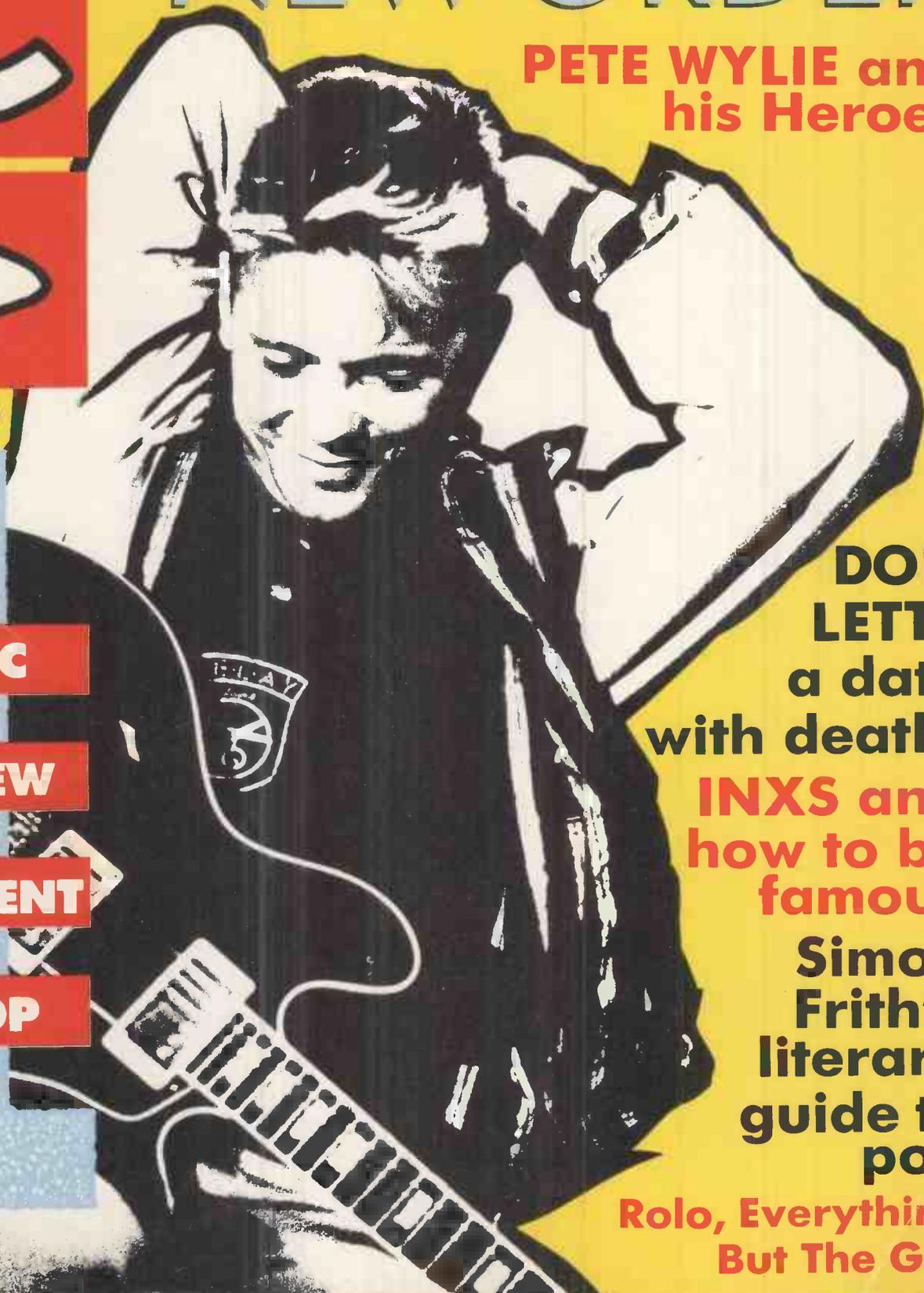


**FIRST ISSUE: OCTOBER 1986 85p**

**18 pages of news and reviews PLUS**

# The Secret Life Of **NEW ORDER**

**PETE WYLIE and  
his Heroes**



**MUSIC**

**THE NEW**

**TESTAMENT**

**OF POP**

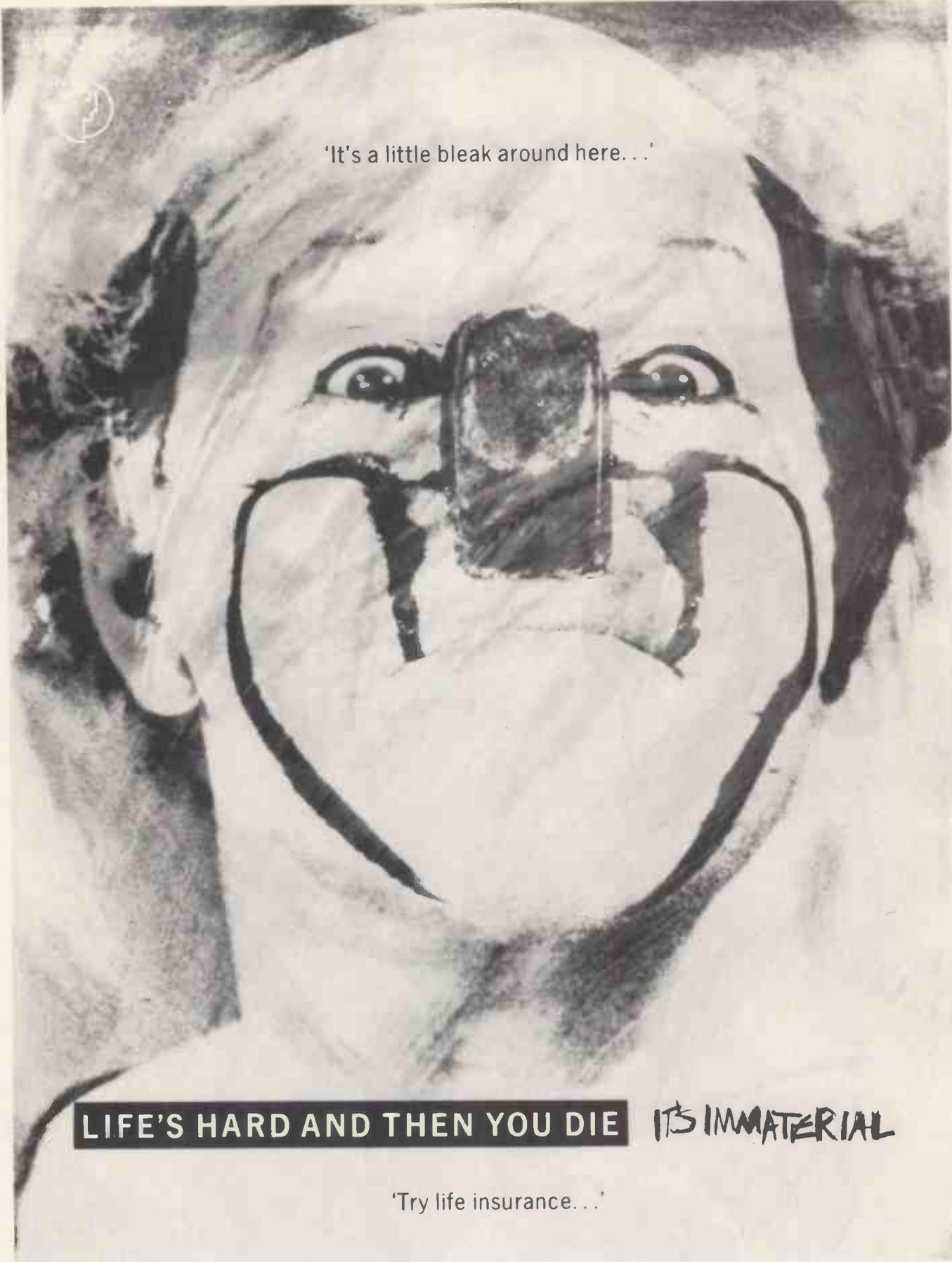
**DON  
LETT'S**  
a date  
with death!

**INXS** and  
how to be  
famous

Simon  
Frith's  
literary  
guide to  
pop

**Rolo, Everything  
But The Girl**

UK



'It's a little bleak around here...'

**LIFE'S HARD AND THEN YOU DIE** *IT'S IMMATERIAL*

'Try life insurance...'

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CONEYL JAY

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**NEXT ISSUE OF UK MIX ON SALE NOV 13**

**THE**

**PRETENDERS**

**DON'T  
GET**

**ME  
WRONG**

**NEW SINGLE  
ON 7" & 12"  
OUT NOW!**



Openings was compiled by: Jeremy Novick, William Shaw, Edwin J Bernard

The imposing figure of Colenso Parade singer Oscar nurses a pint of lager and expounds on the group's music thus: "What would you call our music?" he asks rhetorically in his Portadown drawl. "I was thinking about this on the way up, because people say we're dead emotional, or we're dead moody, but it's not that," he announces loudly over the noise of a pub jukebox. "We're just BAD TEMPERED! It's bad tempered dance music. That's what I'm really striving for."

It's been a few years since Oscar and keyboard player Linda Clendinning left Northern Ireland with their powerfully lyrical bad tempered dance music to give it a go in England. A smattering of independent singles followed; most recently the highly praised 'Hallelujah Chorus'. The line-up has stabilised now; ex-Big Self drummer Owen Howell and guitarist John Watt ("wee John's the worst man in the world for his alcohol") are both fellow countrymen. Bass player Neil Lawson was found in London, where Colenso Parade have based themselves for the last couple of years.

"I love it here," spurts Oscar. "What's the alternative? Going back to Portadown? Occasionally I get starry-eyed about going back there, but I'd be bloody stupid if I did."

Colenso Parade have just released a new single: it's called 'Fontana Eyes' and it's backed with an intriguing version of Van Morrison's 'Here Comes The Night' and it's on Fire Records. And very good it is too.

First there was Christian Paris' *Alice In Wonderland* — a club to tune in, turn on and take off. Then there were the Magical Mystery Tours, mind-expanding trips to who knew where. New York was blitzed — poor things — and the Planet Alice shop was set in the Portobello Road. Then Doctor And The Medics hit the top pop spot with *Spirit In The Sky*. Now comes the inevitable —

Alice the LP. '*A Pretty Smart Way To Catch A Lobster*' features eight nuggets from five dubious sounding groups glorying in names like Underground Zero, Voodoo Child and Gwyllum And The Raspberry Flavoured Cat. Any similarity between Gwyllum's Cat and the good Doctor's crew is purely intentional. The same goes for The Spooks, better

known on Planet Earth as The Damned. Those boys do get around. With tracks linked by the dulcet tones of the Doctor, '*A Pretty Smart Way...*' is perfect for those who were there to wallow in wonder, and for those who weren't to just wonder. As the sleevenotes say "Dropkick me Jesus through the goal posts of life."



Colenso Parade: Oscar, strangled by Linda

Alex Cox, fresh from the rigours and traumas of 'Sid And Nancy', is currently in sunny Spain shooting his next film, a spaghetti western.

Teaming up again with Harry Dean Stanton, the star of his first feature 'Repo Man', the as yet untitled epic maintains Cox's fixation with rock'n'roll.



MANCRAB: Eddie Thomas Jr (above) and Ian Stanley (below) looking bored



The Pogues, who collaborated with Cox on the soundtrack to 'Sid And Nancy' and whose single 'Haunted' was taken from that film, are to feature as the McMarns, a family addicted to caffeine, but who are religiously anti-alcohol and swearing. There's nothing like being typecast, is there?

"'Tears For Fears Split? Oh no. What a headline!' splutters Tears For Fears keyboard player Ian Stanley. "No, I'm afraid not..."

Stanley has just been asked the obvious journalistic question. Does the existence of **Mancrab** mean a split in the ranks of Tears For Fears? In between hours spent recording the next Tears For Fears LP Ian Stanley and Roland Orzabal have been working on a little project of their own, recording material which doesn't fit into the Tears For Fears scheme of things.

"Well," says Ian, "I'm a bit more involved in it than Roland, mainly because I have more spare time. At the moment I'm still trying to figure out how this group works, and what it is..."

At the moment **Mancrab** exists only in as far as there's a single out under that name, the peculiarly titled 'Fish For Life'. "Yes," says Ian, "it is a peculiar title: it's one of Roland's. Once you get used to it it's really good. What does it mean? I think it's the opposite of like; go for it."

The other member of the project is singer and dancer Eddie Thomas Jr. who they originally came across when they needed a dancer for the 'Everybody Wants To Rule The World' video. "Eddie was the final component to make the group work," says Ian. And the name **Mancrab**? Ian explains as best he can: "It's Roland again. He was watching this thing on Channel 4 about Trinidad, and the Trinidadians has created this effigy, half man, half crab, which was called 'mancrab'. Roland was really keyed up about it, he was going 'What a wonderful marriage of technology and mankind!' And we thought, that's a good name. There's nothing in it really."

Quite peculiar. This monstrously bearded man from **ZZ Top** is sitting in a hotel room in Denver Colorado and explaining his passion for Stockhausen's interpretations of Beethoven.

And this is the bloke who appears in all those videos with chrome-plated cars and models whose legs seem to have been rearranged by plastic surgeons to rise up to their chins to meet the norms of MTV?

This is the man who's happy to stand in front of several thousand youths clad in Saxon T-shirts at Castle Donnington? How very peculiar.

There is of course much more to Billy Gibbons than **ZZ Top**. He may have spent nine months this year on a mammoth tour which is now bringing the group to Britain, but in between times he's — among other things — a trustee of Houston's leading museum, a benefactor of several Texas art galleries, and a big fan of experimental music as championed by Brian Eno. He finds the proliferation of the more esoteric types of music extremely exciting. "Brother," he comments gleefully, "it's getting plenty weird out there."

And then he begins telling me about this four page feature about ambient music he's just read in this new magazine he's just picked up... For all that though, Gibbons takes great pains to point out that **ZZ Top** too are purveyors of serious music. He takes the non-serious questions about beards philosophically ("Yeah, we probably do get a bit tired about it but we got 'em!") and answers

**Everything But The Girl** follow up their latest LP 'Baby The Stars Shine Bright' with an eight date nationwide tour culminating in that statutory showcase at the Royal Albert Hall on October 14 where they will be supported by what a spokesperson describes as a "hand-picked 36 piece orchestra".

Tickets will set you back



enquires as to how they twizzle their guitars through 360° with the curt "carefully." "I know we have this very cartoon image but fortunately the serious side of our music has never been compromised by our rather outlandish appearance. That's probably the safe anchor to which we cling. It's serious musicianship that started us off in the first place."

This tour is not quite up to their 1976 excesses when they travelled around with a Texas-shaped stage, live buffaloes, buzzards, rattlesnakes and longhorn steers. "Oh no," says Billy, "long gone is the live section of the show. Long gone. And that probably includes us after eight months touring," he draws. "The current situation is that... er... we have streamlined our production in an effort to squeeze out maximum entertainment. What you've got is **ZZ Top** with a little less chrome and a couple more carburetors..."

The UK tour is Stafford Bingley Hall (October 18), London Wembley Arena (20-23). But all tickets have been sold, except for the last Wembley show. Tickets are priced £9 and £10 and are available from MAC Promotions, PO Box 2, London W6.

£6 to £8 and can be ordered from the RAH Box Office, PO Box 77, London SW4. The other dates are Edinburgh (October 3), Manchester (4), Liverpool (6), Leeds (7), Nottingham (9), Birmingham (10) and Ipswich (11). In the meantime turn to the interview with Ben Watt and Tracey Thorn on page 50.

**Pete Wylie**  
**formerly blah**  
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**blah,has a new single**  
**available exclusively**  
**through Eternal**  
**“Diamond Girl”**



Featuring The fabulous Josie Jones...7" (MDM 12) Extended 12" (MDM 12-12)  
An Eternal Production/An MDM Recording/Marketed by Siren/Distributed by Virgin.



**POLYSTYRENE** on her *Hare Krishna* faith: "I really do think it could be an important factor in modern society. All you need do is look at the role models – the pop stars – they're all smacked out on cocaine and their main incentive in life is to see how often they can have sex. It's pathetic."

**DEITER MEIER** of Yello on making records: "Sometimes, it's like the dialectic struggle of creating a synthesis out of the creative impulse and all the doubt and difficulty that goes with it."

**RUSSELL MULCHAHEY:** "Any idiot can make a music video."

**STEVEN BERKOFF** on replacing Terence Stamp after he walked out of the filming of 'Under A Cherry Moon': "On arrival in Nice at night I am driven straight to the set and rushed into my costume. The producers are anxious and the director and Prince are too. It's a sultry night and the air smells of coffee and jasmine... One glance at the script offers me a clue as to why I am in Stamp's cast offs..."

**PEDRO** of *Frankie Goes to Hollywood*: "Paul Morley... I'm telling you, I don't think he knows what he fucking wants. I suppose he's into the cultier side of it, the dark side of what we sometimes get up to, the messing about and the telling people to fuck off and all the dodgy bits... The 16-year-old birds all over the place side of it."

**FELA KUTI**, on being released from his Nigerian prison: "I'm happy for the suffering because it's opened the eyes of many people." I have accomplished so far two things; people finally know the honesty of my struggle and the potentiality of my leadership"

**Actor MATT FREWER** on what it's like to spend four and a half hours getting made up as *Max Headroom*: "It's a very painful, tortuous and disgusting exercise."

**GREG BODENHAMMER** of Orange County probation agency 'Back In Control'. (The county's probation department has forbidden minors to attend concerts and listen to certain types of music as a condition of their parole): "When we're working with parents whose kids are into heavy metal or punk we simply tell the parents the same things we tell them about drugs or booze. Take it away from them; the records, the posters, the peer relationships – anything that says to the kid that 'What you're doing is OK'."

**STAN RIDGEWAY:** "I'm 31 years old and the human mechanism is a question I ponder. I think to myself – it sounds rather pretentious and pompous, but I think to myself – is there a God, or are we just sophisticated pieces of meat that simply think too much?... I'm leaning toward the sophisticated pieces of meat theory right now."

**MICK HUCKNALL:** "It seems that the Europeans are starting to come around now, starting to impose trade sanctions against Libya which is good. That's the best way of getting rid of terrorism."

**JAZ COLEMAN** of *Killing Joke* on ex-*Killing Joke* bass player Youth, who left to form *Brilliant*: "What's strange about it is that I don't really know him any more. After I came back from Iceland he thought he was going to have a big commercial success with his new band so he stuck the boot in. Well I'm the bastard that remembers these things and when things get going good for me I'll REALLY stick the boot in! He seems a bit of a lost soul to me. I certainly don't think much of what he's doing."

**LOU REED** on his solo career: "I wanted to get popular, so I got the biggest schlock around, and I turned out really big schlock, because my shit is better than other people's diamonds. But it's really boring being the best show in town. I took it as far as I could possibly go and then o-u-t."

**JIM REID** of *The Jesus And Mary Chain*: "I like leather clothes, jackets and trousers, which is embarrassing because I don't think I suit them. I don't look rock'n'roll enough. I look like a little rent boy which would explain why businessmen nip my bum on the tube."

**DWIGHT YOAKAM** on what his music means: "I think it sends a message: 'Let the profit-grasping sons of bitches in Nashville know that country music is still country music and not the pseudopop dressed up schlock that they want to peddle'."

**BOY GEORGE:** "I was at a smack dealers once and there was a guy from *The Sun* there. I freaked. He said, 'I'm from *The Sun*' and I thought, oh no, this is a story. But he was buying smack. I mean..."

**RAT SCABIES** of *The Damned*: "I couldn't go and see 'Sid And Nancy'; it's much too close to home. I knew Sid reasonably well – well enough to get drunk with him a few times and well enough to meet Nancy. I think Alex Cox is a brilliant director, but he could have picked a better subject."

**PAUL McCARTNEY:** "I want my children to have values and common sense but I wouldn't ban them from buying Sigeu Sigeu Sputnik records. Anyway, they've got more sense. They like *Dire Straits*, *Simple Minds*, people like that."

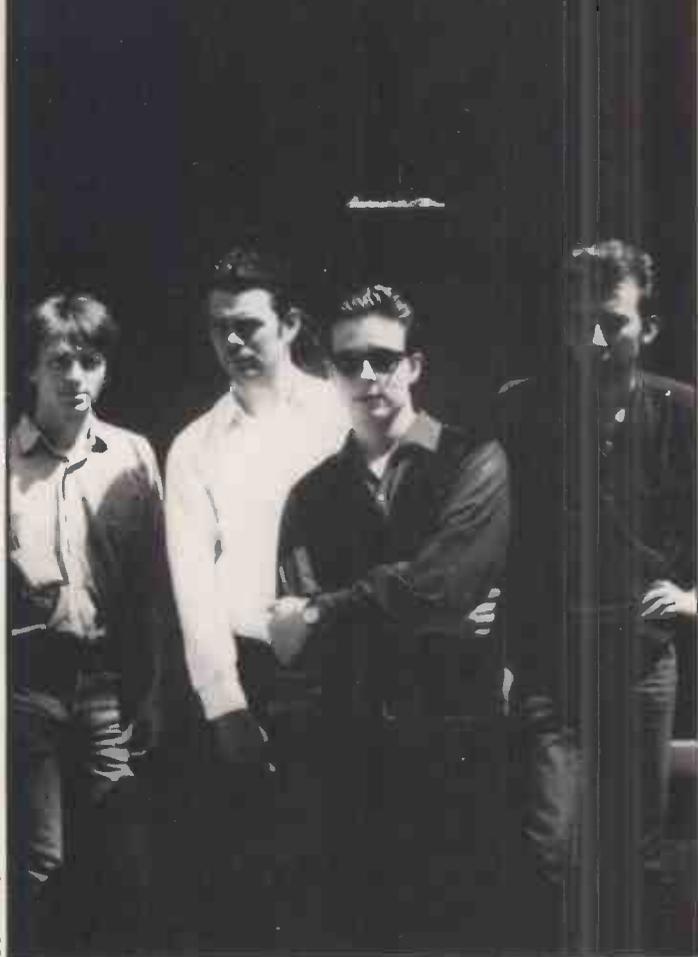
**DAVID BOWIE:** "I really do find it hard to connect with some of my past. Some of it I find amusing now. Some of it I'm still very proud of. But some of it, knowing myself now, and for my personal survival I have found it necessary to become distant from it."

**CHAKA KHAN:** "This will be a good interview, my periods have just come on... Periods are a relief, any woman will tell you that. If men had periods everybody would be talking about them."

**VERA RAMONE** on hubby *Dee Dee Ramone*: "I thought he was just the sweetest, quietest thing. I didn't know he was stoned all the time."

**OZZY OSBOURNE** on singing the song 'Thank God For The Bomb' (words "Thank God for the bomb/ Nuke ya!") on tour in Japan: "No, I don't feel odd singing it. I don't feel odd because it's a true song. If that's the only thing that keeps the peace, then thank God for the bomb."

CONEYL JAY



**WEATHER PROPHETS.** From left: Osin Little, Greenwood Golding, Pete Astor and Dave Morgan.

There's a most revolting simile that Peter Astor of **The Weather Prophets** uses to describe his songwriting: "It's like going to the toilet or something. You can coax it out. You don't have to sit there going gnnnnnnnnnn! At the right moment it just happens."

What that would make his song, heaven only knows, but as a figure of speech it's a little at odds with this well-dressed, polite, intense man. Pete Astor, a 25-year-old ex-English student is in fact a songwriter of not inconsiderable talent.

He made his name first with the group **The Loft** with a minor indie hit 'Up The Hill And Down The Slope' but they split up last year with the departure of music journalist group members Bill Black and Andy Strickland. Pete had to pick up and start again with **The Weather Prophets**. There was, he says, nothing else to do: "It sounds awfully corny but I really didn't have any choice in the matter. It's just something that I do."

