio was formerly a bedroom and he has installed a £1,000 Stan Coil mixer and ordered a new Revox and some speakers. He has been busy sound-proofing the 15 by 12 foot room for the past seven months. He said he had to rip the floor out and re-concrete it. Then the walls had to be replastered and wooden framework fixed all round. Insulating paper was put on top of the frames and



Ron Wood out of Beck into the Faces

carpet underfelt jammed down behind.

The Faces are a unique band in that they are not actually signed for management to any company or agency. The only contract they have is with Warner Brothers. The rest is all done by a shake of the hand and the knowledge that only gentlemen are involved. Included in this agreement is the connection with their U.S. agency, American Talent International.

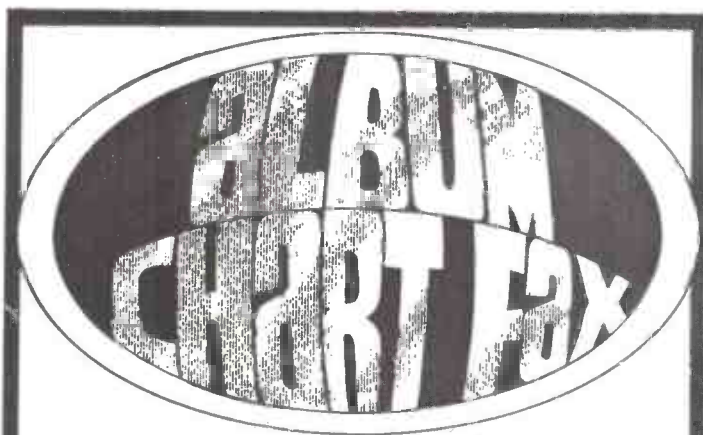
'Contacts are a drag anyway,' said McLagan, 'I don't think they're really necessary. Even without contracts what other band around can have two record companies helping each other out.'

'When Billy Gaff said he'd manage us, he said he'd do it without contracts. He said he'd help us out with our problems, which he has done, and we'd help him.'

Gaff is probably one of the new breed of managers coming into the business that McLagan kept talking about. They are, he said, more honest than the old type who were only concerned with their own percentages of the box office.



The sceptic McLagan



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

America

RP - Various. S - Trident. E - Scott. MP - Kinney.

American Pie - Don McLean

RP - Freeman. S - American. E - Flye. MP - United Artists.

Carole King Music

RP - Adler. S - American. E - Cicalo. MP - Screen Gems/Columbia.

Concert For Bangla Desh - George Harrison and Friends

RP - Harrison/Spector. S - Live. E - Norman & Steve. MP - Various.

Ⓜ Ⓜ Ⓜ Ⓜ - Led Zeppelin

RP - Page. S - Headley Grange/Island/Sunset. E - Various. MP - Superhype/Kinney.

Every Picture Tells A Story - Rod Stewart

RP - Stewart. S - Morgan. E - Bobak. MP - Various.

Farther Along - The Byrds

RP - The Byrds. S - Various. E - Various. MP - MCPS/April.

Fog On The Tyne - Lindisfarne

RP - Johnston. S - Trident. E - Scott. MP - Various.

Fragile - Yes

RP - Offord. S - Advision. E - Offord. MP - Yessongs.

Grave New World - Strawbs

RP - Strawbs/Visconti/Dudgeon. S - Morgan/Island/Lansdowne. E - Various. MP - Various.

Imagine - John Lennon

RP - Lennon/Spector. S - Ascot. E - Various. MP - Northern.

Madman Across The Water - Elton John

RP - Dudgeon. S - Trident. E - Cable/Scott. MP - DJM.

Meddle - Pink Floyd

RP - Pink Floyd. S - Air/Abbey Road/Morgan. E - Various. MP - World Copyright.

Milestones - Rolling Stones

RP - Various. S - Various. E - Various. MP - Various.

Nilsson Shmilsson - Harry Nilsson

RP - Perry. S - Trident. E - Cable. MP - Various.

Nitro Function

RP - Rogers. S - Fame. E - Limbo/Cunningham. MP - House Of The Fox.

One Year - Colin Blunstone

RP - Argent/White. S - EMI. E - Vince. MP - Various.

Sunfighter - Paul Kantner/Grace Slick

RP - Kantner/Slick. S - American. E - Ieraci. MP - American.

Teaser and the Firecat - Cat Stevens

RP - Samwell-Smith. S - Morgan. E - Various. MP - Freshwater.

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

SONGWRITER OF THE MONTH

KENNY YOUNG

Kenny Young, the bespectacled American who, like so many of his countrymen, prefers to live in England, says he feels privileged but not proud to have written million-selling singles for The Drifters, the Rolling Stones, Ben E. King, Herman's Hermits, Ronnie Dove, The Seekers, Reparata And The Delrons, Status Quo, Nancy Sinatra, Jefferson and Clodagh Rodgers.

He feels privileged in that his efforts gave him a certain status in the songwriting fraternity. He is not proud because of the big and hefty stamp of commercialism and conformity all over them.

'A lot of the songs I wrote followed a similar pattern but they had to be because I happened to be working in a songwriting stable at the time and the only motive for writing a song was a hit record,' he said.

The first stable Young was harnessed to was Bobby Darin's T.M. Music.

'My contract called for as many songs as I could turn out in one week. So, we just churned them out. Almost every one contained the same story - boy meets girl, boy falls in love with girl, girl falls in love with boy, boy and girl kiss, boy leaves girl, girl leaves boy. I'll give you another instance; the theme of most of The Drifters' songs were places, such as *Under The Boardwalk*, *Sand In My Shoes*, *On Broadway*, *Up On The Roof*. Everything was either at, in, over, under, inside or outside.

All in all Young wrote 23 chart records, not because he



wanted to but because he was getting paid to do it.

In 1968 he moved to England in order to progress and whilst writing and producing numerous songs, he found himself out of habit, writing more hits, this time for Clodagh Rodgers, and *The Highway Song* for Nancy Sinatra.

Then came his time for realisation. Perhaps it was the old corny cliché of *what am I doing or where am I going* or perhaps it was a case of good, old fashioned frustration at the type of numbers he was famous for producing.

So, gagged with mucous and choked with emotion Young set about repairing the damage he himself had inflicted upon his undeniable talent.

The release of his first solo album *Clever Dogs Chase The Sun* (Warner Bros. WB K. 4611) is his first step towards total individuality.

The songs on the album

are not all personal cries for freedom. In some of them he tries to convey the message about the lifestyle that many of us are leading and the lifestyle that we could be leading. In one song, *Lord It Ain't Easy*, he stresses the difficulty of being a human being in a world where everyone is striving for self-satisfaction.

Perhaps the theme of love and friendship is now rather antediluvian as almost every self-respecting songwriter has also echoed the same plea for time immemorial but why on earth shouldn't Young have his say too?

'I'm just saying that everyone should slow down a bit and enjoy things that aren't necessarily materialistic. I know it's all been said before but why not say it again. Why shouldn't we try to save the earth and the people on it.'

He sees his second album as being more to the point than the one that has just been released.

'The album is more of a transition period for me. It's my first main effort since writing all those chart-orientated songs for everyone. The next one will definitely not follow the same lines as I now have the freedom to express myself more.

'Everything I have written on the first album is true because I have seen it. I am still able to write about a boy and girl loving each other in the truest sense but I am able to make them love each other in different ways and say things that haven't necessarily been said before.'

In the first track, *Me Without You*, he says *Life is not so gay with me without you and I wish I had a clue girl when you were comin' back*. It's a love song.

'Thank the Lord I don't have to rhyme moon and June and soon anymore. A lot of my change of writing style is definitely to do with the contemporary music of today. Music is far more honest today than it has probably ever been. The songs relate to the people who are writing them.'

If he could re-start all over again, Young said, he would have gone in another direction. He's not that sure which avenue he would have taken but there's not much point in talking about it.

'I'm not going to write songs for the hell of it anymore,' he said. 'If one of my songs becomes a hit I won't worry about it but I'm not going to programme my writing to suit the needs of anyone else but me.'

By DEREK ABRAHAMS



crossing rhythms with osibisa

BY DEREK ABRAHAMS

Several thousand words have been written in many hundred magazines in at least a score of different languages about the four West Africans and three West Indians who make up Osibisa. All the reports I've read or had translated for me to read have been favourable and laud the group's efforts in trying to elevate a rather stagnant music scene.

So, rather than jeopardise my safety and that of my colleagues at *Beat Instrumental's* offices, I have decided to make this feature no exception to the rule.

Had I, however, written about Osibisa say, nine months ago, my policy would probably have been markedly different.

I've changed my mind at least half-a-dozen times

since I first encountered the now famous criss-cross rhythms emanating from the various instruments played by Teddy Osei, Sol Amarfo, Spartacus R, Wendell Richardson, Robert Bailey, Loughty Amao and Mac Tontoh at the Torrington Jazz Club at North Finchley.

I thought it rather strange when I was told to arrive early otherwise I would stand the risk of not being able to get in. You see, the group had no recording contract at the time and very few people, therefore, had heard them. Or so I thought.

Anyway, as predicted by Dave Rudland, who ran the club at the time, the place was packed and soon after the group went on stage all but a few began swaying shoulder to shoulder to the

torrid tempos being bashed out.

Not long after their act began I began likening their music to that of Santana. Perhaps they were a little less electric but I thought many of the basic rhythms were analogous.

I know now that I was wrong even to compare the two bands, but when you hear people calling Osibisa the 'English Santana' you can't really help it. Can you?

The next time I heard the septet was at an MCA Records' reception at Ronnie Scott's Club in London's Frith Street. The purpose of the party was to boast about the capture of 'the most exciting band ever'. So, drunk with power I and a few friends sauntered along in the hope of being entertained.

'Osibisa means criss-cross rhythms. It's happy music,' was the message from trumpeter, flugel horn and kabasa player, Mac. And with that everyone on stage let rip with some of the most incredible noises a lot of people at Scott's had most likely ever heard.

Everything about the

group seemed different from the Torrington. The thought of them imitating Santana didn't occur to me that night. They were just Osibisa.

Spartacus, who plays bass guitar and assorted percussive instruments, strode up and down at the back of the stage like an angry lion with the problems of the whole of the music world on top of his mane. I have never seen him stride as magnificently since. During his entire performance no flicker or emotion graced his face. The tightly bound tufts of hair on his head stood up like antennae on a block of flats.

Loughty (pronounced Lofty), the powerfully-built Nigerian-born tenor, baritone sax and conga drum player, began raping the startled audience with his eyes. My fiancé held on to me for dear life lest he should attack her.

After another couple of concert attendances I began to get my old nagging doubts back. Certainly they were entertaining to watch and as there was plenty going on, boredom wasn't my bone of contention. I just kept questioning myself on how original was their sound.

During all this time Osibisa's first album, called simply *Osibisa* had been released. Not long after its issue MCA's press officer, Peter Robinson, took me to lunch and chose a restaurant opposite a record shop featuring a large display of the album's covers in its window. The main topic of the conversation seemed to revolve around how many people were into Osibisa or criss-crossed rhythmic music. Obviously a great many people were, as to date more than 250,000 copies of that first album have been sold and concert halls are full whenever and wherever they play.

The album's contents were pretty representative of their stage act at the time and in between some further investigations about their music I waited patiently for the next most convenient gig.

FAN CLUBS?

It turned out to be at The Roundhouse in Dagenham, Essex, and they brought along with them a great number of their unofficial fan club members. Plastic Osibisa whistles were distributed freely and unknowing followers, proving to their friends that they were one step ahead, offered support to the 'down trodden' Black men on stage by giving the Anglo-Saxon version of the Black Power salute and then laughed at their own bravery. Why is it that whenever Black

rock men get on stage a certain section of the audience persist in behaving like demented Panthers? All Osibisa wanted to do was to play, and they did—selections from their second album, *Woyaya* (*Beat Instrumental's* Album Of The Month for March, incidentally).

Apart from the beating of drums, the shaking of African-style maraccas and the gentle ssh, ssh, ssh of kabasas, little seemed different from previous gigs. At the time I just couldn't make up my mind and a lager bought for me beforehand by Spartacus didn't help either.

It was when they went into their own rendition of the Roland Kirk number, *Spirits Up Above*, that I knew Osibisa were for me and since then I have been a devoted fan. I even keep a plastic whistle in my desk drawer.

There's something about *Spirits In The Sky* that pinpoints exactly the band's musical heritage. It's certainly not Latin American. It blends the savage jungle sounds of West and East Africa with the more gentle Caribbean sounds of Antigua, Grenada and Trinidad.

The album version of the Kirk song is slightly different from their stage one. On record Mary Hopkin and some other friends of the group get together under the direction of producer Tony Visconti and reply to Wendell's vocals.

Loughty worships Roland

Kirk and had, in fact, been to Ronnie Scott's Club the night before I was due to interview him.

'I get a lot of my influence and inspiration from Kirk,' he confessed. 'When you've got his kind of sound buzzing around in your head, you've won half the battle with music.'

But strains of Kirk are not the only things buzzing around in the constantly laughing Nigerian's head. He advises the record buying public to 'watch out' when he lets out the contents of his brain.

RAW SOUNDS

'There are going to be lots of original sounds coming out and they're all going to be raw,' he threatened. 'Osibisa isn't going to be playing clean music any longer. There's too many other people playing clean music.'

Now I know why I had debated for so long about Osibisa's music. For a time it was too clean and sharp. Afro-Rock, for want of a better phrase, wasn't made to be so concise.

'Nearly all other bands around are playing clean music and I think the world needs something much rougher. We're going to give it to 'em,' he added.

According to Loughty, Santana's music is clean and if the smirk on his face and the widening of his eyes meant anything at all, he had

some other words to describe their sound. But he wasn't saying what.

Naturally if one is playing Afro-rock music of any kind it's probably impossible not to get any Latin American influences working themselves in. But Osibisa's members pride themselves on being subtle enough not to blatantly brandish bossa nova type rhythms around like Santana so often do. There is a great deal of West Indian rock influence in their music and it is cunningly disguised as calypso which, Loughty claims, is very similar to West African music anyway. West Indians originally came from Africa anyway, he said authoritatively.

'All West Indian music, their feelings, songs and dancing are very similar to what we were playing in Africa for years before Osibisa was ever formed,' he said.

Osibisa plans to include some West Indian or Trinidadian drums in their music after a forthcoming tour in that part of the world. Apparently Robert's father, who is involved in the music business over there, is negotiating a trip there.

'I'd really like to play there,' said Loughty.

He'd also like to play in South Africa but naturally the Musicians' Union would be totally against such a venture.

'We want to play where the money's big even if it means going to South Africa. I don't



Spartacus R: 'Like an angry lion'



Loughty: 'We don't play sexy music'



Teddy and Spartacus

think we'd only have to play to Black men. Wilson Pickett played to both.

'I can just hear and smell a trip to South Africa coming,' and with that came another leer at me and cameraman, Jim Cotier. The assignment was, in fact, one of the first in the pop field for the photographer and he just didn't quite know what to make of Loughy.

Loughy's biggest ambition is to go with the band on a tour of Ghana and Nigeria, areas he, Mac and Sol know so well.

'I want to show the people there how well we're all doing. Just in case we do a tour there soon me and Mac went to see the film *Soul To Soul* and were knocked out by what's happening in West Africa. We didn't stop talking about it amongst ourselves for a long time afterwards. Yeh! We really want to go back.'

Osibisa's history stretches back only two years when Teddy, Sol and Mac came to London to live and they decided the time was apt for them to form their own band to play their own kind of music. Previously they had served their time in jazz groups, dance bands and providing the backing for bumps and grinds at various strip clubs. They recruited Spartacus and fellow West Indian Wendell to play guitar.

Shortly after this nucleus had got together they were asked to make a film of the band at work in Morgan re-

ording studios, for which the line-up was augmented by Robert and Loughy. The band's line-up has never changed since.

After the initial excitement of making the film, they found work extremely difficult to find but they were soon uplifted by a series of bookings at the Country Club in Hampstead.

Soon after, they signed with Gerry Bron for management and agency and currently have more work on their date sheets than they probably know what to do with.

LOVE AMERICA

Much of their work takes them to America, a country they just love playing in.

'You just ask me how much we love playing in America,' demanded Loughy. 'I'll tell you, we love playing in America and we're really looking forward to going back in the Spring. We blast the place open whenever we go there. Osibisa's music can change everything - all the violence, just everything. When we last played at the Whiskey-A-Go-Go in Los Angeles we even had the heads dancing about.'

'I'd most like to play with Santana. We'd show them where the root of their music really lies. I don't think they'd be playing their sexy music much longer, after we'd have shown them where it's really at.'

Living in England poses some serious problems for



Sol, Mac and wide-eyed Loughy

Loughy. He claims he can't get any conga drums of the type he once used at home and he says he's going to be a worried man when his present ones wear out.

Perhaps that's another reason why he wants to return to Ghana because, he says, he can pick up some good drums.

'It's no good if I ring up someone in Accra or Lagos and ask them to send me some. I've got to feel them first and see them for myself. I like pig skin congas because they vibrate. Western and African conga drums are very different. The weather makes a lot of difference to how they sound too. In London the weather isn't too hot so the drums get a dead sound. Back home, where it's hot all the time, the surface of the drums are tight and springy. African conga drums have ropes and sticks to tune them. Western drums have metal tuners and I don't find these as good. At the moment I have to use them but I always have to warm them up for about ten minutes first.

'Drumming means a lot to me. It's like talking in another language. When I play I speak to them. I put the question and they answer. It's a sort of ESP between us. Whatever I say in my head they seem to understand and sympathise with me and advise me.

'We all get our own vibrations from our instruments. Just as I get mine' from drum-

ming, so does Spartacus get his from playing bass and Robert from the organ and so on. Do you know what I mean?

'We also have our own personalities. We call Mac the Kangaroo of the band because he never stops jumping around. Teddy believes he's the playboy. Spartacus, is as you say, the angry lion. I like that. But he's also the sex symbol and by striding up and down he gets his vibes that way.

RAINBOW

'When we're playing, none of us can really see a thing because we're into what we're doing. But we hear everything. That's the way we are. We produce happy vibes,' he said.

Osibisa played at the Rainbow Theatre in London on March 4. I don't know how many of *Beat's* readers were there but for those that were here's a short list of what the yells and the pleadings and the messages passed back and forth between the players and their instruments are all about: *Woyaya*, which is the album's title, means we are going; *Osibisa*, which you probably already know, means criss-cross rhythms; *Kwaku Baah* usually signifies the name of a person but in the African way only. It usually means the day a particular person was born, such as Wednesday born; *Empen* means thousands but it can also mean too much or fantastic.

□ THE A & R MEN



DANNY BECKERMAN

The life of washing hair, handing out pins and preparing dyes is a far cry from the one that Danny Beckerman now leads at Morgan Studios, Willesden, North London.

Beckerman is in charge of the company's production, publishing and arranging department and with his boss, Monty Babson, he travels the world in search of new material and artists to arrange and record.

However, if it hadn't been for his hairdressing career at Vidal Sassoon's salon he would probably never have made it.

His break in the music business came one day five years ago when he was walking to work down Mayfair's Green Street and he began humming a tune.

'It was quite a pleasant song but I couldn't remember when or where I had heard it,' he recalled. 'Then I realised that it was a totally original number and that I hadn't heard it anywhere else before.'

Fortunately for Beckerman one of his clients that morning was Dusty Springfield and whilst he busied himself sorting out her locks he sang his song to her.

'She was quite impressed with the performance and she recommended that I go to Tito Burns' office to see what they could do with it. When I got to the office Bill Landis, who handled the publishing side, took me to a studio to arrange the song,' he said.

After a short spell of writ-

ing songs for the Burns' office he secured a similar post in another company in Denmark Street. He said the job called for the production of as many songs possible every day, for five days a week and the picking up of a small salary at the end of the week.

'I did that day in and day out, just turning out songs in the hope that one of them would be successful. Still, even if I had written a hit song it probably wouldn't have meant an increase in salary. My contract didn't work like that.

But throughout my time of sitting down and writing one song after another, I still had the song that I sang to Dusty Springfield buzzing around in my head. No one had managed to do anything with it so I decided not to give up and approach someone else.

SINCERITY

Then I heard about Geoff Love's son looking for some songs so one night I slept in a churchyard near his office so I could see him first thing the following morning. He turned out to be quite enthusiastic and gave me an advance for the number,' he said.

At the time Babson was a producer at Lansdowne Studios and through various means Beckerman managed to get himself a job as a tea boy and general assistant there.

Although his new job put his status back he was deter-

mined not to lose heart and began learning as fast as he could the rudimentary tricks of the proverbial production and arranging trade.

Then Babson left Lansdowne to form Morgan and when he was satisfied that his new company was a viable enough proposition, he began recruiting staff, amongst them Beckerman.

'I was thrilled when I joined Morgan,' Beckerman said. 'It meant a great deal to me. It also meant that I had a job that no one else in the neighbourhood where I lived had. They were mainly hairdressers, tailors and taxi-drivers. The job also meant that I could at last put to some use the classical music training I received when I was a boy at the Royal Academy.'

Beckerman is now firmly established as an arranger producer at Morgan and spends a great deal of his time behind the control desk or at the piano. He doesn't consider himself to be a great producer but prefers to think of himself as a director.

'I'll only handle something that I know I can do well,' he said. 'A lot of groups come here and ask me to help them out. If I think they are any good I'll put down a basic track for them and if it doesn't sound right I'll rearrange the number for them.'

Beckerman said that before he will agree to arrange and record a group he must be convinced of their sincerity as musicians. He said that he has come across too many groups who just want

to make money and he's just not interested in this breed.

'I've found that the groups who are only in it for the money are usually rubbish groups anyway and I don't think the public want to listen to rubbish anymore.'

Beckerman is constantly inundated with tapes and demo discs from various aspiring groups. Reggae songs, he said, are in great abundance, perhaps because of the area in which he works. Willesden and its denizens has a very high immigrant population.

'I don't mind dealing with reggae but I'd much rather get into the other music that comes into the office.'

He is mainly concerned in the promotion of a song called *Amsterdam* which is doing quite well in Europe. Another of his songs, called *California Calling*, by a pop group called Fickle Pickle, is also doing very well. Beckerman works a lot with Wilson Malone, formerly with Orange Bicycle. He believes Malone is one of the brightest arranging and song-writing hopes at present in this country and is currently doing arrangements for top session guitarist, Big Jim Sullivan.

'People tend to think that all an A & R man does is produce. What they don't know is that he is the man with all the ulcers. I know because I have one. An A & R man, which means the man who deals with artists and repertoire, does absolutely everything. Not just one thing, but everything.'

"I'M NOT A BLIND BEGGAR" — JOSE FELICIANO

Jose Feliciano learns as many songs as possible during his 14 hours a day of practise so that he doesn't have to sing the same number twice during a concert tour. He reckons to be able to do at least eleven consecutive shows without repeating a tune, hits excluded.

That's no easy task for any performer and in Feliciano's case the job is far more difficult as he is blind.

Nevertheless, his stage performances are faultless. When I saw him at the Hammersmith Odeon recently a packed house gave him standing ovations — one before he was even led to his stool and the other at the end of his act. Perhaps the applause was because of sympathy for his affliction but a lot of it was because of his ability to play good music and the audience's appreciation of sheer talent.

The show didn't appear to be planned in any way, but seemed to be directed by his feelings after each song. Just a word to the drummer and bassist and off they went.

On one point he is firm, however. He states that he wants no part of capitalising on his affliction. He doesn't see why he should have to call himself Blind Jose to earn a living. This is surely a direct reference to the many travelling American blind blues singers of forty or so years ago, such as Blind Lemon Jefferson, Blind Blake, and so forth.

'Those guys just used their blindness so that they could earn money,' he said. 'They were really just beggars and I'm not!'

Besides learning one song after another he also spends a great deal of time writing

new material. If there's no one around to take the tune down for him he composes directly into a tape recorder. The type of song he writes usually depends on his mood.

'Sometimes,' he said, 'if nothing comes out I'll leave it alone and come back to the song another day. Usually, though, I'm able to compose songs fairly quickly.'

Feliciano was born in September, 1945, in the rural town of Lorez in Puerto Rico. He was the second born in a family of nine.

In school, Feliciano managed to keep pace with the regular courses and attended special classes in Braille.

'I couldn't go out and play and be an ordinary kid,' he said, 'so as a release I turned to music.'

When he was nine he received a ten dollar plastic toy ukulele as a present from his father and soon after that he got his first proper guitar from a friend.

'Previously, I had to borrow guitars to learn on from friends,' he said. 'I broke a lot of strings in the process but that was the only way I could learn.'

On the advent of rock and roll Feliciano began imitating then adopting the sounds of such artists as Sam Cooke, Ray Charles, Frankie Laine and Elvis Presley. He was also doing the odd gig at concert halls in the Bronx area of New York.

'I probably had the same difficulty in learning to play the guitar as anyone else,' he said.

'I had received some training on the classical guitar when I was 17 but I also liked the electric guitar too. There are a lot more things you can do with an acoustic guitar,

though, such as getting percussive sounds from drumming on the body or getting a banjo sound by playing below the bridge.

About 1963 his career as a musician began to move. A talent scout got him a recording contract with RCA Victor and his first single *Everybody Do The Click* was released in 1964. An album, *The Voice And Guitar Of Jose Feliciano*, also created considerable interest.

'Mainly I had been singing Spanish songs. I think my earliest influences came through the recordings of artists with Spanish origin who played Latin American

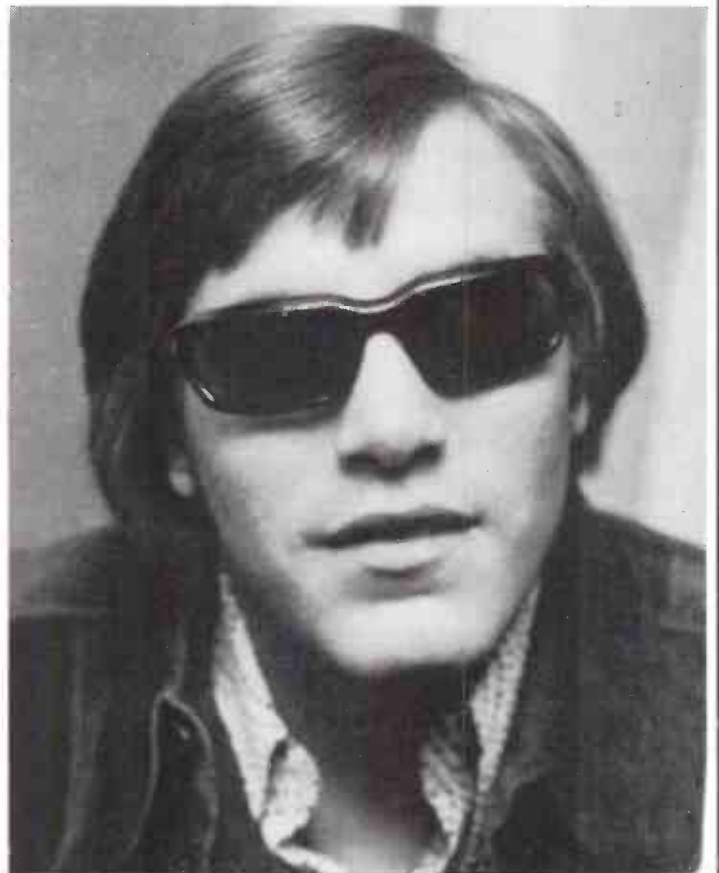
music. I think Luis Bonfá, a Brazilian, the late Wes Montgomery and Django Reinhardt influenced my playing a great deal too.'

Major appearances in Central and South America preceded his popularity in America. His Latin American Triumph in 1966 climaxed when he played before 100,000 people at the Mar del Plata Festival, a seaside resort near Buenos Aires.

His success in America started in 1968 with his first big hit in the English language, *Light My Fire*, *California Dreamin'* and his first album, *Feliciano*, which won him a gold disc. By 1969 he was awarded two Grammy awards, one for being the best new artist and one for the best made contemporary pop vocal performance for *Light My Fire*.

When on stage Feliciano doesn't have a group playing with him. He is happy to play with a drummer and a bass guitarist.

'I think groups are a hassle. Everyone is on his own ego trip and once that starts you get problems.



PROFILE

ALAN SOLOMON



'During our first year we were into a very musical trip, a very technical thing. We were trying to cram as much music as possible into every set. It was all a bit too intellectual,' said Warm Dust's Alan Solomon.

A surprising view for a rock musician to hold – especially in these days of progressive music. But Solomon has had enough experience of the rock scene to know what he's talking about. He was thrown in at the deep end of the business – very young and very naive – and he's learned it all the hard way.

Warm Dust started life on the road at the peak of the 'Woodstock' music boom; they played their first gigs at the many festivals and concerts of that 1970 summer. They played well, they

had something to say . . . and they established rapidly an early reputation.