The group are now following up this summer's success 'I Almost Prayed' with a

new single 'Naked As The Day You Were Born' on Creation records, but the Weather Prophets still remain something of an incongruity amongst that new wave of guitar strumming Bay 63 song merchants. There is something deliberately conventional about Pete Astor's approach.

"I'm always surprised when people say we don't fit in," says Pete. "Some people do perceive us as a little less 'cred' than other indie bands. Actually I'm flattered by the fact that certain sections of the indie audience don't like us because we're not what they want us to be."

And then there's his dress sense. Other groups on the label brush their hair forwards; Astor sweeps his back. His clothes are his smartish side. Meticulous?

He ponders a second: "I suppose I am. But at the same time I'm not too meticulous. I'm extremely fussy about how high the heels of my boots are or whatever, but that doesn't mean that I'm always washing my hair or anything. I find really vulgar things rather painful. Really horrible clothes annoy me."



It's rare that an LP comes along that stops ears right in their tracks, but armed with little more than an acoustic guitar and a mouth organ, **Peter Case** managed to do just that with his debut solo recording released here this summer.

A 32-year-old New Yorker, he spent six years fronting the straight ahead pop band **The Plimsouls** before picking up his hat, packing his trusty guitar and "going out to have a look at what else there was."

After travelling the country, touring the clubs and bars, he teamed up with Costello luminary **T-Bone Burnett**, an alliance which led to his debut solo LP. It's not, he says, a radical departure. "I've always been a teller of stories, and that's still what I do. I just wanted to get a bit more intimate, play songs that people could actually hear the words of."

All this may sound as if Case has gone to the musical backwoods, but his "stories about ordinary people" capture a contemporary edge illustrated by his cover of **The Pogues** 'A Pair of Brown Eyes'. "T-Bone played it and it was such a good song that I thought I'd do it."

Though he denied a 'protest singer' tag, it's difficult not to tie him in with that school. "I Shook His Hand" is about his hero **John F. Kennedy** and what might have been. And yes, he did actually shake his hand. "Walk In The Woods" could be about the infamous USA/USSR nuclear standoff of the same name. "Uh? It could be I suppose. Things like that you can just take for what you want."

"Just say that I'm somewhere between **Ramblin' Jack Elliot** and **Richard Pryor**." Sorry. **Ramblin' Jack Elliot** and **Richard Pryor**. Sorry. **Ramblin' Jack** who? "You don't know who **Ramblin' Jack Elliot** is? I can't believe that. You don't know who he is. Listen, **Ramblin' Jack Elliot** is a great singer, great. In the tradition of **Woody Guthrie**." So now you know. But **Richard Pryor**? "He's the greatest story teller I've ever seen."

She looks like a supermini version of **Tina Turner** (finished in white) and sounds like her too; the 23-year-old **E G Daily** has also been compared with **Madonna**.

**E G** (she says it stands for **Electric Giraffe**, but I know her first name is **Elizabeth**) hates those comparisons, exclaiming that everyone has a belly button. You can see that most readily in the 'Lolita'-inspired video of her debut single, 'Say It, Say It', in which she and her screen mother fight over the affections of a visiting writer and eventually kill him out of jealousy.

**Real Mother Daily** is no less bizarre, running **Hollywood's Anti-Club**, a hang-out for the more avant-garde elements of tinsel town.

As a singer, **E G** was taken under the powerful wings of **Giorgio Moroder**, who used her on every demo he recorded over the past five years. Her debut album, aptly titled 'Wild Child' (**A&M**) is a sensual blend of **Moroder**-inspired **AOR** and down and out rock and roll. All right?





Bill Prince may very possibly be better known to you as NME journalist Bill Black: it's slightly less likely that you'd know him as the man who once used to pluck the bass guitar in Pete Astor's group the Loft. "I was sacked," explains Bill forlornly; what actually happened was that Astor disbanded the group last year to

form The Weather Prophets and Bill went back to his typewriter. But now Bill returns this month with a new group of his own, **The Wishing Stones**, and a single released on Head, the label run by Jeff Barrat who was press officer for Creation records. The song's called 'Beat Girl' and a winsome little strumalong thing it is too.

"Ted Hawkins is an extraordinary figure," announces Andy Kershaw, the man who's become the leading pundit about everything that's authentic and twangy. "He's a really sweet bloke. . . . When I was in Nashville doing some filming for Whistle Test I bought a ticket to Los Angeles and I thought I'd go and knock on his door. He's living in this small house with his wife and his daughter. . . . he was a bit bewildered."

Which isn't surprising. For most of his 50-odd years Ted Hawkins has been a down and out, a hobo, a drifter, a busker and a petty thief. ("He told me when you're poor you got to steal," explains Kershaw). He's been in and out of various penal institutions and even the cover of the LP 'Watch Your Step' has him photographed in one of the institutions in which he was passing his time.

In 1971 he was 'discovered' singing on the streets of Los Angeles by a local DJ, Johnny Jr. who told blues producer Bruce Bromberg about him, and they set about recording this remarkable singer who's been accurately described as having something of Sam Cooke in him, and more than a little of Wilson Pickett too. But after the sessions Hawkins disappeared again until just a few years ago. This time Bromberg managed to capture him on the 'Watch Your Step' LP which was recently released in the UK. That brought him to the attention of the hyper-enthusiast Andy Kershaw who's

been in regular contact with him since their meeting.

"He was getting used to the idea of being unknown," recalls Kershaw, "because 'Watch Your Step', had been out over two years, and hadn't sold millions. 'There's a guy in England who likes my stuff!' he said to me. I didn't really have the heart to tell him it was me."

Bringing Hawkins to a wider public has become something of a crusade for Kershaw. He won his confidence and persuaded the singer to come to the UK for a tour. Since then, explains Kershaw, Hawkins has been ringing him regularly telling him of how he practices each night on Venice beach, because Hawkins' first date in London will only be the second concert he's ever played in front of a paying audience. "He keeps saying 'I'm ready! I'm trainin'!"

Hear the voice that John Peel says he'd gladly swap his wife and Peel Acres for on the following dates: London 100 Club (Oct 3), London Cricketers (4), Manchester Band On The Wall (7), Brighton Richmond Hotel (8), London Swiss Cottage Rhythm Room (9), London Half Moon (10), Sheffield (11), Glasgow Daddy Warbucks (12), Kirklevington Country Club (14), Leeds Astoria Ballroom (16), London Dingwalls (18), London Town And Country Club (19).

Hawkins recorded a series of demos for Kershaw; these are being released as 'On The Boardwalk; The Venice Beach Tapes' (American Activities Records).

"Goths"? We remember them well. No group would ever admit to being one, but there seemed to be an AWFUL lot of them about. A prime example were the Germans **X-MAL DEUTCHLAND** of course. After a smattering of releases on Beggars over the last couple of years they've signed to Phonogram and they're releasing their first single 'Matador', produced by one Hugh Cornwall from The

Strangers, (who could be described by stretching the imagination as far as it can possibly go as a proto-Gothic group). They're also on tour this October; Croydon Underground (October 21), Brighton Coasters (22), Birmingham Triangle (23), Newcastle Riverside (25), Manchester International (26), Leeds Warehouse (28) and Town and Country Club London (29).

# What happens when the National Union of Students and Britain's top rock promoter get together?????



A strange pair of bedfellows you may think. . . . and what do they have in common?

A feeling for youth and the scope for the best in entertainment. They have combined their talents and created Student Vision, the most lively, vibrant video show for students.

Shown in Student Unions around the country at lunchtimes and during the evenings, Student Vision is a solid hour of non-stop entertainment featuring wacky cartoons, action film reviews Endurance – the Japanese game show – and of course the best music on video. It has news, Views and interviews, everything necessary to keep you in touch with what is happening in the student world – from the grass roots up . . .

What other programme gives you all that?

Student Vision is proud to announce it's association with the It Bites Tour when it will be following It Bites at Newcastle University (Sept 26), Manchester Poly (Oct 2), City University (Oct 3) and Exeter University (Oct 10).

The It Bites Intercity Railcard Rocks Tour will give most of us the chance to hear this exciting band from Cumbria for the first time. They are being heralded as the leaders of a new phase in music bringing skill back into live music. Their style looks back to the early 70s and to the skills of the super groups such as Genesis, Yes, Emerson Lake and Palmer, and Deep Purple.

The band, Francis Dunnery (guitar and vocals), Richard Nolan (base), John Beck (Keyboards) and Robert Dalton (drums) have been playing together for 8 years, and have developed their own original style based on instrumental skill and unorthodox arrangements.

As Paul Henderson said after seeing It Bites live "They are one of the best new bands in years . . . virtually pissing on the competition when it comes to creative ability" Student Vision, Harvey Goldsmith Entertainments and Intercity have combined to provide one of the best tours this Autumn. It gives the chance, not only to see It Bites perform live, (they are essentially a live band) but to hear music from their new album, "The Big Lad in the Windmill". Music from their concerts will be brought to you on Student Vision, the programme that communicates to students.



*Communicating to Students*



## THE MIGHTY LEMON DROPS

Just when it looked like things were getting staid and predictable, along has come the new blood — the inevitable new 'scene'. Hordes of baby boomers bursting with energy, vitality, originality and life. And those are just the press releases. The Bodines, The Shop Assistants... and The Mighty Lemon Drops, prefects of the class of '86.

Veterans of some 14 months, The Mighty Lemons are big news. "We had offers off every major record company." Lucky Chrysalis finally landed the lauded Lemons and had the kindness of heart to place the boys on their very own subsidiary label, Blue Guitars, alongside The Shop Assistants.

Run along the same lines as Blanco Y Negro, home of their godfathers The Mary Chain, the label retains "artistic control" while distribution is left to Chrysalis. Consolidating all this is their debut LP 'Happy Head', produced by the band together with Stephen Street, which features a new version of the song that established them so firmly in the nation's hearts, 'Like An Angel'. "It was in the independent chart for six months; there was nothing we could do about it, no shifting the thing."

It does seem that people do like them. Any criticism of the music, such as the oft cited Bunnymen similarities, produces the self assured smirk of the successful. "The only heroes we've had were Slade. They were a really big influence."

The end of term report for The Lemons would contain just one word: effortless. 'Happy Head' was recorded in two weeks. "It wasn't really hard work. Most of the time was spent playing pool and table tennis. What do people who spend 18 months in the studio do?"

# **ALL HE WANTED WAS A FEW LAUGHS.**



**When life doesn't seem that great, heroin might seem a great way to have a few laughs.**

**But it isn't long before the fun turns into a bad joke. You'll start looking ill, losing weight and feeling like death.**

**You'll lose control of your mind as well as your health. And eventually you might even risk death.**

**So if a friend offers you heroin, don't treat it as a joke.**

**Otherwise heroin might have the last laugh.**

**HEROIN SCREWS YOU UP.**

In the first few months of 1986 a club called **Bay 63** gained quite a reputation for being the nation's foremost venue for the 'janglies'. Cast your eye down the names of groups who contributed to this years C-86 cassette compilation and there's hardly one which hasn't trod the boards at West London's Acklam Hall, home of Bay 63. Thankfully Bay 63 reactivates this autumn on Thursday nights: Soup Dragons, Razor Cuts, The Hobgoblins (Sept 18), Nikki Sudden, The Hangman's Beautiful Day (25), BMX Bandits, Talulah Gosh, The Clouds (October 2), Blurt, Happy Mondays, The Young Gods (9), Bid (ex-mainman of The Monochrome Set), The Wishing Stones (16). Jeff Barrat, who's promoting these concerts, is keen to get hold of as many new acts who are appropriate as he can lay his hands on. Ring him on 01-385-7279.

A new series of **The Tube** is to start up on Friday October 31 with each show to be repeated the following Tuesday. As ever, Jools and Paula will be the genial hosts. Until then though, there are a couple of one-off specials to whet the appetite. First, on Tuesday October 7 there is a documentary about the reportedly turbulent making of the film 'Shanghai Surprise', starring Madonna and Sean Penn. Then on the 25th is a 90 minute special of Queen filmed at Wembley Arena.



The Decline' ... ICA.

The seemingly endless celebrations of the 10th anniversary of Punk continue at the ICA with the first ever UK screening of the "legendary" Los Angeles film '**The Decline of Western Civilization**'. Dead nihilistic, huh? Made in 1979/80 by Penelope Spheeris - director of the acclaimed "Suburbia" - it features seminal West Coast bands such as Black Flag, X and Fear cavorting around with their fans doing all the things that punks did. Or do. The Decline' opens on November 1 and runs for a month.



# SHELLEYAN ORPHAN



PETER MCARTHUR

It's a name that conjures up all sorts of ideas about what this couple, Shelleyan Orphan, might be like. And some of them turn out to be true.

Shelleyan Orphan is a quite extraordinary group. It consists of the quiet-spoken Jemaur and Caroline, a string trio and an oboe, and a profound sense of the romantic.

Jemaur tells me that when the poet Shelley drowned off the coast of Italy, Lord Bryon and his

mates went to recover the body to cremate it. The ashes were entombed in Rome. Last summer Jemaur and Caroline went on a pilgrimage there to see his remains. What's more, another part of this story is that Shelley's heart, apparently, did not burn. It was brought back to England and buried in Bournemouth of all places. Jemaur mentions that specially because he and Caroline were brought up there.

Caroline and Jemaur like

their Shelley. "We're into romantic things," agreed Jemaur. "The 19th century, things like that. I really like that whole period, the paintings, the poetry, it was a nice time."

Shelleyan Orphan have just released their first single, 'Cavalry of Cloud'. Jemaur and Caroline sing in fragile voices of intellectual love while a viola, violine and cello saw away around them. The effect is strangely appealing.

It all began in 1980 with Jemaur and Caroline's experiments with strings, but it wasn't till '82 when Caroline quit her 'A' levels and the couple moved to London that the name appeared. Months were then spent trying to recruit the right instruments "Strings," explains Jemaur, "are delightful. They conjure up what we want to see in our songs."

Hawking themselves around, they finally won a Kid Jensen session in June '84, and a few months later Rough Trade supremo Geoff Travis saw them performing at the ICA. They got signed. A single was planned for the following spring, and top arranger Ann Dudley of the Art of Noise was hired into produce the single.

The single was recorded but then, at the last minute, Caroline and Jemaur decided that they didn't want to release Dudley's version of 'Cavalry Of Cloud'. It just wasn't right. Dudley had arranged the single. She hadn't treated the Strings as the group itself.

"It was just too lush, too big," says Caroline. "And we weren't ready." Geoff Travis was patient.

A year later and 'Cavalry Of Cloud' is now the way they want it and there's LP's worth of recorded material to back them up. The LP comes out next spring. They're ready to tour now too, more confident about putting themselves in the public eye. They'll have to be confident, of course, because they'll more than likely be hailed as a couple of fruitcakes.

"Certain people," agrees Caroline, "will say we're a wimpy string group. But I think what we're doing is quite challenging. We're using classical instruments to make pop music. And lots of the songs have a very bitter edge. It's bittersweet."

Shelleyan Orphan will be playing a series of concerts this October; hopefully they'll bring something of the weird wonderfulness of the single to the stage.



# GILBERTO GIL 43-year-old samba star finds he's hip again.

So what do you need to be a “rock-’n’roll star”? Credibility? Being jailed and thrown out of your country for subversive political activities must give a few brownie points on that score. Popularity? Regularly playing to audiences of over 30,000 proves that. Resilience? A career spanning over 20 years – that’s resilient. Gilberto Gil, come on in.

Best known here for ‘Girl From Ipanema’ and ‘Toda Menina Baiana’ – tunes which say “Oh, that one” – Gil has been playing musical mix ’n’ match with his native Brazilian samba rhythms and anything else he can lay his hands on since the early 60s.

In this country though his impact has been as an influence on more familiar names. Look at any number of modern hipsters from the Style Council to Everything But The Girl to Matt Bianco to your own rent-a-funk-band, and you’ll find the pervasive lilting Brazilian mood seeping through.

It’s all give and take and in recent years Gil has taken to incorporating reggae into his scheme of things. “I identify a lot with reggae, It’s very black and Brazil is very black. It all comes from Africa, and also from Scottish influences.”

Hold about. Scottish? Bagpipes, sporrans? It seems that the years of colonisation have left their own tartan legacy. “The rhythm that we call Shotch – a corruption of the word Scotch – is a very popular country peasant music which sounds like the reggae beat.” He tapped out a reggae beat on the table, laughed, and said triumphantly “Shotch. Everybody thinks it’s very Brazilian.”

Gil’s manner reflects his music. Exuberant, animated and punctuated with huge smiles and laughter, belying a background which brings to mind the recent traumas of Fela Kuti. Brazil in the 60s was no place to be a radical, and Gil’s participation in the Tropicalista cultural movement didn’t endear him to his rulers. Not at all. “We were political not in statements but in attitudes. From

their point of view, we were misbehaving, developing new ways of thinking and doing. The swinging sixties thing. In democratic America or Europe, you do these things and maybe you face trouble with the police. But under a military dictatorship things get a little heavier.”

“A little heavier” involved a period of house arrest, three months in jail followed by three years in exile in London. I asked him what the charges were. He looked at me as though I were a naïve simpleton. “Charges?” he said, and smiled.

These days, he acknowledged, he is not involved in any particular struggle, but is content to take a more relaxed approach. “Music is something for the release of physical and mental energy. I’m not using music for anything other than music itself. I’m not saying that it’s purposeless, but those are the aims – amusement, entertainment and knowledge. All those natural things like when a shepherd would pick up a flute and play under a tree or something.”

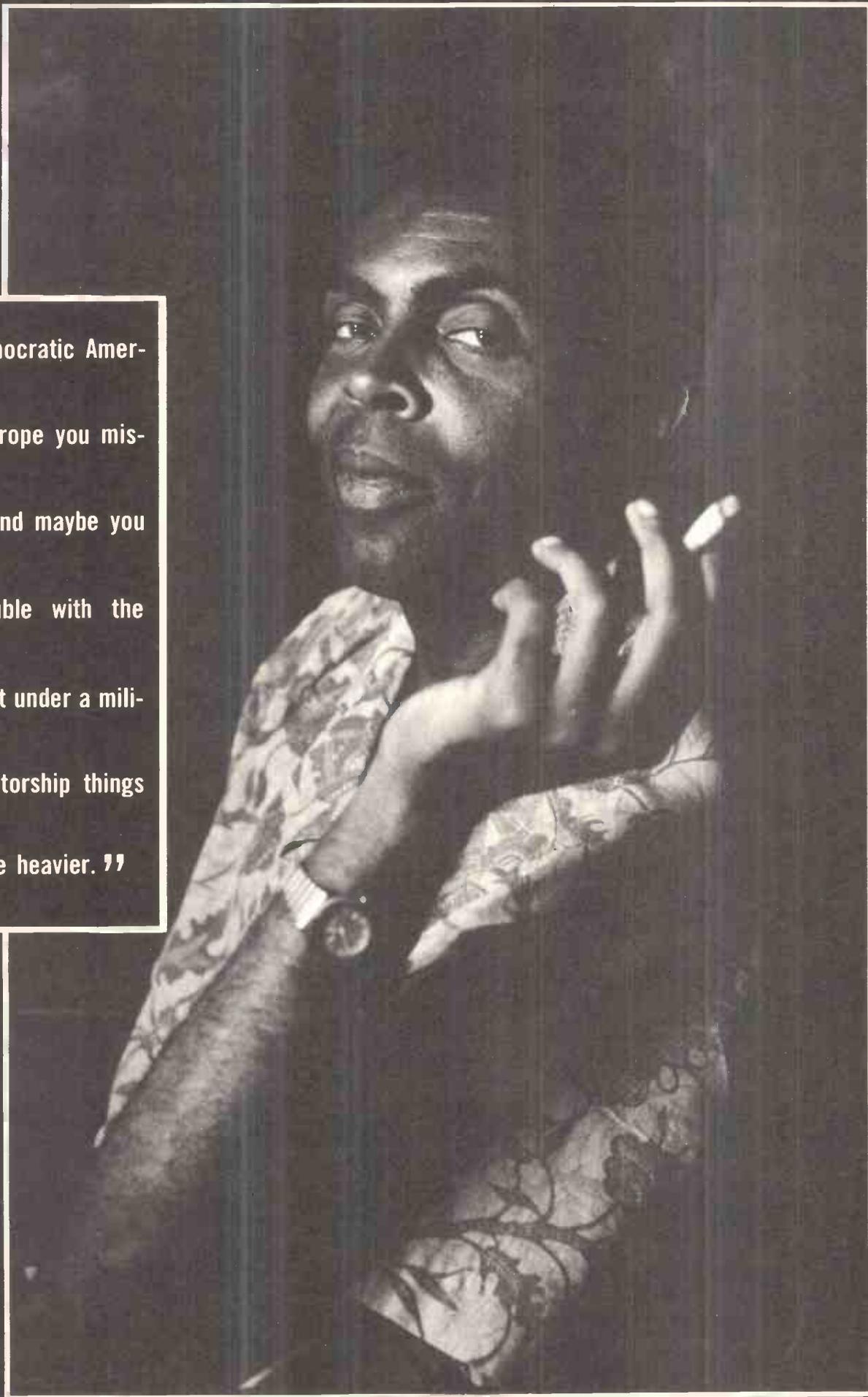
It all sounds so idyllic, so romantic. A shepherd. A flute. But before anyone gets the idea that the man has gone soft, he stressed that his songs still question things like poverty, unemployment – all the usual concerns. By singing in Portuguese though, it’s easy to get swept along on a lush sea of samba rhythms. But it’s important to remember that his last single was written especially for the French SOS anti-racism movement.

“You don’t have to wave a flag to prove that you are into something. No, let people be free to choose their own way. Of course if it is necessary to fight for a specific cause, then you must fight.”

So what about Live Aid? Is that “a cause”? “It was designed by the industry to develop markets, to make a lot of money.” Gil switched into overdrive. “I’m not saying that it’s bad to do that, but that was the real reason behind it. And don’t tell me lies. Big stars flying around on Concorde. It’s just business.”

JEREMY NOVICK

“ In democratic America or Europe you misbehave, and maybe you face trouble with the police. But under a military dictatorship things get a little heavier. ”



# COURTNEY PINE

## 22-year-old Sax Master.

Sax player Courtney Pine is the British "Great White Hope". That he's not white is irrelevant. He's young, sharp and loaded with an extraordinary talent.

The dictionary defines jazz as "music with strong rhythm and much syncopation often improvised." There's more than that though. There's style, emotion, sharpness. From the days of Benny Goodman through to today's practitioners, the dash of the sax has been matched – surpassed – by the cut of the cloth. That the style obsessed 80s has picked up on jazz comes as no surprise, but long after "Absolute Beginners" has been consigned to Channel 4's film bargain bin and the zoot suits have been hung up, the horns will still be blowing.

If jazz is going to avoid falling back into an elitist cul-de-sac it needs more than the philanthropic patronage of white rock stars bringing on the night. It needs charismatic young sharpshooters firing from the hip. People like Wynton Marsalis. People like Courtney Pine.

"I'm 22, I was born in Paddington and I play saxophone. That's about me." That really is about it. Dressed in statutory street apparel – T-shirt, tracksuit bottoms, baseball cap – he could be any suburban kid. It's the T-shirt that gives the game away though. The T-shirt says "Bracknell Jazz Festival."

Coming from a non-musical background, his earliest musical flirtation was along that familiar path – playing recorder at primary school. Improvised syncopation wasn't mentioned.

Already though it was too late. The B's soon become D's, and that parental clarion call went up. "Settle down, get a proper job." Boys will be boys and the teenage riposte followed. In this case, the teen rebellion took the form of more practice and more noise. "I'd practice from 12 until 6, which is what I still try to do. There wasn't much time for study."

All the time, Pine played being the regular kid, and life centred around the

youth club funk disco scene: "Yeah, at that state I was listening to Shalamar. We used to go to the local leisure centre disco and walk home. Yeah, Shalamar and Grover Washington, Ronnie Laws in particular, yeah and Light Of The World and Hi Tension.

"I was really into Hi Tension around that time, 1978 I think. I saw them on TV and got my saxophone and learnt all the horn lines off by heart. And it's strange because my second professional gig was playing for them. My friend's uncle was playing with them and I was introduced and asked to play. It was unbelievable. Seeing them on TV, learning all the stuff and then there I was, on tour with them. Unbelievable."

By this time though, the young Pine had discovered that there was more to life than doing the funky bus stop. Flunking out on the exam front, there was only the trusty sax for comfort. But the adolescent fumbblings needed direction and again inspiration came through the TV screen. "I saw an American Big Band on the Montreux Jazz Festival and this guy with a big afro got up and started playing the same kind of thing that I was trying to do. That was it. I went to my local record library and got out two records by Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane. That was it. Hooked."

The big break came with that legendary ensemble, that school for stars – the Harrow Big Band. The Harrow Big Band? A 21 piece band which toured ex-servicemen's clubs and bingo halls, the Harrow Big Band is as memorable as it sounds. But... One night he was given his chance, a solo. "By this time I'd assimilated so much Rollins and Coltrane and Wayne Shorter that I could pull it through. I got some applause, and I thought "Well, this is alright."

The next major formative influence was probably one of the single most important records of the Seventies: Herbie Hancock's *Headhunters*. Although it never hit the mainstream, it was in many ways the perfect crossover record. Equal parts jazz and funk, it revelled in both and compromised neither.

Where Pine is now though bears little relation to either Harrow or Hancock. "What I'm trying to do now is just play jazz, but to me that doesn't mean

"I'm not from Puerto Rico or Brazil. I'm from Paddington."

CONEY JAY

traditional jazz like Kenny Ball or bebop like Art Blakey or avant garde like Archie Shepp or latin like Airtio. What I'm trying to do is my own thing. I can't go out as a latin band because I'm not from Puerto Rico or Brazil. I'm from Paddington."

Paddington perhaps, but Pine has made such a name for himself that Blue Note, the birth place of cool jazz, were interested in signing him up, only to be beaten to the punch by Island. Even so, he has acquired the guiding hand of Blue Note luminary Michael Cuscuna to produce his first solo album 'Journey To The Urge Within'.

Strangely perhaps for a jazz album – and let's not get into a debate about what is and what isn't jazz – he hopes to be able to cull singles from it, a move which will no doubt please Island. "When I was talking to different companies they all said that I could do a little bit of this, a little bit of that, and



then perhaps we could do something else. But the something else was always jazz-funk or Ronnie Laws part two, and I'm not ready for that. If I want to that eventually, then fine. But first I want to do this."

"This" involves not only being Courtney Pine, solo star, but also membership of a 24 piece band called the Jazz Warriors and a saxophone quartet, The World's First Saxophone Possee.

"This" does not involve jazz funk, or any other variant. For a respected jazzer to slide into the mainstream would not be new. Herbie Hancock has moved very successfully from 'Headhunters' to 'Rockit', and although purists may scorn, the move has inflicted no perceivable damage to his reputation – or his bank balance. But as young Courtney says, Hancock is "a master. He's got nothing left to prove. He's made his reputation, made his point and now he can enjoy himself and he's doing just that."

The line between sticking to your guns, following the right path, and "enjoying yourself" is as narrow as the line that defines jazz itself. The people that Courtney Pine has as his major influences fall very firmly on the side of the right, the side that knows what to say and how to say it. People like Martin Luther King and Malcolm X are cited – a sign perhaps of a burgeoning political awakening – alongside the mighty Coltrane.

"The thing with all those people is that they reached out. They communicated. That really was Coltrane's big thing. I think that in the 70s and 80s he would have turned around a bit, using electric instruments and stuff like that, because he was vocalising already when he died. Can you imagine it though, Chaka Khan and John Coltrane. A Chaka Supreme! Now that would be something."

JEREMY NOVICK



# DAVID BYRNE

## Professional neurotic?

"I was given quite a shock recently," said David Byrne a couple of years ago. "I did an interview for Italian television and they replayed it just to check out camera angles and what not. So I really saw myself sitting and talking and attempting to look really happy and natural. It was really weird, I looked like a bird. What a shock. My eyes and head were darting about all over the place. I think you forget that you have these little quirks."

David Byrne is a bit of an oddity. Of course it is in the nature of pop music for an audience to confuse a pop star with his material. Simply because Talking Heads write neurotic songs doesn't mean that David Byrne is himself mentally unhinged. Just because he acts the epileptic, the terror struck paranoid, the man possessed by religious ecstasy doesn't mean that he is necessarily deranged. For that matter, just because he wrote a song called 'Psychokiller' it doesn't mean that he has had much of a career as a pathological murderer. He is a bit weird though.

"I thought he was a nut, frankly," is how Talking Heads' drummer Chris

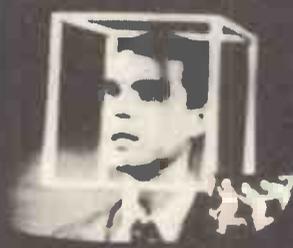
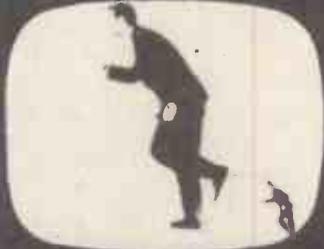
Frantz put it, remembering how they first met as students at the Rhode Island School of Design in 1973. "My impression was that that he was kind of a flakey guy."

"He had half a beard: one side of his face was shaved and the other had a full beard. He had sort of not long but shaggy hair and was wearing old folky type clothes and playing the violin. It was in front of the school cafeteria, along with another guy who was playing the accordion."

Like the rest of Talking Heads, Byrne came from a well-heeled, upper-middle class background. He was actually born in Scotland, but his parents moved to Baltimore. Byrne is the archetypal ex-art school student turned pop star; At the Rhode Island School of Design he was supposed to be doing a course in Conceptual Arts with a subsidiary in something called Bauhaus Theory (there's a joke in there somewhere). His first musical dabblings were as part of a typically strange duo called Bizadi, assisted by fellow student Mark Keyhoe. They played a strange mixture of 60s US punk songs and Frank Sinatra tunes, with Byrne enjoying playing the role of the college eccentric. As art students will, he despised his course and "felt only a frustrated distain for the elitist streak predominant in the whole art scene." To express his distaste he arranged bizarre performances in which he'd shave off his beard, using beer for

SHAMUS MCGARVEY





## BYRNE

shaving foam, accompanied by Mark Keyhoe while a showgirl displayed Russian cue cards. Whacky, hey?

But it wasn't till he teamed up with Chris Frantz that he formed his first 'proper' group. They called themselves The Artistics – appropriately – and though they dealt mainly in cover versions they did have one song in their repertoire called 'Psychokiller'.

"Psychokiller" is the first song I ever wrote," Byrne remembered. "It was some time in 1973 I guess, because Chris and I got this band together called The Artistics. Later we changed it to The Autistics. . . uh, because somebody, I think, misunderstood one of us when we told them our name. . . Oh yeah, and the other guitarist – the guitarists were me and this other guy who unfortunately WAS autistic, so that sort of stuck, unfortunately."

"But what inspired 'Psychokiller' was. . . well, Alice Cooper was really big then and I just thought it would be interesting to do a song in something approaching that mock-ghoulish vein he was pumping out, but give it certain twists. Like, Alice Cooper had all these safety gauges worked out so that it wouldn't connect with anything remotely dangerous. It was all 'It's OK folks it's only a show'. I just like the idea of writing a song that was more. . . real."

The Artistics had a mercifully short life. Byrne dropped out of college and decided to move to the more bohemian environs of New York's Greenwich Village, traditionally a stamping ground for aspiring artists, and for a while he worked there as a short order cook.

In the following year, though, he was joined by Chris Frantz and another Rhode Island student Tina Weymouth. Chris and David decided to try again and this time co-opted Tina as bass player. She couldn't play a note. "It made things a little slower," Byrne said. "And I ended up teaching her a lot of the parts and things like that. It just took her a little longer to learn them than it might somebody else." (In fact – to Tina's great indignation, a year later when the group landed a record contract Byrne insisted that Tina re-audition to get the job.)

By 1975 New York's 'New Wave' was in full swing, bubbling over with a rare creativity. That year a young singer called Tom Verlaine had persuaded the owner of a run down Manhattan club called CBGB's ("Country, Blue Grass and Blues") to start putting on some of the new groups that were springing up

in the neighbourhood. The place rapidly acquired a reputation, there you could go and see the likes of Verlaine's group Television, Johnny Thunders' Heartbreakers, Blondie, The Patti Smith Group and The Ramones. That year the three-piece Talking Heads played their first ever concert there. Looking distinctly terror-struck, the group worked their way through their set. The crowd loved it. "Gee," David Byrne recalled "things must be pretty bad if they like us this much."

The group became regulars at the club, sometimes playing two sets a night. People looked at this strange threesome fronted by a singer who looked like some collegiate inadequate, his hair cropped short and saw something different from the glam rock of the current new crop of New York Dolls imitators. The Village Voice put Talking Heads on their cover: "Tired of glitter? The Conservative face of the new rock underground" the paper announced.

It took them getting on for two years to release their first single 'Love Comes To A Building On Fire', by which time they'd been joined by Jerry Harrison, an ex-member of Jonathan Richman's Modern Lovers. An LP followed – 'Talking Heads 77' – and the group came to Britain to play, first as support to The Ramones.

One night they played a date at The Rock Garden in London and a chap by the name of Brian Eno turned up to see them. He pronounced that they were the most exciting group he'd seen in years: Byrne and Eno met up after the concert and laid the ground for a collaboration that was going to have a huge influence on Byrne and almost – in the end – caused the group to split up.

Eno was to produce the group's next three LPs as well as collaborating with Byrne on a non-Talking Heads project, the experimental 'My Life In The Bush Of Ghosts'. But though the LPs were both commercial and artistic successes, they saw an increasing marginalization of the other three members of the group as Byrne and Eno disappeared off into their own strange and esoteric world, occasionally joined there by people like David Bowie and others intent on following their path of post-art school artistic obsessions.

"By the time they finished working together for three months they were dressing like each other," said Tina letting her obvious frustrations show. "They're like two 14-year-olds making an impression on each other. I can see

them when they're 80 years old and all alone. There'll be David Bowie, David Byrne and Brian Eno and they'll just talk to each other."

It got to the point with 'Remain In Light' when the other group members were not even included in the songwriting credits – until they pointed out this omission to Byrne. And all the while Byrne was issuing press releases to complement the LP's afro funk which included a lengthy reading list of books which explained the relationships of music in African tribal society. Art school or what?

For the next year and a half the group fragmented completely. Frantz and Weymouth – now married – teamed up with Tina's sisters and the cream of Jamaica's session musicians to form Tom Tom Club, an antidote to the intensity of Talking Heads output. Jerry Harrison recorded a solo LP 'The Red And The Black'. And Byrne? He set about working with choreographer Twyla Tharp, writing the music for a new avant garde ballet 'The Catherine Wheel', and tried his hand at producing for The B-52s ('Mesopotamia' and The Fun Boy Three ('Waiting')).

The split never happened. Since 1983 Talking Heads have returned conspicuously to a more straightforward approach. "Maybe," said David, "I've gone the long way round and come to accept almost the conventional song structure as a valid way of working."

The output's been steady, prolific even. 'True Stories', is the third studio LP released since 1983. And that's excluding the Jonathan Demme film 'Stop Making Sense' and its attendant soundtrack, and the collaboration with writer Robert Anton Wilson, 'Music For Knee Plays'.

The 'True Stories' project sees another logical extension to Byrne's multi faceted ambitions. There's the Talking Heads LP, a film, written, directed and starring the man, a soundtrack LP and a book – all going out under the same title.

Byrne continues to embrace the obscure with increasingly commercial results, and communicates to the press as little as he can. And he seems to like it that way.

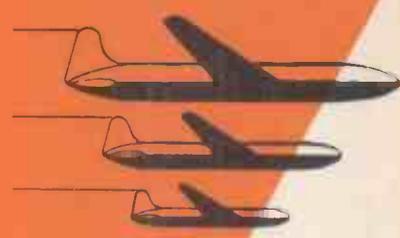
He realises that most people do find him just a little weird though. "I think," he said, "people have this vision of me sitting at home, smoking my pipe, listening to tapes of puppies being tortured. . . I'm happy sometimes. Not all the time, but a good amount of the time."

WILLIAM SHAW

TAKEN FROM THE FORTHCOMING FILM 'GOOD TO GO'



A BRAND NEW SOUND  
**SENSATION**  
GONNA BE A  
**REVELATION**



# TROUBLE FUNK



**THE HOT WAX**

**STILL SMOKIN'**



INCLUDES

1. STILL SMOKIN' (HUG A BUT)
2. DON'T TOUCH THAT STEREO (LIVE)
3. STILL SMOKIN' (THE BEAT IS BAD)

★ **LIVE** ★



**Helen Terry** is sick of that moniker, 'the girl who used to scream behind Boy George'. However, in recent months, she's been called many a worse name than that, after her alleged involvement in the Boy George affair. So before we talk about her debut album, 'Blue Notes', the best this year by a British female vocalist (but let's face it, there aren't many), we'd better get this thing out of the way.

"Jesus Christ! It's totally untrue! Do I look like a regular heroin user? I'm a boozier — you're either a boozier or a druggie — and I have been from a very early age! That's very disturbing..."

Which gets that out of the way: now to her new LP. Produced by Detroit's John Belushi of white soul, Don Was, it's a fascinating insight into the thoughts of charwoman Helen; she co-wrote all the songs but two. The best is 'Love, Money & Sex', a sort of cleaned-up (and non-incriminating) version of 'Sex and Drugs and Rock and Roll'.

"Everyone was a bit nervous about that one. Allee Willis (who's worked with Earth, Wind & Fire) came round one night and we wrote it as we consumed a bottle of vodka in my kitchen. We couldn't find a title, so, as I was pissed, I came up with that one."

Other songs on the album were written with Art Of Noise person, Anne Dudley, Raymond Jones, who's written for Jeffrey Osborne and Whitney Houston, and, of course, Motown's finest, Lamont Dozier, who wrote the single, 'Act of Mercy'.

**Killing Joke's** first British tour for over 18 months starts and ends at Hammersmith Palais on September 28 and October 12, but in between they go to Leeds University (October 1), Manchester Apollo (2), Birmingham Odeon (3), Poole Arts Centre (4), Bristol Studio (5), Newcastle Mayfair (8), Glasgow Barrowlands (9), Liverpool Royal Court (10), and Sheffield University (11). To tie in with this they are releasing a limited edition 12 inch only version of 'Adorations', which comes complete with a supernatural mix of the same song, plus the 86 remix of 'Love Like Blood', both touched by the hand of Zeus B Held, the man responsible for producing the new Pete Wylie LP.

**Simply Red** have announced a series of UK dates. Starting at the Birmingham Odeon (November 25), Dublin SFX (30 and December 1) and Belfast Mayfield Centre (2). They are currently working on a follow up to the monstrously successful 'Picture Book' LP.

Pop's hardest working pinko **Billy Bragg** is out and about playing a selection of favourites, which no doubt include songs from the very fine new 'Talking With The Taxman About Poetry' LP. Witness this at Fulham Palace London (September 21), Brighton Top Rank (22), Birmingham Powerhouse (23), Nottingham Rock City (24), Lincoln Ritz (25), Henley Victoria Hall (27), Manchester Apollo (28), Llandudno Astra (29), Blackpool Opera House (30). Dates resume in November with Portsmouth Guildhall (November 3), Bristol Studio (4), Cardiff University (5), Aberdeen Capitol (7), Glasgow Barrowlands (8), Newcastle Mayfair (9), Leeds University (10), London's Kilburn National Ballroom (12 & 13), Ipswich Gaumont (14), Norwich UEA (15).

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Everybody's reaction has been the same; hilarity. Art Garfunkel in youth culture movie 'Good To Go'? Sort of preposterous really. But, as it turns out, the now middle-aged ex-folk singer with the gleaming bald patch turns in a remarkably good performance. In fact — music excluded — it's one of the best things about Blaine Novak's film. That's what's called faint praise.

Still, music movies are by nature highly dodgy affairs. Island records signed up a whole heap of Go Go acts through Maxx Kidd's TTED label in Washington, and they presumably felt they needed some sort of image for the music, some sort of cultural background to give it "credibility". What better way to do that than make a film about Maxx Kidd and his struggling groups, Troublefunk, Redds And The Boys and Chuck Brown and The Soul Searchers?

The backdrop is the Washington street scene, so to speak: the rough and tumble world of angel dust, hard times, nasty people, and drug induced mindless violence. The only way out is the music. The problem is that there's this bad cop who just doesn't like Go Go music very much. He thinks that the ghetto blasters that pump out this sweet noise are "a breach of the peace," and tells Garfunkel so. He'll do just about ANYTHING to stop that music.

But then honky hero Art Garfunkel appears, driving a Volvo and suffering good white liberal angst. He befriends Little

Beats, a diminutive Go Go conga player and sets about saving the day... OK, the plot stinks, the acting is often dismal and as a whole it makes 'Cagney And Lacey' look pretty profound, but there is a staggeringly obvious saving grace to this pedestrian piece of cinema: there's some exceptionally good music in it. Troublefunk take the biggest slice of the cake, performing 'Still Smoking', 'Drop The Bomb' and 'Good To Go' while The Redds get to perform 'Movin' And Groovin'" and Chuck Brown steps in with 'We Need Money'. This live footage shows that the true power of Go Go's with a lineage which stretches through Clinton to the hard funk of James Brown. For that alone it's worth your ticket money.



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# YOUNG GUNS FALL FOR it--THE BIG

## RIP OFF? Hardly a week goes by

these days without some pop star claiming that he'd been well and truly stitched up by some piece of paper he'd signed when he was young and gullible. Music journalist Simon Garfield spent eight months researching the darker side of the music industry . . .

**"Mistakes? Sure we made huge mistakes! But we were 18-year-old boys who knew nothing about it. Everyone makes mistakes like that. The rip off is the age old story, isn't it? It's always going to happen. It's the story of middle-aged businessmen whose product comes from young boys and girls who don't know what they're doing. So it's going to carry on happening."**

George Michael 1984 quoted in 'Expensive Habits - The Dark Side Of The Music Industry.'

In the weeks leading up to the publication of journalist Simon Garfield's book 'Expensive Habits - The Dark Side Of The Music Industry' you got the distinct feeling that certain sections of the music industry were perhaps a little nervous.

For over eight months the 25-year-old ex-London School of Economics student and Time Out journalist had been researching into the wheelings and dealings of the music business. He'd been

interviewing pop stars and their lawyers, record company officials and ex-record company officials. His intention was to write the book about the music industry that had been conspicuously absent during pop's history. Not the story of the stars and the fans and the glamour, but the story of where all the cash goes.

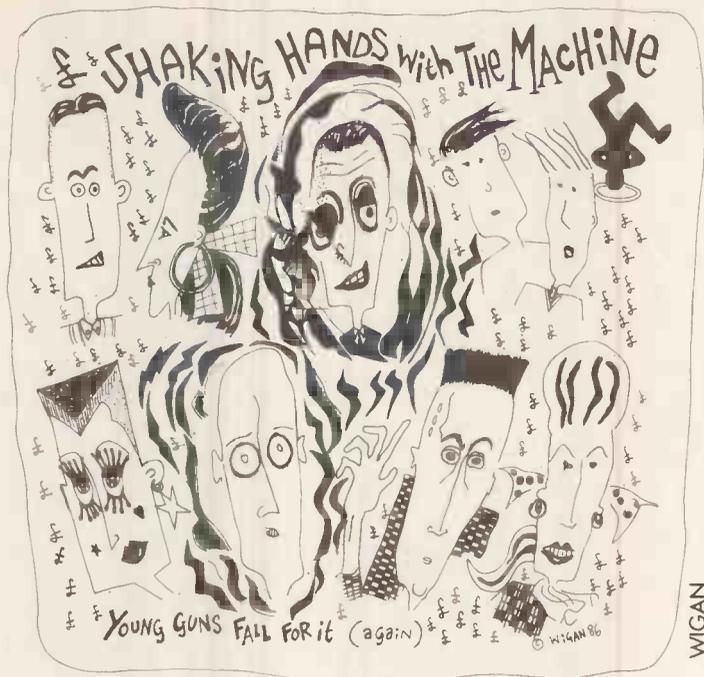
The book has now been published, and the real question is, how much material DIDN'T get into the book? How many stories had to be left out for 'legal reasons'?

"Well, there were things that I knew about where there was no way that they could actually appear in the book, wonderful things like" (Simon names a well-known industry figure) "who had a habit of hanging people out of windows by their ankles; and you hear about great drug tales and about various radio DJs being bribed with VAST amounts of money. But they're all things you can't prove. You hear the stories from so many sources that you think there must be some truth in them, but you can't use them unless someone comes forward and

says 'Yes, so-and-so DID hold me upside down by my ankles from a fifth floor window', which of course they never will. And then of course there were about 3,000 words taken out after legal advice. . ."

The title of the book is perhaps a bit misleading: it's not sensational tabloid stuff at all. It's a serious facts and figures account of copyrights and contracts. "Yes," admits Simon, "it's a tease. I mean 'Expensive Habits. . .'; there is no great drug taking in the industry because, as I quote someone saying, the industry is immensely clean compared to America and also, even if it wasn't, it's very hard to prove anything. When I started the book I knew it wasn't an attempt to write a 'Hollywood Babylon' or a 'Rock Stars In Their Underpants'. Once I'd made up my mind on that I realized that there was a lot of gossip that simply wouldn't fit in. I really didn't fancy doing a chapter about people being caught with their pants down."

Instead it's the stories behind the deals; especially those deals which turned sour. Garfield recounts the famous cases, from the Beatles'



management tussles right up to Wham's recent court action against their original label Innervision. There are the sadder stories, where through their own stupidity or through the malice of others people find themselves ensnared in a web of potentially ruinous contracts. And then there are the real tragedies, like the public personal disaster of Jay Aston who attempted suicide after her career with Bucks Fizz fell apart. She's a woman who believes that it's no coincidence that after a brief fling with her manager's boyfriend, she became the leper of the group. In July 1985 Jay Aston was replaced by 21-year-old Shelley Preston.

Poor Hazel O'Connor gets a whole chapter; the complications of the episode are too involved to relate here, but briefly like others she suffered for her ineptitude at the business side of the industry; the machine chewed her up and spat her out. O'Connor seemed to have spent more hours in court than she had on stage: "I'm just a bit of a mixed up person who probably came into the music business with a bit of an

idealist's dreamy approach and found that in fact it was a bit like going into hospital and having shock therapy," she reckons now.

Everyone has their story. Sagacious Bono is quoted as saying "There's a feeling when you start out that a record company is this thing that comes along and gives you a big bag of money and you go off and be a rock star for the rest of your life." And Paul Young: "The companies do their business and they don't want you to know how they do it. They want you to be A Star."

Of course there are two sides to all these stories, but what is shocking is the sheer scale of these deals. Still, it's a high risk industry, so what would you expect? "Well," answers Simon, "there's a fine line between companies recouping their investment and exploitation."

But by taking the artists' side does he find himself a apologist for the pop stars, an apologist for flash gits having two swimming pools instead of just the one?

"I thought a lot about that," says Simon. "I tend to think that artists are very, very nasty

egotistical pieces of work who I don't even like being in the same room with at all, but when you think, well, who is it who deserves that cash then, given the amount of money made? The majors? The managers? The agents?"