But then the Woodstock bubble burst. Rock went into a period of regression – and Warm Dust were suddenly out in the cold. Although they continued to establish a growing reputation on the continent, they found that English audiences just didn't want to know. The reason – as Solomon says – was that they were 'too much into music.'

'We suddenly realised, sometime last year, that audiences didn't want long, freaky, instrumental parts. So we changed our approach. Now we're more into rock; we're more into writing songs. A lot of our stuff is much shorter than it used to be.'

An admission of selling out? Hardly – because Solomon stresses that they've gone commercial only in the sense that they've started to play what people want to hear. And that, he says, is the important thing.

Solomon's musical career began when he used to play out in front in orchestras at school.

'At that time I began to listen to a lot of avant-garde composers. I heard the work of a classical composer called Michael Sobotnik, who'd started working with a New York electronic studio. It really turned me on to electronic music – what he was doing was amazing.'

His interest in electronic music has lasted throughout the development of his career, through the various local blues bands that took him to Warm Dust. And now, although he continues to display his woodwind virtuosity on stage and in the studios, Solomon is starting to realise, in practical terms, many of his electronic music ideas. He has recently finished building his own synthesizer – and he's found that now he has considerable scope for experiment.

'The basic idea began four or five years ago,' he explained. 'I wanted something to make some of the sounds that I heard Stockhausen making. I started by experimenting with sine and square-wave oscillators – although I couldn't use them on stage, because they didn't fit the music that was going then. I decided that I wanted a synthesizer about three years ago – so I started to make one.'

As he pointed out, the equipment that he now pos-

sesses isn't a synthesizer in the true sense of the word – because there is no facility for voltage control. Rather, he's collected what he describes as a 'collection of gadgets'. The unit is based around a Philicorda keyboard which gives Solomon, with the aid of volume and reverb controls, a very string-like sound 'a bit like a chamber orchestra sound'. He also uses an Electro-Melodica, a square wave oscillator tuned by a keyboard, assembled as a single unit together with a white-noise generator – which gives him an available frequency spectrum from subsonic to supersonic. The 'electronic guts' of the equipment comprises a band-pass oscillator, a filter unit that gives him an acute wah-wah effect, an envelope shaper, a ring modulator and an echo unit. The individual circuits are linked by simple connections rather than by a patch-board – an arrangement that provides for a degree of simplicity and functionality which he finds quite adequate.

As yet, though, he hasn't used the equipment on stage; the instrument was completed only three months ago. Until now he's been working out some ideas – and it seems very probable that the sound of Solomon's synthesizer will soon be added to the stage and studio instrumentation of Warm Dust's musical presence.

'I'll be using it just like any other instrument,' he said. 'It's good that I built it myself – it's probably better musically. I'll be featuring it occasionally for solo parts; otherwise, it'll be integrated with the rest of the band's sound.'



ATOMIC ROOSTER IN GERMANY:

WHERE VINCE CRANE BECOMES NERVOUS ABOUT CHRIS FARLOWE AND RICK PARNELL WISHES HE COULD FLY.

BY DEREK ABRAHAMS

Vincent Crane paced nervously up and down the airport lounge. Pat, his wife, tried desperately to keep up with him to tell him that everything was going to be all right. Rick Parnell was filled also with trepidation and smoked one cigarette after another, occasionally adjusting the brim of his black Mafioso-type hat as he did so. Steve Bolton remained completely motionless and just stared out of the window to the tarmac beyond where workmen were busy filling up the Lufthansa Boeing which was to take us all to Düsseldorf, West Germany, for a pop festival.

Not wishing to add to their problems I tried to make myself as insignificant as possible by just clutching a cardboard box containing the latest issues of *Beat Instrumental*. I just searched the rest of the lounge area for Osibisa who, I had discovered, were also to be on the aircraft. Their destination was also Essen.

Atomic Rooster's members were not worried about the actual flight. They had flown many times before. I don't think that the plane flight, in fact, occupied anyone's thoughts at all. It was just that they were to meet their newest member, Chris Farlowe, at Essen, and play their first ever gig with him there.

'Christ! I hope everything goes well,' mumbled Parnell. It seems that Farlowe had a good idea of what the numbers were all about because of some hard rehearsals. He'd also apparently been taking the words of the songs home to learn them there too. The worry was just about whether he had learned them well enough to perform the songs in front of the expected 12,000 rock fans.

Five members of Osibisa appeared at the lounge door. Two others had, for some reason, been left behind and were to follow on later. They were surprised to see me as only a day or so before I had interviewed them and hadn't told them that I was also going to the Fatherland.

For just a few moments Parnell seemed to get over his nervousness. He saw

Spartacus R wandering around as though he were preparing to go to war with the Matabele against the English in South Africa.

'I'd give anything to be able to play with Osibisa,' he said. 'I've been experimenting for a while with the congas and timbales. Can you imagine Rooster and Osibisa jamming together? I bet I could give a good account of myself.'

He is the son of top drummer and arranger, Jack Parnell. He admits to not having his father's technique as he can't do paradiddles or anything. He says he's just got the necessary feel of drumming.

'My father was voted best drummer in England seven times but I'm nothing like him. He's given me all the encouragement I ever needed but he didn't actually teach me.

'I learned to play rhythms by tapping my hands and feet and just progressed from there. I don't think I'm a bad drummer now,' he said, perhaps hoping that I believed him.

When aged 17, Parnell discovered, perhaps to his amazement, that he wasn't cut out for a singing career so he formed his first band where he took up the role of drummer. The group was called Rick Parnell's Independence.

'One of Independence is now with a group called Byzantium. I haven't seen the rest of them for a while.'

On the break-up of Independence he got a job at NEMS and composer Tim Rice came up with a gig for him in Cornwall with a group called Mixed Bag.

'I got kicked out of the group after about three days,' he said. 'They were a straight pop band and I was going into the underground scene. I don't think the two combined very well.'

'After that I had a string of different jobs. Then one day my old man asked me if I wanted to play with Engelbert Humperdinck. I thought he was joking but discovered he wasn't when he told me that the salary was £100 a week. The job meant that I

had to go to America for three months then on to Bermuda, a few appearances in Australia, Japan and then back home.

'I didn't really fancy going around the world. I thought that I'd go to America and save plenty of money and come back to do what I wanted. I got kicked out of Humperdinck's group.'

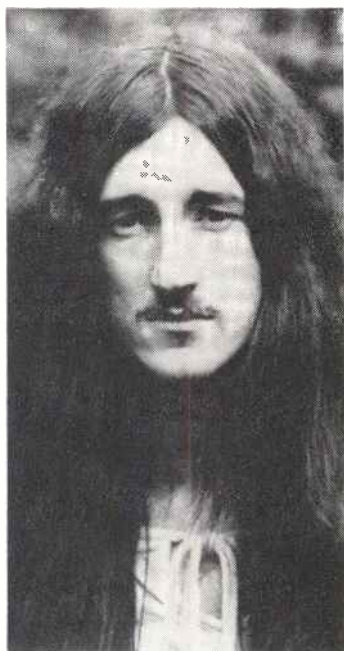
Then he auditioned successfully for Rooster.

Crane had, by this time, gathered himself together and looking a lot paler than he should, began his trek with the rest of the party towards the gateway leading to the plane. Osibisa followed behind with Parnell walking just a couple of steps in front of them. Perhaps he wanted people to think that he was with them.

We clambered into the Boeing and found our seats. I sat between Bolton and Parnell. Crane and his wife held hands in two seats across the aisle.

Parnell continued his observations on himself:

'I wish I could fly without a plane. Just to take off like a



Crane: A brilliant pupil

bird. I'll do it one day.'

He sounded like Icarus must have sounded before attempting to soar to the sun on candle grease wings.

A stony-faced Lufthansa stewardess began handing biscuits and drinks around and we all took some. The biscuits were free. The rest we had to pay for.

'Ah! Aren't these biscuits pretty,' commented Parnell. He took a mouthful 'They're pretty all right. Pretty awful.' He settled for two glasses of Coca Cola instead and a perfumed paper towel for wiping the beads of distress from the forehead.

He settled back and looked out of the window at the clouds below. Then he was back with further comments. He's a very unpredictable man is this Rick Parnell. I sometimes got the impression that he wasn't with the rest of the band at all but far away in his own little world of clouds, biscuits and funky music.

'Beat Instrumental does a good job with its studio coverage. I'd love to get into studio production and elec-

tronics. I'd like to use a studio in the same way as Pink Floyd use one. The effects they get are incredible and I want to get the same. It would be nice to take a studio on the road with Rooster so that we could record whenever we wanted. We might do that one day.

I'd love to find out how John Bonham gets the sound on record from his drums. I really rate Zeppelin. They are definitely the finest players of heavy rock around. Bonham is my influence. He's got taste, style and technique, everything, in fact, that I should have. I also reckon that Bernard Purdie — he calls himself Pretty Purdie — is an incredible drummer. He originated funk drumming. He's on the King Curtis Live At The Fillmore album. Carmine Appici thinks Purdie's great too. Buddy Rich is probably the greatest all-round drummer in the world. It's even more unbelievable because he was the greatest when my old man was my age.'

Düsseldorf:



Parnell: 'That's my rooster'

We arrived at a cold and windswept Düsseldorf and hurriedly jumped into an awaiting bus to take us to the terminal for a customs and passport check.

Bolton and I soared straight through with no problems. Parnell wasn't so lucky and a blank-faced official demanded that he open his bag.

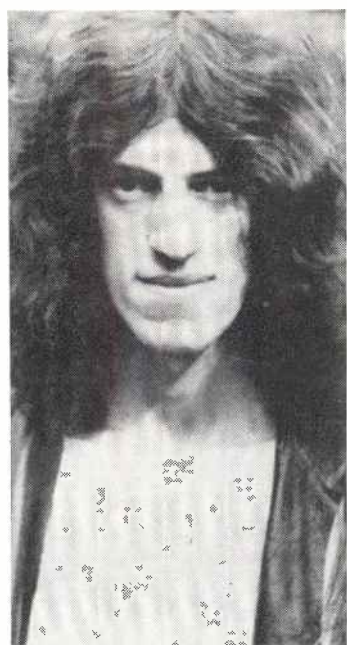
'Vot are zese?' he asked, with an incredulous look on his face. In his hand was a small packet of cone-shaped incense tablets and he stared at these.

'Incense! You burn them and they give out a lovely smell,' was the reply. The official began sniffing them and examining the packet. He shrugged his shoulders. God knows what must have been going through his head. He delved deeper into Parnell's bag. It was all like a lucky dip because the custom's man had won another prize. Just like a magician pulls a rabbit out of a hat so he pulled out a floppy rubber chicken from the depths of the valise. He didn't say a thing but just stared at Parnell as though he were a madman.

'That's my rooster,' said Parnell, attempting to snatch it away. 'I throw it into the audience after we've finished playing.' He could have been speaking to a brick wall for all the notice Herr Bureaucracy took. The toy chicken was stuffed back into the bag and Parnell was waved through.

Crane and Pat were even unluckier. They were semi-stripped. German customs officials are very security minded and object to even a packet of cigarettes going through without being investigated.

Eventually we got through customs, and manager, Robert Masters, was there on the other side to usher us into some cars to take us to the hotel.



Bolton: Happy with his lot

AMON DIN

DAVID BOWIE

BRAINCHILD

FLASH

The first gig with Farlowe was getting nearer and nearer and the nerves were becoming more and more tense.

Essen:

Eventually we arrived at Hotel Arnold and settled down for a meal of schnitzels, steak and beer.

Outside in the street a grey transit van drew up and out jumped Farlowe with a friend as equally involved in the selling of German and other military gear. He had his shop in Buffalo, New York.

Adopting his usual facial expression, i.e. a laughing one, he burst in through the door like Hermann Goering would have burst in through the Reichstag doors in search of Van der Lubbe and told us briefly that he had been shopping for daggers.

Hand Holding

Showing himself to be the total professional there was no sign of being nervous and he began discussing the songs he had had to learn and how he was going to sing them, when a certain shriek should come in or when a certain shriek should fade out. Vincent Crane and Pat still held hands and he looked a little healthier at the interest in the number shown by the experienced singer.

Great activity was evident at the hotel whilst we were stuffing ourselves with more food in the late afternoon. It seems that the whole German nation celebrates its own festival around the time we were there and the natives wore fancy dress and kept popping in and out of the front door making their own preparations for a concert (one of many in the town) and a party. The men were officials of a local club and were all dressed in blue, gold and silver uniforms. Oh how that Saxon race love to wear uniforms! The older

and fatter ones all looked like Luftwaffe generals, with braiding on their shoulders and braiding on their lapels. In fact, there was braiding everywhere and Farlowe and friend played a game of eye-spy with my little eye something beginning with 'O' - Old Soldier.

Whilst the local band were setting up their gear so Atomic Rooster began getting themselves ready for their own engagement.

The hall was huge and concrete. Its interior resembled a fairground, with hamburger, hot dog and pop corn stalls in profusion. Everywhere were uniformed guards and doormen.

Crane treats every gig as the most important in his life. He has come a long way since he first got together a rock group. Contemporary music was actually not his original calling.

He attended Trinity College for three years studying classical music. He says he used to have a brilliant tutor but I have it on good authority that he was also a brilliant pupil.

'There was a lot of training. Part of it meant I had to write a piece of classical music for the tutor. I usually only managed to write half of it and he used to astonish me regularly by guessing how the rest went. Another part of the course called for classical improvisation, which was also really difficult.

'I'd have liked to have gone into classical music full time, but I think 18 years' old is a little too late to start thinking about it. During the time I was at Trinity I also played with a jazz trio at the Marquee.'

When at Trinity Crane also was now to use his ears properly. Many singers complain that they can't hear themselves above the sound of instruments behind them. Rooster's previous singer,



Farlowe: Treated like Moses in Germany

Pete French, often used to complain, Crane said.

'We used to have to write down the make-up of a certain melody line which was played to us. Also we used to have to decipher a four-part harmony being played on the piano. It's really difficult when there is only one instrument involved. I know all the training has helped me a lot because now I can hear everything that the rest of the group are playing. I can also hear what the singer is singing.'

On leaving Trinity College Crane played with Arthur Brown but left because of bad management. He says the band were going out for too much money, and because the group had only had one hit - *Fire* - no one in America really knew much about them and wouldn't

therefore spend the money going to see the band.

'I left Arthur about three years ago. When I took off Carl Palmer came with me and together we formed Atomic Rooster. We made the decision to quit Arthur in New York. We got an offer for management from Rick Gunnell when we were there but decided to take up the offer from Robert Masters instead.'

The third man to join the group was bassist Nick Graham and not long after their first gig they decided a lead guitarist was needed more than the bass player so Graham and John Carr from Andromeda joined. Carl left not long after.

Then Cann left. Crane said there were total musical differences between Cann and himself. All the solos, it

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seems, were dominated by the lead guitar.

Steve Bolton joined after a long and arduous series of auditions.

'There were about 80 guitarists, I think,' Crane said. 'After a while I just couldn't distinguish one from the other. But Steve was the best so he came with us. Then came Rick. He joined after another audition we had. We were really worried about the drumming aspect of the group because we wanted a funky drummer, but just couldn't seem to find one. Rick was the only reasonably funky drummer who came. He's improved a lot since.'

I had decided before John Cann left that we needed another vocalist. I had watched Rod Stewart with the Faces. The nearest we could get was Pete French from a group called Big Bertha. He left because he wasn't a hundred per cent into the music we were playing and he also got too keen on staying in America.'

Moses and His Tablets

So, in the beginning of February, this year, Chris Farlowe, shrieker of the late Colosseum, was contacted. Crane knew him anyway through Carl Palmer who in turn knew him from the Thunderbird days.

When one thinks of vocalists one immediately thinks of Rod Stewart, Joe Cocker, and Chris Farlowe. I personally rate him as one of the best singers in England.

Just as I and Crane rate him so did the Germans. On the announcement of his joining Rooster several thousand people at the Grugahall rose to their feet and just began yelling with joy.

When he appeared it was as though Moses had returned from the peak of Mount Sinai with the tablets in his hand. Farlowe has always been immensely popular in Germany, especially after his spell with Hiseman, Heckstall-Smith, Greenslade and so forth.

He had gone through last minute rehearsals of *Tomorrow Night, Breakthrough*,

Save Me, A Spoonful Of Bromide Helps, The Pulse Rate Goes Down, Decision/Indecision, The Price, Gershtatzer and Devil's Answer in the dressing room before so he seemed to have everything under control.

The gig was superb. Perhaps a little theatrical, with Crane falling supposedly senseless on the floor after a long keyboard solo, Bolton jumped in the air at certain periods and Parnell did his moody and savage piece when the time was right. Generally, however, their performance was spontaneous and the audience loved every minute of it.

Not-So-Deep Purple

Deep Purple had a difficult time in following, I wasn't the only one to say so either.

The PA, which had gone wrong earlier, sounded as though it was breaking up a bit during some numbers, but generally it held together. Crane's organ had been wired up wrongly – the keyboards somehow managed to produce different volumes from the pedals – but he also managed to cope.

Considering it was the group's first gig with Farlowe, they all looked thoroughly pleased with themselves when their set was through. Farlowe said he had to guess a couple of times if he was singing the right tune and whether the time was right for him to come into the song. Crane said he could hear everything.

Afterwards he said: 'On stage professionalism is what makes a band. They are there to play and they must play as best as they can. The audience don't care whether a band isn't feeling in the mood. They've paid money, sometimes a lot of money, and they have every right to demand perfection. I think they got it with Rooster tonight.'

After the set we sat back and watched Purple then returned to the Hotel to join in on some of the merrymaking. On the return Crane said Rooster were to start on a new album in the Spring.

'We'll probably mix it in America. We did a new single in America, by the way. The LP was recorded at Trident and mixed at Elektra's Studios in Los Angeles. The mixing facilities are better there. The speakers make all the difference. The album has Pete French on it for some of the time. There's also some brass included and it's very full and complete. We're all very happy with what came out. At least sixty per cent of the material was written by Steve, Rick and I. We tried to combine a melodic approach with plenty of chords over a short sort of funky rhythm. I don't think this has been done much by any other performers.'

Funkier Than Thou

Crane said that when he thinks of funk numbers loads of cliches immediately come to his mind. There are the same old riffs that are used time and time again and these have to be ruthlessly eliminated. I agree with him that there's not much original material about these days.

'Funk is feel and not technique,' he said. 'It's placing the beat behind or in front of the rhythm and this pushes the band along. About ninety per cent of British numbers are spot on the beat. This doesn't happen with Rooster. All the members have funk in them. I don't think it can be taught. You've either got it or you haven't.'

Crane's efforts to providing the necessary funk for the group comes through his use of a Hammond C3 as the bottom keyboard and which he modified himself. He doesn't like using Leslie cabinets because he says they don't have enough bite to them. He prefers using them in the studio but not on stage. He says that the rotary action that spins the sound round and which gives the true Leslie effect is often lost because of the microphones, which causes the sound to fade and come in when it's not needed. To get the same level all the time he finds he has to pump the volume controls.

'If you put more micro-

phones around you tend to get more effect. But then you lose the effect of having a Leslie in the first place. They are superb in a recording studio though.'

Also included on his keyboard are two Wurlitzer panels and a Selmer Carnival underneath these. They have, he says, a distinctly different sound. The bottom keyboard is for the bass. The sound is split and goes out through an acoustic bass cabinet. Not many people play bass on the organ, he says. Eddie Hardin is the only person who immediately springs to mind.

'It's essential to split the sound because you may want the bass level up and the right hand keyboard down. If you want the correct bass volume anyway you have to split the keyboards because the right hand tends to overpower the bass.'

Crane's balance for the top three manual keyboards go through one volume control which in turn go into the mixer then to the pedal and out of the stacks. All the volume controls were built by him.

Cracked?

Parnell is currently in the process of getting a custom-made Ludwig drum kit. On the Essen gig night he was using a Hayman but he claims he's not getting the necessary bounce from the skins.

Bolton uses a Fender Stratocaster for rehearsals and a Gibson Les Paul on stage. He's happy with what he's got.

Rooster make an American tour in April. According to Masters they've already cracked England and are in the throes of doing the same in Europe. They are now going to concentrate on America. If the single takes off their task will be much simpler.

'We like to work all the time,' said Crane. 'We do get plenty of work anyway. But it's best to never stop. I find I get soggy if I don't. When I'm on stage after a lay off I find that I very quickly become a musician again.'

We all find we become musicians again. And that's important.'

INSTRUMENTAL NEWS

NEW BEACH BOYS BUT OLD FLAMES

Three members of the Beach Boys were in London last month to introduce new members Rickie Fataar and Blondie Chaplin – the first permanent additions to the Beach Boys' line-up since Bruce Johnston joined in 1966.

Both Fataar and Chaplin are from South Africa; both are coloured. But founder-member Carl Wilson discounted the possibility of any political motivations. The reasons for the additions lay, he said, 'solely in the realms of music'.

The decision to add the new members was taken a week previously, when the band was in Amsterdam. The two new members were

originally with The Flame, a South African group that Carl Wilson heard in London some three years ago and signed to the Beach Boys' Brother Records. Fataar will replace Dennis Wilson as drummer; Wilson, who injured his hand some months ago, will concentrate on vocals and keyboards. Chaplin will be playing bass and keyboards and will also, according to Brian Wilson, be contributing extensively to the Beach Boys' vocal harmonies. 'Blondie's voice,' says Wilson, 'has got to be one of the greatest I've ever heard.'

The new members will be making 'an immediate creative contribution to the band'.

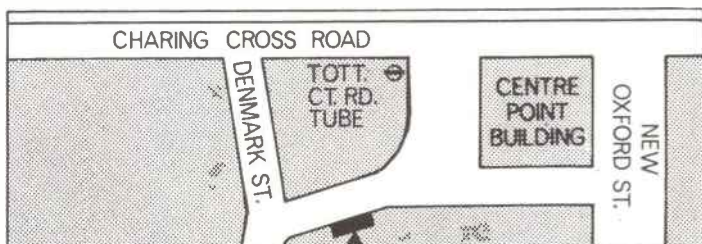
Although Fataar has already played with the Beach Boys on stage, his first appearance with Chaplin, as a full member of the band will coincide with the Beach Boys' forthcoming American tour – which has sold out three concerts at the New York Carnegie Hall a month in advance of the performance. The Beach Boys are expected in England during May for a Rainbow date and several possible provincial concerts.

They also announced that their *Smile* album – which has reached the status of a 'legend' without ever having been heard by the public – will shortly be released simultaneously on both sides of the Atlantic. The complete tapes of the original sessions, including a master copy of the infamous *Fire* suite, are now available – and are currently being re-edited in the form of 'safety' copies.

The album, for which a re-release date has not yet been set, will include *Fire*, *Cabin Essence*, *Child Is Father To The Man*, *Wind Chimes*, *Surf's Up* and the unreleased twelve-minute version of *Heroes And Villains*. Its release will follow that of the new album, entitled *Carl And The Passions – So Tough*.

The Beach Boys will also be changing their recording and live performance policy. They have recently settled their two million dollar suit against Capitol Records with an out-of-court award for a figure 'that must remain undisclosed'. They have also been awarded the rights to five of their most recent albums – some of which may be re-released on the Beach Boys' Brother label. At present they are negotiating to find an English label that will

Continued over page▷



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INSTRUMENTAL NEWS

'do the same for the Beach Boys in the U.K. as Kinney have done for them in the States'. In future they will be playing only solo concerts on their live appearances; they are currently preparing a show that will last for two hours or more.

The future of Brian Wilson

as a performing member of the group remains unclear. He was not present at the press-conference - but his brothers, with Bruce Johnston, confirmed that he will still, as always, play a vital and basic role in the future development of the Beach Boys' music.



Old Flame members Blondie Chaplin & Ricky Fataar

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INSTRUMENTAL NEWS

Vox Sound Limited have now released the tuning device which was previewed in *Beat Instrumental* of January. It has now been named the Vox Checkmate and there are two versions on the market. Unit One comprises six switches for E/A/D/G/B/E strings. When the second button, adjacent to the on/off switch is pressed, an audible tone corresponding to the notes of open strings comes into effect. Unit Two is connected by a further jack lead to the organ output which enables the guitarist to use the organ as a base for tuning, thereby ensuring that the complete group is in perfect harmony. A further two applications are for music shop staff to

make certain that all new guitars leave the premises correctly tuned, as well as for the professional making bridge adjustments.

Mr. John Wyatt, Export Sales Manager for Vox, commented: 'Group guitarists, whoever, or wherever they may be, have one thing in common. Prior to playing publicly, they all have to tune their instruments. With the new Checkmate, they can now tune accurately, simply and quickly. This facility is equally important for the newcomer to the guitar who can check all systems go and be sure they're right.'

The Checkmate measures 8" x 6" x 2" and will fit comfortably within a guitar carrying case.



Mark Tuddenham, Vox's Retail Sales Manager, demonstrating the new battery-operated tuner

NEW SIMMS-WATTS FACTORY

Simms-Watts has opened its new factory at Bletchley, Bucks, two months later than was originally planned.

The factory is 10,000 square feet in size and laid out to give flow line production for the company's products in order to meet the constantly increasing demand for equipment from all over the world. Apart from the main production areas there is a vast stores complex handling components and the wide range of accessories such as microphones and strings marketed by the company, and includes the Ned Callan Corner where the famous hand-made guitars are given the final play and tune before dispatch.

The attitude of Simms-Watts has always been quality first, and a feature of this is the unique 'Soak Bay' where every amplifier is run at full power for 48 hours be-

fore finally being placed in the box. Each amp is then guitar tested by one of the many musicians on the production team.



The "Soak Bay", where every amp is run at full power for 48 hours before dispatch

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New Life for the Flute

One of the most valuable aspects of the 'rock revolution' was that it helped the musician to experiment with new directions for musical expression. In particular, it took him away from the conventional line-up – of guitar, bass and drums – and into new fields of instrumentation. One of the first instruments to experience such a 'renaissance' was the flute.

Of the many classical instruments that have found their way into the rock band line-up, the flute is perhaps the oldest – although the present instrument is a fairly recent development of the long established flute family.

Its relatives can be traced back to more than 2000 years B.C. These were herdsman's pipes, known as the *plagiaulos*, and identified on Etruscan pottery. Similar instruments are known to have been played in India, China and Japan. These are the first true flutes of the 'transverse' type; they were played by blowing across the mouth-piece, rather than down it, as with early instruments of the recorder type.

The modern flute descends from the Boehm-system flute, developed by the famous woodwind maker, Theobald Boehm. He had made his first flute in 1832, and had found the design unsatisfactory. He changed the layout of the keys according to acoustic principles, and replaced the chromatic keys with open-standing keys. His new design was introduced in 1847 and is now almost universally adopted as a basis for the design of the modern instrument.

The present-day flute, unchanged from the original Boehm model, is pitched in the key of 'C' and is known as the tenor flute. Other instruments, based on the same design, are the flute d'amour, now almost extinct, and the piccolo, pitched an octave above middle 'C'. The flute is also available in other keys, of which 'G' (alto flute) and 'C' below middle 'C' (contrabass flute) are the most popular configurations.



Crimson's Mel Collins



Family's Poli Palmer



Jethro Tull's Ian Anderson

The flute has always been a popular orchestral instrument, and has been spotlighted many times for its uniquely 'liquid' sound. This is a product of two factors – the way in which the air column inside the instrument is excited by eddies formed against the aperture (a unique feature of the flute family), and the way in which it is played. Its 'voice' is a product of many factors – and the quality of the sound depends on the skill of the musician in finding the right combination of angle of breath impact, breath force, and shape of lip aperture.

There is little question that the flute, in these terms, is a difficult instrument to play really well. To find out some of the problems, I spoke to Yoel Schwarcz, whose flute work is a prominent feature of Continuum's sound. He began his flute playing within the context of classical music (with the National Youth Orchestra), and is one of the few players to have made the transition from classical flute to jazz/rock work.

'The fingering of the flute is fairly easy to master,' he told me. 'The difficulty lies in mastering the control of the lip aperture. It's the shape of the mouth and the angle of the lips to the mouthpiece that matter most.' He feels that, for this reason above all others, the prospective flute player should go to a proper teacher – because proper lessons will save a lot of wasted time. 'It's important that you get the lip control right,' he said. 'And this takes time. You need to put in a lot of practice, just blowing long notes and practising octaves to get the aperture right.' The sensitivity of the lips is so important that it is necessary to practise every day – otherwise the control of the lips is lost, and the quality of the note will suffer.'

Yoel has found that adapting the flute to rock work has not been easy. 'The big difficulty lies in picking up the sound,' he said. 'The flute's volume range is very limited, and it has to be miked.' This poses problems

— for a contact mike dulls the quality of the notes, and a straight microphone is prone to feedback. Yoel uses his flute directly into an on-stage microphone, and features it mainly in the quieter passages — where the beauty of its liquid sound can be best appreciated. He has experimented with contact microphones, but has found them unsatisfactory. 'The quality of the flute's sound is very delicate,' he said. 'A contact mike ruins it; you lose the sound and tone of the instrument. There is a new design of contact microphone that fits into the cork by the mouthpiece — but this still tends to take the top out of the notes.'