What is most curious is that it's taken 25 years to get this book written. It's a side that music journalists have ignored up till recently. Because for all its avowed independence the music press is heavily reliant on the music industry. For a start, most readers are unaware of how much the record company machinery helps journalists get groups into their magazines, and secondly the music press simply needs record company advertising.

Garfield puts it this way: "It's probably because so many writers are caught up in the routine of weekly interviews that they don't know how the industry works; they haven't tried to probe any further and I guess like you say, it's because if you attack the industry advertising will be affected. Perhaps it's also because people haven't been interested enough."

So when it finally came to a journalist getting round to taking a peek at the earthier side of getting records into the top twenty, did Garfield meet much resistance? Did people try and dissuade him from his task?

"No-one said 'I'm going to break your arms' or anything like that," admits Simon, "not yet, anyway. Quite a few people simply wouldn't talk and quite a few people made themselves very hard to get hold of. Some people just weren't interested in being associated with a book which didn't portray a sunny side to their industry."

Of course this interview was taking place before the book appeared on the shelves: "Mmm," says Garfield. "I'll be in a wheelchair about two weeks after it's out."

WILLIAM SHAW

'Expensive Habits - The Dark Side Of The Music Industry' by Simon Garfield is published by Faber & Faber and will cost you £14.95 in hardback, £5.95 in paperback.



Working Week's Simon Booth and some planks



A lot of hip modern classical music by the so-called 'systems' composers like Steve Reich often verges on aural wallpaper for yuppies, but Philip Glass has managed to maintain his reputation as a 'crossover' composer at the same time as turning in highly thought of works like his recent opera 'Akhnaten'. This year has seen him fulfilling his contractual obligations neatly, keeping CBS happy, by recording a pop LP 'Liquid Days' and now he's returning to these shores to play a series of concerts: Royal Albert Hall (September 26), Edinburgh Usher Hall (27), Birmingham Hippodrome (28), Bristol Colston Hall (29) and Croydon Fairfield Hall (30).

Take a tablespoon of the urban paranoia of 'The Prisoner', add a bucketful of the high gloss kitsch of 'The New Avengers', mix it around, swathe it with stylish photography and tasteful music — courtesy of U2's *The Edge* — and you have Paul Mayersberg's new film 'Captive'.

Rowena Le Vay (Irina Brook) is the archetypal spoilt little rich kid. Living alone in a castle, she has retreated from life. Her father, Gregory Le Vay (Oliver Reed) is the classic symbol of big bad Money — fat, rich and totally devoid of feeling.

Three anarcho-terrorists — themselves ex-spoilt little rich kids — abduct her, torture her,

Irina Brook having a rotten day in 'Captive'



humiliate her. Isolation tanks, brainwashing tanks, being hung naked upside down, you name it, she gets it, all within the confines of a disused riverside warehouse tastefully furnished in hip minimalist style.

The outcome of all this is fairly predictable. She sees the light and they run around like a quartet of fashion victims, never short of money, hi-tech gadgetry or South Moulton Street clothing. It's a hard life being an anarcho-terrorist mannequin.

OK, so it looks lovely and the music is just as you would expect — smooth, shiny and classy. But what is lacking is an edge, something to take it out of the realms of Martiniland.

"We've been told by our management and by the record company that we're not allowed to do anything else now," says Simon Booth, Working Week's founder figure. "And to be quite honest, they're absolutely right. We're always going off doing other things and that's all very well but we've got our second album coming out and it's make or break time."

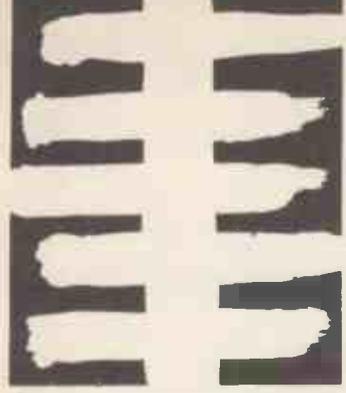
Over the last couple of years the membership of Working Week has always indulged in quite a number of extra-curricular activities: Julie has been off presenting 'Solid Soul', sax player Larry Stabbins has been away working on other jazz projects and Simon and Larry both have been collaborating on all sorts of musical one-offs, like the soundtrack they wrote for the film 'Supergrass' or the song they gave Sade for 'Absolute Beginners'. The result is, as Simon so delicately puts it, "the band's profile is pretty low. So," he continues, "I think we've really got to get it together."

Which is why they're going on an extensive tour this October, round colleges and the sort of small venues they'd normally steer well clear of. ("Aylesbury Friars!" ponders an amazed Simon) Working Week will be doing the rounds as a ten piece band.

The LP is, of course, 'Companeros': "In Spanish it means friendship," Simon explains "but actually it's much more than that, it's a friendship born out of a common struggle, a friendship that comes from working together on a special project."

Despite this new resolve to concentrate on the group Simon will be continuing his own particularly individual extra-curricular activity, namely bird-spotting; he's an avid enthusiasts, though he insists that this stops well short of fanaticism.

"Everyone needs a psychological escape channel. Once a week I turn my back on it all. I go away and do something with people to whom I'm completely anonymous, people who know nothing about rock'n'roll, people come up and go 'Saw a great spotted sandplover the other day. Nice bird that'. That's the way you talk, like very calm, you don't get over-enthusiastic." How very odd.



**2 'Kashmir' by Led Zeppelin from the LP 'Physical Graffiti'**

Epic! Monumental! Lovebeads and kaftans and peace and love! Did I ever feel that I had to keep quiet about liking Led Zeppelin? I NEVER kept quiet about them. They're my all time heroes.

**3 'Strawberry Fields Forever' by The Beatles**

I wanted to choose a Beatles song, this must be my favourite one this week. It's the John Lennon songs I like mostly, 'A Day In The Life', 'I Am The Walrus', not those Paul McCartney tunes, 'Penny Lane' and 'Yesterday' (laughs derisively).

**4 'Sympathy For the Devil' by The Rolling Stones**

A nasty song. I love the backing vocals, the "oooh ooohs!" We ripped them off for one of our 'b' sides. But I'm not a big Stones fan; they should have split up ages ago.

**5 'Perfect Day' by Lou Reed**

It's a lovely song, a lovely sleazy song. I think it's sad, all these groups sounding like Lou Reed these days. It's so retrogressive.

The Mission release their first song on Phonogram this month. "It's called 'Stay With Me'," explains Wayne. "Not the Faces song. My mother likes it. She says 'Wayne, that'll be a top ten hit.'"



CONEYL JAY

**Wayne Hussey of The Mission picking five records to be included on the Ideal Record Machine**

**1 'All The Young Dudes' by Mott The Hoople**

I like it because I like Ian Hunter, he was cool, a real dude. I remember going to see Mott The Hoople when I was young. I was up in the balcony and when he was singing this he pointed up at me and said "Hey you there in the dark glasses!" I was wearing dark glasses, you see. Wonderful.

**Hula.** A type of Hawaiian dance? Not even close. A hoop that kids play with? Maybe, but not in this context. No, Hula is of course the name of that four piece band from the Steel City, Sheffield. It's also the name of a house.

"We spent ages trying to think of a name," explains Mark Albrow, "we went through books and everything, but

eventually settled on the name of our house. It's a good name because it doesn't mean anything and doesn't relate to how we sound."

Hula are Renaissance Men. Artists. Now there's an LP in the pipeline that is very Hulaish. "We were asked to write a soundtrack for an exhibition of sound sculptures at the Mappin Art Gallery in Sheffield. The set

was specially worked out for the exhibition and there was a very complex sound system, because some of the exhibits could play themselves, and a computerised light show, so we had to fit in around all that." An LP of the soundtrack is to be released under the title of "Shadowland" on September 29th.

For such a group of multi-directional artists, their collective sound is still firmly locked in the musical box that is the Sheffield sound. You know the one, abrasive and edgy, a cacophony of (dare I say) industrial clutter which covers up the tunes and melodies!

"Yes, it's true. People are always mentioning that, and we've thought about it but it's not something that we can put our fingers on. Everyone has their pet theories. Personally I think that it's historical. South Yorkshire has always had a tradition of being independently spirited. It's had a bit of a kick in

the head recently by the Government with the rate capping and all that that means, and the social fabric of the place is under a lot of pressure.

"Musically though, things are still very lively. The big problem is that there is a real lack of small venues where bands can play."

Next thing on the Hula agenda is the new single 'Black Wall Blue' - "please stress that it's nothing to do with Wapping" - after which they're coming to London to work with Daniel Miller of Mute Records. "That originally came about through a tour we did with Depeche Mode. It will be really good, because Daniel takes a very active role, he doesn't just sit there twiddling knobs."

Dates are planned for the autumn, but haven't been confirmed yet, and there's a chance that the Mappin exhibition will tour with the boys in tow.



Hula From Left: Norm, John Avery, Ron Wright, Mark Albrow

# WYLLIE'S



## MICK JONES

Booted out of The Clash; went on to form B.A.D. "I've got all my obvious heroes like the Dylans

and Jim Morrison and the Lou Reeds. They're not all from the 60s. There's Sinatra, Elvis... Mick Jones is one of my heroes who subsequently became a mate, which to me is incredible. Last time I saw him I said 'I still find it hard to come and relax with you.' I saw his girlfriend Daisy the other day and she said 'You'll have to come round.' I was going 'Oh noooooo!' and biting my knuckles. I'm glad I still feel that way about people like that.

"Mick has revived my interest in heroes. The fact that he was thrown out of his ultimate vision, The Clash, something that he formed, and he was stitched up by his mates... I'm glad that they're all talking again now... but the fact that he's got back there and he didn't take the obvious route is really good."



## BRIAN JONES

Original Rolling Stones guitarist who died mysteriously in a swimming pool shortly after leaving the group in 1969. "He was the one with the demented vision. He was the one who really made it all happen, who got all the weird instruments into The Stones. There was something sinful about him, and on the other hand you'd see him in interviews and he'd be all cute and lovable.

"I think he looked great, Brian Jones. He's a kind of archetype. I met a couple of blokes just the other night and they thought they WERE Brian Jones. He's sexy, you see. Not faggish, but sexy to men and women.

"I went to the party this summer, the memorial of his death, with Genesis P. Orridge (of Psychic TV, the group who recently released the single 'Godstar' as a tribute to Jones) so we all had a good old drink for Brian. I like Genesis. He's not at all like I expected; he talks like a baby, an arrogant baby who's really in control of what he's saying. He's got this demented vision as well, which is one of the things about all my heroes. I think anyone who's going to do anything has got to be a sort of obsessive, and even if they make prats of themselves it all falls into place in the long run, which is why I haven't been afraid of being a prat sometimes. Even as I speak!"

## SAM KYDD

British B-movie actor.

"He played Mike Baldwin's dad in Coronation Street, but he was in EVERY bad British movie. I read his autobiography

and on every page the word 'blimey' appears. It's his wartime memoirs 'For You The War Is Over' and 'blimey' turns up on every page at LEAST once. Sometimes it's even two or three times. 'Sam, they've just bombed your house and all your family are dead.' 'Blimey'. Now THAT's heroic."



## BOB DYLAN

Aging ex-genius who recorded his best work before breaking his neck in a 1966 motorcycle accident.

"It was too easy after punk. A lot of people got slagged, a lot of people who had maybe done a few dodgy things, who had gone on too long. But Dylan's 'Blonde On Blonde' - it's one of my favourite periods; when he was wearing leathers and dark glasses and stuff... the big mushroom hairdo. For one thing he wrote great tunes. Everyone raves about his lyrics, but you have to have good tunes. You don't have to be the greatest looking bastard but you do have to have good songs."

MARK JAY



# The Liverpool- lian bigmouth

# HEROES

on his Gods  
and Godes-  
ses: "The  
Vast Pan-  
theon There-  
of," explains  
Pete. "I hope  
to be in there  
somewhere."

"Mmm. Heroes. I can probably think of a million, that's the trouble." Pete Wylie, dressed as ever in leather trousers, is slouched on one of those ridiculous sofas which gradually offload you onto the floor, staring at a soundless TV screen and sipping diet Pepsi. 'Monterey Pop' is playing on the video. "Gods In Their Own Right; The Vast Pantheon Thereof," Wylie toys with imaginary headlines for the piece.

Pete Wylie has a long list of personal gods. Ask most people who their heroes are and they'll umm and ahh for a while, but not Wylie. Wylie believes in heroes.

Around his temporary London flat are scattered the various artefacts of his obsessions. In amongst a heap of videos there's a copy of 'Midnight Cowboy' ("John Voight in that film! What a schmuck! That's a real stunt to pull off, to be a schmuck and still be heroic."). Two spaghetti western posters of Clint Eastwood squint down from the walls. There on the floor is a recently purchased LP by heroine Dusty Springfield. By the door there's a couple of photos of dead Rolling Stone Brian Jones.

It gets better: for instance when he gets on to the topic of Jones he suddenly stops in mid-verbal torrent and asks

"Have I shown you the wig?" The wig? Disappearing from the room for a second, Wylie re-emerges with this perfect blonde Brian Jones long pageboy wig on his head. Brilliant. "Bizarre, isn't it?" Indeed it is.

As we've known for years, Wylie is a man who loves the grandiose and the heroic. "I love attitude," he explains. "I think that's the common link between all my heroes. I'd rather have bastards who have a great attitude as long as they've got an attitude. Take Phil Spector. He was a complete twat, but he had a great attitude. Those records he made just say 'I don't care'."

Wylie takes his own image dead seriously too. Those omnipresent leather trousers are part of it. (His ex-girlfriend Josie recalls chucking away one pair that had become increasingly fetid over the years and which had developed a hole where Wylie's genitals were.) And Wylie admits that he's gone to extreme lengths to keep his weight down so his image is right for his 1986 musical onslaught. "I used to have this 'It doesn't matter' attitude, eating Mars bars every two minutes... I actually lost three quarters of a stone more than this, but that was outrageous. My brother came to see me on my birthday and he went 'Aaaaaaaarrrrgh!' He thought I looked like something out of 'American Werewolf In London'."

So what about Wylie as hero himself then? "I used to be determined to be a hero," he answers. "It was really important to me to be 'influential'. This'll sound really crass," he apologizes. "I was in awe of so many people and I knew the effect that they had on me, so I wanted to be that way too. And I tried so hard sometimes.

"It's a weird thing to deal with. I've stopped trying to be a hero and if it happens it happens. I've obviously got ambitions... but it's not something that bothers me. Obviously if people come up to me and flatter me and say I am a hero I get embarrassed. I hate it when people come up and say 'Great record'. I don't know how to handle it. And if somebody comes up and asks me for my autograph in front of my mates I die.

"But it's not something I try and shy away from either. I hope to be up in that bleeding pantheon somewhere. At least I tried."

WILLIAM SHAW



MARTIN SCORSESE AND ROBERT DE NIRO

Actor famous for 'Taxi Driver', 'Mean Streets', 'King of Comedy', 'The Deerhunter'; director famous for 'Taxi Driver', 'Mean Streets', 'After Hours' and more.

"Scorsese is like an ultimate hero to me. All the guys he puts in his films are really strong characters. A lot of my heroes are people like Travis (acted by De Niro) in Taxi Driver. Scorsese's obviously into heroes... he knows the power of heroes. Every Scorsese film I've seen has had an effect on me. I love all that stuff. Robert De Niro is a hero. He can act an utter asshole and still be great.

"We sent Scorsese the tape of 'Sinful' in the vague hope he'd do the video. We sent it to Fellini too, and we actually got a letter off Fellini's office and they said that he's working for two years and after that he'd be really happy to do it... ha! ha!"



DUSTY SPRINGFIELD

Emerged in the 60s as the UK female soul voice, recording hits like 'I Only Want To Be With You' and 'You Don't Have To Say You Love Me'. Turned up again recently recording terrible songs for Peter Stringfellow's Hippodrome label.

"I love Dusty. She made great records, but there was that whole thing of her getting messed up for being gay... Last night me head was a bit gone. I'd been out and I came back at five in the morning and - I wasn't suicidal by any means - but I was a bit fed up and so I listened to Dusty singing 'Windmills Of Your Mind' - a really tack trash song - and she makes it sound like the most profound song you've ever heard. I heard her doing these really naff songs on 'Live At Her Majesty's' - these really naff songs she does for Peter Stringfellow's label - and she was BRILLIANT! The power! All this stuff about come-back-Sandy-Shaw. Dusty would eat her alive."



JOSIE

The woman Wylie shared a flat with in Liverpool for some years, currently a musical collaborator. "She's got a vision and it's kind of warped, she'd be the first to admit it. She doesn't try to rationalize things, she refuses. She knows that if she was to rationalize things she'd end up up her own arse. I couldn't work with her if she wasn't a heroine. I couldn't just work with a girl who sang. She's got power and she's got strength and she's caring..."

"The fact that we broke up after living together for three and a half years... obviously it's a bit turbulent when it happens, but the fact that we're closer than we ever were is a testament; she's the best person I've ever met. She's just a great one."

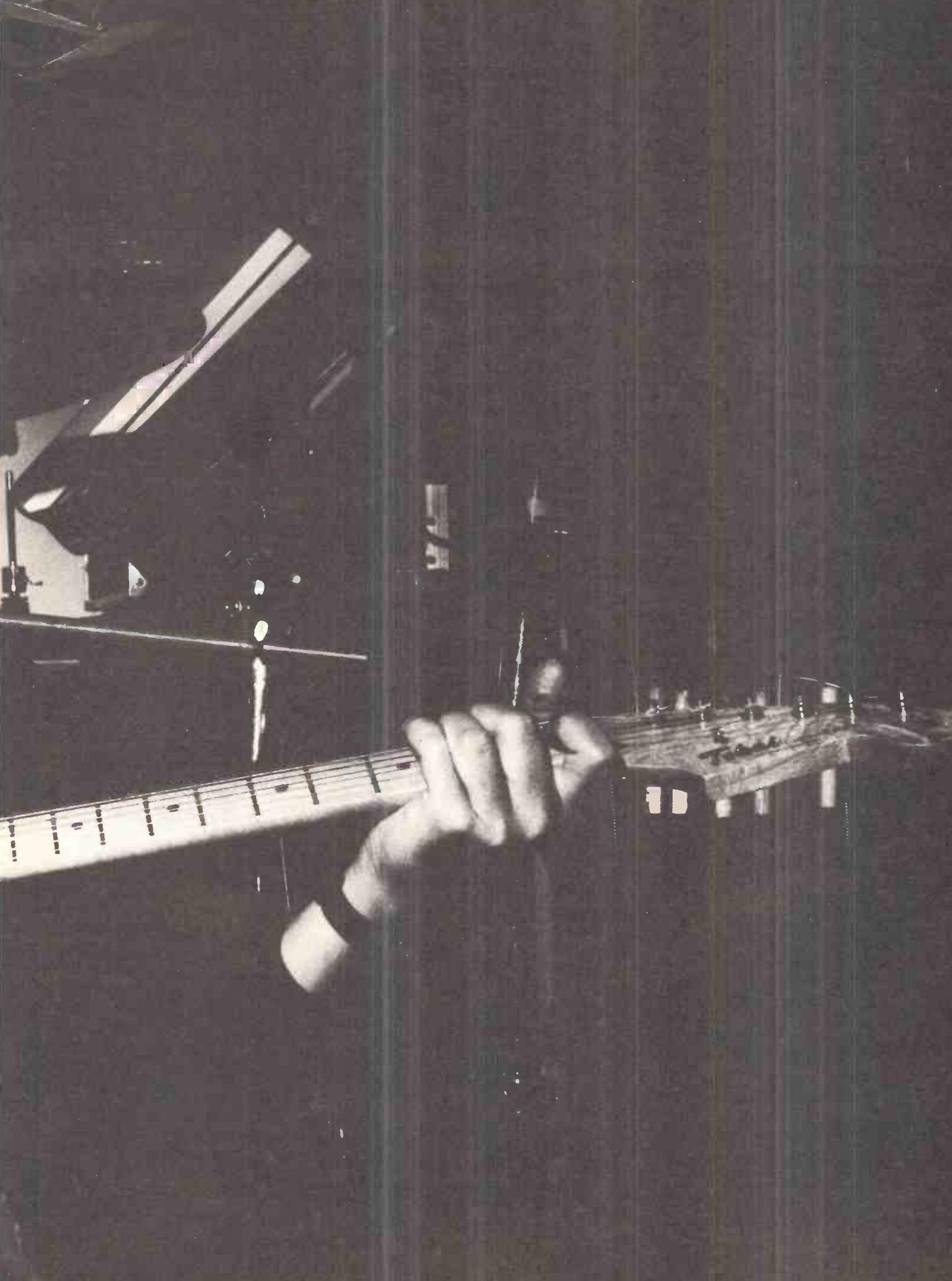


ALONZO TUSKE

Alonzo who? "One of my great heroes. In fact I was considering calling the new LP 'God Bless Alonzo Tuske'. When the Beatles went over to America there was serious Beatlemania. All these people at the airport: thousands screaming. Off they went to the Ed Sullivan Show; thousands screaming. But this one guy, Alonzo Tuske, walked up and down with this placard saying 'I Hate The Beatles!'

"He could have been killed by thousands of screaming schoolgirls! I mean, why did he bother? I think that's great, that he could be arsed to get a placard and walk up and down when he could have been in the pub! And the fact that he's called Alonzo Tuske..."





# NEW ORDER

It's easy, looking back, to see how New Order became so mysterious, to see why they've managed over the years to give so little away. Back in the late '70s when the three male members were in Joy Division no-one wanted to talk (or listen) to them, and when eventually they did achieve a small measure of success it was to singer and lyricist Ian Curtis that journalists flocked. He danced on stage as if repeatedly jolted by an electric prod in his spine and wrote dark brooding melodramas that he refused to explain – people automatically assumed that he was the group's genius. The other three, whatever they were called, were by and large treated as the able backing musicians, the channel through which Curtis' genius was allowed to explode (never mind that, even then, they wrote all the music).

Their silence was only hardened when Curtis died in 1980 – hanging himself one evening in circumstances which no-one has been able to, or more likely wanted to, explain. The other three carried on (drafting in Gillian soon afterwards) but they weren't keen on talking to anyone – doubtless a mixture between fear at having to talk, or even think about, the painful past, and their own self-confessed doubts about their ability to succeed without Curtis.

Soon though their silence became more than that. It became an essential part of the New Order style. They treated their audience with an amused contempt – swearing at those who dared request songs, belting them if they got too close, replacing song lyrics with barrages of expletives and categorically refusing to play encores. They delighted in refusing to calm the uproar when the name New Order was recognised as that of a neo-Nazi group and Peter Saville's sleeve designs were recognised as "borrowed" from fascist posters of the '30s. And when they consented to interviews at all they refused to bide by the usual "pop star vs interviewer" conventions and were instead deliberately evasive, awkward and argumentative, saying very little at all of substance. Factory kept its policy of not advertising records, they kept to their policy of not promoting them or giving any sign they cared about their success. Journalists were, predictably, furious. New Order simply didn't care.

But, in the last couple of years, New Order's

attitude has softened. And while they still don't seem wholly committed to success today they also can't be bothered to be that horrible either. They're being reasonably helpful by their standards. They refuse to pose for photos of course but they agree to be snapped as they sit round and Barney relents on an earlier decision not to talk. Meanwhile they, in no more than ten minutes, agreed their UK tour itinerary with their tour manager. One place up north is out – "that was where we asked for sandwiches and they brought us four". Another is in – "they make a nice cup of tea there". A venue in the south west is dismissed – "I had to buy a new pair of shoes there the floor was so dirty". Once it's tied up I'm allowed to lead them next door, one by one, to the grotty kitchen/office, and ask them questions.

## BERNARD SUMNER

Bernard Sumner (Barney, as he is known) fidgets compulsively in front of me. He gives the wall a frightening stare. He looks more like a fugitive on the run than a pop star. "I don't know if you know," he begins, "but I didn't want to do this interview. I don't want to do any interviews any more." One look at his face is enough to tell that this is more than a sudden fit of pop star pique. "I want to stop and think about things," he explains, "to look at the past and look at the future. I need to think about it all and come up with an answer. Primarily I'm a human being more than I'm a musician and I'm trying to get back to that state at the moment. I've put too much into this business. I've been involved too much for my own good."

Just the job itself, or the rock'n'roll wildness that goes with it?  
"Everything."

He is, I have already been told, dreading the forthcoming American tour.

"I hate touring," he confirms. "I don't get anything out of it whatsoever. I feel terrible because to play every night I have to get drunk so I'll be drunk for six weeks. I just want to step back for a while."

Quite clearly there's a lot on his mind. And he's obviously not joking when he says he wants to think about the past. When I prod him into telling me about it he launches himself almost unstoppably into a stream of memories, some of them not that nice.

"I was born," he begins, "on Jan 4 1956. Just Bernard Sumner.



**// I don't want to do any interviews any more. I want to stop and think about things... I've put too much into this business. I've been involved too much for my own good //**

My mother didn't have very much imagination. I was," he says, "very shy and pretty nice. I was the only child. I got spoiled as much as my parent could afford: I got five fish fingers for my tea instead of three."

Parent? Just the one?

"Yeah," he says. "I never had a father. I lived with my grandparents and my mother until I was 12 in a Coronation St terraced house. Then she got married and we moved out to a council house across the way – that was horrible. People chucked bottles out of the windows and I'd wake up in the morning and see used tampons and durexes hanging in front of my window on a tree. That's not very nice. I used to have a motorbike and the petrol would be nicked every night. In the end I wired it up to the mains electricity. I got a high voltage coil out of a lorry and put it through a transformer. I never got it stolen again. I don't know who used to do it but a couple of other kids had bikes nearby so I went round and trashed their bikes one night just in case they'd done it. It made me feel better."

He hung out with two groups of friends – his school friends ("nice") and the local hooligans. The latter were "a bit evil." They enjoyed "kicking dogs in the balls, stealing, breaking into people's cars for a laugh" and so on. Barney would join in, to a greater or lesser extent, and then go home, shut his bedroom door and listen.

"My parents used to argue all the time," he recalls vividly. "When they first got married I used to sit up at night and listen to them shouting at each other – quite disturbing. It was a very weird part of my life. It stopped after a while because they just gave up. That's what people do, isn't it? Just give up..."

"It made me think they were horrible. Some of the things they used to say that they thought I couldn't hear..." "The pain floods back into his eyes. "I've never liked my mother. She's just horrible to me. Really nasty. I've stopped speaking to her. I haven't seen her for two years. She did something which was unforgivable about four years ago and she doesn't really exist in my mind now."

As Barney entered his teens he began to worry about what he could do when he left school. Going on the dole was unthinkable – "I'd been brought up believing it was shameful" – and it seemed unlikely he'd have any qualifications to speak of. A job in a supermarket while he was still at school scared him even more – his fellow workers were "the nicest people I've ever worked with in my life but it was so boring that it instilled in my brain that if I ever did anything like that I'd go insane." He felt even worse because he'd taken the job to be able to pay back his grandfather for his scooter. "I never did," he gulps. "I still feel guilty about that to this day." The only talent he did have was at art so he desperately tried to get a job doing graphics at an ad agency – in vain. Somehow his mother got him a £13-a-week job instead – in the treasury doing accounts. That was dreadful: "25-year-old blokes sleeping for an hour at dinner because they're like old men," he remembers with horror. He had to escape.

He did so with surprising resourcefulness. First he borrowed a portfolio from a rather more talented friend, then he applied to every Manchester ad agency in the Yellow Pages. He got two jobs. He then told one of them he had flu and couldn't start for a week, meanwhile trying out the other one. The next week he swapped, told the one he's just worked in he'd got flu and tried the one he'd missed the previous week. At the end of that week he chose the best one. Working on TV commercials, supposedly, but it turned out more like three years of making tea, delivering messages, labelling things and, eventually, painting "film cells". There was one major consolation – he could listen to music all day; Kraftwerk, Iggy Pop, David Bowie and Led Zeppelin whenever Barney controlled the tape recorder. He might have carried on frittering the hours away there if he hadn't gone to see the Sex Pistols one evening with his old schoolfriend, Peter Hook. He claims, like many others, that the experience literally forced him to form a band. He already had a guitar – a sixteenth birthday party from his mother – Peter bought a bass and the two of them bought instrument instruction books. Soon afterwards they roped in a singer who they'd met at concerts – Ian Curtis – and wrote their first song, 'Survivors', rehearsing opposite a steel band in a pub called The Great Western. "It was like The Stooges without any rhythm," Barney chuckles. "It sounded awful. I thought it was wonderful."

After a series of drummers Stephen joined, they wrote a whole set of songs, played them for a year, decided they were all crap, wrote some more and recorded them as the Joy Division LP, 'Unknown Pleasures'. "We were just doing something because we loved it," remembers Barney, going uncharacteristically misty-eyed. "It was for very unselfish reasons. There was no thought of being successful or making money – we just did it because we liked music and wanted to produce something that was good. By that time I had already come to the conclusion that there was nothing else in the world for me."

Which is why there was no question of not carrying on after Ian's death, hard as it was. He recalls their first ever performance afterwards as a three-piece at Manchester's Beach Club. "I knew everyone was looking at me going 'it must be really hard for him'. It was horrible, like breaking a massive sheet of ice. But we had to do it. A bitter pill to swallow and it took a few goes to get it down and we did it."

Indeed they did, but was it worth it? Looking at Barney's worried face today it's sad to realize that this whole music making business is no longer the simple innocent joy it used to be.



**// I was quite shocked. I wanted to join but I thought I couldn't. I was going to say 'no' because I thought my mum and dad wouldn't let me give up college //**

## GILLIAN GILBERT

Gillian Gilbert laughs nervously, more the shy giggly adolescent girl than the 25-year-old pop star. She's not really used to interviews. She usually sits there with the others saying nothing until finally "they pick on you and say 'Why don't you say much? Is it *awful* being the girl?'. It's so embarrassing."

She insists that the fact she's the only girl is irrelevant and from the time I've spent with New Order that rings true. The real division, if there is one, is between two pairs – her and Stephen (who she lives with) as against Barney and Peter, the more abrasive and dominant couple (beneath which, one suspects, they respect Stephen and Gillian more than anyone else in the world). She is, however, the most recent member, being asked to join back in 1981 a few months after Ian's death and after New Order had already struggled through a couple of hesitant outings as a three-piece. Her only previous experience was some incompetent acoustic guitar strumming on a couple of songs in the group started by her middle sister Kim and a friend, The Inadequates.

At the time she had just passed her first year exams in graphics at Stockport College of Technology. It was Stephen who actually asked her (though he says the idea came from manager Rob Gretton – "definitely not *me*"). "I was quite shocked," she remembers. "I wanted to join but I thought I couldn't. I was going to say 'no' because I thought my mum and dad wouldn't let me give up college." So she asked them. "They said 'great, yeah'. They were quite keen."

By then she'd already had that first brief encounter with music in The Inadequates. A friend of Kim's had written to the local paper complaining that there were no punk bands in Macclesfield and claiming, a little prematurely, that the three of them were forming one. One day the friend rung up in a panic begging the two of them to come round and "make something up quick" – a reporter and photographer had just arrived. The next week they were on the front page. "It was horrible," Gillian recalls. "I went to this posh school. I thought being on the front page confessing to being a punk they'd throw me out."

They didn't but, even though The Inadequates didn't last long, neither did Gillian conform to their standards. Her days of playing hockey ("I was a reserve. Cross sticks! 1-2-3! Don't repeat *any* of this!") and having a crush on a certain Liverpool footballer ("I *can't* say who. It's really *awful* now. I'll be the laughing stock... it was *Emlyn Hughes!*") were finishing.

In their place came organising Macclesfield coaches at £2 a time to go and see people like Elvis Costello (who she also fancied) the Stranglers in Manchester, and discovering with a few friends a pet band who no-one else had heard of. A few months previous they had played a rather messy punky thrash and then were called Warsaw. Now they were called Joy Division.

"Nobody else liked them," she remembers. "It sounds corny and stuff but they really did change *everything*. We used to go and they'd just be five people watching."

When they became "popular" – in other words when 'Unknown Pleasures' LP and the 'Transmission' single crept up the 'indie' charts – it "lost its appeal a bit" for a while. And then she started going out with Stephen. Nowadays the two of them live together in a modest house in Macclesfield with their Yorkshire Terrier Sammy. "Children?" she laughs, "I worry enough with the dog."

## STEVEN MORRIS

On the wall of New Order's rehearsal studio is a letter from Steven Morris' dad. It's typed on headed paper and is a request, in an awkward distant hectoring tone, for an autographed photo for a friend's daughter. One suspects the photo was never sent. Certainly Steven gives the impression that he and his dad were always rather distant.

"Once I found a baby diary my dad had when my mum had me," he says. "You're supposed to write down what happens. It's only got one entry: 'Steven has got a tooth – we are afraid the neighbours will start talking soon'. I must have had an *awfully* uneventful infancy. As far as *he* was concerned anyway."

He's fairly vague about what his father does these days. "He's got an office," he offers, "and he's not home much. He travels even more than me – he told me about a station in Cologne: 'Don't go near the station, that's where all the naughty women hang out'. How would *he* know? He flogs taps, I think, and toilet seats. He gave me one for Christmas once – *very* nice it is too, made of wood, sort of, er, *renaissance*. Pretty useless really though, because I've already got one."

Steven Paul David Morris ("all saints, aren't they? Strange...") plopped into the world at four in the morning just under 29 years ago. "I didn't really have that many friends," he says matter of factly. "I was ill all the time. They never found out what it was – I just used to throw a wobbler every few months and collapse. They thought I might have some mental defect," he laughs, tapping his head, "and spent quite a bit of time investigating *that* possibility." At the age of 14 he was "suspended indefinitely" from school for "over-indulging in other pursuits".

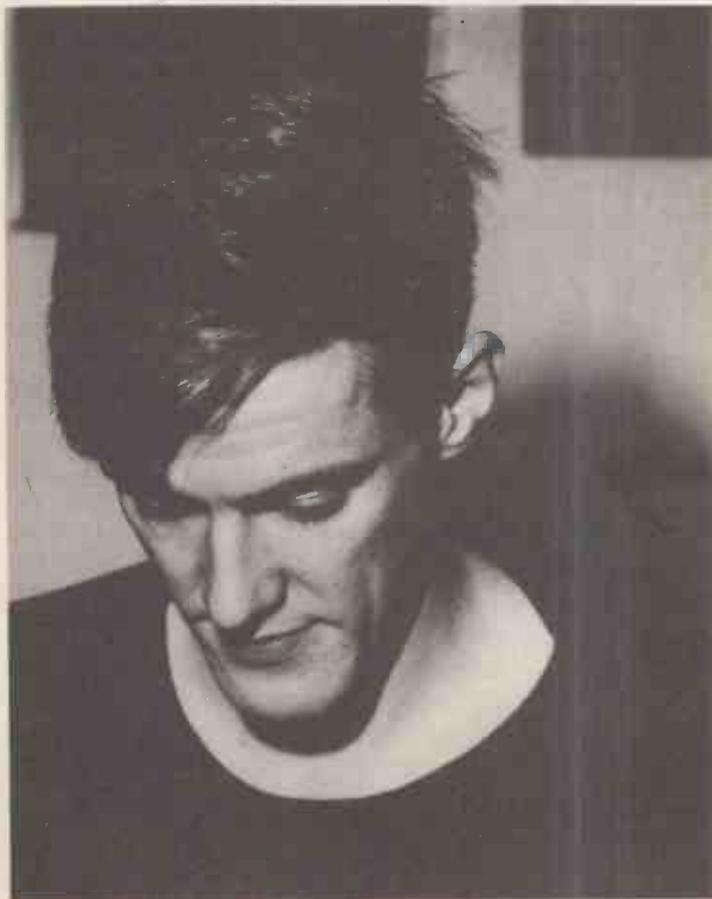
"I was sniffing glue, drinking cough medicine, that kind of thing," he says. "I daresay if it was today I would have ended up a smack addict. I can see why it appeals but it didn't really get me anywhere but in a lot of trouble. The CID," he recalls, "were called in. It was my own fault. All someone had to do was open my desk — it was full of empty medicine and dry cleaning fluid bottles." A friend was caught and confessed more serious misdemeanours to his parents. "LSD was mentioned," sighs Steven, "and that was it."

His parents, understandably, were distraught. "Major efforts," he remembers, "were put into transforming me into a nice boy". After strenuous efforts a new school — "like a paramilitary organisation" — was found but Steven escaped at 15 to work at a mill "cutting rolls of cloth and cutting out daisies to adorn ladies underwear". But three months later he ruined his prospects of a life of lingerie by "getting pissed one afternoon". He was sacked. Further disgraced he moved to a squat then gave even that up and moved back home.

"One day I was walking down the street," he recalls, "and this music shop in Macclesfield had this sign in the window saying 'drummer wanted'. I thought *that's* a good idea — I had some drums because my parents had thought they'd indulge me a bit — 'it'll give him a bit of a hobby; something to bang about.'" The ad had been placed by Ian Curtis. Steven went round, was plied with Marlboro cigarettes (he'd supposedly given up) and a four song Warsaw demo. Pretty soon he was in the band. A couple of years later Ian was dead. "You always think afterwards there's something you should have done," he sighs, "but there's nothing. Shame though."

And now? Steven lives in harmony of sorts with Gillian ("We throw kitchen equipment but we don't really row") and wonders

**// I was sniffing glue, drinking cough medicine, that kind of thing. I daresay if it was today I would have ended up a smack addict //**



whether coming home with a member of the band is a good idea after all.

"We don't really have to worry about financial success any more," he explains, "and I'm not really sure that's a good thing. If you've not got something you always want it. When you've got it you've got to find something else. I *think* I know what I want now — just a quiet life. To be comfortable. How does that sound? Yeah," he sighs, "it does sound a bit like being an accountant, doesn't it?"

## PETER HOOK

Peter Hook loves playing games. Especially the 'being awkward during interviews' game. He blocks as many questions as possible (more, one suspects, out of boredom than secrecy) and today, if he does answer, he repeatedly insists that he does so hand-in-hand with me, so that I have to tell *him* about my childhood, my schooling, my romantic experiences etc. It ends in casual abuse — I call him a pathetic bastard because he's loving this stupidity so much. "No I'm not," he grins. "I'd much rather be having a *Kentucky*." Bastard. . .

Bit by bit however he does let slip quite a lot of what has happened since his birth on February 13th 1956. A Friday, one presumes? "Thursday," he sneers with delight. "A lot of people try that one." And what was he like? "I used to frown a lot," he says. "My 16-month-old daughter frowns a lot too funnily enough. Heather Lucille, she's called. Lucille because Little Richard was making a comeback when she was born." Heather's mother, he digresses, is called Iris and they've been together for eight years. He intimates that she'd like to get married and he wouldn't. "And will I?" he teases. "That depends on what the stakes are."

Peter's parents both worked — his father as an engineer, his mother at the ship canal — and came home to a two-up two-down eventually filled with three boys: Peter, Christopher and Paul. Peter, the oldest, was lazy at school, and naughty out of school. He won't give details of the latter today but the last time we met he and Barney teased each other into admitting misdemeanours like cat burglary and nicking lead off roofs. Whatever the truth he can't have got into too much trouble because when he left at 16 with his one 'O' level (English, grade 6) he got a job at the Town Hall in the law office, subsequently he drifted through jobs as assistant cook at Clacton Butlin's ("I once split 2,500 chickens into four and split 10,000 tomatoes"), a humper in a tea warehouse, a clerk in another law office, this time on the docks before giving up work for the band. All the way through explaining this he hints at untold naughtinesses but won't be explicit. Did he ever *really* get into trouble with the law?

"That would be telling, wouldn't it?" he grins wickedly.

Indeed it would — which is exactly why I asked.

"But I'm not going to tell you anything, am I?" he chuckles.

And why not?

"Because I don't like seeing it in print," he answers.

Oh. So what does he like seeing in print?

"Samantha Fox."

And so on. We move on to the way he treats audiences. He explains that he has no qualms about hitting members of his audience when they provoke him and isolates "paying", "coming to the concert" and "bugging me" as sufficient provocation. In his world being a celebrity doesn't have many bonuses.

"I get my car kicked in a lot," he complains. "I think that's how people react to 'celebrities' all over the world. Do I think that's fair?" he grins wryly. "Well *they've* paid for the car so I suppose they may as well kick it in."



**// We've had a great time since Ian died – he'd have enjoyed it. That's the one regret. But that's his tough shit, isn't it? //**

He escapes from this unwelcome attention at his half-finished Rochdale house where he also owns a studio with a partner. "I spend a lot of time decorating," he says. "It's a bit of a shithole really. I built a doorway yesterday. It took me ages. The Membranes were upstairs and I was making more noise than them." When he's not doing his D.I.Y. bit he works in the studio, prepares his motorbike, and does weightlifting every other day "to get rid of the bags round my waist". Then he sleeps – on the left side of the bed with his arm hanging out.

"One night on the Buzzcocks tour in Glasgow," he explains, "I was pissed and I woke up with my arm hanging out the bed and I thought 'that's really weird'. Ever since I haven't been able to sleep without my arm hanging out like that."

Very strange. So what else? He enjoys sex ("Of course I do. Why? Do you fancy some?"), he worries about having "gone over a fence" at 25 or 26 ("you start worrying about everything; it's just the realization that life isn't as blissfully simple as you thought"), he admits to an irresponsible streak ("it makes life interesting – for everybody") and says that what makes him saddest is "thinking about Ian dying."

"It didn't really make me cry, it made me upset," he remembers. "When my cat died I almost shed a tear or two. But I do think about Ian a lot. What a fool. We've had a great time since – he'd really have enjoyed it. That's the one regret. But that's his tough shit, isn't it?"

## THE LP BROTHERHOOD

"It was a bind," sighs Barney, about the next new Order LP 'Brotherhood'. "When we went into the studio we discovered we only had maybe four songs – and they weren't completely finished – so we had to write the rest in the studio." From the tone of his voice it sounds as if he reckons they didn't make a very good job. If that's what he thinks he's wrong. It's quite possibly their best LP yet, and is certainly a change of tack. Ever since their dour, first attempt, 'Movement', the sort of sub-Joy Division everyone feared they might resort to, most of their work (with the odd exception like 'Thieves Like Us') has been veering towards the brilliantly hypnotic disco that filled 'Low-Life'. 'Brotherhood' is different, full of tunes, new songs and unexpected melodic twists.

"My favourite song," says Barney, "is 'All Day Long'. It's about child beating." His face hardens. "I don't see how anyone can hurt something that's so innocent, something that's blank and hasn't been written on yet. It's the ultimate crime. If curing the culprits didn't work I'd kill them."

The strangest song is undoubtedly the closing 'Every Little Counts'. It marches slowly and melodically – a funeral-paced 'Temptation' meets 'Walk On The Wild Side' – and Barney begins to sing "every second counts/when I am with you/though you are a pig..." and then bursts into laughter. He sounds on the verge of hysterics for most of the rest of the song, a cruelly sarcastic pledge of affection – "even though you're stupid/I still follow you".

"I'm laughing," insists Barney, "because the lyrics are so shit. It's funny because it's a rotten lyric and we don't care. It was the tenth song we wrote and I just thought it's not worth me sitting down and doing it properly if I'm not enjoying it. You should have heard the lines we left out. He giggles. "Even though you're dead/I still sleep with you." As usual most of the song titles (and the album title itself); are a mystery.

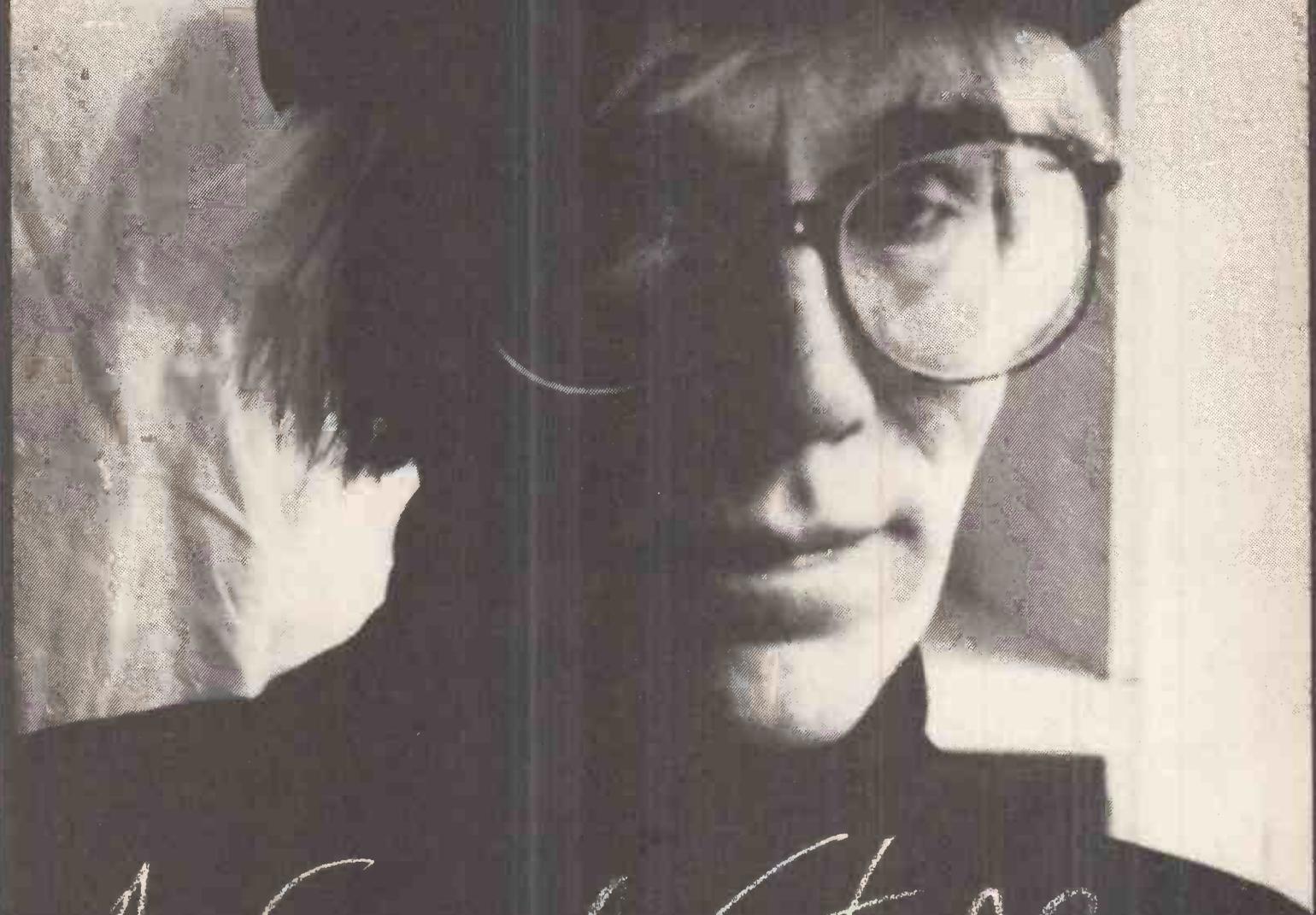
"We always have troubles with titles," he explains. He smiles – he knows that years and years of New Order and Joy Division fans' lives have been wasted trying to figure out the significance of each title to each song. "Do you want to know how we do it?" he asks. "We have a sheet of paper in the studio and whenever anyone thinks of a title they write it down. There were loads, One of the album ones was 'Unspeak' I think. At the end of the album everyone puts a tick by the ones they like and the ones with the most ticks get on the LP. A few are taken from the lyrics of course but for the rest it's a rather crude labour-saving device.