His advice to the would-be flute player is to go at first to a teacher — to learn the correct approach to sound quality. The teacher, he said, will also be able to help with the selection of a good instrument. He emphasises the old advice of 'go for the best you can afford'. 'A good second-hand flute will cost about forty or fifty pounds,' he said. 'There are cheaper models, but they will not have the tone of a superior instrument.'

Stackridge's 'Mutter' is one of today's flute players who learnt the flute purely as a rock instrument. Unlike Yoel, he took no formal music lessons — but he respects Yoel's views on the value of proper training. 'I just picked the idea up as I went along,' he said. 'I just used to mess around in local groups.' He started flute at the age of eighteen, after he'd seen one in a local shop window, and has now been playing for about three years. 'At first it was hard to get the right note,' he said. 'So I suppose that proper lessons might have helped — I don't really know. Once you've got the right note, it's just a matter of taking it from there. Once you've got the right sound, I think it's better not to go to music lessons — they'd teach you to play correctly, but you'd lose originality.'

Like Yoel, he emphasises the importance of 'working at it'. 'It's the lips that really

matter; breath control is also very important. If you leave it for a few days you lose the feel.'

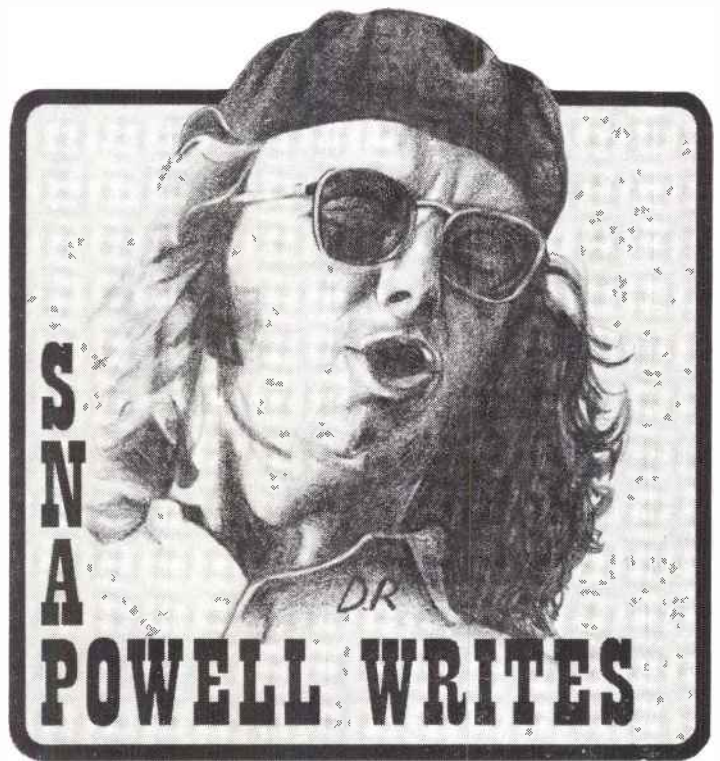
He plays the instrument directly into an on-stage microphone, which is taken straight into the P.A. He regards the quality of the note as very important. 'If you're playing "electric" music, you should aim for an "electric" sound,' he explained.

Mutter passes on the advice that 'the more you do exercises, the better it is'. He reminded me of what Boehm had said: 'Listen to each note you play. Hear it in your head; know what the right note should be.'

On whatever basis — and by whichever means — the would-be flute player wishes to learn the instrument, the first requirement is to get a good model. As Yoel has said, there are some excellent second-hand instruments on the market from about forty pounds upwards. Such an instrument will give the musician a good start, for the superior sound-quality of a more expensive instrument will fully justify the extra cost. Approach a good dealer, who will advise you on a good instrument.

Many musicians will find that forty pounds is a good deal of money to invest — particularly if the flute is a new instrument to them. But it is rarely worth purchasing a cheaper flute — for the production of a quality flute is a skilled process, and the musician must expect to pay for a well-made instrument. He will find, anyway, that new student models, made by several of our top musical instrument manufacturers, are priced at about the same level.

Selmer, for example, produce a range of four high-quality flutes designed specially for the student. Their Melody Maker student outfit, priced at £39, includes a case and a cleaning outfit. Their Gold Seal, Console and Sterling flutes are priced at £43.50, £45 and £48 respectively. For the serious musician, they produce a range of Boehm system flutes, priced between £176 and £332.



Looking out of the window at the sky over Notting Hill, not the most inspiring sight at the best of times, caused me once more to think of sunnier climes.

In six or seven weeks time, Wishbone Ash will join the summer migration of British bands across the Atlantic. Once on *terra firma* we will attempt for the third time to show the natives of 'the land of plenty' that British rock music a la Wishbone is alive and kicking.

Before leaving for the States, however, we have a number of pressing engagements. Firstly, priority is to finish the third album which is now well under way. Next, so I'm told, we are to tour Germany for a week and to stop off in Switzerland for a couple of days.

It seems we are the latest in line to be asked by friends and well wishers not to desert Britain for more tempting places, like America. I feel that the time is right for a visit, however, since we have just finished a major tour of Britain (you must need a rest from us).

We could, for instance, play somewhere like Coventry three times in one month and make a lot of people, including ourselves, a lot of greenbacks. But by doing so we would appreciably damage interest in the band in that city. I read in an interview with someone just the other day 'you should always leave the audience wanting more'. Up to a point this is very true. It's in the interest of the band and the audience.

I mentioned the new album earlier on. Well, with much perseverance and a good supply of fags and booze it should be completed by the end of the month. Naturally, it's going to be the best one to date.

There is a greater percentage of songs this time as opposed to sound. Three numbers, *Time Was*, *Warrior* and *Throw Down The Sword*, have been featured on stage over the last month. This has made it possible for us to drop *Vas Dis* as the set opener, which pleased Steve. After playing that particular number he was often seen to be afflicted by a severe case of muscular cramp.

Seriously, though, I am proud of the way the band has tackled vocals recently. We have been practising a lot and it has paid off. It's the same old story. If you stick at it long enough, it will happen. So, with 'brilliant' vocals to match the 'brilliant' instrumentation we should be fit to challenge the rest of 'em.

It's strange because that attitude, one of competition, has a lot to do with the overwhelming success of British bands. The Americans are not into competing against each other as much as we are. In my opinion this is why British bands display more dynamics and variation as opposed to their American counterparts who are much more interested in obtaining a relaxed and natural feel to their music.

Hence we get the Grateful Dead, Poco and Steve Miller Band on one hand, and Yes, ELP and Led Zeppelin on the other. Ted has just shattered my theory. He tells me he wanted to take up the steel guitar!

No we ain't going all countrified. He feels the instrument has a greater potential than shown by its country exponents. We'll see what happens when he gets 'is grubby hands on one.

MANAGERS & AGENTS.

DOUG D'ARCY

Doug D'Arcy's title at Chrysalis is as meaningless as some of the great, overloaded handles bestowed upon members of several Eastern European governments.

Officially he is known as Creative Director.

'Really,' he confesses, 'it means I supervise the management, recording and publishing sections of the company and I'm also in charge of the design of a majority of the company's album sleeves.'

D'Arcy has been involved with Chrysalis almost from the time of its inception. He knew the company's founders, Chris Wright and Terry Ellis, when at Manchester University.

D'Arcy was social secretary there and so his knowledge and understanding of the booking of groups and the problems they encounter is probably greater than most.

To D'Arcy the chance to work full time in the music business was the realisation of an age-old ambition.

'Music has always played a major part in my life. When I was at school I used to rush home in the evenings and listen to Buddy Holly, Woody Guthrie, Jack Elliott, Jesse Fuller and Duane Eddy who were all popular in those days. Then, whenever I ever had any time off from studying, I would always listen to records.

'So, when I was offered the chance to join Chris and Terry to combine my leisure activities with my work I was really grateful.'

D'Arcy has, over the last three years, developed a close affection for the groups that have come his way, groups such as Ten Years After and Procul Harum to name but two.

He and his staff are always on the lookout for new artists to sign. However, through a strange course of events many of their bands have been created by members leaving other Chrysalis acts, Wild Turkey from Jethro Tull, for instance.

Tir Na Nog are another of D'Arcy's favourite groups and just one of the many bands getting full support from a formidable company in the music industry, surely a situation that every group or artist around needs.

'They had received some rejections from some other companies,' he said, 'and I suppose they were a bit down in the mouth. Then they just walked in our office with some rough demos. We listened to these and were very impressed. They're going to be a big act soon.'

D'Arcy said he has found that when a band is recommended to him he finds that on first listening only the group's basic potential registers.

'There's a lot of hard work getting a band together. I have found that it usually takes about nine months for them to be completely confident in what they're doing. However, groups generally are not that patient and want to sign recording contracts as soon as possible, whether they're ready to or not.

'I firmly believe also that a band wishing to sign a recording contract should have some basic idea of what the music business is all about. I've heard of some groups that just want to sign contracts in the belief that their signatures on a piece of paper will make them stars. They couldn't be further from the truth. The music business just doesn't work like that.

'Unfortunately, too many



groups totally underestimate the work needed by a company to make them into professional entertainers. You have to work so hard for so long before getting them suitable to go on the road.

'Coming back to Tir Na Nog, we had to work hard to get them known at all. Fortunately we were able to put them on a tour with Jethro Tull and Procul Harum but their appearance just informed the world that they existed.

'After the tour they released an album which sold quite well. A second album is now being prepared. Sometime in April they make another tour with Jethro Tull and after that we should get some idea of how to handle them in a way that will make them even more successful.'

When Chrysalis and D'Arcy agree to take a group on for either management or agency the first task is to find them some work. The company has not found the need to lay out large cash amounts for a group like so many other record companies. Instead they offer a full service, an agency that is

prepared to take some time in getting the right gigs and plenty of good advice.

'Firstly, a group needs exposure and they can only get this through work. A group will find out more about itself when working constantly for three months than they will during three months of rehearsals in some room or other.

'We like to think that when a group comes to us they are not coming for the money we can offer but for the service. We don't need to lay out thousands to prove to any group what we are worth. I think we've proved that several times over.

'Naturally we do invest some money in groups when we take them on. If they haven't got equipment or a means of transport we'll probably find it for them. But the amount of money we spend depends on how much confidence we have in the group as a whole.

'No band has left us because of bad service yet.'

By DEREK ABRAHAMS

Emperor Rosko, that catarrh-voiced disc jockey whose mind zapping statements are expected to have you cavorting around like a frenzied Dervish the minute his show starts on a Saturday morning, is planning to open a school for the training of jocksters later this year.

He told *Beat Instrumental* that construction work is already in process on a building in the Pimlico, South West London, area.

'There will be four studios operating simultaneously in the building and each will be equipped with everything that a future disc jockey will need to use and operate.

'The students – there will be about ten of them at a time – will undergo an extensive two-week course and will probably be in the studios for at least six hours a day. After that they will have to do homework. All in all I reckon they will be at it for about 42 hours a week. It's definitely going to be hard work for them.

'I'll expect them to do long practice sessions of news reading, tape editing, engineering and station management. At the end of the course, and when I think that they are sufficiently trained in the art of disc jockeying, they'll get a diploma. If, at the end of the course, the pupils are not up to standard, they can carry on until they are.'

Rosko's standards are particularly high. They need to be for he also operates the largest travelling discotheque in the world. Well, that's what he claims anyway.

It seems surprising that someone like Rosko insists that his students undergo a severe elocution course but I suppose one can zap-bam-yeh-yeh-yeh to a record in the Queen's English, too.

'Disc jockeying is not only playing what's in the charts,' he said. 'News reading is equally important and one has to speak very clearly. Not only pop fans listen to radio shows, you know! That's why I want the students to take an elocution course,' he said.

ROSKO'S D.J. SCHOOL

BY DEREK ABRAHAMS

Rosko said he was still working out the fees he will charge his prospective students but he stressed that hire purchase or weekly instalment facilities could be introduced. Hotel accommodation at cut rates and equipment at cost price may also be available to people wanting to take the course.

Rosko is opening his school in anticipation of the commercial radio stations opening around Britain by next year. He feels that although there are several thousand part- or full-time disc jockeys at present, not too many of them will be qualified, or good enough, to operate a radio station.

'There is a similar school in America and they operate six-month courses. They're very together over there. I think the schools began opening about eight years ago over there and it's about time Britain had one or some, too. Mine'll be the first.'

The other interest in Rosko's life is his travelling discotheque. It has a power rating of 1,000 watts and has 44 speakers, mainly Celestion and Goodman. He said he'd love to have tannoy speakers but they are too expensive for him to use at the moment.

'We take the discotheque over the whole of England. I think I've travelled 100,000 miles during 1971. We play at private parties, deb's balls and county fairs. We even did a stadium at Leeds. This year we hope to get onto the college circuit. At the moment we're doing about four gigs a week.'

'A lot of people are under the wrong impression when they hear about Rosko's discotheque. They think it includes the largest light show in the world, too. It doesn't. We do have strobe lights and we show movies. We can also supply go-go dancers. Rosko can supply

anything! But it's music I'm into, not lights.'

The Rosko International Road Show – as it's officially called – carries about 600 singles and 100 albums. 500 of the singles are the most requested tunes over a certain period of time. It has two roadies and an assistant. Stuart Henry or Johnnie Walker sometimes help Rosko out. The discotheque gives a minimum of two hours per show and costs more than £100 to hire for that period of time, or more, depending on what the customer wants.

'It gets to be a bit of a risk sometimes,' said Rosko, 'when travelling around to different gigs. There'll always be a few yo-yo's who want to cause trouble and when they start it naturally spreads to other parts of the hall.

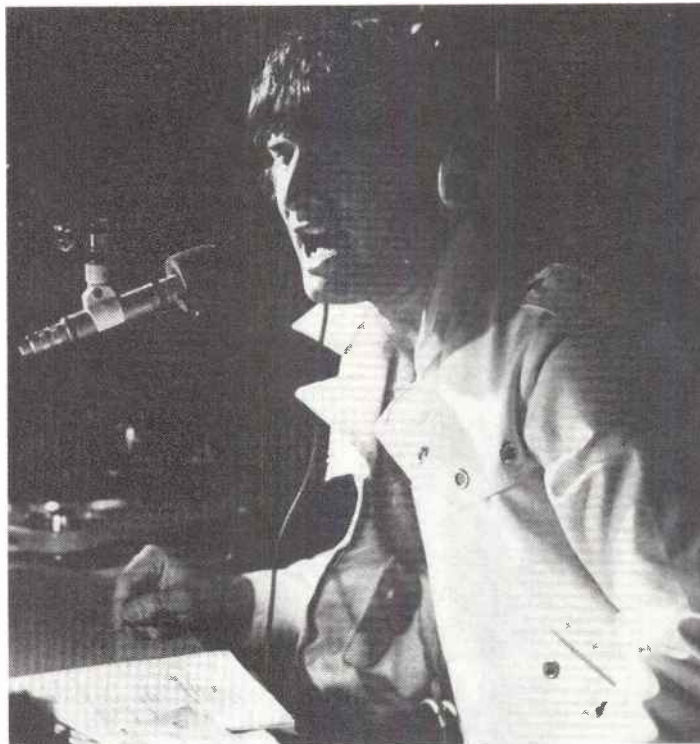
'Last Boxing Day, that was Boxing Day 1970, we did a gig at Bishop's Stortford and a fight started. Then people began beating each other's brains out. Bottles were flying all over the place. The worst thing about it was that there were only two policemen on duty at the local station at the time. We just kept playing records and ducked everytime some bottles flew our way.

'It got to be a drag after a while with all the great fuss going on so we played *God Save The Queen*, closed the show, and went.'

The travelling show, Rosko believes, is good promotion for record companies as it gives him the chance to play records that he wouldn't otherwise have time for on his radio show.

'Because of the show I have made records like *Burundi Black*, *Sultana* and *Double Barrel*, hits. I also made a record called *All Right Now* a hit, only through playing it on the discotheque and then on the air. I even got a letter of thanks.'

Rosko estimates his record collection to consist of more than 5,000 singles and 1,000 albums. He sorts them out quite regularly – but at home and under lock and key – and gives many away as prizes in competitions for dancing, miming, singing and so forth.



GIRLS IN ROCK

Sarah Gordon says she would like parity between the male and female species. Women, she feels, should be allowed to drive buses, deliver the post and, in fact, do for the same money any job a man does.

How about women street sweepers, Sarah? 'No!' she said in the same breath. 'I think that's going a bit too far. It's not a very nice job for a woman to do.'

Sarah's manager looked at her with vexation written all over his face. 'You've just completely ruined your argument,' he said. 'You can't say you want equality for some things only. You've got to have equality in everything if you're talking that way.'

So, it seems, Sarah's Women's Lib convictions were instigated by a clever publicity man, and she had just shattered the image. She looked shamefaced and said nothing more about her ideals. She wanted to forget all about them for the while and concentrate more on the subject of Bondage, the group which she leads on stage.

Born in Kingston, Jamaica, she has been living here since the age of five.

'Even when I was that age,' she said, 'I was singing. I come from a family of 13, and everyone was religious. We all used to go to a gospel church in Croydon and we all used to take part in the songs. The atmosphere in that church was incredible with us all singing songs like *Abide With Me* and *Jesus Wants To Save You*.

'I'm still quite religious, you know,' she said as if she was a novelty. 'I still say prayers at night.'

So, there are prayers at night and the ripping off of

SARAH GORDON



gear and the brandishing of a whip in the evening.

Part of Sarah and Bondage's act calls for a certain amount of sadism but really it is just part of her call for freedom.

'I do a topless spot,' she said, 'to show that a woman should be able to be com-

pletely free. No one says anything when a guy takes his shirt off on stage, but they all get hot under the collar when a girl does it. It's not right, it's unfair. It's.....'

Watch it, Sarah! You blew your argument on freedom just a couple of minutes ago. Her manager gave her an-

other warning look and she silenced herself just in time.

She did, however, point out that she doesn't strip off at all the group's gigs, but only when the occasion calls for it.

It seems it was her manager who actually suggested the topless spot. Just for something different, you understand.

'We build the act up very slowly,' the manager said. 'Sarah really works hard on stage. If the audience is not very responsive she works even harder. Usually at the end of the show they can't contain themselves, but are shouting for more and more.'

Sarah and Bondage claim they are able to regulate their act to suit the venue. There is a cabaret act for the night clubs circuit, a heavy routine for the colleges where, I understand, they are particularly popular, and out-and-out pop for the ballrooms.

Sarah formed her first group when she was 18. She was previously involved with the 13-member Interstate Road Show, which she describes as a 'big soul show,' and in which she sang with some other girls and Johnny Orlando.

The forerunner to Bondage was Sarah Gordon's House Of Bondage which had nine members and very little money. The number was reduced and House Of Bondage became simply Bondage.

'They go on first and do their thing, and then I go on and do mine,' she said.

Sarah and Bondage's first record, *Linger A Little Longer*, was very recently released on Don Lawson's newly-formed Seven Sun label issued through Beacon Records, EMI and Lugtons.

STATESIDE REPORT

BEAT GOES TO THE U.S.

We are expanding all the time. For instance, our coverage of recording studios here is second to none so we hope therefore to include in forthcoming issues of the magazine thoroughly up-to-date reports of what's happening behind the control desks in United States.

English acts are once again taking American music fans by storm and many have chosen to spend great lengths of their time across the Atlantic in a effort to get the Saxon message over.

Naturally they aren't without their problems. Dave Mason, who once played alongside Stevie Winwood, Jim Capaldi and Chris Wood in Traffic is at odds with Blue Thumb Records following the release of *Headkeeper*, his first LP in over a year.

One side of the album consists of five new songs, whilst side two contains five takes of old material recorded at a recent concert at the Troubador in Los Angeles.

Mason considers production level of the album to be as bad as a bootleg. 'They recorded it from rough tapes, 7½ IPS copy,' he says, 'It's definitely not what I want to put out for the public.'

Bob Krasnow, President of Blue Thumb, contends that Mason 'stole' the master tapes from Sunset Sound Records in L.A. He also states, however, that *Headkeeper* was recorded from masters that Mason somehow left behind.

Mason, for his part, says that he took the tapes to San Francisco, where the recording was finished. He had planned to release one album of all new material, and a live record from his Troubador concerts. 'And when I went to talk to Blue Thumb, they handed me this album. I couldn't believe it.'

Apparently, according to reports here, Dave says that he never wants to work for Blue Thumb again. 'I'd sooner go home to England, hang out and write songs for five years. It would be good for my head.' He has been living in the San Francisco area for the past year or so, where he has formed a band with keyboard man Mark Jordan, bassist Lonnie Turner (formerly with Steve Miller), and percussionists Rick Jaeger and Felix Flaco.

THE BYRDS

Jim McGuinn, founder and last of the original Byrds, would like to get the original group together for one album. The others seem ready if contract hassles can be settled. Gene Clark has been working as a solo for A & M, and Mike Clark and Chris Hillman have recently split from the Flying Burrito Brothers. Dave Crosby, meanwhile is finishing up his album with Graham Nash for Atlantic. The Byrds great reunion will be on Asylum Records, if all works out.

Pacific High Recorders has

been working with FM radio station KSAN in San Francisco, presenting a highly successful series of live concert broadcasts from the studio. Almost all the big name bands in SF have been on the show, which has attracted a wide audience.

One of the shows has been released on an album — Stoneground's concert of last July, which comprises three sides of their latest record, *Family Album*, on Warner Brothers. The remainder of the two-record set was done at the Record Plant in Los Angeles. Ron Elliott, a former partner of Sal Valentino in the Beau Brummels, co-produced some of the sessions.

RANDY LIKE ELTON

One of the brightest young singers to come along in a while is Randy Edelman, with his first album just out on Sunflower Records. Edelman once worked with Jackie de Shannon as an arranger and pianist, and Jackie returned the favour by helping out with Randy's debut album.

The only thing holding Edelman back is the fact that his vocals and nicely syncopated piano sounds very much like Elton John. Besides singing, playing, and writing all the material, Edelman produced, arranged and even orchestrated the album. He's been playing piano since he was five, and he was performing concerts at the age of ten. He's got great talent and potential, and he definitely deserves a listen.

Fans are eagerly awaiting for the first new Everly Brothers' album for some time, and the word from RCA is that it's due very shortly. The Everly's have been trying to decide on a title, and their latest choice seems to be *Stories We Can Tell*. A host of rock people fell by RCA Studios in Hollywood, where many sessions were done.

John Cippolina, having recently split from Quicksilver, has organized a band with Pete Sears, late of Silver Metre and Rod Stewart's band. Sears is alternating between bass and keyboards, while Cippolina is now playing pedal steel in addition to lead guitar. The new group is called Copperhead.

NEW HOT TUNA LP

Hot Tuna's new album for RCA has just been finished at Wally Heider's studio. The title is *Burgers*. Jerry Garcia's first solo album is out on Warner Bros. Neil Young's latest for Reprise is *Harvest*. Neil did sessions in Nashville, London, and California; he was helped by Crosby, Stills, Nash, James Taylor, Linda Ronstadt and a group dubbed the Stray Gators. In London, Neil recorded a couple of tracks with the London Symphony Orchestra.

Neil's old back-up band, Crazy Horse, has gone through some changes with the departure of Jack Nitzsche, who has gone to work with Young. Ralph Molina and Billy Talbot have reorganized the group, adding guitarists Greg Leroy and George Whitsell, in addition to organist John Blanton. The new Crazy Horse went to Pacific Studios in San Mateo to record their album for Reprise, titled *Loose*.

The Youngbloods have added a fourth member, bassist Mike Kane, who doubles on various horns. The group's latest release is *Good and Dusty*, on their own label, Raccoon Records. Van Morrison has been working at Pacific High, laying down tracks for an album.



WHO IS THIS FREAK

BY STEVE TURNER

When it comes to being slagged, Tony Palmer must be the Grand Funk Railroad of pop journalism.

Three years ago he was welcomed as someone who had at last realised the emerging importance of rock music. Eventually, when he was big enough to knock down, the critics claimed that he attached too much importance to something which was really of minor

significance.

Tony Palmer thinks he knows why the pop press have it in for him. One reason is that he tends to use words that have previously been restricted to classical music when he writes his pop columns. This is because he feels that pop has not yet developed a sufficient vocabulary to describe its music – a fact which is confirmed in almost every

review that appears in the pop press. An example of this is a recent review which uses such words as; 'good dirty sound', 'weighty', 'firm', 'raspy', 'good' and 'a monster' to describe Jeff Beck's new album. Most of these words were intended to describe *objects* when they were introduced into our language but because pop has no vocabulary of its own, we have to use them to explain

the *sounds* we hear. 'The very word "pop" is itself an example of what I mean,' says Palmer: 'We use it to describe everything from Lulu to Hendrix and beyond.'

Another reason for the criticism is, Palmer suggests, because pop is not his sole interest. In fact it's very far from his only activity. He reckons to spend about one day in seven to pop and his only regular pop column is

to be seen in the *Observer* each Sunday. His other activities are well represented in the shelves of books that line his study – they range from art to pornography, from classical to pop and from poetry to a broad selection of recently-published novels. A line of books above his chair are the results of his work so far. A book in German on the electronic media, a book on pop and an account of the Oz trials.

Right now he's two-thirds of the way through a book on Charles II as well as writing a book called *English Eccentrics Revisited*. He's just completed a pornographic film on the Danish Sex Fair on which he collaborated with Richard Neville and is in the process of editing a film he's made of Ginger Baker. It seems as though it's almost a sideline that he writes regularly for *The Spectator*, *The New York Times* and *The Observer*!

Freak Mathematician

'One reason I get criticised by the pop press,' he says, 'is because I refuse to make pop the centre of my life. And I'm a mathematician to boot! I mean – who is this freak?! There's also a lot of resentment left over from the days when I did a television programme called *How It Is* where several pop people were "attacked".'

A mathematician to boot! Palmer lectured on the subject at Cambridge University before entering the TV world. The change came when he spent a summer holiday working with a film producer and films 'got into his blood'. Soon after this experience he began work for BBC television. 'I worked for them for three years,' says Palmer. 'The first film I made was about Benjamin Britten. Whilst making that film I found out that they wanted a film explaining pop music. That film became *All My Loving* and it was notoriously successful!'

This film centred around the persons of Jimi Hendrix, Pete Townshend, Paul McCartney and Eric Burdon –

all of whom apparently felt that rock expressed a certain amount of violence. To illustrate this point visually Palmer used newsreel clippings of Vietnam and other violent scenes which upset a few people. However, Palmer is undaunted by all of this. 'The music expressed the world they lived in,' he says. 'That world is a violent one. I just visually illustrated what they had claimed to be true.'

Toothbrush & Piano Leg

Whatever the merits of this film may have been, it has proved to be the springboard for most of his activities since. 'Since that film,' he says, 'I've been absolutely besieged with offers to show it again or to do similar films. Eric Clapton contacted me with the idea of making a film of the Cream's farewell concert at the Royal Albert Hall. He made it absolutely clear that he didn't want a straight news report – he wanted something that matched the music in film techniques.'

Another result of *All My Loving* was his *Observer* column. He'd only ventured into pop journalism once before but rather out of a mistake than anything else. He reviewed poetry for *The London Magazine* and was asked by the editor to do a write up on *Sgt. Peppers' Lonely Hearts' Club Band* which Palmer assumed was a poetry book. Looking back he feels that it was in fact poetry, but admits that when he first heard it 'it rather hit one between the eyes.'

The theme of Palmer's pop criticism is that it's validity lies in the fact that it represents life *now* better than any other existing medium. 'If people want to play the music of the sixties they'll play Beatles music,' he says. 'I think that if people look back at modern history in fifty years' time they won't be listening to the symphony for "Toothbrush and Piano Leg" which is the sort of "music" being presented at the Festival Hall now.'

He's careful to make the

point that pop is only one part of a whole culture. 'It's the tip of a cultural iceberg,' he says. 'If you break down the component parts of this culture, none of it is very substantial but put together it forms something exciting.' He quotes the underground press, contemporary fashions and poster art as an example of this. Separately they are loaded with faults and lack of originality but together they seem important and new. Tony Palmer explains the feeling that he gets from the music: 'If you go to a good pop concert or you're listening on the headphones it becomes immediately exciting, immediately eloquent, and immediately passionate in a way that no other experience is so immediate in today's culture.'

He sees his function in all this as being to inform the uninitiated of the treasures that lie beneath the three letter word of pop. It's because of this, he feels, that the readers of the weekly music press tend to be very anti-Palmer. He appears regularly in the letter columns when someone or other considers that he's the pseud of the week! 'My function in the *Observer* is to cater for *Observer* readers and not *Melody Maker* readers,' he says: 'I'm not interested in exciting the people who are already excited. I'm after the unconverted. My function is as a reporter. I don't interpret.'

Ropeladder to the Sahara

Following the Cream film Jack Bruce asked him to be responsible for a BBC documentary which was to be filmed around him. This he did and it was shown in the Omnibus series under the title of *Ropeladder To The Moon*. More recently it was Ginger Baker who was on the phone to him. He wanted Tony to film him crossing the Sahara Desert in his Range-Rover and also to film local musicians.

'It's a film about African music and its effect on Ginger,' he says. 'He drove across the desert – about 700 miles

a day—while I filmed. He's written music especially for these sequences. Then we filmed some native dancers and compared them with the dancers you get in the cities of Nigeria. You see the relation between go-go dancing and native dancing.'

Apparently Ginger hopes the film will be shown on American TV but as yet there are no plans for it to be shown in Britain. Tony tells a story which reflects the charisma which must be inherent on Ginger's drumming. 'I was in a club in Lagos where a local group were playing,' recalls Palmer. 'I didn't consider that they were anything special at all. Then Ginger came in and started playing with them. From then on they sounded like the greatest group on earth!'

Not So Bad

A film which he is a little less than satisfied with is *200 Motels*. He was credited as being the Technical Editor for the film but when released he even slammed it himself in a review. He feels that Zappa was attempting the impossible with the venture and that a much better film could have been made with the material available. 'I don't bear him any grudge,' he makes clear, 'but I just think it's a pity.' He says that whereas a normal 90-minute film will need only 120 pages of script, Zappa produced over 300 for *200 Motels*! Obviously this fact went a long way to creating the overloaded film that resulted.

One attitude that Palmer finds hard to understand is the way in which many people seem to equate his name with an inferior piece of work no matter what he does. He quotes an example from the magazine *Time Out* when they reviewed his book *The Trials Of Oz*. In this review they said: 'The book is not as bad as you might have expected it to be'. He doesn't appear very happy when he thinks of this. 'That I find absurd,' he says. 'I mean – the assumption that because it was me it would be bad.'

NELSON'S ROCK MEETS

By Derek Abrahams

Rick Nelson hasn't changed too much since his sleek, bobby-sox, all-American beach party and ice-cream parlour image of the late 1950s and early 1960s.

His hair has been styled to suit the needs of today but still it is immaculately groomed so therefore totally acceptable. He's 31 years old now but his face is almost bereft of any of the creases one tends to get at that age. He is still unmistakably American and fresh. His knitted sweater, with the letters R-I-C-K-Y across the chest, and his boots, with long sharp toes and engravings on the sides, testify amply to his involvement in the entertainment industry.

But no longer does Nelson sing songs such as *Stood Up*, *Believe What You Say*, *Lonesome Town*, *Be Bop Baby*, *Travellin' Man*, *Somebody I Got A Feeling*, *Never Be Anyone Else But You*, *It's Late*, *Sweeter Than You*, *Just A Little Too Much*, *Everloving*, *Young World*, *It's Up To You*, *Fools Rush In*, *For You*, *Poor Little Fool* and *Hello Mary Lou*.

He's been asked to sing them lots of times when on stage with his two-and-a-half-year-old Stone Canyon Band but these tunes belong to another era of his life and he's not that keen to return to that style.

To Nelson, old songs are ones that were written a year-and-a-half ago.

Musically he has progressed quite considerably since those days when most of the mentioned songs were recorded on mono tape recorders and the two-track stereo machine was still in development stages.

He said he feels good to be back in a land of certainty. He didn't mean England, either. He meant that at last he has found a suitable direc-

'For a period of my life I was in a state of limbo. I just didn't know what I was doing or where I was going,' he said, leaning back to accept the hospitality offered by a plush velvet couch in the lounge of his Grosvenor Square hotel room.

'Although the contemporary music scene took over from pop in the mid-1960s I never felt that I was left without an acceptable image. I just felt that it was difficult for me to get totally into one thing. I did a lot of television work and plenty of night club engagements, but somehow I just didn't seem to be part of it all.'

Since forming the Stone Canyon Band he has found himself to be more versatile than he ever thought. Writing songs now takes up a lot of his time, even though he can't disappear to any country residence for months on end to finish songs for an album or whatever. Eight of the numbers on his latest album were written by Nelson.

'When I was singing in the late fifties and early sixties I did write a little, but not seriously enough to ever get my teeth into anything solid. I wrote numbers like the flip side of *Poor Little Fool* and things like that. I suppose I never really thought about writing songs until I formed the band. But then again, I never really thought of any solid direction from the time rock and roll declined to the time I formed the Stone Canyon Band.

'I find I write better songs when I'm travelling and we're certainly doing a lot of that. We've been criss-crossing America for about three months now doing one show after another.

'There doesn't really seem to be any particular formula to the songs that I write. I find that all of a sudden I will write four or five numbers in



Rick Nelson: 'I know where I'm going'

a week and the following week I'll dry up completely. I have to admit I do get a little worried when that happens.

'Mainly my songs are about people and communication. The Stone Canyon Band's music is not intellectual. Music shouldn't be anyway. People have been intellectualising for too long and they now need something to lift them up. Our music is entertaining and we like to feel that we are communicating with people in our way. If the audiences scream or want to get really involved in the sound then they can.

'People have been waiting for a long time for someone to get it on. I'm not saying that only the Stone Canyon Band are doing this but we're sure helping a lot,' he said.

A further change in Nelson's musical make-up is his use of both acoustic and electric guitar. His old idiom called for a few strums of an acoustic guitar and no more.

'When I first began learn-

ing to play the electric guitar - I have a Gibson - I was pretty scared as I could hear every note that was coming out. Also there is the necessity to know more than the five chords I once played. I still use an acoustic guitar - a Martin - for some numbers and I find that I can play this better too.'

Nelson handpicked his members for his group and he described them all as 'good and talented'. He was, he added, really fortunate to get them. The members of the band are Nelson, lead vocal, guitar and piano; Allen Kemp, background vocals and lead guitar; Randy Meisner, background vocals and bass; Patrick Shanahan, drums; Tom Brumley, steel guitar.

The latest album from the band *Rudy The Fifth* (MCA MUPS 440) was produced by Nelson with the aid of a 16-track machine, a far cry from the mono recorders once used for his records. But then again, a lot has happened to Nelson since then. He's not lost anymore.

BRUMLEY'S COUNTRY

By John Bagnall



'Steel guitar first instrument I learned' – Tom Brumley

Pedal-steel guitarist Tom Brumley epitomises the legend of the 'country boy made good'. He was born in Missouri, right at the heart of the country music area. With four brothers actively involved in the country music culture, it was natural that he should follow in the tradition of the neighbourhood.

'Steel guitar was the first instrument I ever learned,' he said. 'Back in those days it was just an ordinary guitar, laid across the knees like a Hawaiian guitar – the pedal-steel guitar didn't come on to the scene till about '55 or so.

'I got a little band together with my brothers and played around for a while. Then I joined the services, out in Germany. It was while I was playing around the clubs and bases over there that I decided to go professional.'

When he left the services, Brumley went straight to the Buck Owens band, one of the leading country outfits. He stayed with them for a number of years – during

which time every single he played on went straight to the top of the country charts. His reputation as a steel-guitarist grew rapidly, to the point where he was regarded, after such masters as Buddy Emmons, as one of the leading steel guitarists.

But he soon found that his enthusiasm for country music pure-and-simple was beginning to wane.

'There wasn't a challenge any more,' he explained. 'I didn't really find I had any enthusiasm for what I was doing.

'Working with Rick and the other members of the Stone Canyon Band has changed that. He got me back into enjoying it. He's a great guy to work with – and he hasn't asked me to change my playing at all. The band's just given me the desire to get further . . . it's renewed the challenge. I like what I'm playing now.'

At first he approached the music of the Stone Canyon Band with some trepidation.

He'd been brought up in the discipline and tradition of the country artist; to be asked to join a rock outfit was, in his own words, 'a little bit worrying'. He was afraid that he would be asked to play in a style that was alien to his background.

'But it was fine,' he continued. 'I was asked first to do the live album at the Troubador in Los Angeles. I didn't really know what to expect – and I didn't know what was expected of me.

'As it turned out, Rick just left me to play the way I felt. He didn't ask me to change at all – I was just left to work things out the way I wanted them to be. Everything went fine – just like the way it's gone since.'

Brumley has found the transition to rock music easy to make; he has found encouragement from all sides – rather than the prejudice that one might expect.

'My country friends have been right behind me,' he said. 'There's been no hard feelings at all. They see what I'm trying to do in taking the pedal-steel guitar a little further on. I haven't had any problems.'

He sees his work with Rick Nelson not so much in terms of his playing rock music, but in terms of rock music assimilating country music for what it is.

'Steel has got into rock because of what it is and how it sounds,' he explained. 'Its sound has become accepted for what it is. There are some good musicians around who are showing the way. Al Perkins – he plays on the third Stephen Stills album – has a rock background pure and simple; Rusty Young of Poco is going to become a tremendous musician . . . they're making people aware of the instrument.'

Gerry Garcia is another guy who has brought the

pedal-steel into rock. I wouldn't say that he's necessarily a good steel guitarist – but he's a superb musician. He's made the steel guitar what it is today in rock music – which is the mark of a great musician.'

For himself, Brumley is excited by his prospects as a rock musician. He sees a considerable future for the pedal-steel guitar in the rock-field – and believes that there are going to be a lot of innovations made.

'You've got to remember that the pedal-steel is a fairly recent instrument,' he said. 'It's also the most difficult instrument to play well that I know. There's not that many musicians who are really advanced on it in the rock field.'

'It means that the directions for it – and for me – are wide open. It's a new field and there's not many people to learn from – there's no-one to show the way. Whatever I play is "right", because there aren't any set standards for what I'm doing. Rock is just so open.

'I was searching for a while when I first joined Rick . . . I was aware of so many directions to follow. Now I'm much more aware of which way I'm going.'

Brumley's reputation as a steel guitarist has earned him an appointment as consultant to the American Z.B. steel-guitar company, makers of the instrument that he now plays. His twin-neck custom guitar is played through an old Fender Twin Reverb. The amplifier, built in 1963, is more true to the sound he wants than any other amplifier he's tried. He dislikes pedal-steel 'gimmickry' and uses no effects pedals. The steel guitar, he says, has made its entry into the field of rock music by virtue of its unique sound – and he sees no reason to change it.

PLAYER OF THE MONTH



BILL BRUFORD

'Nothing comes easy in music. I'm not about to do anything for ten years. I'm still learning.'

Yes's Bill Bruford is unusually certain of his musical directions – and of his musical development. 'I'm not a skilled musician,' he claims. 'I'm just a reasonably well-trained drummer.'

Despite his self-deprecation, Bruford is regarded as one of the most exciting young musicians on the contemporary rock scene. His work with Yes – the only band he has ever worked with – has already won him a great deal of respect. His work on the new *Fragile* album – which includes his first attempts as a composer – demonstrates better than ever his potential as a 'thinking' musician.

Five Per Cent For Nothing is a synthesis of his musical development. 'There is a lot of "me" in it,' he says. 'I'm very nervous about what I do – and very naive as a composer. I have to work very laboriously – working out *Five Per Cent* was like weaving a delicate tapestry. It was an intricate process . . . of finding what was "right". I'm very pleased with the result – I just couldn't believe it. There's a great deal of satisfaction, a great feeling of achievement.'

The careful construction of the piece – around a repeated sixteen-bar riff – is indicative of Bruford's assertive musical philosophies. He dislikes the concept of improvisation. 'Improvisation is a very complex process,' he says. 'It's a process of spontaneous composition – and to compose as you play is very, very difficult. It's unfortunately true that the attempts of most rock musicians have been appalling.' He emphasises instead the importance of pre-planning. 'We work on the basis of pre-planning and pre-thought – it might take us two weeks to compose a short piece. It would be nice to rehearse in front of an audience so that they can see just what we go through.'

He has also formed a pleasantly chauvinistic conception of the role of the rock drummer. 'Many musicians don't know what a drummer can and can't do. Most people see drumming only in terms of set rhythms – terrible! It's not what drums are about at all.'

'Drumming is, much more, about underlining. The bass drum relates to the bass guitar, the hi-hat relates to what the guitar is playing. My snare part relates to what Rick is playing.'

'The drums can also give melody – on *Heart Of The Sunrise*, Rick has made a melodic translation of the drum part. It's percussion in a melodic sense, with harmony.'

He sees his future very much in terms of his own musical development. 'There's not much I like about my music at the moment,' he says. 'I intend to persevere, to work things out in my own terms.'

MC5 decided to conduct their interview with me in one of their cupboard-size hotel bedrooms. On the door was a poster of Chairman Mao, on the wall a centre-page spread from *Penthouse*, and standing on a table was a superimposed photograph showing a full frontal view of a long-haired President Nixon. Unlike most visiting American bands they hadn't taken a suite in a respected Park Lane hotel but had gone up the road a bit to Queensway, and to make it a little more like home, they'd brought along their own decorations.

At one time the MC5 used to think a little violence would put their country right but now they're back preaching love and peace. 'Basically that early philosophy came from our relationship with John Sinclair,' Fred Smith told me. 'John got into a heavy violence trip, a heavy "off the pig" scene. Now we don't believe in telling the kids to get guns and kill the pigs. I think John is now realising that things he said were wrong.'

It was for John Sinclair, sentenced for possession of marijuana, that John & Yoko performed their recent benefit concert. Sinclair describes himself as a 'poet' or 'writer', and it was his meeting with MC5 and the formation of the Translove Energies community that brought attention to the Band. Bob Tyrner met John at one of his poetry readings and was very impressed by his writing. Later he came across a letter Sinclair had written in an underground magazine in which he suggested that so-called rock musicians take a listen to some jazz. Rob wrote back a letter suggesting that Sinclair take a listen to some rock. He did listen to some, by the MC5, and it was then that his involvement began.

POSITIVE

Tyrner tried to justify their earlier calls for violence by explaining that it could be a positive force. 'In every act of creation,' he said, 'there is violence. When you see the MC5 on stage you see

violence but it's *creative* violence. I went to see *The Devils* last night and I related to that . . . ' However, it always seems that the purveyors of violence are able to justify their act and MC5 were no exception. Later, Sinclair got more and more involved in the thoughts of Mao and more and more embroiled in his court cases, so MC5 parted company.

Although, as Wayne Kramer explained, it's impossible to find out all the inconsistencies of a society and then mentally erase them, it's just that they have now come to believe that violence is the direct opposite of what the world needs. 'At that time,' recalled Fred, 'it seemed the only road possible. It seemed that you had to be super-strong to get it over to those in power. Today, we believe in *loving awareness*. By that we mean communication, telepathy, the sensitivity of one person to another. They are the most important things.'

SHARING

The way in which they are trying to spread this 'loving awareness' is through a loving feeling in their music. They're concerned about 'sharing each others emotions', and as they're musicians they've chosen to share their emotions through music. They would like to see more people decorating their homes with their own pieces of art. In this way even private homes could express part of the owner's personality and in that way it would be sharing.

For the MC5 at least, words are getting less and less important. Vibrations and feelings are taking over. Fred assured me that he'd received good vibes from me when I'd entered the room as if to prove his point. 'I think right now,' he said, 'rock 'n' roll is the only media which young people are listening to.' Wayne interjected with a valid point: 'A lot of people today are living out Bob Dylan records. That's how art affects people. It works on a more cerebral level. It's not like a rally or a

MC5 ~ NO MORE VIOLENCE

series of political speeches.'

The reason that the MC5 feel that they'll succeed with the message that thousands of years of writers, politicians, poets, artists and preachers have failed with, is because they're using the contemporary medium of the record. 'One of the reasons I think music will do it,' Rob told me, 'is because it comes straight to you whether you like it or not. If you create a sculpture people have the choice of whether to go and see it or not. Music has a better chance to get into the subconscious because it comes to you through your ears.'

BRAINWASHING

As this suggested possible dangers, I questioned Rob as to the ethics of trying to change people without them being consciously aware of the process. 'Yes', he admitted, 'there is a danger of brainwashing. Did you see *Clockwork Orange* . . . ?' He referred to an incident in the film where Alex was manipulated into doing good through being brainwashed into feeling sick at the sight of evil. It was at this point that he lost his free will and became in effect a machine programmed by the government. 'We are brainwashing to a certain extent,' said Rob, but then tried to justify it by saying that Americans are brainwashed 24 hours a day anyway by TV and advertising. I asked him whether the 'evils' of the existing society justified his

use of the same methods. 'As far as I'm concerned,' he replied, 'I have a different intention and I also respect a person's freedom. I really can't say whether I'd use this power for evil though.'

Wayne and Fred had to leave the room to conduct another interview in the basement so Rob loosened up a little and began sharing his thoughts on the generation gap, religion and the problem of good and evil - all good heavy stuff! 'I'm a product of the modern society,' he said. 'I was watching TV at the age when my parents, generation were on the breadline. I have a great relationship with my parents, but they'd really like me to be doing something else.' As for the ideal Utopian society which he and the MC5 are working towards: 'If it happened I'd be bored stiff. You're right - there is a big dilemma, isn't there! I'm bored stiff now! As far as religion goes I'm into a kinda pantheistic thing. I think sex has a great part in my world vision. My emotions are tangled up about it though.'

Speaking from his pantheistic viewpoint Rob said: 'Everything we do is holy if we look at it that way.' I asked him whether stabbing babies with bayonets would be a holy act if we decided to look at it that way. 'I don't know man,' he replied standing up and looking out of the window: 'As I say, maybe we shouldn't have talked about this. Sometimes I'm not even sure what I really know anyway.' S.T.



STUDIO PLAYBACK

NEW CROWN AMPS

Crown International of Elkhart Ind. have announced a new high power amplifier capable of providing 1000 watts RMS into 4 ohms load. Available from Macinnes Laboratories in the U.K. the M600, as the new device is known, is described by Crown as a 'heir to the DC 300 tradition'. Like the DC 300, the M600 is DC-coupled throughout although a front panel switch provides for an AC-coupled input if required. Power bandwidth at the 1000 watts level is ± 1 dB from DC to 20 kHz and THD at this level is below 0.1% throughout the frequency range. At 600 watts THD is below 0.05%. Intermodulation Distortion is better than 0.1% at all levels from 0.01 watt to 1000 watts, and the Damping Factor is greater than 200 from DC to 20 kHz. Hum and noise are at least 110 dB below 600 watts level. The M600 is equipped with its own two speed fan for cooling, and on the rear panel is a switch offering six positions of operating modes. A front panel plug-in offers a wide range of input configurations and all circuit boards and I.C.'s plug in for ease of service. However, like all Crown amplifiers there is a full three year warranty on the M600 covering all parts, and labour. Two M600 amplifiers may be combined to provide 2000 watts RMS

into 8 ohms (140 volts at 15 amps). This is then known as an M2000. Up to 8 M600 units may be slaved together via the interlock connectory provided with control of the array being made from one master unit. The M600 is designed for standard 19" rack mounting, and is 16 $\frac{7}{8}$ " deep and 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ " in panel height. Weight is 80 lbs, and price inclusive of import duty, is £730.

Neumann - New mike!

F.W.O. Bauch Limited, who are distributors of Neumann microphones, have just announced an important addition to their range of hand held mikes. This addition, the Neumann KMS85i, has been developed in an attempt to eradicate the age old problem of the solo rock singer with his hand mike - that of 'popping' or various other explosive sounds. The protection that has been fitted for this purpose is a multi-stage mechanical filter which is positioned in front of the condenser capsule. The actual microphone housing is a dual wall separated by damping material and along with the elastic suspension of the capsule is able to suppress the noise that is so commonly found in hand held mikes used by solo rock artists.

LANSDOWNE'S STUDIO HORROR

Mr Denis Preston, managing director of Lansdowne Studios, was recently responsible for producing a bit of horror in his own studios. Along with actor/writer John Stewart-Anderson he has been working on an album entitled *Frankenstein Passion*. Side one features Stewart-Anderson as Baron Frankenstein in the *Passion* itself and on the second side he takes the part of the mad composer in *The Devil And Doctor Gland*. Besides narrating the parts of the main characters Stewart-Anderson was also responsible for writing the scripts. Incidental music is being provided by Leon Young and it's guaranteed to be full of terrifying spine-chilling sound effects. There should be quite an interest among the public in this type of album considering the following that is attracted by horror films. The first album of this type which Mr Preston and Stewart-Anderson collaborated on contained one side entitled *The Werewolfe And Dracula's Guest* and the whole horrific package was sold under the title of *Stereorrific!* *Frankenstein Passion* will be released on the EMI Studio Two label. In the meantime, Lansdowne will continue in a less frightening fashion with such artists as Barry Ryan and Uriah Heep - they're producing albums - albums you could take your children to hear of course!

BUSY TIME FOR NOVA

Carlin Music have booked a lot of time with Nova Sound during the past two months for a group named Roro who are being produced by Jon Alcock. The end result will be an album. Another large part of Nova's studio time has been used by Air-Edell who's producer Annie Farrow has been creating jingles for such various good causes as Andrews Liver Salts and Ajax. Studio Manager George Pastell describes Annie as 'a lovely lady'. Neil Reid, currently in the charts with *Mother Of Mine* has been in with producer Dick Rowe to record further singles. His album *Neil Reid* which is also in the top ten was recorded at Nova and his obvious satisfaction with the sound he got then is shown by his return to record singles. RCA artist Pete Kelly has been in with producer Roy Morris to record a couple of singles whereas Jade Warrior and Matching Mole have concentrated on albums. Gem Productions, with producer Mike Leander, have booked studio time along with Marriane Faithfull for a possible single release.

**BEAT'S SPECIAL
FEATURE ON
STUDIO
ENGINEERS
STARTS ON P.54**

STUDIO PLAYBACK

ALAN CLARKE AT AIR: 1st SOLO LP SINCE HOLLIES SPLIT

Alan Clarke has been recording his first solo album since leaving the Hollies at Air London studios. Most of the songs he recorded were self-written and the whole album was self-produced. Although he put down 14 tracks it's expected that the LP will contain about 10 of them when it is finally released by RCA. Osibisa have booked the whole of May to record their next album. Apparently they're

going for a 'live' sound although there will be no studio audience present during the sessions. George Martin is back producing his fave raves Parrish and Gurvitz. This will be their second album release. Other albums to be recorded at Air London recently have been by Tom Paxton, Mary Hopkin and John Barry. Mr./Mrs. Alice Cooper will also lay down some tracks when he arrives in England.

MELLOTRONS TO U.S.

George Clouston, Managing Director of Mellotronics Ltd. and Peter Nichols, Sales & Technical Director, left London on March 5 for an extended visit to the U.S.A. and Canada.

Demands for this famous and unique instrument, they say, have reached such proportions all over the world, particularly in the States, that they must now go over there and make franchise and distribution agreements.

New York, Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Dallas, Los Angeles, Oregon, Toronto and Montreal were cities on the list to be visited.

Stackridge Maxi-single

Stackridge, just back from gigs in Northern Ireland, have been recording tracks towards a maxi-single at De Lane Lea's Wembley studios. The A side of the single will be *Stark* although it will be a different version from the 15 minute album track. Stackridge intend to record their second album during the month of May. Wishbone Ash have also been recording - this time for an album. Release date is April 27th. Rod McKuen has been producing his own tracks which are to go towards another album and Fleetwood Mac have also been in producing their own album material.

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NO MORE SAGE FOR PAUL

Paul Brett and his Sage have parted company because he couldn't use his 1932 Army and Navy Gibson guitar as much as he would have liked.

Evidently the group were heading in an electric direction and he felt that his much-treasured acoustic piece would have eventually joined the ranks of Britain's unemployed. Furthermore, getting involved in a fully-electric unit would have put him back several years.

So, rather than sell the Gibson — he has been offered a few hundred pounds on more than one occasion, the last bid came from Lonnie Donegan — he decided to quit the group and try and make it instead with the assistance of violinist-extraordinaire, Mike Piggott.

'The electric music scene doesn't appeal to me at all,' he said. 'I don't even really like the sound of the electric guitar anymore. Over the years I've just developed on my own style of playing and I want to stick to it and see what I can do.'

'Songs come more easily for me with an acoustic guitar anyway.'

CABARET

Brett started playing eight years ago when he was 16. His first appearance was with Arthur Brown's band, which he describes as Britain's first 'soul' group. From there he went on to join Neil Christian and the Crusaders.

'I took over from Ritchie Blackmore, who later went on to other things. I believe he's doing quite well for himself these days,' he smirked.

Then came a spell with a group called The Overlanders and success, however mediocre it now seems, arrived.

It came in the form of *Michelle*, that evergreen Beatles tune.

'We had a number one with that song,' he recalled. 'Being a member of a group like The Overlanders taught me a great deal about the music business and my own capabilities.'

'Firstly, I got rid of a lot of stage fright. I think it was during the tours of the Northern cabaret clubs that it went.' He speaks of getting rid of stage fright as a doctor in a hair clinic would talk about banishing dandruff.

'Can you imagine playing to a whole crowd of miners? I remember the curtain used to go up, the lights would go down and all you could see were the torches on their helmets. The Northern people are pretty difficult to play to sometimes. If they don't like you they really let you know. But if they like you they also let you know.'

When he left The Overlanders he became lead guitar with Elmer Gantry's Velvet Opera, a band which no one really rated at the time but which have since achieved cult status.

It was also about this time that he also began a career of session work.

It's Brett's voice and guitar playing that can be heard on some of the tracks on Roy Harper's *Genghis Smith* album, The Strawbs' *Dragonfly* and records by Al Stewart and Ralph McTell.

Another passion of Brett's is producing. He says he really gets a kick out of supervising album cutting. He prefers to use Pye's studios when donning his producer's hat.

'Jeff Calver, the engineer there, really knows what it's all about and what I want. He's also deeply into acoustic music. When we were recently recording my guitar



for some tracks and we put four microphones around it, we got a fantastic tone. We always record the guitar in stereo to get a nice, big, rich sound.'

'The Gibson has got as many tones as any electric guitar. When I strike the harmonics it really sounds incredible. Basically, it's a good, loud dance band type of guitar. I've heard nothing like it when it's recorded in stereo,' he said proudly.

JAZZ VEIN

To go with his guitar he uses on stage a WEM PA and an Audio Master for balancing the sound.

'Our roadie, Ray Radford, is very important to us. He really balances the sound up well. In fact, he rehearses every number with us so he knows when to adjust the mixer without being told.'

Brett doesn't think that there's another comparable duo in this country.

'Mike is the only violinist I've ever heard who's really flexible. He can play a Paganini concerto one minute then suddenly add a pick-up and get the electric effect. On our new single, *Daliah*,

he plays wah-wah fiddle. We sometimes do a tune-up on stage and it sounds like Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grapelly used to. You know? that old Hot Club jazz vein. The audience really like it.'

As a musician Brett admits that he doesn't make much money but he says he doesn't really need much money.

His running costs are low, his girl friend helps him with a lot of song writing and so the only expenditure he's really got is paying for the petrol for his new station waggon that his management company, Red Bus, have just provided.

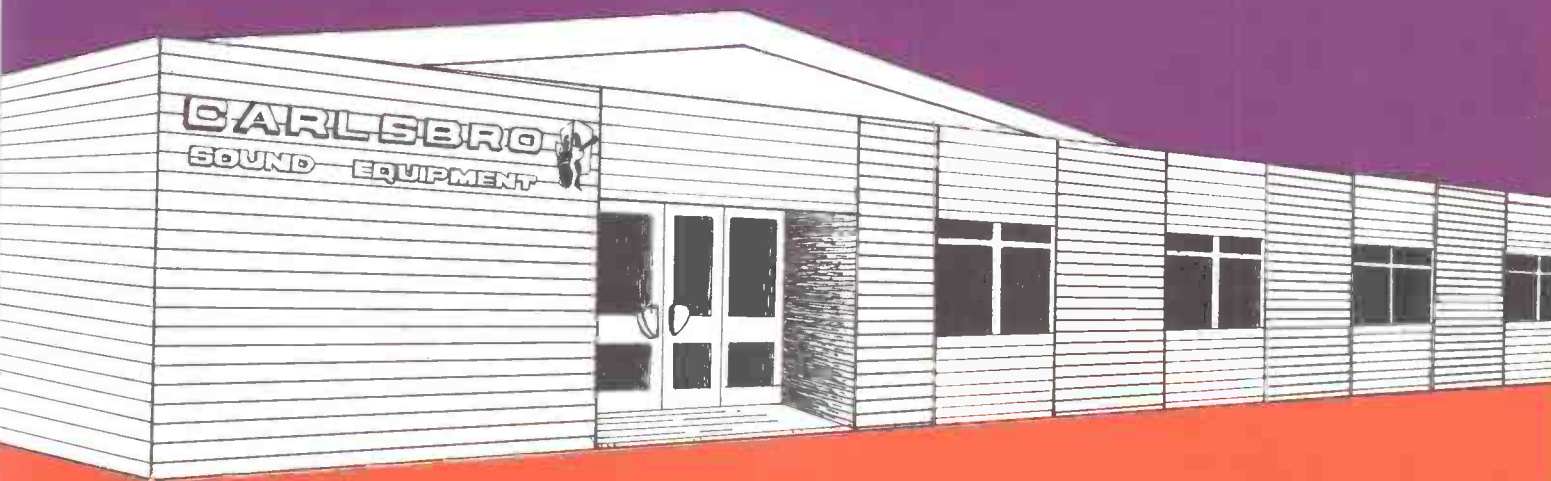
'Red Bus really understand the needs of a musician. I've not had to wait for hours in reception to see either Ellis Elias or Elliott Cohen. If the Bus believe in you they really work hard for you. When I had Sage we had a van to travel around in but I have given it back to them and got the waggon instead,' he said.