"They've always been irrelevant to the songs," he laughs. "Since Joy Division. Back then we had a sheet on the wall, this poster of all the films this cinema had on that year and we'd pinch one word from one film and another from another. I think 'The Eternal' was from something called The Eternal Flame. Probably all the Joy Division titles came from there bar about three. I mean we do employ some taste." He points to a calendar on the wall. "You wouldn't call a song Young's Kitchen, would you?"

But they would, and have, called a song 'Bizarre Love Triangle', from a News Of The World story about a "Vicar Caught In Bizarre Love Triangle". Barney has a peculiar theory to explain this strange mixture of perfectionism and last minute indifference. "What I think is important," he explains, "is that your ideas spread in different directions, even rubbish places, because it's all part of where humans are. I mean, I go out on Friday night and get drunk for no apparent reason, just to let myself go, not think about anything and be dumb for a night. And with some songs you take the same attitude. That's the way human life is and our songs should reflect human life. So 'Bizarre Love Triangle' is a Friday night attitude to writing lyrics and singing a song. That's all."

CHRIS HEATH

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# The **SIXTIES** Revivalist's

## Quiz

Questions set by Bob  
Kelly & William Shaw

*OK. So you've got the black polo neck sweater, the leather trousers, the pebble glasses, the winkle-pickers and the Brian Jones hair-do. You've got everything by The Doors and The Velvet Underground and your Bob Dylan collection stops at 'Highway 61'. AND you've got every episode of The Prisoner and The Monkees on videotape. You think you're pretty damn hip, do you? Well how many of THESE can you answer?*



PETER J RICHARDSON

- 1.** Where and when was Jim Morrison's most celebrated arrest. And what was it for?
- 2.** Who was accused of being Judas at the Royal Albert Hall in 1966?
- 3.** What's the unfortunate connection between The Oakland Chapter of the Hells Angels and The Rolling Stones?

**4.** The Move's 'Flowers In The Rain' was the first record played on Radio 1 when it opened in 1967 and it was a top five hit, but the group didn't make much cash out of it. Why?

**5.** One 60s US punk group learned the song 'Louie Louie' from Paul Revere And The Raiders and ended up having a much bigger hit with it. Who were they?

**6.** How many of the Beatles were right handed?

**7.** Who had the original hit with 'I Want Candy'?

**8.** Who received the UK royalties to The Doors 'Hello I Love You'?

**9.** Who had an aunt called Mimi?

**10.** What group started out as The Golliwogs?

**11.** Who ran Dandelion Records and hosted a show called Rockopportunity Knocks?

**12.** Which 60s US punk group appeared in an episode of The Munsters?

**13.** "Hey white boy what you doin' up town:" is a line from what song?

**14.** Stupid ways of dying; which pop stars ended their lives on the following dates?

- a) 13 July 1969 in a swimming pool.
- b) Sept 18 1970 choking on vomit.

- c) 4 Oct 1970 of a heroin overdose.
- d) 3 July 1971 in reputedly 'mysterious' circumstances.

**15.** What is A. J. Weberman famous for?

**16.** A group from Andover with an ex-bricklayer for a singer reached number one in the US with a raucous single which featured a two note ocarina solo. What's the single? Who's the group? Name the brickie.



**17.** It's 1965. A Texan group release a single 'She's About A Mover' and try to pass themselves off as a new English discovery. Who are they?



**18.** They released the garage-schlock single 'Psychotic Reaction' and their publicity shot had them dressing up in vampire capes. What's their name?



**19.** The man in the lovely outfit performing solo on Top Of The Pops in 1967 was usually more successful in the group he formed with his brother. Who is he?

**20.** The Velvet Underground claim to have been present at a party which features as a sequence in which famous film?

**21.** The Flies were a 60s US punk group who had an infamous stage act only hinted at by their name. What was it?

**22.** Fred 'Sonic' Smith was the husband of "poetess" and singer Patti Smith but before that he was in a seminal 60s group. What was their name?

**23.** Who are the following people better know as?

- a) James Jewel Osterburg.
- b) Rudy Martinez.
- c) Don Van Vliet.
- d) Louis Firbank.
- e) Roger Keith Barret.

**24.** What was the name of the truly ridiculous movie which caused Peter Tork to leave The Monkees?

**25.** Which 60s group started their life with a residency at Belfast's Maritime Hotel in 1963. The singer has since gone on to greater things.

### ANSWERS

1. Miami, Florida 1st March 1969; for showing his willy while inebriated on stage. 2. Bob Dylan, when he appeared with an electric group. The Band, "You're a liar", he shouted back. 3. The 1969 Altamont Festival where the Angels were hired to act as bodyguards for 500 dollars worth of beer. A black man with a gun got on stage during the Stones performance and was viciously stabbed to death in front of thousands of viewers. 4. Publicity for the record was a poster showing the then Prime Minister Harold Wilson in a compromising position with his secretary. Wilson successfully sued the group for royalties from the record, which he donated to charity. 5. The Kingmen. 6. Two; Paul and Ringo were left handed. 7. The Strangeloves. 8. Ray Davies, because the song had nicked Kinks guitar "riff". 9. John Lennon. 10. Credence Clearwater Revival. 11. John Peel. 12. The Stodells. 13. Waiting For The Man by The Velvet Underground. 14. (a) Brian Jones, (b) Jimi Hendrix, (c) Jonis Joplin, (d) Jim Morrison. 15. Riffing through Bob Dylan's litter bins in search of clues to his "genius". 16. "Wild Thing", The Troggs. Reg Presley. 17. Sir Douglas Quinte. 18. Count Five. 19. Dave Davies. 20. Midnight Cowboy. 21. After pelting the audience with flour during the act the singer would climax it by unfasting into the front rows. 22. MCS. 23. (a) Iggy Pop, (b) "2" of "2" and The Mysterons, (c) Captain Beethoven, (d) Lou Reed, (e) Syd Barret. 24. Head. 25. Them; the singer was Van Morrison.

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# The making of MICHAEL HUTCHENCE

...or how INXS have become one of the most bankable groups in the world. Chris Heath talks to Australia's "sexiest" star

Michael Hutchence smiles as he looks round at his surroundings, the kind of surroundings he's used to.

We're in the ludicrously extravagant poolside restaurant of the Holiday Inn, Chelsea, puzzling over items on the menu like Pigeon and Turkey Salad and Ruffled Eggs. It's early afternoon – Michael has just got up. From behind the gold-rimmed sunglasses that hide most of the damage from last night's party he takes in the sunlight coming in through the translucent roof, lighting up the trees, the plants and even the little birds that hop around. And he thinks about why being famous is important to him. He'd hate to think it was because he couldn't live without all this.

"I don't know why people want to be famous," he sighs. "There's not much in it really." Because people want to be recognised in the street? "Not quite," he decides. "I know what it is. They have an incredible need to be friends with the world. Like, 'hi everybody, I'm here!'. There's this strange notion that it will fill your life."

Who, you may be wondering, is Michael Hutchence to be blathering on about fame as if it's something whose consequences he has to prepare himself for every morning over breakfast? Isn't he just that gawky lead singer in INXS that people say is supposed to be "sexy" but who's got dodgy long hair and fairly severe acne at close range? Well, yes, that's exactly who it is.

Or, to put it another way, Michael Hutchence is the lead singer of INXS, the group who have had five successful albums in Australia and who, in the last few years, have been the most popular homegrown band in the country. INXS, the group who have number one singles in Argentina. INXS, the group who have hits in America, get produced by famous people like Nile Rodgers and can wheel in Daryl Hall on backing vocals. INXS, who at home get introduced to Charles and Di on their visits and who after-

wards let slip "they were great, really funny. Charles came up afterwards and said "you must be awfully shagged out after all that". INXS who were the only group from the Australian leg of Live Aid to be included on the worldwide satellite transmission. And Michael Hutchence is, as most people will tell you, a major part of INXS' appeal. It may be the painfully shy Andrew Farriss who writes most of the music but it's Hutchence who fills it with its pounding rock-'n-roll swagger, who prances on stage in (he admits) "the man-possessed style", defiantly sticking out his lips like a nimbler, less theatrical Mick Jagger. And he's the one who the girls at the front are there to scream at. ("I can't relate to them sometimes," he moans, "but what can you do? Say 'I don't want your teddy bear'. Usually I chew their crutches out and throw them back. They love it.") He's also the man voted sexiest in a recent American poll. "I'd never sit down in front of the mirror and try to make myself look sexy," he has said. "I just do what I do and obviously a lot of females are, er... interested. I'm a fairly sexual person." In Australia Michael Hutchence has girls waiting for him after every show. "I used to be a real bastard," he says cryptically, "but I'm much nicer now." In Australia his girlfriend Michel ("One 'l' one 'e'") refuses to meet him after concerts any more. "She's nearly been trampled to death in the crowd. She hates the whole rock-'n-roll business." People will do anything to get a part of him. "People assume that anything on you is their property – your hair, your favourite jacket. There's inside jobs as well. People taking things backstage and getting head jobs for it. It's a sick, sick, sick world." In America he's treated like a proper star. "They have a real star system there – it's frightening. You can get put in a box with cotton wool around you so easily."

But in England, of course, he's safe as could be – for the moment at least. As success has built up overseas over the

CONEYL JAY

years, Britain has ignored INXS completely. INXS, it's whispered, blame the record company, who were never prepared to promote their records properly unless INXS came over to help. INXS in their turn refused to come over and play small concerts as an unknown band ("you only play to Australians here anyway") until Phonogram broke a record. And beneath it all everyone was slightly unsure that a band of long-haired leather-jacketed Australians who, however pop-py or disco-y their records became, stuck by the virtues of "rock'n'roll" could ever find a place in the style-conscious and cruelly dismissive British market.

Until this year, that is. Phonogram won, it seems. They refused to release INXS' fifth album, "Listen Like Thieves", until the beginning of this year, three months after the rest of the world, when INXS agreed to come over and promote the record. And it seems to be paying off. In under six months they've gone from playing the Marquee to playing the Hammersmith Palais to playing the Royal Albert Hall and supporting Queen (albeit as bottom of the bill). And three singles - "This Time", "What You Need" and "Listen Like Thieves" - each got progressively more radio play and higher in the charts, even if they all stopped just short of the Top 40. Meanwhile the album, to Phonogram's surprise, sold over 20,000 copies.

It's as part of this continuing effort that Michael Hutchence is here today. He may appreciate in his head that most British interviewers will treat them like a new band but when he comes down to it he doesn't like it onebit and, one hears, can act the sullen primadonna at will. The idea of stars being treated as special and important has been with him from an early age, a product of the high society dinners that his mother (a film make-up artist) used to hold. With barely concealed pride he recalls attempting to frolic as a 10-year-old with the even younger Natassia Kinski. "I tried to play doctors but I didn't get very far. She was extremely intelligent and didn't want to waste her time on boys."

He also began to learn his way around the world at an early age, spending some years in Hong Kong where his father works as an importer and exporter. "A capitalist pig. Ha! Ha!" says Michael. "He's one of the last colonials still there, waiting for the Chinese to come over the border to attack him. He'll be standing on the roof." It was over there that he had his first brush with the music world. Aged 11. He already had a band who fumbled through Peter, Paul

and Mary hippy folk songs and, hearing of this, an advertising executive friend of his mother's suggested he was just the boy to sing the music for the man's new product - a plastic battery-powered Santa Claus into whose stomach you stick a minute record so that it goes 'Ho! Ho! Ho!' and then sings 'Jingle Bells'. It was a big success that Christmas. "My first sell-out," says Michael. "If anyone out there has a copy please send me one."

At that time though, Michael had no intentions of being a pop star. He knew he wanted to be famous of course, but the most obvious route was that suggested by his mother's glamorous social world -

**With barely concealed pride Michael recalls attempting to frolic as a 10-year-old with an even younger Nastassia Kinski. "I tried to play doctors but I didn't get very far."**

to become an actor. And that's doubtless what he'd have stuck at if he hadn't been harrassed at school back in Australia for being "this toffee-nosed little prick from Hong Kong". He was saved by the intervention of a bloke called Andrew Farriss who became his best friend. When Farriss formed a band with his two brothers (they called themselves The Farriss Brothers) Michael became singer. In 1977 they began rehearsing, by 1979 they'd had their first Australian hit single ('Just Keep Walking') and album ('INXS'). By 1983 they were big stars. "It was hilarious when I realized," remembers Michael. "I just laughed and laughed." And, he admits, got used to it. "One day," he told me on our previous meeting, "when this is all over I'll probably get really neurotic about receiving this much attention. It's really dangerous."

And what about *now*. Doesn't he ever get really neurotic now? He shakes his head the first time I ask but when I ask who he turns to when he gets down he mutters as jovially as he can, "the Lord". Really? "Sometimes I do. I used to be a Christian and I'm still battling to get rid of it. I can't go for religion where you walk round with some guy nailed to a cross with blood dripping all over him with thorns on his head, I find it really disgusting. And scientifically, I can pull it apart so easily." Actually he says he's more likely to turn to his girlfriend or the band, though he hints that the band have spent more and more time recently using their intimate knowledge of each other to tear each other down, one by one. And, he says, he still has friends,

still the same ones he had before the band started. NO new ones? He shakes his head. "It's hard. You just make thousands of new acquaintances."

Last night he made some more acquaintances, at his "first A-class celebrity socialite party I've been to in London". He's not talking about the world of Duran Duran, Samantha Fox, the cast of Eastenders, the odd footballer, Fleet Street, Sigue Sigue Sputnik and trendy London media people. These are the circles with real power, the people who run the international music industry and their associates, "a wonderful mixture of black t-shirts and Chanel cocktail dresses." "It's a whole different world." And is this the final reward for all that fame? "That's what I've been thinking about all morning," murmurs Michael. "Is that it?"

Well, is it? Because if so you'd expect Michael Hutchence to stride out now; to forget success in Britain, to forget success anywhere in fact, and get on with his rather lower profile "next career", films, (he's already recently appeared in a film called 'Dogs in Space'. "Not a pop star whim at all", he insists, all about a bizarre group of people living in a Melbourne house in the late '70s.) When he catches himself boasting "I went on a bus recently in Australia, pathetic, isn't it?" he admits - then maybe it just isn't worth it. Except that Michael Hutchence is one of those people who seem naturally famous, naturally a star and he's certainly not fed up with being "friends with the world" yet. In fact, he agrees, leaning back and sliding his hands inside his jacket to rub his nipples for about the twentieth time since we started lunch, he'd be happy to take it as far as he can. Like Prince or Madonna? He shrugs.

"That's where you go into a whole new area - megastardom. Being that big isn't just selling a lot of records and being very popular. You change society at large. In a small way you're part of history. I don't know what I'd have to do - I'd have to do more than just write a couple of really good songs. But yeah, it'd be great".

# ARTEFACTS

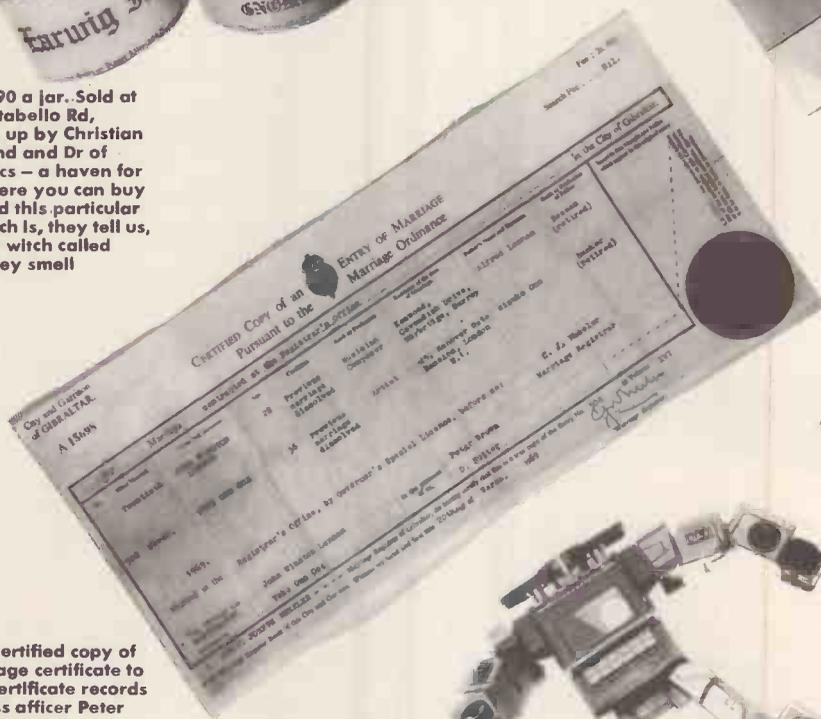
## The Guide To Fantasy Shopping



**Sanctity Incense, £2.90 a jar.** Sold at Planet Alice, 284 Portabello Rd, London, the shop set up by Christian of Alice In Wonderland and Dr of Doctor And The Medics – a haven for would be hippies where you can buy jewellery, clothes and this particular brand of incense which is, they tell us, concocted by a white witch called Jeremiah Surram. They smell disgusting of course.

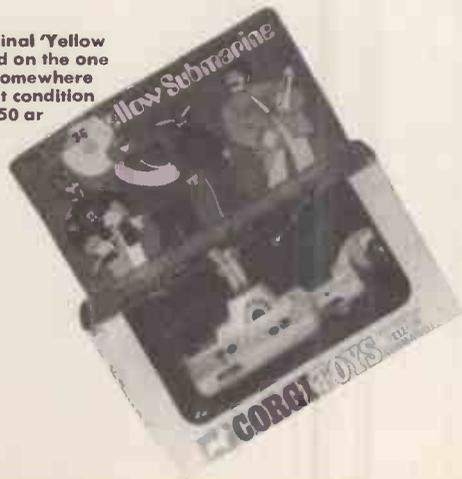


**The Spacemate from Sudden Sway, released by Blaco Y Negro.** Possibly the most elaborate piece of nonsense devised in a long while. Pop group Sudden Sway claim that this complicated kit is a complex tool to help individuals understand the universe. S-P-A-C-E-M-A-T-E stand for Super-dimensional Perceptive Aid Combining Every Manner and Type of Everything. Gorgeously packaged and worth every penny at just under £10.



**Beatles Artefacts 1: Certified copy of John Lennon's marriage certificate to Yoko Ono Cox.** The certificate records the witnesses as press officer Peter Brown and one D. Nutter. It changed hands recently for about £3,000.

**Beatles Artefacts 2: Original 'Yellow Submarine' toy modelled on the one in the film of the song.** Somewhere over 16 years old, a mint condition sub will set you back £250 or thereabouts.



**Taiwanese robot radio – £15.50.** Splendid transformer toy which mutates from a replica ghetto blaster into a ten inch high space monster. The quality of the AM radio it features is, however, dubious.



**Eyeball bubblegum: 5p.**





It's a sad fact of life that books about pop music are usually pitiful things. Publishers know only too well that the only safe way to make a bit of cash is to whip together a biog from a few cuttings and some pimply photographs. But in spite of that the 30-odd year history of pop has thrown up the odd great tome. . .

**Simon Frith,**  
Observer pop critic,  
lecturer in Sociology  
at Warwick  
University and  
himself author of the  
highly praised  
'Sound Effects' – a  
sociology of rock –  
has been poring  
through his  
bookshelves to pick  
out the ten best  
volumes ever written  
about pop.

# THE 10 BEST BOOKS EVER WRITTEN ABOUT POP MUSIC

## 1. 'AWOPBOPALOOBOP- aLOOPBAMBOOM: POP FROM THE BEGINNING' by Nik Cohn

There are more solid histories of 1950s and 1960s rock and roll (Charlie Gillett's definitive 'SOUND OF THE CITY', for example) and subtler, more thoughtful accounts of what it all meant (Dave Laing's 'THE SOUND OF OUR TIME', for example) but Nik Cohn's pop story is the best, and not just because it came first. Cohn defined good rock writing: insider knowledge worn easily and cynically, prose paced and loaded to match the music it describes. Every eager boy and girl in the music press since has tried in vain to write like this (Cohn's only real successor was Peter York) and his flip approach lives on in SMASH HITS and THE FACE, but Cohn wasn't just a smart stylist – he had an intelligent point to make (which is what differentiates him from today's neat phrase-makers like Julie Burchill). At the very moment when rock was constituting itself as a Serious Art Form, Cohn convincingly explained the superiority of pop. For him Dylan and the Beatles marked the end not the beginning of good times, and the Stones, as he suggested, should indeed have been killed off before they reached 30. Everything Sigue Sigue Sputnik so clumsily argue now about fun and flash and hucksterism Cohn argued with wit and elegance nearly 20 years ago (and, anyway, I've never forgotten him calling Eric Burdon an exploding doughnut).

*"British pop in the fifties was pure farce. Nobody could sing and nobody could write and, in any case, nobody gave a damn. The industry survived in a state of perpetual self-hyped hysteria, screaming itself hoarse about nothing in particular. There was much assorted greed, schndery and lunacy. Trousers dropped like ninepins..."*

*'Awopbopalooboplopbamboom' 1969*

## 2. 'REVOLT INTO STYLE' by George Melly

While Nik Cohn was commenting on pop in QUEEN as a sort of gadfly insider, a teenage hustler himself, George Melly was reporting on the same events for the OBSERVER as a measured outsider, an older generation art critic and jazzman. His articles were, though, equally apt and even more influential. Melly understood British rock by reference to both teenage affluence and pop art and his treatments of style

as revolt, revolt as style, have been echoed in all hip pop theories since (see Dick Hebdige's 'SUBCULTURE – THE MEANING OF STYLE', for example). Melly combined his own working knowledge of the music and art business with a semiologist's obsession with the details of fashion, and he could have made sense of punk (and probably did) without even leaving his desk. 'REVOLT INTO STYLE' has, strangely, been out of print for years (and impossible to find in old book shops) but the rumour is that Melly is at this very moment preparing a second edition. Let's hope so.

*"P. J. Proby was the last great King Of The Damp Crutch, and this was at the very time when both the Beatles and the Stones were turning against live appearances and working towards a form of hermetic pop. Yet Proby was admired, for his hair and its ribboned bow, his velvet suits, his splitting trousers, his clashes with authority, his bloody-mindedness... Even his downfall had a certain panache."*

*'Revolt Into Style' 1970*

## 3. 'ELVIS '56' by Alfred Wertheimer

Wertheimer was employed by RCA to take publicity pictures of this new artist they'd just signed from Sun. He was, then, both in on and instrumental to the process which transformed Elvis Presley's sense of himself and which made his image the most potent sign of youth culture there'd ever been. Presley is pictured here on and off stage, formally and informally, at home and at work, on the road and in the studio. He's pictured, that is, in the act of becoming Elvis Presley – those swollen, sullen, damp good looks being moulded into the familiar sleek-haired, bedroom-eyed icon. Wertheimer's linking words on this are interesting but rock and roll has always been just as much a matter of image as of sound and it's the images here that count – Elvis's tenderness with his own body, Col. Parker's plump beak, the permanent clutch of agog teenage girls. The best rock photo book because it has the images that matter most.