An album from Brett and Piggott is scheduled to be released in May on the Dawn Label and it should show the acoustic scene that he has returned to. D.N.A.



CARLSBRO

SOUND EQUIPMENT



1972

CATALOGUE

CARLSBRO

PA POWER AMPS



In the interest of improving our equipment we reserve the right to alter designs and specifications without notice.



100/7 P.A.
200/7 P.A.

Seven high impedance inputs, each with volume, bass and treble controls allowing full mixing and maximum control for any combination of microphones. Master volume, treble and bass gives the extra facility of adjusting the tone and volume without re-adjusting all the channels. Reverb or echo may be added.



60 P.A. Reverb
100 P.A. Reverb

Four inputs with separate volume controls a master volume, bass, middle and presence giving excellent tonal quality richness and reverberation. These are well established and proved very successful with club artists.



60/5 P.A.

The 60/5 P.A. has five high impedance channels; and like the more powerful 100w and 200w masters offers the same professional mixing, and master controls including slave output.



100 Slave
200 Slave

Up to 10 slave power amplifiers can be connected to one master. When using 200 watt slaves, over 2,000 watts can be obtained without any loss of quality. An independent balance control is on each slave and acts as volume for use as a monitor.



ALL MODELS

Voltage adjustment 110v. 200v. 225v. 250v. A.C. 50-60 Hertz. Output impedance 3.75, 7.5, 15 ohm and (100 volt line. 100+200 only) Mains lead 10 feet (304.9 cms). Heavy-duty cover. Speaker leads 24 feet (7.3 m) 42 feet (12.8 m). All power ratings for amplifiers and cabinets are quoted RMS. (British rating).



CARLSBRO

PA SPEAKER UNITS

CARLSBRO P.A. CABINETS

All cabinets are fitted with a sloping front to give a better sound distribution. Input is via standard jack socket. Cabinet finish black leather cloth. Two speaker leads are supplied length 24ft. (7.3m) and 42ft. (12.8m) Heavy duty covers.



4 x 8" Columns (64 watts) Pair

A small powerful column unit fitted with an adjustable fold away tubular stand. Suitable for the single artist and small group. recommended to be used with a 60 P.A. reverb amplifier.

Height 41 1/2" (105.41 cms)
Width 12 1/2" (31.75 cms)
Depth 7 1/2" (18.41 cms)
Weight 35 lbs (16 kilos)



4 x 10" Columns (70 watts) Pair

Recommended for the small group or combo and can be used with the 60 P.A. Reverb amplifier or the 60/5 amplifier. These columns like the 8" are fitted with a fold away tubular stand.

Height 48 1/2" (123.17 cms)
Width 14 1/2" (36.83 cms)
Depth 9" (22.86 cms)
Weight 50 lbs (23 kilos)



3 x 12" Columns (120 watts) Pair

Specially designed as a high power handling column unit for use with the 100 watt P.A. amplifier. Also suitable for monitors when used with slave amplifiers.

Height 48 1/2" (123.17 cms)
Width 14 1/2" (36.83 cms)
Depth 9" (22.86 cms)
Weight 59 lbs (27 kilos)



1 x 12" P.A. (60 watts) Pair

A small compact speaker cabinet ideally suited for the small combo or single artist when used in conjunction with the 60 P.A. reverb amplifier.

Height 30 1/2" (77.51 cms)
Width 14 1/2" (36.83 cms)
Depth 9" (22.86 cms)
Weight 40 lbs (18.1 kilos)



2 x 12" P.A. (80 watts) Pair 2 x 12" P.A. (120 watts) Pair

Ideal for 60 and 100 watt P.A. amplifiers. (Recommended for Disco)

Height 30 1/2" (77.51 cms)
Width 16" (40.64 cms) Depth 10"
(25.41 cms) Weight 44 lbs (20 kilos)
80w. 52 lbs (24 kilos) 120w.



4 x 12" P.A. (160 watts) Pair 4 x 12" P.A. (240 watts) Pair

Recommended to be used with 100 or 200 watt Master or Slave amplifiers.

Height 48 1/2" (123.17 cms)
Width 22" (55.88 cms) Depth 11"
(27.94 cms) Weight 89 lbs (41 kilos)
160 w. 104 lbs (47 kilos) 240 w.



1 x 15" Twin Horn (100 watts) Pair

Satisfactory for all P.A. requirements producing hi-fi results with remarkable clarity. Specially recommended for professionals.

Height 33 1/2" (85.10 cms)
Width 22" (55.88 cms)
Depth 12" (30.50 cms)
Weight 70 lbs (32.00 kilos)



Horn Unit 2 (120 watts) Pair

Each cabinet containing two horn loaded pressure units which when used with the 4 x 12" 160 watt cabinets extends the frequency range up to 10,000 Hz, thus considerably improving the clarity by allowing the harmonic content of the voice to be heard

Height 7 1/2" (18.41 cms) Width 22"
(55.88 cms) Depth 11" (27.94 cms)
Net Weight 16 lbs (7 kilos)



Horn Unit 4 (240 watts) Pair

These are designed to be used with the 4 x 12" (240 watts) cabinets and 200 watt master or slave amplifiers. To connect all horn units, simply plug in main speaker lead into the horn and use a short lead to couple the horn up to the original P.A. speaker.

Height 11 1/2" (28.58 cms) Width 22"
(55.88 cms) Depth 11" (27.94 cms)
Net Weight 23 lbs (10 kilos)

CARLSBRO



POWER AMPS



60 TC.
100 TC.
200 TC.



A new and exciting twin channel amplifier, completely redesigned and restyled, available up to 200 watts continuous output. Channel one has two high impedance inputs with reduced sensitivity on one. Bass, treble and volume controls makes this channel suitable for bass amplification and can also be used for microphones. Channel two: the inputs are arranged as for channel one but both with increased sensitivity, controls bass, treble, response, and volume. The "response" controls the centre frequency where the bass and treble crossover, and allows you to adjust it with the result that the whole characteristic of the sound from this channel can be altered. All that, plus a master presence and limiter gives you an amplifier to suit all moods and styles of playing. The limiter controls the power output giving sustain at different sound levels.



60 & 100 TR.

The tremolo reverb amplifiers are available in two ratings, 60 watt and 100 watt. They are very popular with night club artists who can make full use of the effects and want a clean undistorted sound. Twin channels with volume, treble and bass on each, and top cut which is common to both reverb and tremolo. Depth and speed operated on the treble channel only. A twin foot switch is supplied with all T.R. amplifiers.



ALL MODELS

Voltage adjustment 110v. 200v. 225v. 250v. A.C. 50-60 Hertz. Output impedance 3.75, 7.5, 15 ohms. Mains lead 10 feet (304.9 cms). Heavy-duty cover. Speaker lead: 6 feet (182.8 cm).



CARLSBRO

SPEAKER CABINETS

All cabinets are fitted with a sloping front to give better sound distribution. Input is via standard jack socket. Smooth running castors—lockable on rear wheels. Heavy duty recessed carrying handles on all large cabinets. Cabinet finished in black leather cloth. One speaker lead supplied—length 6ft (182.8 cms) and heavy duty cover.

4 x 12" STACK
One of our popular systems, comprising of either a 100 watt amplifier plus 4 x 12" Small Speaker and 4 x 12" Large Speaker or 100 watt amplifier plus Two Custom Built 4 x 12" Large Speakers.

4 x 15" SPEAKERS
Suitable for bass, lead, organ, P.A., etc. Handling capacity 200 watts.
Height 48" (121.90 cms)
Width 38" (91.48 cms)
Depth 16" (40.64 cms)
Weight 154 lbs (69 kilos)

1 x 15" TWIN HORN
Ideal for any instrument... "Natural Sound"... highly recommended for Disco.
Height 33½" (85.10 cms) Width 22" (55.88 cms)
Depth 12" (30.50 cms) Weight 70 lbs (32.00 kilos)
Power handling 50 watts per cabinet

4 x 12" SMALL (80 WATTS)
4 x 12" SMALL (120 WATTS)
Can be stacked with 4 x 12" large and suitable for 60, 100 or 200 watt amplifiers.
Height 32½" (81.91 cms) Width 30" (76.24 cms)
Depth 12½" (31.74 cms) Weight 99 lbs (45 kilos)

2 x 18" SPEAKERS
For the ultimate in bass amplification. Two heavy duty 18" speakers fitted into a bass reflex cabinet handling capacity 200 watts
Height 51½" (130.07 cms)
Width 30½" (77.51 cms)
Depth 15½" (40.64 cms)
Weight 144 lbs (65 kilos)

2 x 15" SPEAKERS
For use with any instrument, an excellent multi purpose speaker unit handling 100 watts.
Height 40½" (102.87 cms)
Width 30" (76.24 cms)
Depth 15½" (40.64 cms)
Weight 107 lbs (48.5 kilos)

4 x 12" LARGE (80 WATTS)
4 x 12" LARGE (120 WATTS)
Two power ratings suitable for 60 or 100 watt T.C. and T.R. amplifiers.
Height 40½" (102.87 cms) Width 30" (76.24 cms)
Depth 14" (35.56 cms) Weight 118 lbs (53 kilos)

1 x 18" SPEAKERS
A solidly constructed bass reflex cabinet fitted with one heavy duty 18" speaker handling capacity 100 watts.
Height 32½" (81.91 cms)
Width 30" (76.24 cms)
Depth 15½" (40.64 cms)
Weight 89 lbs. (41 kilos)

2 x 12" SPEAKERS
A semi pressurised unit with two heavy duty speakers, handling 60 watts.
Height 25½" (64.77 cms) Width 30" (76.24 cms)
Depth 11½" (29.21 cms) Weight 70 lbs (31 kilos)

CARLSBRO

SOUND EQUIPMENT

TC. TWIN

Twin channel portable 60 watt professional combination amplifiers, with bass, treble and volume controls on each channel plus top cut which is common to both channels. Colour coded control knobs are also featured to enable the operator to identify each control at a glance. Two powerful heavy duty 12 inch speakers are used to give excellent reproduction, outlets are provided for the optional use of speaker extensions.



Specifications:

- Two channels, Bass and Treble
 - Two inputs per channel.
 - Volume, Treble and Bass on each channel.
 - Top cut operative on both channels.
 - Voltage adjustment by selector plug 110v, 200v, 225v, 250v, 50/60 cps. A.C.
 - Speaker impedance adjustment by selector plug 3.75, 7.5, 15 ohms for additional speaker units.
 - Two standard jack socket outputs.
- Height 29½" (74.99 cms) Width 25¼" (64.13 cms)
Depth 10" (25.41 cms) Weight 75 lbs (34 kilos)



2 x 12" T.S.

Two 12" heavy duty speakers in a custom built cabinet to be used with the T.C. or T.R. Twin
Height 29½" (74.99 cms)
Width 25¼" (64.13 cms)
Depth 10" (25.41 cms)
Weight 52 lbs (24 kilos)

TR. TWIN

This model is a development of the T.C. Twin giving the same high performance qualities with the addition of tremolo and reverberation.

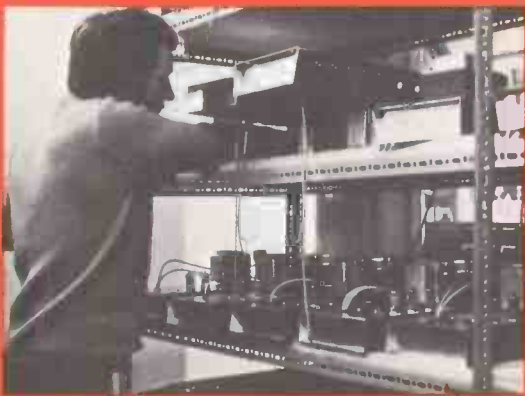
- Tremolo speed control
- Tremolo depth control
- Reverb control
- Stereo jack socket for twin
- On/Off foot switch
- Weight 79 lbs (35 kilos)



**PRODUCTION LINE OF
CARLSBRO SOUND EQUIPMENT**



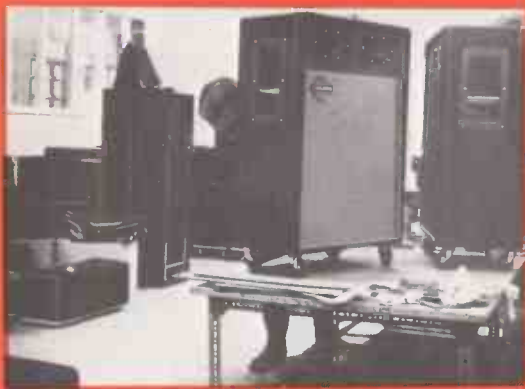
(1) The making of the new Carlsbro 100 T.C. amplifier.



(2) On soak. A 48 hour test is given on all Carlsbro Sound amplifiers.



(3) Cabinet finishing.



(4) The finishing touches—a final inspection before shipment is always made.

SOUND EFFECTS

FuzzWah



Wah-Wah



Wah Swell



Fuzz Unit



REVERB UNIT

A self contained solid state reverb unit with mixing facilities for microphone, records, tape recorders etc. adds that extra refinement required for a polished performance.
 Four volume controls ● One reverb depth control ● Mains on/off switch ● Neon indication for mains ● Mains input socket ● Jack socket O/P ● Foot switch



FIBRE CASES

Heavy duty fibre cases specially designed for extra protection to the range of 100 and 200 watt master and slave amplifiers.

**SPECIFICATIONS FOR ALL
AMPLIFICATION EQUIPMENT**

Model	Power Output	Valves	Net Weight	Width	Depth	Height
60 P.A. Reverb	60 watts	2 EL34 3 ECC83	39 lbs 17.6 kilos	25½" 64.13 cms	9½" 23.50 cms	10½" 26.04 cms
100 P.A. Reverb	100 watts	4 EL34 3 ECC83	40 lbs 18.1 kilos	..	..	..
60/5 P.A.	60 watts	2 EL34 5 ECC83	38 lbs 17.2 kilos	..	..	..
100/7 P.A.	100 watts	4 EL34 5 ECC83 1 ECC81	53 lbs 24.5 kilos	29½" 74.99 cm	12" 30.50 cm	12½" 31.10 cm
100 P.A. Slave	100 watts	4 EL34 1 ECC81	52 lbs 24 kilos	..	..	..
200/7 P.A.	200 watts	4KT 88 5 ECC83 1 ECC81	65 lbs 29.5 kilos	..	..	..
200 P.A. Slave	200 watts	4 KT 88 1 ECC81	64 lbs 29 kilos	..	..	..
60 T.C.	60 watts	2 EL 34 4 ECC83	38 lbs 17.2 kilos	25½" 64.13 cms	9½" 23.50 cms	10½" 26.04 cms
100 T.C.	100 watts	4 EL34 3 ECC83 1 ECC81	53 lbs 24.5 kilos	29½" 74.99 cms	12" 30.50 cms	10½" 27.31 cms
200 T.C.	200 watts	4 KT88 3 ECC83 1 ECC81	65 lbs 29.5 kilos	..	..	..
60 T.R.	60 watts	2 EL34 4 ECC83	39 lbs 17.6 kilos	25½" 64.13 cms	9½" 23.50 cms	10½" 26.04 cms
100 T.R.	100 watts	4 EL34 4 ECC83	41 lbs 18.5 kilos
Reverb Unit			7 lbs 3.1 kilos	18½" 47.22 cms	6½" 17.14 cms	4" 10.20 cms

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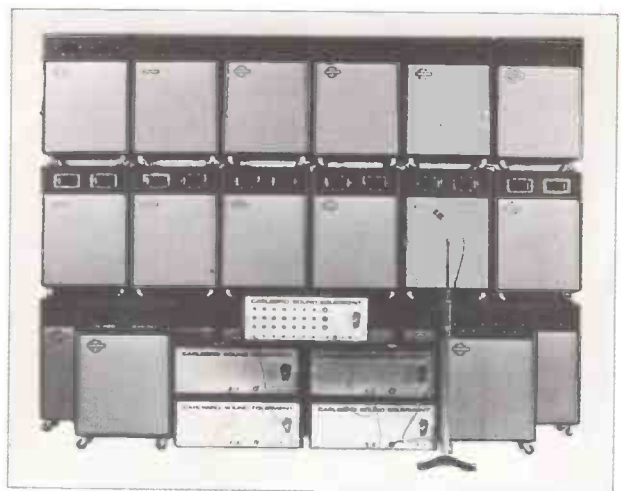
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Photograph showing 1000 watt set-up using one 200/P.A.7 and four 200 P.A. slaves and 1 x 15 Twin Horns as used by Emperor Rosko.

For price list contact: Carlsbro Sound Equipment, Lowmoor Road Industrial Estate, Lowmoor Road, Kirkby-In-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, England. Tel.: Kirkby-In-Ashfield 3902.

'NOBODY CAN REPLACE CREAM'

— *Ginger Baker*

It seems that it's not only the record-buying public that consider Ginger Baker to be the world's top drummer. 'I haven't ever heard anybody who'd cause me any worry', said the man himself. 'The only time I did begin to worry was when I walked into a club and heard an album playing with a drummer who I thought was incredible. Then I found out it was me.' All this was said without any trace of a smile across his sunken cheeks.

'I've heard a lot of people copy me but it just didn't flow with them', he continued, always seeming to find something to distract his attention when a question was answered. He fiddled around with a slide viewer and slotted in some shots taken of himself and his new protégé, Fela Ransome-Kuti. He mumbled something about the fact that he was only interested in seeing the ones of himself anyway.

'There aren't many drummers who can do a drum solo and excite the audience', he said, peering into the viewer. 'When I do a solo I'm very conscious of the audience. At some point or other the audience turn me on. Eventually the audience plays the drums through me — what the audience wants comes out.'

After a while Ginger seemed to relax and began talking about his early days. 'I was just very lucky,' he explained when I asked him where his talent was derived. 'The first time I ever sat down at a drum kit I could play it. I played my first gig after five weeks! That was with the Storeyville Jazzmen — I told them I'd been playing for three years and they believed me. After that I joined Terry Lightfoot's band which was a trad jazz outfit.'

The story in between is well known by now but for today's generation I knew that it was his role in Cream that he's missed for. I asked him whether he'd ever heard Grand Funk, one of the groups that took advantage of the vacuum created by the Cream break up. He answered in the negative, and in such a way that I knew it was going to remain that way unless he accidentally walked into a room where *E. Pluribus Funk* was blaring.

Ginger doesn't think it's possible to replace Cream. 'I don't think anybody ever will', he says. 'Cream were three excellent musicians who, for a period of time, worked so together. There was a sort of ESP between us.' Did the ESP vanish? Was that why Cream fell apart? Ginger didn't want to say. He feels that enough has been said about that subject. 'No one will ever replace the Beatles. Cream played Cream. Beatles played Beatles. It's that individuality and originality that made it popular.'

One thing that he was most persistent about was the fact that I was not to put a tag onto his music. In fact, I couldn't even call Cream a rock group. 'We were always having rows with reporters because they wanted to name it', he explained to me. 'I've never put a name to music. You play yourself. I just play what feels natural for me to play. If music is enjoyed by the people then I'm happy. It was just *our* music.' Hasn't he got any influences then? 'I've got about two million influences', he answered.

He now intends to get a band together by this autumn. The difference between this band and his previous set-ups will be that the musicians will all be reading



The student and his master

music. 'It will be a case of people playing what I feel', he said. The stimulation behind all this is that he's just completed a film with Tony Palmer (*see feature*) for which he did the musical score. 'It has been ten years since I've actually written music and I began to enjoy it again', he said.

He's also been involved in the building of *The Ginger Baker Studios* in Lagos, Nigeria. I had been under the impression that this was solely for use by local musicians but Ginger stepped in and corrected me. 'Anybody can record there. I'm hoping to fly out a few friends. It's right next to the airport.' All the equipment will be custom made by Dick Sweatnam of Helios Electronics at Teddington. The studio itself was designed by Sandy Brown.

Although he's busy constantly he considers himself to be relaxed at the same time. He rarely listens to records and never practises. 'I think that if I was to practise I would frighten the life

out of everybody', he told me. 'I can play things that are impossible to most people now and I haven't practised for six years! If I did practise I'd be playing impossible time things. Technically I'd become far more involved. I can play everything I want to play with the technique I have now.'

'My practise is playing now. When I play, I play something I've never used before.' He even went as far as to say that a lot of people who practise and then play, very often fall down on gigs because of this. They become proficient on their own but aren't able to play off the musicians they're working with.'

Towards the end of the interview Ginger told me that he had to break it off now. He's got to go somewhere with Fela Ransome-Kuti. It's to do with the African film. The situation reminded me somewhat of a quote I'd taken down from him earlier on: 'It's my life. It's my laugh too. I don't like staying in one place too long.'



AL STEWART'S SONGS OF LIFE AND LOVE

By John Bagnall

... In the Halcyon days of my late adolescence my goal seemed clearly in sight/ Playing electric guitar in a beat group, we set the ballrooms alight/ Camping it up for the dyed blonde receptionists who told us we were alright/ An ego trip for a teenage superstar on thirty shillings a night ...

Love Chronicles has proved to be Al Stewart's anthem. It describes the metamorphosis of a singer/songwriter – told in terms of the experiences, sometimes humorous and sometimes sad, involved in the never-ending story of growing up.

... And at school, would you believe, three hundred boys and no girls at all/ But you're a fool if you should leave, just think of the joys of rugby football/ And prep in the morning and Brylcreem and acne, and cross-country running to kill evil thoughts/ I'm surprised that I survived/ I ran ten thousand miles with my back to the wall ...

But Stewart did leave. He dropped out of the educational forcing-house at the

age of seventeen – and found himself a part of the beat group scene, circa '63. For two years, in a total of six different bands, he chased the 'dyed blonds receptionists' in the dance-halls and ballrooms of Bournemouth.

... And so it fell that I came up to London to look for fortune and fame/ Stary eyed with my seaside successes and much too sure of the game ...

'It seemed the only way out of Bournemouth was to go to the capital,' said Stewart, 'to seek for fortune and fame ...'

We were talking at his publicist's office. As he occupied himself with changing the strings on his battered guitar, he spoke of his arrival on the London scene:

'I came to London in February 1965,' he continued. 'I got my first gig in Bunjie's – in the East end of London. I played there every Friday from March '65 to September '67 – a total of two-and-a-half years. I was making a gradual metamorphosis from the group scene to the folk

scene.

'The whole folk thing was just starting then ... and I was there at the beginning of it.'

He cut his first album at the end of 1967. It was called *Bed-Sitter Images*, and it signalled the start of Stewart's rise to fame. He moved out of Bunjie's and began playing the folk clubs and concert venues of the country – finding himself, through the medium of the college gigs, a growing and enthusiastic following.

'The first album sold about 2000 copies,' he said. 'It wasn't terribly splendid, but it was enough for CBS to let me do another album.'

'The second album was *Love Chronicles* and it came out in January of 1969. It did a very strange thing – it sold about 4000 copies in six months ... and then it just went on selling. It still is selling as steadily as ever – sales are now about 15,000. That's a very unusual thing to happen.'

Stewart has found that all his albums have followed the same pattern. Each new album has done better than the first – by a factor of some fifty per cent – and they've continued to sell steadily, long after the period in which most albums reach their sales zenith.

'Why?' said Stewart. 'Well – because I keep playing. I've never become a household name, you see. I keep on playing the colleges – more and more each year – and each new year brings a fresh crop of students who've never set eyes on me before. Each year there are new converts to be won.'

'*Love Chronicles* was voted number one folk album in the *Melody Maker* poll of 1969; *Zero She Flies* came out in March of 1970 – to reach the astronomical heights of number forty in the national album charts.

'I assume that *Orange*, the new one, will again be 50% up on *Zero*. I might make a gold disc by the time I'm about 100 ...'

It was, of course, the *Love Chronicles* album that established Stewart on the ladder

of escape from the nebulous depths of the folk club scene. In many ways it was a masterpiece of its time, a uniquely autobiographical album that evokes, though intensely personal in its images, a great deal of sympathy in its impact on the listener. *Love Chronicles* still sells because it describes the complex problems and hang-ups of 'discovering' what you are all about – problems intrinsic to the process of growing up.

For many of Stewart's admirers, the potency of his songs rest in his ability to extract the essence of the situations that he describes; each situation, what's more, possesses an almost surrealistic element of exactitude.

'I don't believe that you can describe a battle,' explained Stewart, 'until you yourself have been involved in it. In my time at Bunjie's my songs progressed from early protest to love songs – which, I discovered, I was better suited for. The whole thing is what I call the 'School of Realism'. You shouldn't write about something unless you know about it.'

HAND-MADE

'Love songs, you see, I had on tap. The style? It was there on the first album – it's just slowly evolved.'

All Stewart's songs are based, directly or through metaphor, upon his own experiences – and upon the other people that they involved.

'Stephanie was the first girl I ever loved,' he explained. 'Just as on *Love Chronicles* ... and Jenny was the girl who brought me to the bridge of impotence. *In Brooklyn?* I stayed there for a night ... and the song records my impressions. *Old Compton Street Blues* speaks for itself – I played Cousins, in Old Compton Street, many times ... and I lived in Soho itself for a while. *Ballad Of Mary Foster?* Well, I lived in Gloucester for a while; *Mr. Whilloughby* was a kind of amalgam of all the masters I

met at school. People like him are everywhere.

'In fact, of all the songs I have written, only three or four have not concerned themselves with fact.'

Stewart talks as he writes; he seems to search for the exact words – the phrase that is 'right', that sums up a feeling or situation with succinctness and clarity. His seeming pre-occupation with the sales figures for his albums are perhaps indicative of a mind that leaves little to speculation or estimation. Approximation is a habit in which Stewart does not indulge.

'Writing, pure and simple, is easy,' he explained. 'But to write as I like to write – to maintain simplicity without triteness – is very difficult. Very, very few writers are what I would call 'great' writers – and I'm only interested in the very best. It's not at all easy to write well.

'I do try to find 'succinct' phrases – I quite like that description of my writing. I tend to be wordy to a point of fault, you see. Look, for example, at the lyrics of *Gethsemane, Again* – that is a very wordy song. I just try to get the exact phrase. On electric *Los Angeles Sunset*, from the *Zero She Flies* album, there's a phrase: '... diffuse into cinerama haze ...' That was the exact phrase ... I could have looked through Roget's Thesaurus three thousand times, and I still wouldn't have found anything that could have expressed my impressions more exactly. That phrase was the right phrase.

If one word is wrong, then it has to go. I must always have the exact word – and it's worth taking a little bit of time.

'Music, I think, is everything. I look upon my songs as 'hand-made songs'. I don't think that I've yet written anything that I'd describe as 'great'. It will be ten years before I write anything that's really good – if I ever get that far.'

'Manuscript is the only song I have ever written that is above average,' he said. 'The others ... well, they

were the best that I could do at the time they were written. But *Manuscript* stands up.

'It was written for myself ... totally for myself. It's a little time capsule – you could take it backwards or forwards in time by maybe fifty years, and it would still be as valid as when it was written.

IDENTIFICATION

'I don't, you see, think of what others might want or do want when I write. I just try to produce the best work I can at that time.'

Stewart has no pretensions about his musical position. 'I play, I sing, I write because that's what I like doing,' he says. He sees himself as meeting a demand. As long as there are people there to listen, says Stewart, then he will go and play to them.

Stewart has given little time to considering why his songs should seemingly be taken so close to the hearts of his audience. Is it a question of identification? Stewart isn't sure.

'I suppose that some of my songs can be identified with,' he said. 'But many ... well, take a song like *Night Of The Fourth Of May* – there's no leeway there. The song is very exact. Some of them, though, do have 'gaps' that I suppose some people do fall into.'

He is just concerned, when it comes to the crunch, with playing his own music – as well as he can.

'I think it's going to take time to get where I'm going. My heroes – Camus, Tolkien ... they didn't write their masterpieces until they were well past the years of their youth. Perhaps it's the same for anyone – I don't really know.

If I do write a great song, then it won't be for at least ten years. But I'm going to keep trying. It's the one thing that I really want to do.'

... And all the words I ever said have been no use to hide me/And all the songs I ever sung, each one of them untied me ...

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FRANKFURT FAIR REVIEW

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AND MOST
SUCCESSFUL
IN THE HISTORY
OF THE EVENT.
BEAT
INSTRUMENTAL'S
REPRESENTATIVE
IN GERMANY
SENT US
THIS SPECIAL
REPORT

One of the nicest things about this year's Musical Instrument Trade Fair in Frankfurt is that it does really make one feel proud to be British.

Of the 328 participants, Britain's 50 or so exhibitors have the most attractive stands and the most novel and interesting instruments

on show. Elsewhere in the enormous hall, which houses all the musical instruments at the fair, there are a lot of new finishes and little gimmicks, but basically the German and the foreign exhibitors are showing the same old thing in the same old way.

It's really nice to see that

Britain is beginning to take the lead in the entire world instrument market as well as the purely pop field in which British manufacturers already have a stronghold.

Looking round this year's fair – and it takes a good four hours just to walk from one end of the hall to the other –

it is about 10 per cent larger than last year and this is mostly accounted for by the appearance for the first time of music publishers.

The predominant theme is amplification. There are 76 manufacturers of amplifiers here and many distributors are showing other people's

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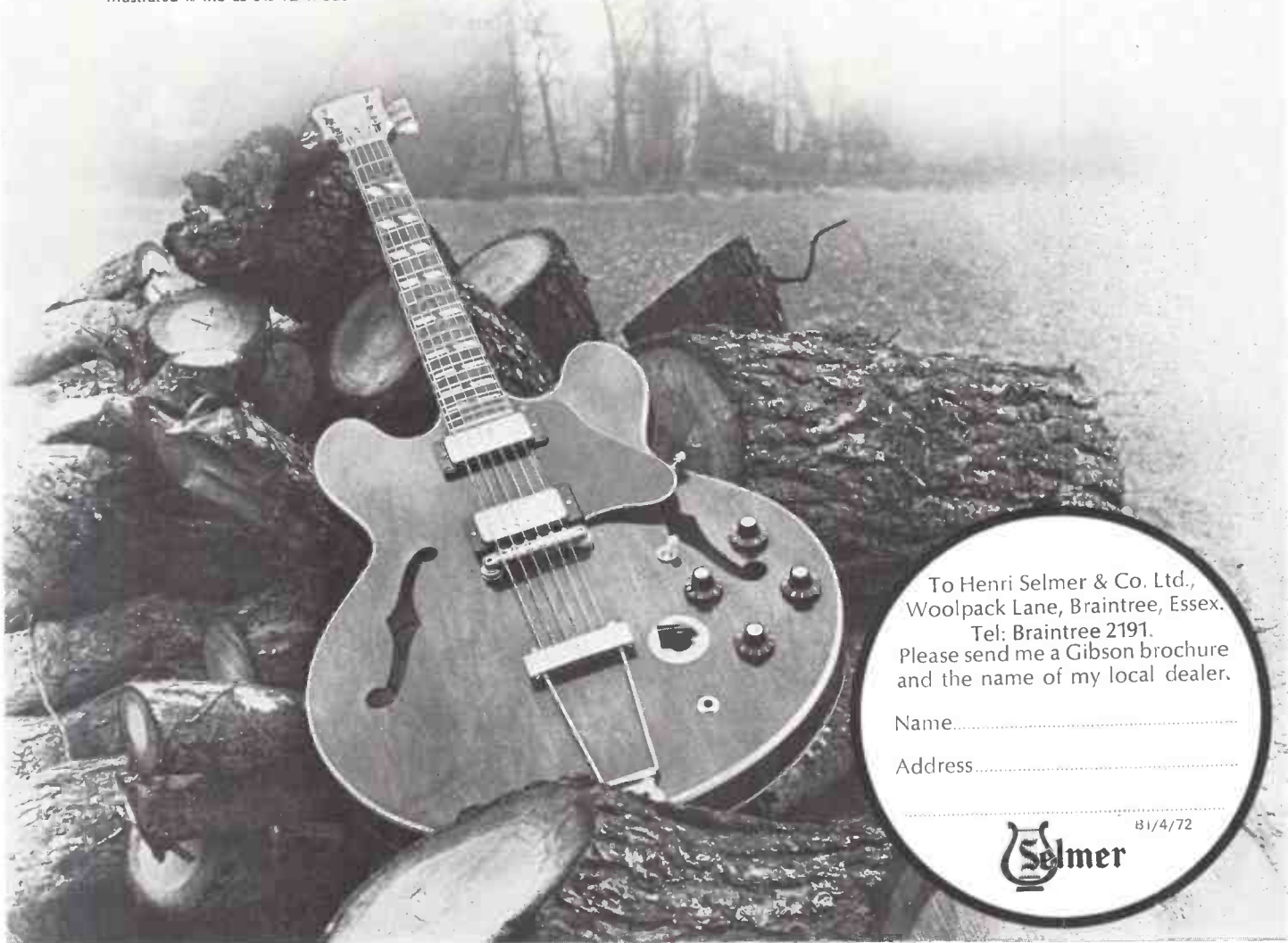
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FRANKFURT REVIEW

amplification so that about one third of the stands have amp equipment on show. In the British Board of Trade joint venture section there are about four stands – apart from the periodicals and the AMI information office – that are not showing amplification.

Once again this year business has been brisk and British manufacturers are doing well for our export market.

There have been one or two nice surprises. The appearance of Wout Steinhuis who has bought Orange amplification . . . Gene Krupa, demonstrating on the Slingerland stand . . . a brilliant new pickup for guitars developed by Simms-Watts for the acoustic and classical guitar which will cost under £10.

There have been some shocks too. H. H. Electronics, exhibiting for the first time, had their brand new PA amp stolen from the stand even before the fair opened. Everyone has been a little shaken, of course, by the news of fire at the Russell Hotel – August scene of the British trade show.

There has, of course, been the inevitable crop of briefcase salesmen and one British man, Mike Show, has been touting round a really novel idea – a chord chart for guitarists which works by having a revolving disc rotating on another with windows that enable the beginner to locate any chord sequence and the fingering needed.

Another goodie for guitarists is the new Terry Gould

Tutor which really does get the folk-orientated man off on the right foot. Of course, there is also some incredible rubbish here, all on the foreign stands . . . amplifiers that look as though they would collapse if you put two watts through them . . . guitars made from box wood . . . and bratwurst sausages which are about the only food available in the exhibition hall.

In general the standard is very high and the Europeans are to be congratulated for the excellent craft instruments – violins, lutes, dulcimers and the various reed, brass and percussive instruments which are still manufactured on a cottage industry basis.

instruments introduced last year.

Boosey and Hawkes have presented three things on their large stand, Dan Armstrong amplification, Beverley Drums and Laney amplification. Dan Armstrong is here in person to demonstrate his own range of amplifiers and speakers, only recently introduced by the company and which feature graphic equalisation.

The Laney equipment is still very popular with many groups. Beverley drums are, of course, very reasonably priced. The range includes functional drum stands and accessories, which this year are being shown in a new gold finish.

CARDIFF MUSIC STRINGS:

Moving over to this stand we are faced with the inevitable series of packs of strings. What can you say about guitar strings? Well, if you ever meet George ——— who makes them you'll find

BOOSEY AND HAWKES:

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Beverley's 'Viking Gold' drum set, marketed by Boosey & Hawkes

there's an awful lot. New this year from Cardiff are Country and Western style bronze wound strings in three gauges.

Good strings these, and well worth trying because they are inexpensive. You don't have to pay a fortune for good strings. Cardiff is now making nylon plectra which are nice to handle because of the finger-grip and plastic kazoos - well, what can you say about plastic kazoos?

CARLSBRO:

Here we see for the first time the 60/5 PA amp which features five channels, each with volume, treble and bass controls and slave facilities. To go along with this is a new PA speaker cabinet which is excellent for the home or a small group and fairly cheap.

DALLAS ARBITER:

Here in force on two stands, one outside the British section, featuring the

whole range of Hayman percussion, and the FHW drum heads with very exciting finishes on these excellent British made drums which are better seen than described. Making a stir, of course, is the see-through kit which is already available in Britain.

The D-A stand in the British section is decked with Sound City amps, the range of Hayman guitars and the low - powered slider amp which, again, can be seen in the shops in Britain.

GENERAL MUSIC STRINGS:

Again the problem for any journalist trying to write about strings. The brand names of Picato, Monopole, Ambassador and Red Dragon are well established and all one can say is try them and see if there's a set that suits your style of instrument.

An associate company of GMS, Peter and Nicholas Engineering, is making some ingenious mike and music



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Bletchley, Bucks.

FRANKFURT REVIEW

stands that should make a big splash in this market.

HOHNER:

Coupling the enormous Hohner stand with the Sonor percussion stand in the separate demonstration room. This firm must have the largest exhibition area in the Fair. Really nice are the new super 64 Chromonica, which will sell for around £12 and which is perfection in a musical instrument of this sort, and a splendid plastic ivory treble recorder that for just over £3 is a knockout in playing appearance. The Pianett N, at £150, the Electric Piano Number 2, at around £300, and especially, the much-improved Clavinet D6, at £210 a really worthy

article on their own because of their amazing price and versatility.

HORNBY SKEWES:

Amplification again on this stand, this time completely re-vamped versions of the Zenta equipment, including reverberation and microphone mixer units. A new finish is a light-weight metal cabinet covered in an attractive orange leather cloth. The reverb unit sells in the U.K. for £22.95 and the TMU 3 mixer unit is £33.57. They are powered by PP 3-type batteries.

HH ELECTRONICS:

These last-minute exhibitors are displaying some



HH Electronics' new IC100S instrument stack



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Featured this month is the Johnson 100 Watt Valve Range



100 WATT PA

6 High impedance channels each with volume bass treble. Master volume and reverb (optional).



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All these amplifiers use the 100 watt R.M.S. power output circuit which we pioneered in 1962, later copied by many other manufacturers. Matching is by separate jack sockets into one-4Ω, one-two or three 8Ω or one-two or three 15Ω loudspeakers. Each combination giving the full 100 watts R.M.S. power.

Johnson Triumph House, 122 Brighton Road, Purley, Surrey CR2 4DB . Tel: 01-660 2327

very attractive solid state amplification which is so compact that you could get about 4,000 watts worth in the boot of your car. HH is established as a producer of studio amplification and it would be nice to see someone finally get solid state amplification off the ground. Marc Bolan is already using this stuff.

JENNINGS:

Of course, the star attraction here must be the three-manual portable organ – the first of its kind – but news to everyone is the firm's new 15 watt valve amp which has been designed for the beginner on guitar or organ who perhaps can't afford more expensive equipment. The little combination amp has tremelo and all the normal controls for £68.

Also exciting is the range of rifle guitars; the Outlaw, Winchester and Gunman Bass which are actually shaped like rifles and have built-in electronics for various effects like fuzz, presence and so forth.

JOHNSON:

Here is another tiny combination amp with 15 watts through two 13 x 8 inch speakers. It also has tremelo but it's much cheaper than £20. A good idea from Johnson is the Speech Master, which enables up to 20 people in a group to have their own personal headphone system and microphone, and still remain in touch with the rest of the group.

MARSHALL:

The news from Marshall is that they are using a new Celestion speaker exclusively designed for them and which is, in fact, four times as powerful as a normal 15 inch speaker. It is being used mainly in the Marshall PA cabinets, in combination with the incredible new PA Mixer unit introduced by Marshall earlier in the year.

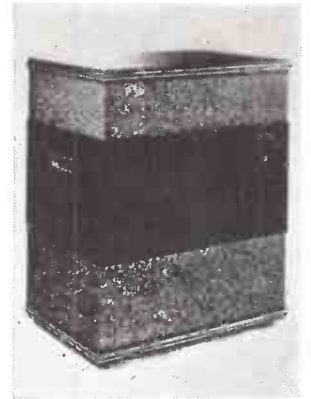
ORANGE:

Cliff Cooper is particularly pleased that his amplifica-

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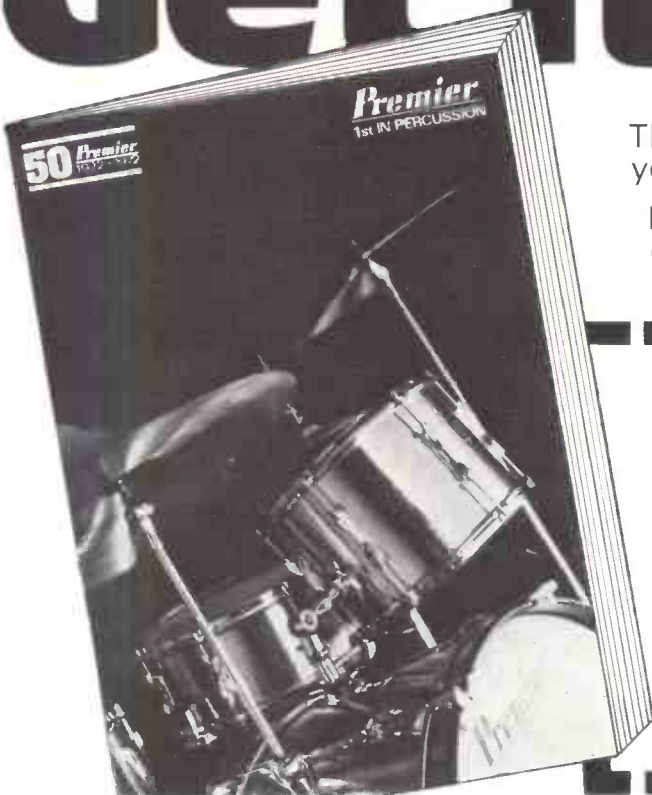
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FRANKFURT REVIEW

tion is to be used at the Olympic Games in Munich later this year. On show for the first time is the Orange 24 - track studio recorder which Cooper has decided to produce as opposed to the 32-track system because it is more compatible with present studio systems.

B. L. PAGE:

B. L. Page and Sons, the U.K. distributors of Framus, Dynacord and Echolette equipment, were well represented on the various companies' stands. Ben Page told *Beat Instrumental* that a considerable amount of interest was shown in some of the new items that he will shortly be introducing in this country.

These include the K.V. 40, a new 40/60 watt amplifier, from the well-known Dynacord range. This two-channel combination amplifier offers a full range of controls, with facilities for vibrato and reverb. Dynacord equipment, renowned for its quality and reliability, has recently been adopted by a number of leading British bands.

Echolette gave prominence to their five-channel stereo Panoramic mixer and aroused considerable interest in their Equaliser/Synthesizer unit. Framus guitars will shortly be introducing a new range of copy instruments, based on established Fender and Gibson designs, and retailing for a third of the price.

PREMIER:

Premier are this year celebrating their first fifty years and have introduced some new products, including some new drum outfits, timpani, vibraphones and educational instruments.

A brand new chromium-plated Olympic snare drum designed for marching bands is very attractive. Another new item includes Olympic stands and hi-hats modelled on their Premier counterpart.

ROSE-MORRIS:

Two absolutely brilliant ideas from Rose-Morris. The first is a double bass drum pedal which sells with snare drum stand, tom tom cradle, cymbal stand and hi-hat stand for £162. A great idea

which saves the use of two bass drums. The second brilliant idea, which Rose-Morris is marketing, is the Synthi synthesizer, the size of a briefcase, which includes a memory bank and a finger touch keyboard. Some really great noises from this machine which can be pre-programmed or set up as you play.

ROSETTI:

This year Rosetti are concentrating mainly on their world distribution of Simms-

Watts amplification. The Simms-Watts boys have come up with a graphic equaliser which also has normal amplification facilities with two channels with treble, bass and volume controls on each. Another great one from Simms-Watts is a bass amplifier which has a three-way overriding control switch called the Tri-Tone Bass. But, of course, best of all is the pickup for classical guitar which is the nearest-ever amplified sound to the true classical guitar sound.



Marshall's new 250w slave amps, distributed by Rose-Morris

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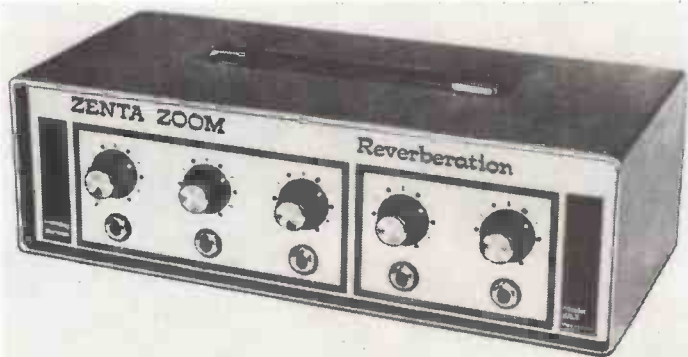


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Rose-Morris
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FRANKFURT REVIEW



Hornby-Skewes' Zenta Reverberation unit

SHARMA:

Keith Hitchcock, the Peterborough-based company which makes this famous range of Sharma organ speakers, put up a very effective display at the Fair, and caused considerable interest.

Star of the display was surely the Model 2000 de Luxe Traditional version, which achieves a stately appearance by having a medium walnut finish throughout. The main side panels are finished with solid wood features. The speaker material is dark and expen-

sive in looks. This model has the home appeal of the 500 model plus an in-built amplifier, giving sufficient volume for home use and enhancing the tonal qualities of the larger entertainment models. Also shown by Hitchcock were the Sharma 500, the Sharma 500 de Luxe, the Sharmette, Chorister, 5200 multi-channel model, the 5300, with three-channel outputs, the 2000 professional and the Sharma Combo pre-amp.

SELMER:

This company has taken as its basis for the exhibition the company's U.K. manufactured amplification, which includes the Compact 50 RSV and the Compact 30 SV along with various other familiar Selmer amps and speakers. Once again the Sellond range of Latin percussion, also made in Britain, is on show. This year, this percussion has been expanded to include three conga models, a set of

bongos and a guiro, all manufactured in fibre glass.

SNS:

SNS are here for the first time this year and are exhibiting the range of solid state amplification which has some graphic equalisation and was seen for the first time at the London trade show last year. The new addition to the range is a series of module amplifiers which are being sold for studio work.

SOLA SOUND:

On show here Sola-Rola add-on unit for organ which is a two-speed rotating sound source popular in this country and a matching 15-inch bass cabinet. The 100-watt auditorium PA set-up is a six-channel amplifier with volume treble and bass on each channel and other amplification shown on the stand are all now finished in bright colours.

The IC-100 and IC-100S are the most Advanced Amplifiers made in Europe



HH ELECTRONIC

HH Electronic, Industrial Site, Milton, Cambridge CB4 4AZ



Selmer's Zodiac 50SV amplifier



Carlsbro's 60TC Instrument amplifier



The new 40/100 watt Bandmaster mixer, from Watkins



Orange Music's new Killerwatt Slave - 750 watts of peak power

VITAVOX:

Vitavox are here for the first time exhibiting the public address speaker and cabinets which they have been manufacturing for cinemas and outdoor use since before the war and which they now find are popular in the group market. It is a technical item but Vitavox have developed a new S3 pressure unit to meet the growing demand for increased power handling capacity without loss of efficiency.

VOX:

Vox, of course, are showing the new guitar tuner which automatically tunes your guitar although you may be deafened by another noise around you. Vox are very proud of their attractive high compression speakers which couple very high efficiency with novel appearance and a light show as well.

WATKINS ELECTRIC MUSIC:

The most successful item of equipment the Watkins brothers have ever produced is the Copy Cat, which sold out last year at Frankfurt and this year has been the main feature of the stand. Also exhibited are a range of equipment already available in Britain, including the Band Mixer, a 40 or 100 watt power mixer, the Vendetta system, a column for public address work and a monitor reverb.

VAMPOWER:

A lot of interest was shown in Vampower's Jak-Pak range of amplifier modules, shown here for the first time in Europe. The company also introduced two new valve amplifiers in forty watt ratings - an amplifier top and a combination model. A 15 watt amplifier was also shown, together with the company's horn cabinets and P.A. equipment range.

1

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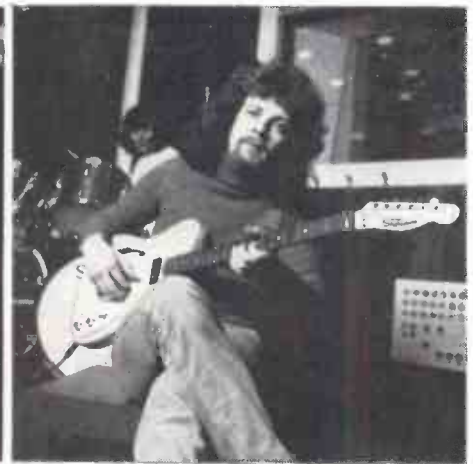


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'66' Bass Matching the '65' in finish, but with one pickup, volume and tone controls.

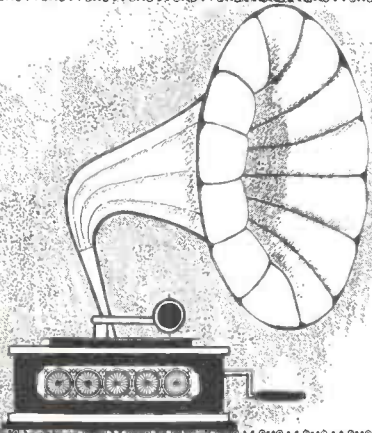
All-metal bridge and tailpiece, with Chromium-plated covers for tailpiece and pickup. The neck has an adjustable truss rod. Complete with lead and luxury plush-lined case.

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ALBUM REVIEW

ALBUM OF THE MONTH

DAVID BOWIE HUNKY DORY RCA SF8244



Much attention has centred around the *Hunky Dory* album – Bowie's first offering for some time. Leaving aside the question of whether he is the next Dylan (or, for that matter, the next *anyone*), *Hunky Dory* shows the many facets of Bowie – and the extent of his vocal and lyrical talents. The album really cannot be described; it can only be heard. Outstanding tracks? – Well, Bowie achieves such variety of mood and presentation that it's extremely difficult to select a few to the exclusion of the others. *Changes* may well prove to be Bowie's *Sound Of Silence*. *Oh You Pretty Things* is something of an 'acid' – i.e. sarcastic – song . . . Whatever future status Bowie achieves, *Hunky Dory* must rank as one of the great albums of contemporary rock.

- Tracks: Side One – *Changes, Oh You Pretty Things, Eight Line Poem, Life On Mars, Kooks, Quicksand.*
- Side Two – *Fill Your Heart, Andy Warhol, Song For Bob Dylan, Queen Bitch, The Bewlay Brothers.*

AMERICAN PIE DON McLEAN UNITED ARTISTS UAS 29285

Hot on the heels of his great big number one hit *American Pie* comes the fantastic, the incredible, the almighty . . . Don McLean. With a cocky 'thumbs up' pose on the cover McLean attempts to hide the deep intellectual meanings that lie in the dusty corners of his songs. Still, as a housewife from Neasden once confessed to me – all his songs sound the same. The same as what, you might ask? The same as *American Pie* is the answer to that one. The version of his number one, smash-hit single which is contained here is much longer, but . . . there's no denying it . . . it comes out sounding like *American Pie*. Inside is contained a moving poem to Hopalong Cassidy: *My hat's off to you, Hoppy. Say good-bye to all the boys at the bar-20, The black and white days are over, So long Hopalong Cassidy.*



- Tracks: Side One – *American Pie, Till Tomorrow, Vincent, Crossroads.*
- Side Two – *Winterwood, Empty Chairs, Everybody Loves Me Baby, Sister Fatima, The Grave, Babylon.*

THE BEST OF MIMI & RICHARD FARINA VANGUARD VSD 21/22

The late Richard Farina – poet, journalist, novelist, songwriter and contemporary influence, along with his wife Mimi (Baez). A beautiful collection of tracks originally released in the mid-sixties.



- Tracks: Side One – *Reflections In A Crystal Wind, Bold Marauder, Dopico, A Swallow Song, Chrysanthemum, Sell-Out Agitation Waltz, Hard Loving Loser!*
- Side Two – *Dandelion River Run, Pack Up Your Sorrows, Tommy Makem Fantasy, Michael Andrew And James, Dog Blue, V, One-Way Ticket.*
- Side Three – *Mainline Prosperity Blues, Allen's Interlude, House Un-American Blues, Activity Dream, Raven Girl, Miles, Children Of Darkness.*
- Side Four – *Hamish, Another Country, Tuileries, The Falcon, Reno Nevada, Celebration For A Grey Day.*

LET'S MAKE UP AND BE FRIENDLY BONZO DOG BAND
UNITED ARTISTS UAS 29288

The influences present range from the raw rock of Captain Beefheart (evident in *The Strain*) to the BBC's Morning Story and the bouncing country sound of Johnny Cash (*Bad Blood*). Perhaps the Bonzo Dog Band have absorbed too many influences for their own good and have therefore destroyed their own unity. Neil Innes seems to want them to pull in the direction that was drafted out by the Beach Boys during the mid-sixties (*King Of Scurf*), but the dominating figure of Stanshall wants to direct the music into the realms of Zep-rock or even Cash-country-sounds-for-prisoners-like-myself (*Bad Blood* – Live at Bordstiff Training Centre).

- Tracks: Side One – *The Strain, Turkeys, King Of Scurf, Waiting For The Wardrobe, Straight From My Heart, Rusty (Champion Thrust).*
- Side Two – *Rawlinson End, Don't Get Me Wrong, Fresh Wound, Bad Blood, Slush.*





JOSE FELICIANO THAT THE SPIRIT NEEDS RCA SF 8823

A great collection of songs by the man who sings Elton John songs better than Elton John. Feliciano recently did a few concert appearances here and for those who did attend any one of them this must therefore become a part of your collection. Unfortunately, his single, *Que Sera, Sera* (Not the Doris Day version) a few years ago, is not included here. Instead we are treated to *Wild World*, *Border Song* and *Take Me To The Pilot*. All the other numbers are self-penned by the blind Puerto Rican born singer/guitarist. Feliciano plays almost every instrument, including acoustic, electric guitars, acoustic steel guitars, bass, congas, organ and all vocals. Wouldn't really be surprised to see the album in the charts in a couple of weeks.

- Tracks: Side One** – Come Down Jesus, The Spirit, Wild World, Border Song, Only Once, Take Me To The Pilot.
- Side Two** – She Let Me Down, Daytime Dreams, My Last Farewell, Mellow Feeling Per Day.

GOOD TIMES A' COMIN' HOOKFOOT DJM DJLPS 422

Hookfoot are probably better known for their contributions to the session work of the British Isles than as their group identity. However, a listen to *Good Times A' Comin'* will show that Hookfoot are very much a group of originality in their own right. The lead guitar work of Caleb Quaye is outstanding as is Dave Glover's bass. It's difficult to pick out the best tracks as they are all of such a high standard both musically and 'commercially'. Possibly *Gunner Webb's Changes* and *The Painter* will become the most played tracks.

- Tracks: Side One** – Sweet Sweet Funky Music, Living In The City, If I Had The Words, Gunner Webb's Changes, The Painter.
- Side Two** – Flying In The U.S.A., Is Anyone There, Slick's Blues For Jumbo, Look To Your Churches, Good Times A' Comin'.



GRAVE NEW WORLD STRAWBS A & M AMLH 68078

Complete with magnificent cover, 16 page booklet and fold out art work comes *Grave New World* from the Strawbs. This is surely the best album they've recorded so far and one in which they've successfully cut the chords from their folkly past. For many the Strawbs will still be associated with the folk scene but a listen to this work will show that they have evolved their own music. The themes of the songs seem to be the constant search for a workable philosophy. The album begins with the words *The Wanderer has far to go* (*Benedictus*) and ends with *The Journey's End* in which 'the wanderer' has travelled far but the point he has reached is still only a crossroads!

- Tracks: Side One** – Benedictus, Hey Little Man, Queen Of Dreams, Heavy Disguise, New World, Hey Little Man.
- Side Two** – The Flower And The Young Man, Tomorrow, On Growing Older, Ah Me Ah My, Is It Today Lord?, The Journey's End.

SIEGEL-SCHWALL BAND RCA VICTOR SF 8246

Not too well known this side of the Atlantic are the Seigel-Schwall Band who hail from de blooze city of Chicago. Although I am not myself a blues fan I was totally impressed by the music here. Unlike most contemporary blues bands they have resisted the temptation to become self indulgent. Each track is allowed to have its own individual appeal. The line-up is: Corky Seigel (piano, harp, vocals), Jim Schwall (guitar, vocals), Rollow Radford (bass, vocals) and Shelley Plotkin (drums). Some of the tracks were recorded live at The Quiet Knight, Chicago, and the studio tracks were put down at RCA's Mid-America Recording Centre.