## 4. 'ROD STEWART' Paul Nelson and Lester Bangs

Pity the poor rock writer. Publishers long ago found out that there's no mass market for real rock books – rock fans don't read, book buyers aren't interested in music. The only rock publishing money to be made is from instant biographies of the latest big record sellers –

and even then it's not likely that many people read the words between the pictures. And so the music section of Smiths is full of hack lives, cobbled together from press clippings and old MELODY MAKER reviews. There have been good biographies (Dave Marsh on Bruce Springsteen and The Who, for example) but the form is essentially disposable, which is why this mixed-up account of Rod Stewart, archetypal stadium star, is such fun. Paul Nelson does the serious I-was-there reportage, the late Lester Bangs, the greatest rock stylist of the 1970s, combs the Stewart archives and makes up anything he needs and can't find out. The book ends with a hilarious diatribe, Rod's nightmare of post-punk Britain, which gets at the paranoid starmind better than any number of real in-depth conversations (Lester's book on BLONDIE, moral muck-racking, is equally compelling).

*"To be English is to be conscious of two things: (1) You used to rule the world, and (2) All your current rock and roll bands stink, but the liberal or left-leaning fan is obliged to like them even though they all sound either like old tarpaulins being dropped in a well while a sickly whelp mewls piteously; or they sound like seven college students hoping for at least a C+ even though they are dashing off a project entitled 'Twitch Of The Miscreant' in between beerbusts."*

*'Rod Stewart' by Lester Bangs 1981*

## 5. 'PAPER-BACK WRITER' by Mark Shipper

Lester Bangs argues in ROD STEWART that when writing about rock it is both pointless and impossible to separate fact and fiction. Mark Shipper had already acted on this insight in his alternative history of the Beatles. In his account, just as 'true' as Philip Norman's or Hunter Davies's researched tomes, Paul McCartney was a solo recording artist before he was recruited to the Beatles, Brian Epstein was a plumber, and Linda McCartney left Wings to join Steely Dan. Shipper satirises the ways rock legends are made and this is, without a doubt, the funniest rock book ever written. Rock fiction is, in general, a feeble field, made up of thinly disguised ROMANS À CLEF like Elaine Jesmer's Motown saga, 'NUMBER ONE WITH A BULLET' and Jenny Fabian's 'GROUPIE' and soapy melodramas that never approach the frisson of real life – who could invent a story as compulsively sleazy and naive as Boy George's?

## 6. 'THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ROCK' by Phil Hardy and Dave Laing

Rock fact books (trivial pursuits) are dominated by two publishers – Rolling Stone (histories, discographies, almanacs) and Guinness (endless variations of the top 50). They put out reliable work, I guess, but effectively reduce pop and rock history to globules of received commercial opinion. The great advantage of Hardy and Laing's 'ENCYCLOPEDIA', by far the best such reference work there's been (only Pete Frame's 'FAMILY TREES' are as fascinating) is not the accuracy and insight of its individual entries (facts and opinions well combined) but its range – reference books are most useful, after all, for what they tell you about people you know nothing already about. Even now, ten years later, this is the best source of information on the history of US and British rock and roll, on classic soul music, on the pop mainstream, and the good news is that a new edition is presently being prepared.

## 7. 'STARLUST' by Fred and Judy Vermorel

The Vermorels are mavericks in the British rock scene, archivists, moralists, authors of the definitive biography of the Sex Pistols, the definitive anti-biography of Kate Bush. 'STARLUST' is a collection of fans' "secret fantasies". There's no commentary – the Vermorels just worked to collect the material, the letters to stars, the replies to ads, the phone messages and fan club conversations. These are organised, loosely, around three sorts of star, three sorts of fan, three sorts of desire – Barry Manilow (and Manilust), David Bowie (and the weirdos), Nick Heyward (teenybopper) – but there are other pop-sex objects here too, and at first reading 'STARLUST' is straight pornography (one revelation it makes is that people's sexual fantasies these days can only be articulated in the language and shape of the sort porn magazines). But there's more going on in these primal scenes than moments of masturbation. In both practice and imagination these fans are obsessed by their idols (they're the involuntary victims of star sales campaigns) and obsession involves hatred as well as love, dreams of possession as well as dreams of being possessed. 'STARLUST' is the most intimate and disturbing account there is of what it means to consume music, and I'm curious now to see what sense, if any, the Vermorels will make of this in their promised second, 'theoretical' volume.

"Me and my husband only live together now as brother and sister. Because – and this may seem rather silly and stupid – but I just feel unclean with any other man apart from Barry Manilow. If I can't have sexual intercourse with Barry, I'll go without. I'll never be unfaithful to Barry. My husband understands this. He realizes my interests are different to his and he does try to understand."

Barry Manilow fan quoted in 'Starlust' 1985

## 8. 'DAVID BOWIE: THE PITT REPORT' by Kenneth Pitt

Kenneth Pitt managed David Bowie from 1966-70 and this is a good book for two reasons. First, it gives a detailed account (balance sheets and all) of the business of pop failure. Pitt looked after Bowie before he made it and is obviously still living in memory with the hustles and hassles involved in day-to-day survival of the bottom of the career ladder. Failure is always more interesting than success (all rock biographies get less interesting as they go along) and case studies are always the best way of getting a grip on the pop process (the best account of the American rock industry, another analysis of failure, is Geoffrey Stokes' 'STAR-MAKING MACHINERY', the story of a Commander Cody LP), but 'THE PITT REPORT' is, too, a romance, the story of a manager's love, in the end unrequited, for his boy. There is a thinly concealed sexual element in this – the boy was, after all, David Bowie, and the homosexual inflexions in pop management have been a feature of the British scene from the 1950s (as Nik Cohn points out) through to, say, Simon Napier-Bell's appreciation of Wham appeal – but this isn't really what makes Pitt's story so poignant. The question is why should he (and other such managers before and since) devote so much of their energy and imagination to these pimply, creepy youths? Sex and money are only minor considerations in the answer – it's the gamble involved that is addictive.

## 9. 'SMASH HITS YEARBOOK 1983' edited by Neil Tennant

SMASH HITS has outsold the rest of the music press in Britain for the last ten years not just for marketing reasons but also because it's much better written and more emotionally satisfying than the weeklies. While NME uses up gallons of ink trying to persuade us that this group from Middlesborough is really quite extraordinary (even though no-one had ever heard of them before nor will ever hear of them again), SMASH HITS has the much happier task of revealing that the latest superstars are even bigger nerds than you and I. Unlike the NME's writers, always going on about truth and purity, the SMASH HITS crew

focus on those things we usually do judge people by – what they keep in their handbags, how they look in swimsuits, who's their favourite character from fiction. The YEARBOOKS have all this and quizzes, calendars, short stories and hopeless predictions of the future. True collectors' items.

"Elvis opens with a high, wild 'WELLLLLLLLLL...' and pulls fast and hard into the first verse before the echo of his shout has had a chance to fade. His voice is raw, pleading and gushing, full of indescribably sexy asides, the throaty nuances that would flare up into 'All Shook Up' and 'Burning Love'. Elvis slows for a second in the middle of a line, drawing softly, over his shoulder, as if he can't quite bring himself to say out loud how good the party's going to be..."

'Mystery Train' 1975

## 10. 'MYSTERY TRAIN' by Greil Marcus

Greil Marcus is the best rock critic there's ever been, the only one who listens to records so hard that he can then write about them in words that sing and dance and have more resonance than the original sounds themselves, and it's a pity he doesn't have an outlet here, if only to show what dolts most British rock writers are. We have got 'MYSTERY TRAIN', though, Marcus's exploration of the mythology of the USA as embedded in the key figures of Robert Johnson, Harmonica Frank, Sly Stone, The Band, Randy Newman and Elvis Presley. This makes 'MYSTERY TRAIN' sound heavy duty and it is – Marcus is writing out of the US tradition in which rock is taken seriously – but the book is something else too, a playful encounter with the intellectualising urge itself. If for Marcus, as for Cohn, Little Richard's 'Tutti Frutti' was, in itself, the most startling, profound commentary on life he could ever hope to hear, then it follows that commentary on 'Tutti Frutti' should have something of the same mad, mind-wrenching quality. 'MYSTERY TRAIN' does.

● Nik Cohn ('Awopbopalooboplopbamboom; Pop From The Beginning' published in Britain (1970) by Paladin. Originally issued in 1969 under the title 'Rock From The Beginning').

● George Melly: 'Revolt Into Style' (1970) Penguin.

● Greil Marcus 'Mystery Train' (1975) Omnibus £4.50. A new edition is in the pipeline.

● Paul Nelson and Lester Bangs 'Rod Stewart' (1981) Sidgwick & Jackson £4.95.

● Mark Shipper 'Paperback Writer' (1977) New English Library. Out of print. No plans for new edition.

● Phil Hardy and Dove Laing 'The Encyclopedia of Rock' Goffin, out of print.

● Kenneth Pitt 'The Pitt Report' (1983) Omnibus £6.95.

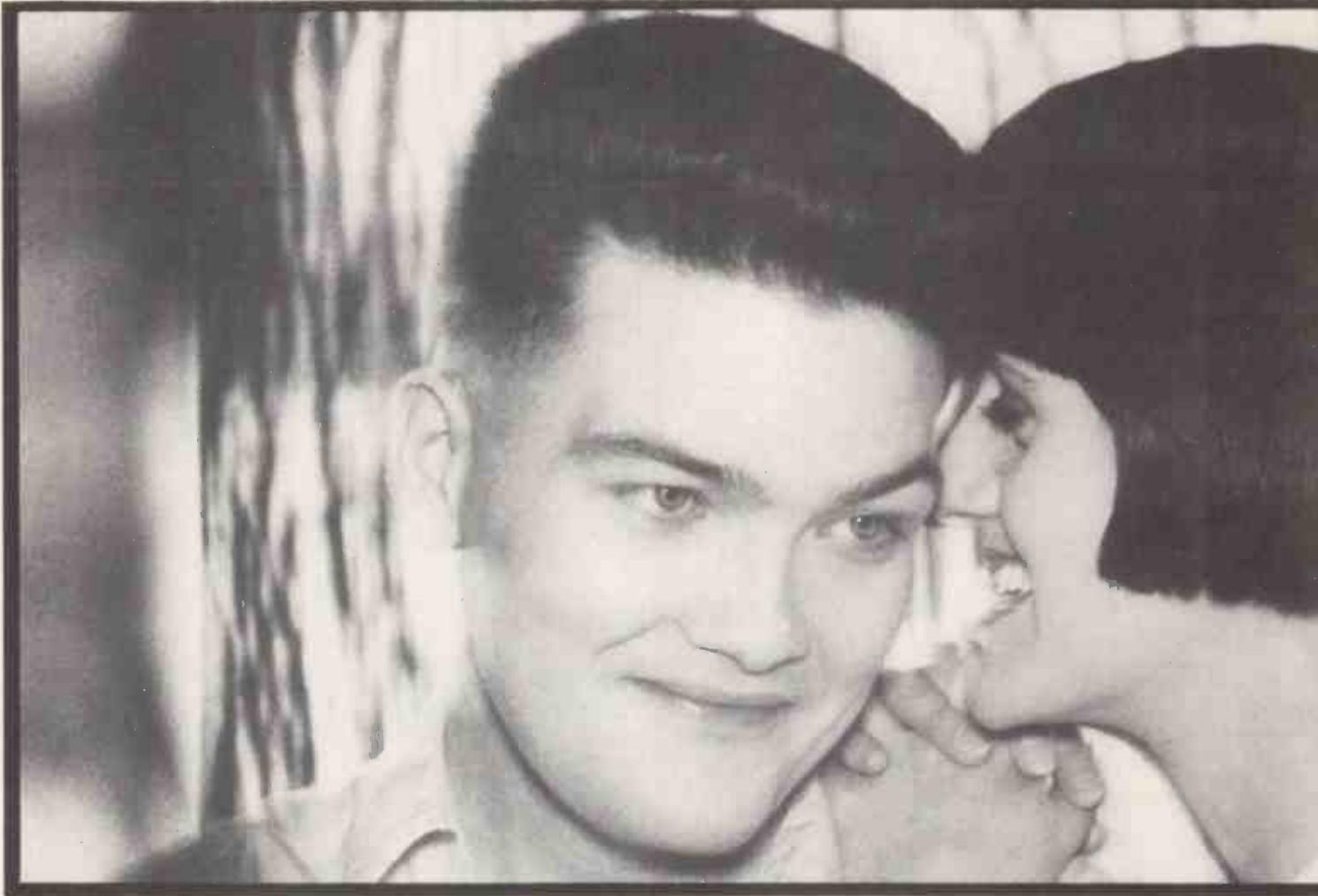
● Fred and Judy Vermorel 'Starlust' (1985) Comet. Sadly this book's already out of print after less than 12 months on the shelves.

● 'Smash Hits Yearbook' 1987 edition appears later this year, edited by Ian Cranno, EMAP £2.95.

● Simon Frith's 'Sound Effects' is published by Constable £5.95.



# EVERYTHING



**A** haircut. It all starts with the haircut. "The record company said to me, 'Come on Trace, you've got a new album to promote, get a new haircut.'"

Not actually the true genesis of the current state of coiffure of Tracey Thorn of Everything But The Girl, but Tracey Thorn does have a new haircut. And Everything But The Girl do have a new LP to promote. Where their debut 'Eden' was accompanied by a tumbledown bundle of brown curls, and the second – last year's 'Love Not Money' – trailed by a highlighted elephantic spiky-top containing more mousse than the entire Canadian mainland, the model bestriding the two sides of 'Baby The Stars Shine Bright' sports a slightly grown out Louise Brooks bob, a style more usually reserved for leather-clad Parisien dominatrices. Part of the sophisticated Everything But The Girl wit?

It's a measure of Everything But

The Girl's state of success that they've had to find themselves a manager, Eileen. Up till recently they'd taken care of business themselves. Eileen, in whose flat Ben and Tracey sit, brings in the tea.

It's been a slightly unsteady path for Ben and Tracey to pop's – shall we say – upper-middle echelons for Ben and Tracey so far. With the single 'Each And Every One' drawing them into the limelight while they were still cramming for their English degrees at Hull University, their ascendent did slip somewhat; B.A. finals put paid to the accompanying tour that would have got their faces known.

"It's true," says Tracey, "we've gone from being cult 'indie' stars to minor pop stars, but there seem to be so many stages in the business. It's like climbing a never-ending mountain. As soon as you get to one peak you see a higher one in front of you. We slipped a bit after 'Eden', but we levelled out. . .

"We're in an odd situation really, because, due to our background people assume that we've got an affinity with the current 'indie' bands. It's true that we are more likely to be spotted at a Go-Betweens gig than a Paul Young gig, but we are more likely to be appearing the following week on a Italian pop show with Paul Young than the Go-Betweens. You make some strange friends in music, because after all, you are all striving for the same thing, to be numbered all over the world."

The new LP 'Baby The Stars Shine Bright' may be the correct way of going about that. Preceding LPs have been odd; patchy and personal affairs, from the smokey jazz and bossa nova sounds of 'Eden' to the bleak Smiths-ish 'Love Not Money' (a period when Tracey even took to introducing Ben as the original 'Boy With The Thorn In His Side'. Ben has his own way of summing up the transition: "From samba to sombre."

# BUT THE GIRL



"Yuck!" says Tracey Thorn.

"Baby The Stars Shine Bright" is more overtly big 'P' Pop, hearkening back to the golden era of the mid-60s, to Spector's wall of sound, the Shangri-Las, but more particularly to the English end - Dusty Springfield and Petula Clark - the real belters. And to make their point they have employed nothing less than most of the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

But the most notable difference is that they play down their previously up-front politics. Last year's LP, their frequent benefits, their concerts in Russia, prominently pinned the Everything But The Girl colours to the red flag. Who can forget Ben's striking duet with Billy Bragg at the Brixton Academy benefit for striking miners last summer? Bill and Ben sing!

"Yes," says Ben, "we seem to get singled out to do benefits, and after a while you just can't keep being the

bleeding heart of the world or you'd be doing benefits every day of the year. We are continually approached at gigs by earnest young men who say 'I'm from the Plymouth Socialist Vegans, would you play at our fete? Monsigneur Bruce Kent is hopefully... etc, etc.

"It's alright for Billy Bragg. He can just stick his guitar on his back and go toddling off round the world. But there's

**"We are continually being approached by earnest young men who say 'I'm from the Plymouth Socialist Vegans, would you play our fete?' We just can't keep being the bleeding hearts of the world."**

been this trend lately for people to turn into latterday Bob Dylans and Leonard Cohens and turn up at benefits giving solo inadequate renditions of their hits, pale imitations."

"When we go on tour," Tracey piles in, "whether they are benefits or not, we feel we ought to put on a show. I'd rather just send a tenner to a worthy cause than stand in a field getting sunburnt and listening to horrible music."

"The song 'Little Hitler' came out of the fact that being a 'political group' we encountered certain political types whose breed of Socialism seems to lead them to them despising the world. It could apply just as easily to the right, to any power-crazed egomaniac with that kind of brutally dogmatic attitude that would line people up against the wall, not just during the revolution, but for years afterwards. The kind of person for whom ideology completely takes over."

It's an odd situation that Everything But The Girl find themselves in now, a kind of double bind when it comes to hits that they're only too aware of: "If we were having hits," ponders Tracey, "then I should imagine we'd be seen as no different to A-Ha, but then The Smiths sell huge amounts of records and nobody thinks of them in the same terms as A-Ha. In a sense that's a failure on their part, that although they are a successful pop group on their own terms, but stick severely to their guns and ideals, they've never actually ascended

to the real pop aristocracy. It's a strange paradox."

"As long as we get into the charts with great songs, that's fine," decides Ben. "It's great that The Jesus And Mary Chain made it with 'Some Candy Talking'. It would have been terrible if they'd got into the charts with something abominable, but 'Some Candy Talking' stands in comparison with this

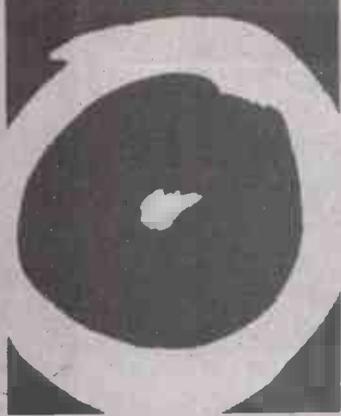
year's great singles, like Cherelle's 'Saturday Love'. That's the kind of ambition we hope to realize."

"I love Primal Scream," announces Tracey enthusiastically: the two of them turned out earlier this year to witness Bobby Gillespie's ICA appearance. "They're just out and out pop stars. The first time I saw them it was curtains. They go right back to Phil Spector. Anyone with haircuts as good as that, and anyone who can have a five minute huddle on stage mid-set to decide what they do next... They remind me a lot of what The Marine Girls used to be like in attitude. And they've got a brill tambourine player! You don't see many men playing a tambourine."

Do the two of them get fed up with always being taken for a miserable boy/girl duo by the press? "Nooooooo!" answers Tracey. "It's much better to be called miserable bastards than insignificant twits. Besides everybody gets tagged so that people get one fixed idea about you. We seem to provide a love/loathing mentality where we get reviews from people who have been waiting for three months to get the half-bricks out, so we must at least be doing something controversial to provoke that. It's brilliant! And basically we ARE a 'boy/girl duo' in inverted commas, but we're presenting things in a very modern way."

"I think," says Ben sagely, "my whole life has been in inverted commas."

BRUCE DESSAU



single **'World Shut Your Mouth'** (Island) is no exception and heaven forbid, might even bruise the charge with its grizzly delights. Somewhere in the cuddly pleasurezone between Petula Clarke's **'Don't Sleep In The Subway'** and staggering out of a stranger's party in the week small hours, it's Cope's most assured pop moment since, ooh, the last single. An album is expected in the next few months and promises to tickle you in the strangest places.

The The's album **'Infected'** has been threatening to make most else seem pointless, for quite a while now, but with **'Heartland'** (Some Bizarre) hitting the dizzy heights, it might just deliver the goods. **'Out Of The Blue... Into The Fire'** and **'Slow Train To Dawn'** are standouts in a dark, unconventionally attractive album, the latter featuring a duet between Malt Johnson and Neneh Cherry, ex-Rip Rig and Panic/Float Up C.P.-er. More of a baroque house than a grand folly, it's still sumptuous enough to make you want to move in.

Stephen Duffy knows full well how to twist current pop into the best shapes, and the re-release of **'I Love You'**/**'Icing On The Cake'** (10) brings nowt but praise from this quarter. **'I Love You'** has just about the best first line of any pop song ever written. Suck it and see.

**'Eccentric'** is a word I'd never even contemplate using about Annie Lennox, despite her insistence that cross dressing maketh the truly offbeat. She still photographs as well as any living being but now that the endearingly sterile freakpop has been abandoned in favour of **'authentically'** rocky credibility, there's not much to hold the attention past the pretty sleeve. **'Thorn In My Side'** (RCA) is rather closer to something off an Eagles LP than most of us would care to admit, but at least it'll have a good video, eh. Eh?

If we must be adult about our aural pleasure, let's have it in the shape of soul sweeties like Krystol's **'Passion From A Woman'** (Epic) and Alexander O'Neal's **'You Were Meant To Be My Lady (Not My Girl)'** (Tabu) or The Bangles' **'Walk Like An Egyptian'** (CBS). The Bangles' effort is their

least skippety for some time, treading a bit close to soft rock silliness for my liking, but Susanna's smile and the group's West Coast Kookyness always drags you back just once more.

American Girls would probably love to be The Bangles. They've got longer legs and better lips, but their **'American Girls'** (I.R.S.) single, still manages to suck more eggs than a battalion of grandmothers. On the back of the record there's an uncredited paragraph in tiny letters informing us that American Girls are tough, hard and melodic, and that this is a brilliant debut from an excellent band. Confidence and desperation are never further apart than the thickness of a big fat advance cheque.

Ashford and Simpson's public love letters oscillate wildly between Romeo and Juliet and Peters and Lee, their newie **'Count Your Blessings'** (Capitol) chunnering along the Opportunity Knocks school of Deep Emotional Involvements. The accompanying **'Real Love'** album is more of the same but with enough persuasively bizarre promises to keep you caring. Perhaps they ought to hook up with Jai Dean Woolf. His **'Sweet Miss America'** (EMI) is sugary, assured pop with the best haircut you'll see this year. He likes life. Maybe he's Ashford and Simpson's son.

Casting a cursory eye over the indie network it's distressing to find that lunacy appears to have been abandoned in favour of earnest common sense and serious cover photos. An honourable exception is The Ex's **'1936'** (Ron Johnson). Packaged lavishly with a free 150 page booklet about the Spanish Civil War, written in Dutch. Incomprehensible, devoid of any sense of economics and four unremittingly awful songs. Admirable.

Just before the creaky door on the record cabinet slams shut, out pop The Stranglers with **'Nice In Nice'** (Epic). Never before have old lags combined quite so effectively, the glamour of girls in high heels, and a band dressed in convicts uniforms singing about prison tea. The grandest folly yet, and something close to the sublime. Either that, or crap. Funny old thing, pop.

## LONG PLAYERS

### THE FIXX

**'Walkabout'** (MCA)

The Fixx. Sounds as if they should be called something like Fixx Fixx. One listen to this and it's easy to see where they fit in on the musical map. Somewhere over there. A selection of ten songs that flow seamlessly into each other producing a 'classy' mid-Atlantic pop that is faultlessly played, immaculately produced and professionally crafted. In a word, characterless. It's one of those records that the phrase "Now who does that sound like?" keeps popping up. And the annoying thing is that it just cannot be placed. After four years together, The Fixx have realised that the name of their game is American Market, and have unashamedly pointed themselves in that direction. A little bit of luck, and who knows, they may attain that mythical status of 'Stadium'. Who knows. But really, **'Walkabout'** is one of those records that face into the background. In a word pleasant.