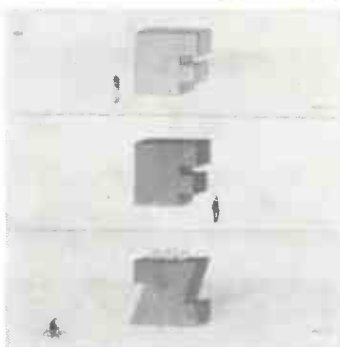
- Tracks: Side One** – Country Road, Devil, Leavin', Corrina.
- Side Two** – I Won't Hold My Breath, Next To You, Hush Hush,



FISHBAUGH FISHBAUGH AND ZORN FFZ CBS 64783

FF & Z are Americans Gary and Paula Fishbaugh and Peter Zorn. Together they have been gigging in most places in the States for well over a year. When they first appeared at a concert here they were plagued by faulty equipment but still managed to win through because of their amazing powerful harmonising techniques. Recently they won plenty of new followers after appearing on the Moody Blues tour. Junior Campbell, and Pentangle member Terry Cox on drums to name a few. The other instruments are all played by the three members. Superior stuff by a group that should go a long way in the music business.

- Tracks: Side One** – Love Comes Around, Hint Of A Freeze, I Owe Her My Life, This Time Around, Door Into Tomorrow, Leave Me Alone (Let Me Rock 'n' Roll).
- Side Two** – Rock 'n' Roll, Speed On Happy, The Children Are Wandering, Red (Became The Colour Of Spring), Sorrows From Your Dreams, Sweet, Sweet Music So Deep.



IKE AND TINA TURNER 'NUFF SAID UNITED ARTISTS UAG 29256

Compared with the incredible double 'live' album released by UA late last year, this is a let down, but by appearance only. That album gave true insight as to how they were on stage, with numbers like *Honky Tonk Women* and *Proud Mary*, plus spots by the Kings Of Rhythm and The Ikettes. Here the amazing pair show how they are going to be next time they come over and if this is any indication then start booking your tickets now. Ike seems to be playing a far more important vocal role than he ever did but still all the main work is carried through by his wife. For rhythm alone there's no comparable track anywhere in the world than *I Love You Babe* on side two, which starts off with a brass riff that one expects to hear when Red Indians appear on the film screen and also during which a thumping bass drum is heard throughout.

- Tracks: Side One** – *I Love What You Do To Me, Baby (What Do You Want Me To Do), Sweet Frustrations, What You Don't See (Is Better Yet), 'Nuff Said.*
Side Two – *Tell The Truth, Pick Me Up (Take Me Where Your Home Is), Moving Into Hip Style-A Trip Child, I Love You Baby, Can't You Hear Me Callin', 'Nuff Said (Part II).*

**NILSSON SCHMILSSON RCA VICTOR SF8242**

This is an album that's hard to fault. It's outstanding feature is the perfection of the arrangements and the unity of the entire album. It's encouraging to note that most of it was recorded in England – at Trident – and that a lot of the remixing was also performed on British soil (Air, Island & Trident). Nilsson owes very little to the music that has gone before him and he's impossible to pin down as far as 'influences' are concerned. All but three of the songs were written by himself. The entire recording is a joy to listen to and serves to elevate contemporary music from its self-inflicted rut.

- Tracks: Side One** – *Gotta Get Up, Driving Along, Early In The Morning, The Moonbeam Song, Down.*
Side Two – *Without You, Coconut, Let The Good Times Roll, Jump Into The Fire, I'll Never Leave You.*

HARVEST NEIL YOUNG REPRISE K 54005

The disappointment that I felt with this album was accentuated by the delays which held it up for so long. Also, it falls short of *After The Goldrush* which must be the best album for years with its undying quality. The themes are the same – pain, loneliness and the search for the 'heart of gold' which constantly eludes him. Possibly the best thing that Young has got going for him is his voice and for this reason it is best left in its purest form along with a guitar and perhaps the occasional percussion. *Are You Ready For The Country* stands out for its funkiness but *A Man Needs A Maid* stands out for its over-loaded-ness (The London Symphony Orchestra). *There's A World* also has an element of the big screen epic about it again provided by the L.S.O. Undoubtedly it'll sell well – but it's still only 75% as good as *Goldrush*!

- Tracks: Side One** – *Out On The Weekend, Harvest, A Man Needs A Maid, Heart Of Gold, Are You Ready For The Country.*
Side Two – *Old Man, There's A World, Alabama, The Needle And The Damage Done, Words.*

**MILESTONES THE ROLLING STONES DECCA SKL 5098**

I'm not convinced that each of these tracks was indeed a milestone for the Rolling Stones but I suppose descriptive accuracy will always give way to a pun in the world of commerce. I'm also convinced that the Stones themselves will feel the same. There's very little comment that will enlighten anyone further than a listening of the tracks – all of which are familiar. *Under My Thumb* stands out as a Stones 'great' as does *Satisfaction* and their R & B influence stands out through all the tracks (excepting *She's A Rainbow*). In fact, *She's A Rainbow* seems to be a reminder of a time when the Stones became followers instead of leaders and attempted their own Sgt. Pepper. Thankfully they've since acknowledged their roots and maintained their position.

- Tracks: Side One** – *Satisfaction, She's A Rainbow, Under My Thumb, I Just Want To Make Love To You, Yesterday's Papers, I Wanna Be Your Man.*
Side Two – *Time Is On My Side, Get Off Of My Cloud, Not Fade Away, Out Of Time, She Said 'Yeah', Stray Cat Blues.*

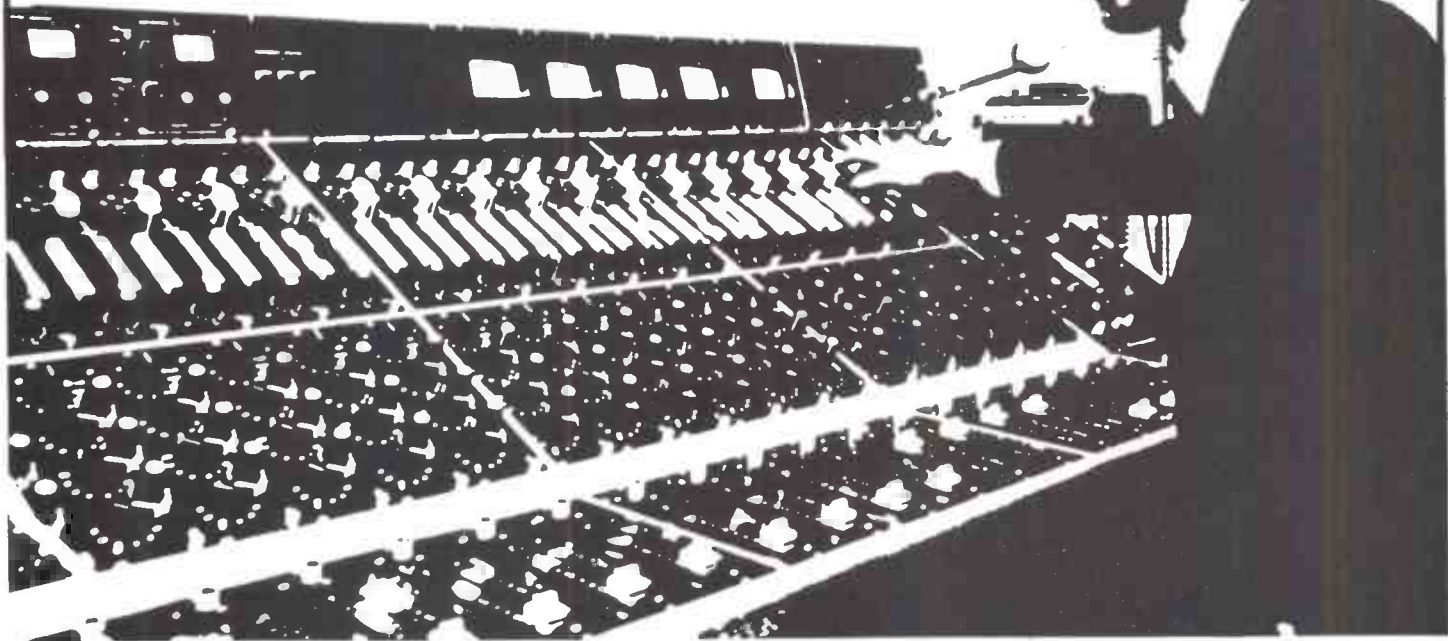
WEIRD SCENES INSIDE THE GOLD MINE THE DOORS ELEKTRA K 62009

The title of this song is in fact a quotation from the poet songwriter Jim Morrison (1943-1971) from his song *The End*. It is obviously a direct prophetic reference to the British mining strike of 1972 when it could be observed that in the mines of our great country there were indeed some 'weird scenes'. But why does he refer to a 'gold' mine when, as we all know, our mines contain nothing but coal or related substances? Perhaps 'gold' is an oblique reference to the cause of the 'weird scenes' which occur in the mine, i.e. money?!

- Tracks: Side One** – *Break On Through, Strange Days, Shaman's Blues, Love Street, Peace Frog, Blue Sunday, The Wasp, End Of The Night.*
Side Two – *Love Her Madly, Spanish Caravan, Ship Of Fools, The Spy, The End.*
Side Three – *Take It As It Comes, Runnin' Blue, L. A. Woman, Five To One, Who Scared You, Don't Go No Further.*
Side Four – *Riders On The Storm, Maggie M'Gill, Horse Latitudes, When The Music's Over.*



STUDIO ENGINEERS



One of the most important members of the recording team is the desk man – the studio engineer.

Fortunately, he now receives more credit and appreciation than was once the case. But many people outside the studio business fail to appreciate the full extent of his responsibilities. He provides the link between the artistic considerations of a recording session and the technical aspects of the recording process. It is his job to translate the ideas of the group, and the instructions of the engineer, onto the matrix of the recording tape. However good a band may be, they cannot hope to record their music at its best without the services of a talented and experienced engineer.

The road to the engineer's chair is a long one; the amount of would-be engineers who actually achieve their ambition is very, very

small. Most studios receive several letters each day, from youngsters who are anxious to get into the business; very few succeed. The demands upon the top engineer and the qualities expected of him are extremely high. He must have an extensive knowledge of all kinds of music, a fair amount of applied technical knowledge and the personality and character to work under the strain that a recording session often imposes.

Teamwork

Above all, though, he must have a certain indefinable 'flair' for his work. He must be capable of involvement in the session above the level of the actual job – he must, in a sense, 'live, think and breathe' engineering.

In order to get some idea of what makes a successful engineer – and to give fur-

ther recognition to the importance of his role – *Beat Instrumental* spoke to some of the studio business' leading desk-men. We spoke to engineers from the leading studios of this country – both the large, well-established units and the smaller, more personal provincial studios – and we recorded some of their comments.

The importance of teamwork is crucial to the smooth and efficient running of the modern recording studio. The co-operation that exists between their engineers has undoubtedly accounted for a large part of **Advision's** success in the highly competitive recording business. Their engineers include desk-men of the calibre of Eddie Offord and Roger Cameron – as well as up-and-coming engineers like Graham Middleton, Andy Whetstone, Gary Martin and Martin Rushent. It was to Martin

Rushent that I spoke when I telephoned Advision's London W1 studios.

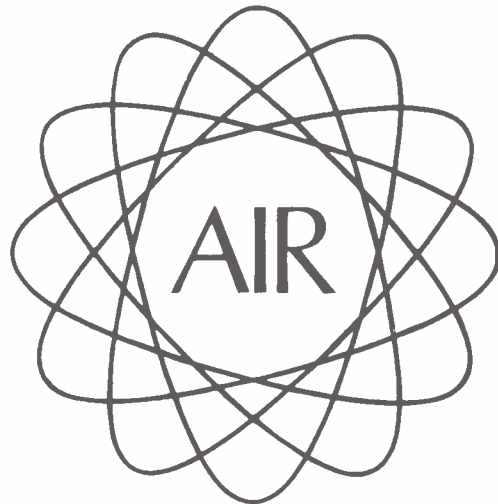
'The trends that were emerging last year have continued,' he said. 'That is, the role of the engineer has changed. Most engineers are moving more and more into production – the role of the producer, as it existed a few years ago, has lost its importance.'

Credit

The reasons for the changing relevance of the engineer's work, he explained, lie in the different attitudes of the recording bands to studio work.

'Bands these days are much more aware of the sound that they want,' he continued. 'They no longer feel that they want the services of a producer in the old sense of the word. Most of them want to do the produc-

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STUDIO ENGINEERS

tion themselves – so the producer, as a kind of 'middle-man', has tended to disappear.

'As a result, the engineer is no longer confined to the desk. Recording is a process of co-operation between the band and the engineer directly.

'The band know the music they play, and the sound they want. They see the engineer as an "outsider" to make the whole thing work.'

Martin is pleased by the fact that the engineer is now tending to get the recognition, on album sleeves and through the pop press, that the work deserves.

'We're getting more recognition now – and we're making a name for ourselves,' he said. 'People are only just realising that the profession

exists – and it's nice to feel that we're getting a bit of credit.

'But the publicity also means that we're getting a certain amount of criticism. It's a healthy trend, because criticism can only help to raise studio standards yet higher.'

Reggae

Steve Wadey, who owns and operates **SWM** studios, began his musical career as a song-writer. Among the compositions that he penned was Los Bravos' hit, *Black is Black*; it was the proceeds from this song that helped him to realise one of his ambitions – to set up his own studio.

Having found his premises, Steve was faced with

the problem of obtaining good equipment. He couldn't afford to buy a complete studio set-up – so he built himself a four-track tape recorder and a sixteen-channel mixer. Having ironed out the problems, and bought the rest of the necessary gear, he was able to open SWM in May 1970.

His studio experience was gained as a free-lance producer; he found few problems in assuming the role of engineer. Most of the studio's early work took the form of demo recordings:

'I suppose it used to work out as 70% demos and the rest singles,' he said. 'I was doing very little album material.'

'Lately, though, things have been changing. With the interest in reggae, I've found that I'm doing a lot of work for the reggae artists – Jimmy Powell, Doris Troy, The Cimmarrons, Laurel Aitkens... about 80% of the studio time. Demos are now only about 20%.'

Steve has also found that his work has diversified along other directions. Lately he

has been working on the sound-tracks of a few commercials – the latest being for Uni-Royal. He has also been recording 'muzak' for Rediffusion and a chain of French supermarkets. Recent music sessions outside the realm of straight rock and pop music have included work with artists such as Ronnie Carroll.

Expansion

Whereas at one time Steve might have wanted to expand his four-track facilities, he now finds that he has no desire to change them. The reason, he explained, was that many bands were moving away from the larger tape formats.

'A lot of people seem to think that we're going back to four-track,' he said. 'In many ways eight-track and sixteen-track can be "too versatile". It's possible to get very technical with it – but then the music also tends to become very "technical".'

'My attitude is that if you can produce a good recording on four-track, then



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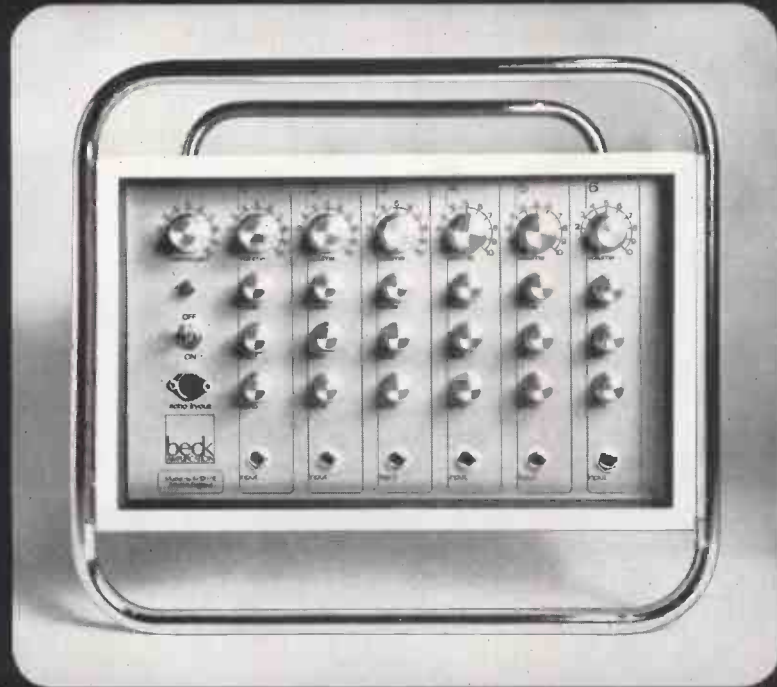
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the music must also be good.

'There's also the question of expense. I can record a band on four-track, mix it down to a single track – and put it down on one track of the four-track again. That gives seven tracks to work with, for only £5 an hour.'

Mike Boback, engineer at **Morgan** studios, found his way into the business through his friendship with another well-known engineer – Andy Johns. It was while Johns was at Morgan, some four years ago, that the studio found itself short of a tape-operator. Boback heard of it from Johns, applied, and was given the job. Since then he has graduated to engineer, via short spells in two other studios. He returned to Morgan just over a year ago, since when he has engineered sessions for two Rod Stewart albums, the Kinks, Lou Reed, Long John Baldry and several other artists.

Like several other engineers I spoke to in the course of preparing this feature,

Mike places relatively little importance upon the 'electronics' aspect of the engineer's job.

'I really think that a knowledge of electronics is basically immaterial,' he said. 'A musical background is much better. You can relate to the band that much more easily.'

Mike himself comes from a musical background. He used to play with a band – and has himself recorded an album. His knowledge of group music has stood him in good stead for, like many of his contemporaries, he has found that the present-day engineer is much more involved in the production aspects of recording.

'You're not tied to the desk anymore,' he explained. 'The engineer is more than just a desk-man. It's a much better situation. For a start it's much more interesting – and it's better than having a producer telling you what to do.'

'Also bands are much more into the studio thing than they used to be. There's a lot more contact with the engineer.'

Mike confirmed to me the difficulties that a would-be engineer now faces in getting into the business.

'It's much more difficult to break in now than it used to be,' he said. 'Equipment is much more complex – we've now got three sixteen-track recorders and a Cadac 24-channel desk – which means that there's a lot more to get into.'

'The main thing now is that you can't get away with being bad. When I started, standards of engineering were generally lower – because there wasn't nearly so much emphasis on technical and creative quality.'

'Now things have changed. To get to the standard that you need to be these days takes a lot longer than it used to. You've got to put in a lot of studio practise, and get a lot of experience. It means that you can stay a tape-operator or something like that for a very long time.'

Production

Trident desk-man Ken Scott's introduction to studio

engineering was, to use his own description, 'terrifying'. At the time he was working for EMI as a tape-operator, having joined them fresh from school as an assistant in their tape-library. One of EMI's engineers had fallen ill, and Ken was asked to do the session.

There's got to be a first time for everything – and it's usually a nerve-wracking experience. But for Ken, that first session was doubly awe-inspiring; the session turned out to be for the Beatles – who were waiting to lay down the preliminary cuts for their *Magical Mystery Tour* set.

But things turned out well. Ken, having been thrown in at the deep end of the business, went on to desk more Beatles sessions, including some of their singles and most of the white album. He moved to Trident two years ago, since when he has worked with Al Kooper, George Harrison (All Things Must Pass), Lindisfarne and on David Bowie's *Hunky Dory* album – to mention but a few.

The recording of *Hunky*

TRIDENT STUDIOS

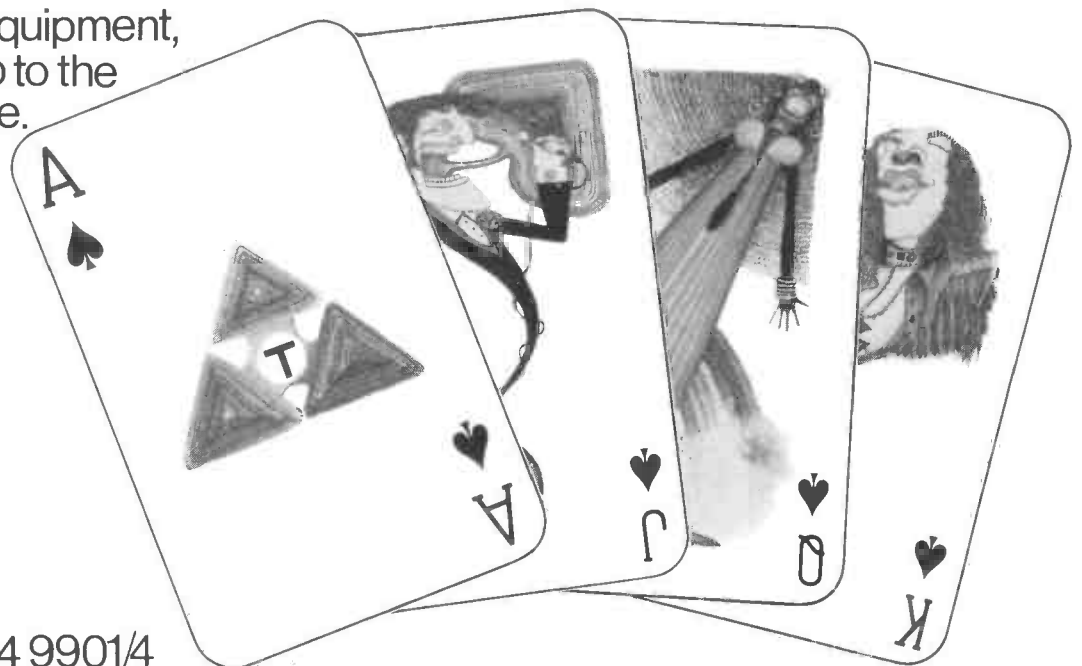
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STUDIO ENGINEERS

Dory represents an important point in Ken's studio career, for it is the first album that Ken has also produced. Like several other leading engineers, he wants to involve himself much more in this side of the recording process.

'There's something about production that is somehow more satisfying,' he told me. 'It's a new field for me. There's a big challenge which sometimes isn't always there when it comes to engineering.'

Nevertheless, he still views the engineer as an important member of the recording team.

'It's a very important role – the engineer gets exactly what the producer wants,' he said. 'There's a lot of new blood around and some of the younger engineers are already proving how im-

portant good engineering can be.'

Patience

Ken cites the work of one of his colleagues as an example – David Henteshal, who has already engineered sessions for Atomic Rooster and John Kongos.

Unfortunately, the prospects for those who wish to follow the example set by Henteshal are, according to Ken, even worse than they were last year.

'There are so many youngsters wanting to get into the business,' he said. 'There just aren't enough vacancies to go round.'

'The only advice I can offer is: be patient. Keep trying, and keep writing to all the studios. It's all down to patience, even after you get the job. You'll start as

tea boy – and then it just depends on the breaks. There's no way of telling how long it can take.'

Psychology

'An engineer is a highly skilled man,' said **Nova's** George Pastell. 'He learns to practise his art through experience. It is his job to be technically equipped to give his very best service to any client. He must have a flair for his work; he must have talent. And he must have a very, very good pair of ears.'

'But it doesn't stop there. He must also be a P.R. man. He must know how to get the best sound and how to correct faults in the technique and approach of the client – without insult. He must produce exactly what the client wants, yet make the client feel that he is doing it himself.'

George – as he is known to all his staff – is the studio manager at Nova's Brynston Street studios. An extractor, he is perhaps uniquely qualified to present the 'image' of a modern studio in terms of the relationships

between client, engineer and studio manager. He understands well the psychology of the modern studio – and had invited me down to his office to expand on some of his ideas.

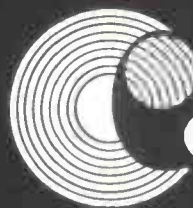
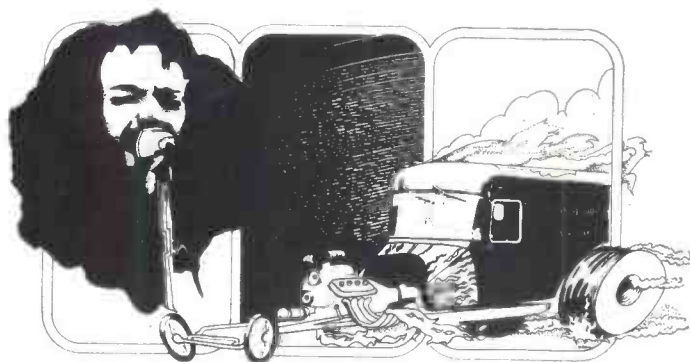
'There are two sides to the modern studio,' he explained. 'And it is the studio manager who is responsible for providing for them. There is the physical side – the studio must be clean and sweet running; the equipment, the lighting . . . it must be supplied and maintained at its peak. Then there is the psychological side. It is my job to create an environment that is smooth running and efficient. I have to create an environment in which my engineers can give of their best.'

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'When I interview a potential engineer,' he said, 'I look for only one thing – dedication. The rest of it . . . it can be learnt. I would also expect him to have talent, a sound knowledge of music – and intelligence.

'I ask my engineers for the "impossible". I want them to be able to adjust to anything – to give the same attention and dedication to each session, even if it is not their particular "cup of tea".'

Nova's work is varied; their sessions include group work, solo artists, commercial jingles – and many other forms of audio work.

'An engineer should give exactly the same application to the recording of a jingle as he would to any other session,' George said. 'Even if we are recording "bad" music – or an artist whose work is aesthetically unattractive – I would expect only the very best recording of it.

'And I would not tolerate complacency. Part of life is to become better and better. This is as true of engineering as of anything else.'

Higher Standards

When John Taylor of **Hollick and Taylor** first established his own business, the capabilities of the recording studio were vastly inferior to those of the present day. John can remember the days when a recording was made directly onto disc – for the studio tape-recorder, even in its most basic single-track form, simply did not exist. As for stereo, compression, graphic equalisation . . . well, they weren't around either.

Nowadays, of course, things have changed. John's Birmingham-based studios can boast the most modern and up-to-date equipment available – and some impressive recording credits.

And, as the operator of a provincial studio, John finds that his current work is extremely varied. He has always had a strong interest in the film world – and a fair proportion of the studio's work is connected with film work. As for music, Hollick and Taylor have recorded all kinds, from classical and

traditional to the work of the Move and, recently, chart-orientated bands such as New World.

The variety of work that the studio receives puts a great deal of importance upon the versatility of the engineer – and versatility, to John, is one of the most important requirements in the present-day engineering profession.

'Pop music and classical music require vastly different approaches,' he said. 'So it's essential that the engineer should be adaptable. A different balance must be achieved – and the musical aspects are very different. Apart from anything else, the importance of the equipment – equalisers, compressors, etc. – varies according to the application.

'I'd say that the most important requirement in any engineer is a good ear. If he can use his ears, then he should be able to handle anything.'

John has been in the business long enough to watch the way that techniques have developed. And

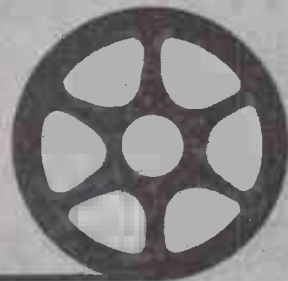
he had some very encouraging observations to make.

'I'm quite convinced that standards are better now than they were during the "boom" of a few years ago,' he said. 'The standards of musicianship are much higher, and studio standards have also risen. Nowadays you see that bands are adopting instruments that weren't seen much a few years ago – instruments like saxes and violins. Studio techniques have improved alongside the music. The business is less busy than it used to be – but everyone seems to be taking more time and trouble with musical quality.'

Own Label

John himself is now expanding his interests. For some time the studio has owned its own label, Grosvenor, which until recently has specialised in classical and organ recording. It will now be expanding to take in a number of rock and pop groups. Through the medium of the label, and with the

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STUDIO ENGINEERS

help of his wife Jean – who is herself an experienced engineer – John hopes to 'do his bit' towards helping to raise standards even higher.

Lansdowne's David Baker was familiar with most aspects of the music business before he joined the studio. He had travelled abroad with various bands, as well as having done a fair amount of booking and producing.

'I wanted to learn as much of the business as possible,' he told me. 'I wanted to get to know the routine before I tried anything specific. My first job in the studio was as a tape-operator at Lansdowne – again, it was all experience in meeting a lot of people, and a lot of bands, and finding out exactly what made them tick.'

David's experience of the

music industry's many aspects – not to mention the 'psychology' that he learnt as a tape-op – helped him to earn a place as an engineer, a position that he has now held for some two years. His most recent work has been on various single sessions – which have ranged from the recording of Daniel Boone's new chart single to the Chelsea football team's recording of *Blue Is The Colour*.

'The basic difference between an album session and a single comes down to the mixing,' he said. 'Bands seem to have changed their attitudes lately – they no longer have this thing of "let's go into the studio and cut a single". Most single material is now selected from four or five numbers recorded during a single session –

which we mix as a single. We try for a slightly "harder" sound.

Adaptive

'Most bands now place far more importance on an album – but a lot of record companies still have this thing about "finding a single".'

David has found that he has to adapt himself to many varied sessions – a 'fact of studio life' that all engineers encounter.

'I do have my own personal preferences when it comes to the artistic aspects of music,' he explained. 'But it's possible to find the ability to think only of the technical aspects – so that you can face any approach.

'One thing you do find, though, is that you tend to form a "team" with a particular producer – in which case you get a "name" for a particular kind of music. That seems to be something that more and more engineers are finding these days – that they get a label for the kind of work they prefer.'

David emphasises the importance of teamwork in the studio – particularly in the working relationships of the engineer and producer.

Relationship

'If the engineer is working properly, then the producer/engineer relationship becomes a question of teamwork,' he said. 'The producer has the ideas – it's the engineer's job to put them across. I feel that the engineer – if he has any artistic streak at all – should be able to put forward his own ideas, as long as the producer is prepared to consider them.

'It depends very much on the personal relationship of the engineer and producer. They should get on well together. I think you'll probably find that the majority of successful records are produced and engineered by a regular team.'

David Wood, who operates **Impulse**, learnt the business 'from scratch' at his Tyneside premises. Although

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he had only a very limited background in studio techniques when he started, he has found that he has learnt a lot during the studio's five years of existence—so much, that he now feels able to offer any band the same quality and standards of engineering that they would find in any of the bigger and better-established London studios.

'I suppose it did take me a time to get things worked out,' he said. 'In that respect it would possibly have been better to start in an established studio — I would have found it easier to pick up on some of the more advanced aspects of engineering. But now I feel it's been worth it. I've been operating Impulse for about five years — and things are going well.'

Because Impulse is some distance from London, David has found that his work and studio facilities are of a different nature to those of most southern studios.

'We only have four-track, at the moment,' he explained, 'because there's not really the demand for sixteen or

eight-track machines. I'd like to be able to increase the configurations of the studio, though — sometime in the near future.

'We do a fair mixture of work here, but it's not as varied as for a bigger studio. We don't really have the space to handle large string sections and suchlike — so most of our sessions involve groups and solo artists. Our facilities are perfectly adequate for that kind of stuff.

'A lot of our work is for bands who are up in the North on tour — they tend to provide us with most of our album sessions. The other main part of our work is demos — for local groups.'

Among David's more recent sessions are the recording of the Hartlepool benefit single — organised by United Artists records — and some work with Lindisfarne, with whom David has worked for a long time. He owns, with Lindisfarne's Alan Hull, a music publishing concern — which is one further aspect of his varied work.

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Happy

He also involves himself closely with the production of his studio's sessions:

'A lot of the bands we get in are fairly new to the studio environment,' he said. 'So they expect me to help them with most aspects of the session — production as well as engineering. It's such a different situation to that of the London recording studios.'

'I think I can say that I'm very happy with the kind of work we do here. The better facilities and equipment of the southern studios appeal to me — but I'm quite happy with what we have been doing.'

Air London's Bill Price began his recording career as an apprentice electronic designer. His interest in groups and music led him to search for a job as an engineer — a process that involved writing to nearly every studio and record company in the country. His persistence was rewarded when Decca offered him a job as a tape operator. A few months later he had the opportunity to desk a session by the Applejacks — a session that led to the hit single *Tell Me When*.

Early Break

From that early break he went on to work with Englebert Humperdinck and Tom Jones — sessions that might not sound particularly attractive to the rock fan, but which represent demanding and interesting work for the engineer. His experience and capabilities have now taken him to Air London, one of the fastest-growing southern studios, where he is a senior engineer.

'Studios these days are getting busier and busier,' he told me. 'We've been making a lot of changes at Air London — nothing really dramatic, but a lot of small things that are

necessary to "keep up" in the business.'

The process of recording is also getting more complex, he explained. More and more bands are involving themselves closely with the production and mixing of their albums — and the position of the engineer is becoming far more crucial.

'Groups these days are far less "employees" of the record company than they used to be,' he said. 'They have more scope to follow their own ideas — they have the opportunity to put their own personal stamp on a recording.'

'The adoption of sixteen-track machines has also changed things a lot. Now a musician can put down a track in the studio and make his decisions about the sound he wants at a later date, standing in the control box. A lot of people work this way. It's now possible for one guy to play everything — and make all the decisions.'

He gave Stevie Wonder as an example — Stevie has just spent two days in Air London, laying down fourteen tracks for a new album.

Film Work

'That guy is just amazing,' Bill said. 'He was working each night from seven in the evening right through till nine-thirty the next morning. He played all the instruments himself — organ, drums, bass, the whole lot; and also told me the exact sounds and effects he wanted. At the end of the two-day session I could hardly keep my eyes open. The producer was fast asleep. Stevie was still going strong.'

Such sessions must obviously stand out in anyone's memory — but it's not the only one that Bill's been involved with in recent weeks. The modern studio is a very varied place in which to

work — which is just one of the reasons why the engineer's job tends to be a much-cherished position. Bill has been closely involved with recent sessions by Roger Cook, Pink Floyd, Nilsson, Al Cooper, Procul Harum, the Peddlers and — a new activity for the studio — the recording and arranging of a soundtrack for a new Burton-Taylor film.

A lot of their day-time work tends to be of this nature. The reason, Bill explained, was because few groups like getting up in the morning, and 'neither do engineers'. The studio concentrates on some unusual sessions during such slack periods. Recent work done at Air London includes the recording of medieval music, poetry, modern opera and a Shakespeare play.

Orchestral

Mike Thompson, one of the engineers at his father's **Wessex Sound** studios, was 'brought up in the business'.

His father owned a hi-fi shop with its own studio; Mike spent most of his after-school hours 'messing around' in the control room. After two years at college, studying electronics, he went to a Bournemouth studio and eventually moved to Wessex, in London, nine years ago.

Since then he has found that he has tended to specialise in the larger orchestral sessions — although Wessex, as a major London studio, cover all kinds of work.

'We do a lot of orchestral work — which is what I specialise in,' he explained. 'But our work includes group sessions, a lot of classical recordings, albums of all descriptions and a fair amount of television and commercial work.'

Even though he himself specialises in one aspect of the studio's work, Mike considers it important that an engineer should be able to tackle any session.

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able for each to be able to follow his own interests,' he said. 'But it's very important that they should be equipped to engineer anything that might come up.'

One of the most important attributes of the engineer – or the potential engineer – is that he should have a 'flair' for his work.

'It's not a thing that can be learnt,' Mike said. 'It's something you're born with. You've either got it or you haven't. I find that it's usually fairly easy to tell when people are, in that sense, "born" engineers; it doesn't take long to find out.'

'The engineer should come into the business for love of music – not for the money to be made. There are, of course, a lot of financial returns to be made if you prove successful. But, at the lower end of the scale, the money isn't so good. The trainee won't get paid much as a tape-op – but, if he shows promise, he'll progress.'

'The whole job is very much more complicated than it used to be. Even three years ago a tape-op had to do little more than press the stop/start button and the rewind. Now it takes quite a long time to learn to operate just a standard 16-track machine. But, if he's good, he should graduate to engineering after a couple of years.'

Mixture

Malcolm Jackson, who owns and operates the **Jackson Recording** studios in Hertfordshire, began his recording career as an engineer and producer in radio and television. He moved into the field of music engineering with the opening of his own studio ten years ago – since when he has learnt the techniques through experimenting with the many bands that he has recorded.

'We do a great mixture of sessions,' he said. 'From the group point of view we do both album sessions and demos. But, besides working with groups, we also do sessions with solo artists and work for music publishers and songwriters, industry – in the form of tape and film cassettes – closed-circuit presentations, conference work and a little bit of film work.'

'I handle most of them myself – though I'm just in the process of hiring another engineer. For the bigger sessions, especially for group work, I use freelance engineers.'

Malcolm sums up the essence of the engineer's responsibilities in four words: 'communication with the client'.

'That's what it's all down to', he explained. 'The engineer must be able to communicate with the client – to work with him smoothly.'

The ability of English engineers to establish the right kind of 'repartee' with their clients, is just one of the reasons why Malcolm considers the standards of U.K. studios to be so much higher than those of the States.

'They are just so much more competent,' he said. 'And they have that ability to communicate. It really is the most important asset of any engineer – and what I would look for in selecting a potential trainee.'

'Otherwise, there's little I go on. Much depends on the type of studio that an engineer intends to work in. Above all, though, it comes down to the simple fact that engineering is engineering.'

No Status

Bryan Stott, one of **IBC Studio's** senior engineers, started at the studio shortly after leaving college. Having spent six months studying piano and 'looning around', he joined IBC's technical department, where he helped design and build the mixing desk that the main studio now employs. After a year he moved to the disc-cutting room, working on the cutting of stereo and mono masters; the experience proved to be useful, for an engineering vacancy appeared and Bryan was able to take it.

'It was quite easy, really,' he explained. 'I knew the

mixer, having helped to build it, and I knew the requirements of engineering, having spent a year putting other people's sessions onto disc. From the point of view of the actual recording, I found that my background – I come from a very musical family – was a great help.'

He has now been an engineer for some four years, during which time he has desked sessions for all the Bee Gees' material, and a lot of other bands. Although he came straight into engineering in a senior position, he doesn't believe that status stands for much.

'We have no real concept of status here,' he said, 'except for when it comes to paying salaries. From the point of view of engineering, we believe that it's important that no one should feel they ever 'lose face'. We work as a team, and there are always two engineers on every session. Sometimes I might be on the desk, at other times I might be working as the tape-operator while one of the junior engineers does the mixing.'

Bryan has found that the working tempo of an engineer can vary considerably from time to time.

Involvement

'We operate a system known as the "client preferred" system,' he explained. 'When a client makes a block

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booking'he normally chooses the engineer he wishes to work with.

'This means that you might be working flat out for a month or so on one client's sessions – it takes about one month to record an album – and then you'll suddenly find that you're not doing any work at all.

'Although we do tend to work with the same client, there's an obvious interchange to cover holidays and illness difficulties. Basically, though, I find it's better to work with the same regular clients. There's a higher level of personal involvement – and you get to know the client's way of doing things. You know what they're going to want in the way of sound balance and effects. It saves a lot of time.'

Contribution

Ralph Downs, engineer at **Rockfield Studios**, began his career as an electronic engineer repairing Hammond organs. One fortuitous evening, he went with some friends to watch The Nice play a concert. Keith Emerson was having trouble with his organ, and the roadies seemed unable to sort out the problem. So Ralph got up on stage, walked over to the Hammond, and put it right. The result was that Emerson offered Ralph a job with The Nice – and Ralph accepted.

However, he soon found that life on the road was a bit harder than he had expected.

'All I was really doing was humping and driving,' he explained. 'I found it very hard work and I was beginning to lose interest. I'd got

to know Kingsley Ward at Rockfield, and one day he asked me to help out. I've been with Rockfield since then.'

One of his first sessions in the recently-opened Monmouth-based studio was the Dave Edmunds hit *I Hear You Knocking*; since then he has done further work with Edmunds, as well as recent sessions for the forthcoming Arthur Brown's *Kingdom Come* album, Roy Young and Kenny Young. The studio will tackle anything that comes along, but Ralph finds most of his sessions to be for group albums – though he occasionally desks 'the odd small orchestral thing'.

Like most of the engineers we spoke to during the preparation of this feature, Ralph considers a musical background to be of great importance – but he also attaches great importance to a knowledge of electronics.

'I think it helps if you know how your controls and circuits work,' he said. 'It's particularly important if you're working with special effects or doing, as I do,

studio maintenance.'

He also believes that the engineer should be able to make his own contributions to the 'artistic' aspects of each session.

'It depends, of course, on the producer,' he said. 'Every producer has got different ideas of what makes a good sound. If the producer is good – and if he's able to explain what he wants – then you can get on with him well. Occasionally, though, you meet a producer who doesn't seem to know what he's doing – and then you can help a lot. Overall, you should be able to make any suggestion that might be useful to the producer.'

Beck's Derek Tompkins developed his interest in music through playing with a group and running a hi-fi shop. As a qualified electronics engineer, he found himself asked to build specialised and customised amplification equipment; he was also involved in recording his own work.

He soon found that many bands began asking him to do sessions with them. Accord-



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ingly, he set up his own small studio, where Family and Cupid's inspiration were among the bands who cut their first demos with him. After some years of working independently, he decided, with some friends, to open Beck Studios. Since then – and without any formal advertising – Beck's business has grown considerably. Recent visitors to the studio have included Black Widow, Pete York, the Barron Knights and the Sweet.

Derek himself prefers to confine his activities to those of the engineer. Recently, though, he has found himself asked to produce many of the studio's sessions.

'The border-line between engineering and producing can be very fluid,' he said. 'The engineer should be able to give advice and make his own suggestions. The producer should also be familiar with the engineer's work – he should know what to ask for from the engineer, and what he can expect. In positions where the engineer is restricted solely to his desk, there's a tendency for him to

get a little bit lazy – so it's as well that he should be involved in the artistic side of the session.'

On the other hand, Derek believes that a line of demarcation should be maintained.

'There's a very good case for the producer not involving himself too closely in production,' he said. 'It's important that he should be able to concentrate on the artistic side of what's happening, without having to worry about checking the meters and everything. That's the engineer's province.'

He sees two sides to the approach of the studio. One, he says, is the 'artistic' approach.

'That's where the producer puts his own stamp on each session,' he explained. 'The studio tends to turn every group into what the producer wants. Nevertheless, such a situation is very valid.'

'The second is the "Interpretation" approach – where the studio "put together" the session to present the music of the band in its best form.

I think bands prefer the interpretation approach – and that's the approach that we follow.'

Drama

Michael More, of the recently-opened **Theatre Projects** studio, got into engineering by 'following the lines of the same old story'. As a boy he used to tinker around with old radio sets, dismantling them and building his own designs from the pieces. He went on to technical college to study electronics – and found himself a part-time job as 'studio lad' in a small local studio.

After two years at college he moved on to a job with Radio Luxembourg, starting in their production studios as a junior and moving, over a period of seven years, to the position of 'Number Two'. During his time with Luxembourg he worked as a freelance on straight disc sessions.

He had always had a strong interest in the theatre, and had become very aware of the possibilities that specialisa-

tion in this field offered. He heard of the proposed Theatre Projects idea and went along to offer his help and opinions. He helped to build their initial equipment and took over the responsibility of engineering when the studio became fully operational. Although they originally intended to specialise in drama work, the studio has, in the seventeen months of its existence, branched out into 'straight' group work – and Mike now has four group masters in the pipeline. The studio has now installed eight-track facilities, and Mike expects the amount of group session to increase.

When I spoke to him he was able to give me some interesting ideas on drama work – an aspect of modern studio work that is often ignored by those 'outsiders' who are more interested in music.

'This line of work is very much more important than a lot of people realise,' he said. 'Most drama – either for the stage or radio and television – uses a lot of tape effects. A lot of dialogue is heard off-



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stage, for instance, and there's a lot of sound and music effects used.

'In many ways it involves finer limits and stricter demands than you'd find with a music session. Drama producers tend to be rather more "fanatical". Actors themselves tend to be rather "prima donna-ish" – they sometimes try twenty or thirty takes just to get one line right. And the final product has to be of the highest quality. We do a lot of work with the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre, etc.; they are very demanding.

'That's why I'm glad, in a way, that we're now doing much more music work. I tend to feel more confident with music; drama can be very heavy going.'

Variety

Calrec Sound Studios, a division of the Calder Recording Company, are situated half-way between Leeds and Manchester in the Yorkshire town of Hebden Bridge. Resident engineer is Howard Smith – and he's been in and around the business for

about eleven years. As with most provincial studios, the sessions that Howard handles tend to be very varied. Howard believes that this variety of work is to the mutual advantage of both himself and the bands he works with – because it helps him to maintain a fresh approach to every session.

'In the physical and technical limitations of the studio in which he works, an engineer should try to handle as great a variety of work as possible,' he said. 'It helps him to approach each separate session with a clear mind; it's very easy to get 'bogged down' if you're handling the same kind of work every time.'

Most of Howard's work tends to be demos and single masters – but the amount of finished work that he produces is now increasing. One of the reasons lies in the fact that London-based groups, as well as local bands, are increasingly moving 'out of town' to record.

'As the cost of studio time in London rises,' he said, 'so groups tend to come out to people like us, except for those tracks that require

the most complex technical facilities and accommodation for 30 or more musicians. We're in the process of expanding to accommodate even those.'

Much of the expansion is 'home-grown', for Calrec have now established themselves as one of the leading, and fastest-growing, manufacturers of studio equipment in the country. They produce custom-built modular-system desks, as well as a wide range of microphones and other equipment – all of which is tested and used under the exacting standards of their own studio.

Appreciation

Bob Sibbald, engineer at the Edinburgh-based **Craighall** studios, started in the business through 'a stroke of luck'.

'I came here straight from school, about seven or eight years ago,' he explained. 'Craighall were looking for a junior engineer, and I saw the advertisement in the paper. Although I didn't think I had a chance, I applied. Up until then I had no experience whatsoever, and no knowledge of electronics. I'd done O-level physics, and mucked around on my father's tape recorder, but that was all. Anyway, through pure luck, I got the job.'

'I started as a kind of "studio virgin" – not knowing anything. I spent the first

six months just sitting around the studio, watching how everything happened. I had a basic interest in music and musical appreciation; I just learnt to use my ears to find out what differences tone settings made, and my eyes to find out how the desk and all the other equipment worked. It was just a question of looking and hearing.'

As one of the leading Scottish studios, Craighall have found that their work is very different to that of the English studios.

'You could say that our bread and butter is Scottish music,' he said. 'The studio was originally started to record and release pipe-band music, military bands, country dance music, etc. It may not sound much to a Londoner, but we can easily sell five thousand copies of a single album. So that's become our everyday work – although we've now expanded, of course. We do a lot of folk sessions – although less so than during the folk boom of a few years ago – together with group stuff, and a few classical sessions. Sixty per cent of our sessions are for masters, the rest is demos – usually for groups.'

The variety of work that Bob encounters has meant that he has had to develop the ability to adapt to many different considerations.

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'I've found that I've had to force myself to "forget what I did yesterday";' he said. 'One day I might be working with a quartet, the next I'll have a classical session or some work with a heavy band. I have to disassociate myself from what I was doing before. Sometimes it's not easy – but it's essential, because there are varying considerations to be made for every session.'

He believes, unlike some other engineers, that the art of balancing can be learnt by someone who is not necessarily 'born' with an ear for the work.

'I'd say that if one has a good sense of musical appreciation – of all types of music – then you can develop a good ear for engineering,' he explained. 'A "good" or "bad" balance is anyway a very personal thing – the whole conception is a matter of personal taste.'

Instructions

Majestic's Roger Wilkinson got into the studio world 'quite by accident –

through a sporting fixture'. He was playing a game of badminton and began talking with the opposing captain. At the time Roger was working in advertising; the captain was involved in the studio business. He was told of a job vacancy at Advision, applied, and was given a position as a tape-operator. After nine months of 'sheer damned hard work, day, night and weekends' he was allowed to take his own sessions.

After numerous months spent in several other studios he eventually arrived at Majestic in time for its opening. Since then, he has been the resident engineer.

'The studio is large enough for all sorts of sessions,' he told me. 'We can take anything up to a sixty or seventy-piece orchestra; consequently, our work is very varied.'

'I suppose it's chiefly music – mainly group work and occasional orchestral sessions. We do some incidental music for films as well. Most of our work is for masters; we do very few

demos.'

For a busy studio, Majestic does not carry a large staff. As a result, Roger has to tackle a lot of work outside the role of the engineer.

'I have to look after everything – we all do. There are a lot of problems, of course, but we've grown up with them and we're used to them.'

'I do most of the producing, but then every engineer does to some extent. Most producers, you see, tend to work on the sound that the engineer gives them. They're more concerned with the structure of the music. So, in that sense, the engineer has a function as a producer – although some producers, of course, like to chip in odd instructions on the sound.'

'I don't mind taking instructions, however strict they are, from a producer who knows what he's doing. It's the producer who only thinks he knows what he's doing who's bad to work with.'

'Generally, though, most producers respect the knowledge of the engineer. They're more worried about con-

tinuity and context, especially if they're of the "dedicated musician" type. They let the engineer take care of the sound.'

Ken McKenzie, who owns and operates **Multicord**, began his musical career as a member of a 'really terrible' group. At the time he was nineteen – and getting very frustrated by his inability to communicate his ideas to the rest of the band. So when, a couple of years later, he was given a tape-recorder for his birthday, he was 'knocked out' by the possibilities it offered for developing and putting on tape his ideas. He built a gadget that allowed him to multi-track by 'ping-ponging' from track to track and set up a spare room in his parents house as a makeshift studio.

Decision

At first the studio was strictly a hobby; he added to its facilities and worked in it in his spare time. He was also studying to become an accountant, and working as a free-lance engineer for the



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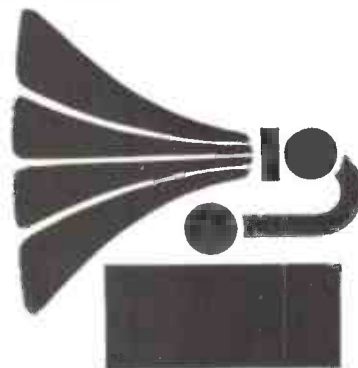
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BBC. Shortly after qualifying and taking his place in an accountancy firm, he found himself faced with a choice.

'The recording and music side of my interests had been growing bigger and bigger,' he explained. 'I'd come to the point where I had to make a decision – to follow the studio, or to remain an accountant. I finally made it; I jacked in the accountancy and became an engineer.'

Within a year his home studio had been extended to include a six-track desk and a couple of stereo machines, and Ken began to produce demos. As the business grew he moved into new premises, added a bigger desk and four-track facilities and established his business as Multicord.

'My early experience of tinkering around with equipment helped a lot,' he said. 'I was able to get the best out of what I had to start with. Now the equipment is a lot better – but four-track is not as far as I want to go.'

'I'm now producing a lot of masters, as well as demos. There's a strongly-established club circuit in the North, and a lot of people drop in to record. I've also found that I'm doing more and more work for several of the local radio stations.'

As the operator of what is, in effect, a one-man business,

Ken handles production as well as the engineering.

'In a way I think it's better,' he said. 'If the engineer and producer and group have to communicate with words, there's likely to be a certain amount of communication breakdown. But when you've got a producer, engineer and session man rolled into one, as I am, things seem to go more smoothly.'

'I'm very pleased with the way things are working out. I've never had so many debts in my life, but I'm happy.'

Expansion

Bob Auger and Dave Kent-Watson are the joint managing directors and engineers at **Indigo Sound**, one of the leading northern provincial studios. Both came into the studio business from television backgrounds. Bob started with the BBC, producing films for *Top Of The Pops* with his own film unit, and later moved to Granada TV; Dave had run a small mobile recording business in Portsmouth, before moving to the BBC and later to Granada, where he met Bob.

They soon found that they had similar ideas about sound and studio techniques, hav-

ing both passed through the same BBC engineers' course. They both felt that there was a considerable need for a multi-track studio in the Manchester area, and they set about finding the finance to build one.

Eventually they found premises – coincidentally, next to Granada's headquarters – and started conversion in October of last year. Bob was responsible for the electronics aspects and Dave took care of the building and acoustic design considerations.

'The first phase was completed in March 1972,' they told *Beat Instrumental*. 'We're now providing a first-class service for a wide variety of people – management agencies, groups, theatres, television, etc. The sessions cover all kinds of work, including pop, classical music, television and advertising promotions of all kinds. We were starting to get involved in them even while we were still building.'

'A lot of our work is obviously local, but we also get a lot of work from London-based artists who are up here on tour.'

'Generally, we've been extremely pleased with the interest that's been shown in the new venture. A lot of people have told us how glad they are to see a multi-track studio in Manchester. Now we're in the process of extending our facilities. We're planning to move to eight-track later in the year – and the equipment is designed for portability, to cover location work.'

Creative

Elizabeth Usher, engineer at **West of England** studios, divides her time between the studio and her law studies at Exeter University. She entered the engineering profession through an early interest in music, starting first in production and then extending her interests and knowledge to cover desk-work.

One of the things she's noticed in the last year has been the changing role of the provincial studio.

'There's been a change in attitudes,' she explained. 'Even local people have now come to accept that they have a 'real' studio in their midst – and we've found that more and more bands are coming from further afield to record with us, especially since we've extended our premises.'

Elizabeth has also noticed an interesting change in the nature of the bands she's been working with: group musicians – good group musicians – seem to be much younger than they used to be.

'We've had a band with a drummer who was only fourteen,' she said. 'And another with a sixteen-year-old bassist. Both of them were excellent musicians.'

All of which has lent more importance to her function as engineer and producer.

'Sometimes, when musicians have been working with each other for a long time, they can get too close to see clearly what the other members can contribute. An

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informed outside opinion helps. This, in itself, can be creative.'

Helpful

Trend Studios, based in Dublin, are the Republic's leading recording studios. The resident engineers are John D'Ardis and Fred Meijer.

'We both started working as engineers in the Eamonn Andrews studios over here,' said John. 'I left there about four years ago when Trend opened; Fred's joined me in the last six months.'

'Before I got into engineering I was studying in accountancy. I had a keen amateur interest in recording – and I was doing a bit of part-time work in radio. Fred's got a more technical background – he's always been more involved in the maintenance

side of things.'

As the leading multi-track studio in Eire, Trend handle about sixty per cent of the Republic's recording sessions – material that varies from traditional folk music to classical music and out-and-out rock.

'I'd say ninety per cent of our work was music,' John said. 'And, of that, nearly all is mastering work – we do very few demos. We do a limited amount of other work as well; mainly television commercials and sessions for television pop shows.'

Contrary to what one might expect, the current trouble in the North has not affected Trend's overall business – but it has limited their expansion plans.

'We were intending to go sixteen-track in order to start catering for English musi-

cians,' John said. 'But very few are coming over, so it's not really been possible to go sixteen-track yet. We have done some work in the past with people like Mary Hopkin and Donovan – and we hope to be picking up on it again as soon as the present problems are over.'

Although Trend handle material for most of the leading U.K. record companies, the bulk of their work is for the home market. John has found that the necessary approach is quite different to that required in London.

'Most of the bands we get are very inexperienced when it comes to recording,' he said. 'So I think that it's very important for the engineer to be able to set the band at ease – and not to exploit them in the sense of pushing them too much.'

'Above all, then, he should be helpful. And he should be able to work very fast. There's not much money to be made from recording over here – most groups rely on live appearances – and they

don't like to spend more time than necessary in the studio.'

De Lane Lea's studios are the source of many of the top-selling recordings in today's charts. The engineer responsible for many of them is Martin Birch.

He came into the business via a background of playing in several semi-pro bands, and gradually edged his way over to the technical side. He applied for a job as an assistant engineer at De Lane Lea, got it, and has been with them ever since. In the four years he has been with them, he's desked sessions with a list of top bands which includes Fleetwood Mac, the Groundhogs and Deep Purple. Purple's Jon Lord is quoted as having said he 'wouldn't work with any other engineer but Martin'.

One of the most difficult things to establish in the preparation of this feature was exactly *what* attracts people into the engineering business. Martin has his own ideas:

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'It's a very creative thing,' Martin said. 'In some ways it's like painting a picture. Every session is completely different – and each calls for a completely different approach.'

'I like to try to record a band as they are – that is, as they sound. If they want to change their sound, I'm there to provide the guidelines.'

'As to what I like about the business – well, I suppose it comes down to the nice people you meet.'

And what doesn't Martin like about it? – 'the not so nice people!'

Brian Hatt, engineer at **Orange's** Old Compton Street, London studios, came into the recording business from a background as a group musician. He had spent a period of time building himself a small demo studio at his home, using a lot of equipment he had built himself, in order to try out some of his ideas. Then he met Cliff Cooper – who now

runs the Orange group of companies. Cooper, at the time, also had a small demo studio and a partnership seemed the logical step to take. They moved into their present premises; Cooper took over the administration of the studio and Brian became the resident engineer.

In his time as an engineer he has worked with many bands and solo artists; his credit list includes Hot Chocolate, Ike and Tina Turner, Paul Anka, Rolf Harris and, in conjunction with Orange's own label, John Miles.

Brian, like all engineers, believes in adherence to the strictest professional standards – but he voices one important consideration.

'Sometimes an occasion might arise where there's a clash between engineering technique and the music itself,' he said. 'When that happens, then, as far as I'm concerned, the music has got to win – every time.'

Orange have lately joined the growing ranks of the sixteen-track studio – with the addition of a machine that was designed and built to their own ideas. At present, the studio is in the development and test-building stage of a thirty-two track recorder. While everyone at Orange is most enthusiastic about the added scope that the machine will offer, Brian believes that some limits will have to be imposed.

'I think people are going to find out that thirty-two track is the absolute limit that can be handled to full advantage,' he said. 'If the thirty-two track machine becomes standard, which it probably will, then desks will have to get simpler. Otherwise it's just going to take too long to record – the whole process will become too complicated.'

'Let's face it – the quicker – and better – you can produce a record, the better you are at your job.'

**STUDIO
ENGINEERS
FEATURE
COMPILED AND
EDITED BY:
JOHN BAGNALL**

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