JEREMY NOVICK

### THE FEELIES

**'The Good Earth'** (ROUGH TRADE)

There are prolific bands and not so prolific bands. The Feelies fall firmly beyond the realms of the latter. The brainchild of New Yorkers Glenn Mercer and Bill Million, they were first heard of (on these shores) in 1980 with the LP **'Crazy Rhythms'**. Sporting an over the top preppy college kid image, they seemed a little too New York, a little too clever. They called their instruments things like galloping guitars, spasmodic drums and droned bass. A little too smart perhaps. But the music was something else. Haunting and atmospheric, their gentle guitar and percussion-based tunes sought to create a mood, a feeling. Then they disappeared. Six years on, and there's a new Feelies LP. Six years may have passed, but they're still playing the same game. **'The Good Earth'** stretches further the fragility angle with a collection of jingly jangly melodies that

## OCTOBER POP by Paul Mathur

**Don Was** from Was (Not Was) is telling me about George Clinton. "I met him in Detroit one day and he said, 'let's get this clear, I'm crazy but not half as crazy as everyone else'." Ten minutes later, at the end of our road I see an old wino trying to chat up a tree, and I know exactly what Clinton means.

Nowhere is out-and-out lunacy more prevalent than in the hurdy gurdy pop menagerie. In the absence of enough open parkland to build pink castles and reservoirs full of asses' milk, what else can record company moguls do but make their follies in little black vinyl circles.

On the other hand, I have to admit, the most endearing, relentlessly beautiful pop music, can always be trusted if its creator is a couple of bricks short of a full load. Take Was (Not Was) themselves for example. The world they occupy is superficially the same as ours, but just wait until you turn your back and all of a sudden they'll bring out something like **'Robot Girl'** (Phonogram). Lord knows what it's on about but the wiggly mirror Hip Hop beat wraps itself around you so seductively that after a couple of minutes you don't really care that when you wake up with her next morning, you might have to get handy with an arc welding tool. The B-side **'Earth To Doris'** is weirder still, a smalltown tale of Midwest ordinariness, laced with a kind of comic book absurdity. Like Tom Waits on mescaline and quite, quite indispensable.

Julian Cope might be a little eccentric, but rarely fails to come up with something worth crossing continents for. The new

most of today's UK hipsters would give their hollow bodied Gretsch for. On first listen, The Feelies care little for conventional structure or conformity, preferring to build layer upon layer until the right feel is created. On second listen they are just good songs. Everything about this is in a word, gentle. The vocals are more breathed than sung, the guitars float the percussion rolls. The net result is an insidious record that seems to crawl under the listener's skin as the tunes and melodies assert themselves. Gentle without being fey, a little gem.

JEREMY NOVICK

## THE MIGHTY LEMON DROPS

'Happy Head' (BLUE GUITAR/CHRYSALIS)

There's theory that people are born like blank sheets of paper. Life then imprints its codes and messages on to that paper. That seems reasonable. Put simply, everyone is influenced. It's what you do with those influences that counts. All of which brings us nicely to the Mighty Lemon Drops. They've done nothing with their influences bar use them. They've not even had the wit to abuse them. That's not called nodding. Now that's not admitting to an influence, that's just called plagiarism. The Mighty Lemon Drops have found a pen to inscribe their blank paper with. The trouble is that the only thing it will write is Echo And The Bunnymen. Take that away and the question would be asked 'Do the Lemon Drops exist at all?' But no. Wait. There's something else. It's, it's... The Teardrop Explodes. These boys would kill their mothers if only their passports would say Place of Birth: Liverpool. Let's take one song, the last single, 'The Other Side Of You'. A driving opening, throbbing even, courtesy of Pete Wylie. This is getting silly. The vocals enter the fray, a pubescent McCullough who has a serious problem pronouncing his R's. The chorus comes in — "The river runs deep and wide, take me to the other side, come on baybeee." No wonder Jim Morrison topped himself. Take the ingredients and repeat twelve times. Say the magic words — "we've got the patronage of the music press"

## TALKING HEADS

'True Stories' (EMI)

Jaunty. Remember that word, we'll be coming back to it. So, the first of David Byrne's 'True Stories' series. A film, a film soundtrack and a book. But first the Talking Heads version. And right from the start, there's no doubt about their intent. A laugh, the age old cry of "1,2,3,4" and off into 'Love For Sale'. A tune straight from the outtakes section of 'Little Creatures', complete with the obligatory references to televisions, it sets the tone for the rest of the LP. Short, sharp stabs at straight ahead pop with references pointing in all directions, from calypso to tango, from country to funk. But mostly just pointing in one direction — that of talking Heads. To describe any Talking Heads product as lightweight is a dangerous thing to do. They have a habit of coming back, tapping you on the shoulder and making you look really stupid. Having said that, this is lightweight and less than memorable. The problem of setting such high standards. The overall tone of 'True Stories' could be summed up by that word jaunty. The bouncy backbeat, those jolly choruses — jaunty. Even the words seem to be concerned with jauntiness. Of course there are the constant references to the trappings of modern life: the television, the radio, the video, the problems of relating to other people. All the usual stuff. But somehow there's something lacking. The spark of the unexpected, perhaps. It could just be that with so many other ongoing projects, Byrne has simply lost interest.

JEREMY NOVICK

and there you have it. A hit LP. At the end of the year it will be said that the ignoble failure of Sigue Sigue Sputnik was the attempted pop con and ho, ho, ho, we sussed it and laughed them out of court. Listen to this and that opinion will be revised. SSS were misguided innocents compared to this lot in the con stakes. The only nice thing is that both the reviewer and the band are smiling. The band for obvious reasons and the reviewer because he cannot believe the sheer chutzpah of the whole enterprise. "The river runs deep and wide, take me to the other side, come on baybeee." Are these boys serious?

JEREMY NOVICK

## HELEN TERRY

'Blue Notes' (Virgin)

Can't say I've ever been the world's greatest Boy Jaws fan. The fickle finger of the fame he craved finally — and perhaps deservedly — caught up with him, but the unfortunate circumstances inspire mixed feelings.

The Boy did produce one flash of genius to justify his fifteen minutes, however, and that was 'Church of the Poison Mind', a perfect distillation of blues and pop lent immortality by the bittersweet wailings of Helen Terry. And, appropriately enough, a re-run of 'Church', 'Love Money and Sex' (no, the Boy didn't write it, though he did co-write two other tracks here) is one of the few highlights of this

polished but ultimately soulless debut.

Produced in typically clinical fashion by Don Was, this collection is just that: a collection, a ragbag of influences, not a unified whole. Helen's efforts to ally passion to her unquestioned vocal power are defeated by cluttered arrangements when all she needs is a joanna and a sax. Worse still, one minute you're in the presence of a cool Janis Joplin, the next there's a militant Gladys Knight serenading you. Even Barbara bloody Streisand takes a bow.

But all is nearly forgiven through a gorgeous rendition of Lamont Dozier's 'Act of Mercy', a surefire smash and the perfect antidote to the plastic soul currently poisoning the airwaves. More of the same, Helen, and you can still be a contender.

ROB STEEN

## THE CHAMELEONS

'Strange Times' (WEA)

Manchester's Chameleons are certainly not a group to be laughed at. This new LP is the peak of their long years on the fringes, combining pensive music and moody singing from the passionate voice of Mark Burgess. Atmospherically depressing, it's got a progressive attraction but by far the most charismatic track has to be the recent single 'Swamp Thing' with its tribal beat, twangy, rounded acoustics and sinister backing vocals. It's a tantalizing LP. It leaves you wanting more.

ALEXANDRA BILLINGTON

## HEAD OF DAVID

'LP' (Blast First)

It's just a hunch, but I reckon in their time Head of David have not been opposed to the odd soiree huddled around a jostick in their native Black Country, dribbling eulogies over Jimmy Page lead breaks. Still, we all love a murky past, and 'Dogbreath' does in some way serve to drag these sinners screaming from the land of the brain-dead. Side one is little more than a gruesome collage of fuzzbox and feedback and the droning "Bastard, Bastard... Bastard, Bastard" is just a touch banal. But 'Rockets USA' comes to the rescue suggesting that Head of David are far more comfortable with Stateside trash images than they would be with any introspective home-town whingeing: 'Oh Dudley, so much to answer for', could never really stand comparison with West Coast wet dreams such as 'Snuff Rider MC' or 'Joy Ride Burning X' You can almost smell the sump oil on the fret board. With the masterful 'Shadow Hills California', Head of David present the darker side of Altramount through acid-blurred eyes. 'Dogbreath' is mindwarp without the camp theatricals and far more menacing besides... ever been on the receiving end of a Hell's Angel's pearly grin?

IAN PERRY

## THE BIG DISH

'Swimmer' (Virgin)

The group named after a tin of soup release a platter that is, well, palatable but neither delicious nor revolting. Singing dish Steven Lindsay sounds as if he attended the Billy Mackenzie school of vocal style but skived off at dinnertime to practice trading harmonies with his mates. The result is that the songs mostly lack a distinctive vocal melody — the bass and drums are meaty enough but everything else sounds to be in conflict, the other instruments, numerous vocals and quirky bits of percussion, all clamouring for a slice of the pie, and ending up a trifle wafy and unmemorable. There could be a little more space in the overall sound to make it easier to digest, this album is always on the verge of becoming less than the sum of its ingredients.

DAVID WHITWORTH

## THROWING MUSES

'Throwing Muses' (4AD)

Kirstin Hersh is 19 years old, pregnant, lives in Rhode Island and studies philosophy. That figures. Her big squares nicely with this skittering, acrobatic and quavering voice singing madly of dieing rabbits; one of those uncanny voices that makes you check whether you've set the turntable at the wrong speed. She's one of four; three women, one man. They're 4AD's first US signing and a discovery that's admirably consistent with the label's adventurously esoteric output. They sing tortured ballads chock full of intensely personal film noir imagery. The music's positively rustic, country art rock; an easy reference point would be 10,000 Maniacs, though Throwing Muses are ten times rougher and a hundred times less dippy. A mite pretentious in its poetics, but invigoratingly original for all that.

WILLIAM SHAW

## TIPPA IRIE

'Is It Really Happening To Me?' (UK BUBBLERS)

The Saxon sound system has an awful lot to answer for. The early 80s saw the south London system acting as a fine training ground for new young bloods of the calibre of Maxi Priest, Smiley Culture, Tippa Irie, Asher Senator and scores of other talented MCs; yet the mid-eighties has seen these people go on to make some fantastically horrid records. In its attempts at pop crossover the UK style of chatting on the mike has become trite beyond belief; the attraction to the artists seems to be that the pop market is probably a lot more lucrative than the dancehall circuit. The irony is that any pop appeal these records have is that they are one-off gimmicks; bright eyed and bushy tailed rhymes over a production line studio rhythm that will sell one single, maybe two, and nothing more. The LP's title track charts Tippa's rise from the Saxon system to its peak with the saccharine 'Hello Darlin'. 'Is It Really Happening To Me?' wonders the youthful Tippa. Yes it is, but it won't be far long if you carry on turning out this rubbish, Mr Irie.

WILLIAM SHAW

## COURTNEY PINE

Journey To The Urge Within (ISLAND)

The young pretender comes good. Courtney Pine, the absurdly young and gifted saxophonist, has had a build up that would normally spell disaster in the cut throat 'knock em up, smash em down' world of music. Never mind that, he is from the field of pure jazz, he has been adopted by the mainstream and it's by those rules that he has been forced to play. But all that doesn't matter, because, like I say, it's all come good. From the moment that the right track starts up, you know that it's going to be alright. A cover of Wayne Shorter's 'Dolores', it's straight down to business. Surging sax and a throbbing driving rhythm section it leaves no doubt where its heart lies - firmly in Coltrane country. The comparison has been made before, and it's one which Pine readily accepts - as well he might. There are two other covers included - Horace Silver's 'Peace' and Coltrane's 'Big Nick'. But the homespun compositions work equally well, especially the frantic 'I Believe'. The band, Julian Joseph (piano), Garry Crosby (bass), Mark Mondesir (drums) and Cleveland Watkiss (vocals), are all equally young - average age is about 22 - and all equally gifted. Though not featured on all the tracks, Watkiss's scat singing makes a welcome antidote to the rest of the LP which itself covers a spectrum from the dense intensity of 'I Believe' to the cool mellow blowing of 'Peace'. This boy - these boys - is going to be around for a while yet.

JEREMY NOVICK

## WIM MERTENS

'A Man Of No Fortune & With A Name To Come' (DISQUES DU CREPUSCULE)

Un-pop music from experimentalist Mertens the Belgian composer who is vaguely allied to the so called 'systems' movement which seems to embrace anyone from Steve Reich to Brian Eno. Until recently Mertens was involved with Soft Verdict, a group of musicians under his direction, but now here he's performing solo; the LP consists of Wim plonking away at graceful piano patterns while singing incomprehensibly in a delicate falsetto. Very relaxing, and extremely beautiful.

WILLIAM SHAW

## SOUL ASYLUM

'Made To Be Broken' (ROUGH TRADE/TWINTONE)

Soul Asylum are, apparently, big on America's thriving college circuit, that nation's musical saving grace and bread and butter for many a fine group. Their music is that most boyish of noises, US hardcore. If you were to think of Husker Dü in a more angular and ungainly form you might be somewhere close; very sweaty music that sounds curiously old-fashioned with its thumping drums and chop-change rhythms. One imagines blobby great veins sticking out of the singer's neck.

WILLIAM SHAW

## PAUL SIMON

'Graceland' (WEA)

When Paul Simon went to South Africa in 1985 to record this LP he was so anxious not to be another plundering whitey that he paid the black musicians he worked with three times the US scale of musicians fees. General M. D. Sharinda and the Gaza Sisters can't have known what hit them as they pocketed their 190-dollars-an-hour payments. I wonder what the Gazankulu-land word for 'Strewth' is. (Paul Simon mentioned that figure at the recent LP launch press conference in London in partial justification at his breaking the UN cultural boycott of that country.)

The LP itself is a mixture of two inspirational forces; one, the South African black culture he says he's fallen in love with, and two, closer to home, the 50s rock'n'roll he grew up with. Take the title song, named after Elvis's tacky homestead, backing vocals by Phil and Don Everly, music by his pick of African musicians - actually not an odd as it sounds. But overlaying this sparkingly fresh music you get Paul Simon's increasingly obscure poetry; and the fact that he's a fantastically clever songwriter backed by musicians who are playing with a rare excitement still doesn't stop Simon's songs from being as ever unbearably cosy.

WILLIAM SHAW

## THE QUICK

'Wah Wah' (A&M)

There's something mighty fishy about groups who enjoy the backing of a major label for six odd years and yet still command the response "WHO?" when their name is uttered. The Quick are one such band with two previous anonymous LPs on CBS. Their latest bid to escape musical suburbia, 'Wah Wah' smacks of desperation at times, and who can blame them? Failure to make an impression with this one will almost certainly condemn them to a lifetime as Butlin's peak season main attraction. Pondering over some of the more presentable items on the LP, (they are few) the recently released 'We Can Learn From This' springs instantly to mind, and, (hopefully never to be released), 'Sharon', makes an impression, if only for her insidious foot-tapping obsessive quality. Since British 'indie' bands declared a monopoly on 'pure pop', it has become increasingly difficult for outfits such as The Quick to elbow their way onto the scene without attracting the scorn of les enfants terribles. But never fear, 'Wah Wah' has its destiny. Its slick production and bland MOR-ish subject matter present it tailor-made for the US market. We should hope The Quick make it big in the States, the musical balance of payments demand it to be so. As recipients of exported American dross for a number of mind-numbing years, it is high time we exported some of our own pop.

IAN PERRY

## ANDREW CAINE

'One' (Epic)

"What kind of world is this we live in?", wingers Andrew Caine, and well he might. What kind of world is it where a bunch of talented musicians, all of whom have pedigrees as long as your arm or mine, can still end up producing an album which is reminiscent of something you'd be unlucky to hear in Pizzaland. Music to get ripped off by? Andrew Caine looks like a cross between Robert Palmer and Georgie Fame and sings like, well quite a lot of people really: Sting, hints of Graham Parker here and there, and others too numerous to mention. Lyrically,

he slips effortlessly between the hacknied and the plain mediocre. Incisive gems such as 'Youth's Wasted On The Young' and 'I Don't Want To Face Up To Reality' delivered with authentic rockist gusto in between the guitar breaks, are you getting the picture? What really got my goat though, was the way that every single track ended in an interminable 'repeat and fade' which was when I realized that the only thing giving it any semblance of life was the sheer volume. It's so polished, so clean, So... professional, so untouched by human hand. If you keep your albums in alphabetical order, then file this one under C, somewhere between Cadaver and Costly.

DAVID WHITWORTH

## CARMEL

'The Falling' (LONDON)

Whereas you think of Sade crooning across a moonlit blue casino floor and of Kate Bush wailing from a misty mountain top, then Carmel clearly never leaves the smokey confines of the jazz cellar. Her discs won't go platinum — they'll go bleu.

All 'jazz' styles are served here. From the R'n'B chugalong of 'Let Me Know' to the swinging soul/soca feel of 'Sally', from the sleazy free-form structure of 'Tok' to the steamy gospel strains of the Eno produced 'Mercy', this LP runs the gamut from J to Z. The mood though is the thing. The voice implores help. This is a world where love is crossed. It is as if Carmel has been staying in, smouldering, till she can bear the injustice no longer... and screams to the world her fears and passions. The band, of course, are tight in the best loose sort of way. Jim Parris judiciously patrols the beat with his double bass and Paul Baylis jaywalks in with a trouble alto sax. The backing vocals (Helen Watson and Shirley Laidley) provide the perfect canvas for Carmel's angst ridden pleas, while a sombre evocative organ completes the almost gothic feel that pervades some of the slower numbers. This is a record to cherish. Whether the singer traverses from the club cult to chart success depends more on the movement of pop fads than the true strength of this set. Either way, it's hard to imagine Carmel leaving the jazz cellar for the jacuzzi set.

MARTIN STOCKMAN

## THE HUMAN LEAGUE

'Crash' (VIRGIN)

A strange group are The Human League. Hugely successful and yet obstinately unwilling to play the game. They seem to disappear off to the wilds of Sheffield for vast periods of time until they are almost forgotten and then reappear with alarmingly good records. And they've done exactly that again. For this year's bulletin, they've chosen to hit back with a hip swinging, body grooving little number. Much of the credit for this can no doubt be placed at the door of producers Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, current flavour of the year US hotshots. From the start, the name of the game is laid out loud and clear. The opening track, 'Money', is an instant dance floor classic, a theme that is repeated throughout. Slickly played and expertly crafted, 'Crash' is an almost perfect example of the fake funk and plastic pop hybrid — white boys on soul. The only thing that sets it apart — well not the only thing, but the main thing — is the presence of Phil Oakey. Now the boy has never been a singer and no one is really going to quibble about that at this stage of the game. So it's a bit flat in parts. So what? It really doesn't matter. What is nice is that it's acknowledged. The second track in sounds like it should be called 'Swing', and is as well crafted a slice of P-Funk as you'll find, yet it's somehow made all the more endearing by the strained neo-black American vocal. It's even credited as 'Swang' on the track listing. That's cute. If further proof be needed, just listen to the pronunciation of the word 'baby' on 'Need You Lovin''. Now there are many ways of saying that word, but the way Oakey manages is just not one of them. Not so much mid-Atlantic as sub-Atlantic. Never mind, it doesn't matter. There is one thing that makes this LP an instant deck hogger and that's the tunes. Take away the production, take away the dance inflections, and the sheer quality of the melodies would carry it through. Every track could be a single. As it is, the current hit, 'Human' is probably the least representative track here. If there is a criticism, then maybe it's that it is a little too self-consciously 'get down', a little too much music by numbers. Soul without the soul. All the ingredients are there and are just right. But let's not nit pick — just take the thing for what it is — one hot disc.

JEREMY NOVICK

## BILLY BRAGG

'Talking With The Taxman About Poetry' (Go! Discs)

Billy Bragg has this problem. He really is an honest, selfless hard working man. As a pop image that stinks. It gives Bragg this odour of puritan sanctity: his image is one of stripped down authenticity, the voice of truth untainted by ego or fancy production work. But the curious thing is that for all that Bragg has a very sly sense of kitsch. He revels in trite conceits, one line jokes and lumpy rhymes. Bragg sings to women called Shirley, he enquiries of them 'How can you lie there and think of England/ When you don't even know who's in the team?' If that's not kitsch what is? And brilliant too. Occasionally, of course, he lapses into the horrendously cumbersome. 'Ideology' may be fine as an analysis of the power structure of British politics but as a song it's awful. But as on 'Levi Stubbs' or 'The Passion' he can still charm the pants off the dewy-eyed with his political romanticism.

WILLIAM SHAW

## LOVE AND ROCKETS

'Express' (BEGGAR'S BANQUET)

Opening with a dreamy saxophone sequence, Love and Rockets — the trio formed from out of the ashes of Bauhaus — explode into a fierce, fiery fusion of sixties influenced finery and psychedelic perpetuation. Having previously released three singles and a notable debut album in last year's 'Seventh Dream Of A Teenage Heaven', Daniel Ash, David J. and Kevin Haskins have in the meantime built up and maintained a large American following, having completed three successful Stateside tours, despite their lack of success over here.

Tentatively stepping out on a couple of British dates, this release eases them into a more comfortable position with the volatile public. Channelling their sixties sensibilities and highly-charged guitar and bass techniques into powerfully mesmerising songs, Love And Rockets metamorphosise into a seductive band. 'Express' sets a glowing example.

ANNA MARTIN

## IT'S IMMATERIAL

'Life's Hard And Then You Die' (Siren)

It's Immaterial are of course complete hippies. On what must be the album with the dodgiest title ever ever they banter on about space, and how we all need it (man) whilst chucking in little wacky bits about Tupperware and rope. Really it's all have a good life y'all: the songs are observations on life, about deep blue skies and rough seas and every man laying his thoughts to rest type things. It's all quite nice; naive and young — a bit mellow and quite harmless.

LISA ANTHONY

## THE FALL

'Bend Sinister' (BEGGAR'S BANQUET)

A choppy guitar starts up, dragging along a rolling drum and a rocking bass in its wake. A tune becomes decipherable. It could be virtually anyone. Then the voice: "It's approaching, yus, yus." Now it's obvious who it is, there's no mistaking that hectoring bark. Anything could happen, the world could change shape, but there would still be that hectoring bark. And that's kind of reassuring. The Fall have been relentlessly churning out music of the highest quality for near on a decade now, and it doesn't seem a day too long. 'Domesday Pay Off' sees Mark E, and the gang continue where they left off with 'This Nation's Saving Grace'. No longer are instruments wilfully abused, no longer are records deliberately under produced, no longer are tunes spitefully disguised under a barrage of venom. Today's Fall are a happier sounding bunch than ever before, but don't fret the essential ingredients are still there. The lyrics are still barked, the words still (to these ears) indecipherable, the tunes still memorable. The plastic keyboard and shrill backing vocal is pure Nuggets era. Except that is for the voice. And it works perfectly. There's even a cover of 'Mr Pharmacist', a ditty first recorded by The Other Half, long lost West Coast beat boys. The appeal of The Fall is impossible to quantify. It's not an acquired taste, it's just there. 'Domesday Pay Off' is possibly the best Fall LP ever. But then I said that last time. And the time before. And will probably say it again next time around. The Fall are like that.

JEREMY NOVICK

## THE BOLSHOI

'Friends' (BEGGAR'S BANQUET)

Brandishing the admirable combination of trebly guitar work, rivetting rhythms and catchy choruses, The Bolshoi's second album continues to find the band a refreshingly lyrical alternative. Adventurously entertaining at the best of times, with live performances that dramatically demand attention, vocalist/guitarist Trevor Tanner and the rest of the group have progressed since the release of their first mini-LP 'Giants'. With a string of well-received singles to their name, they entice the listener with a further sample of strong, melodic songs which include the latest single 'Books On The Bonfire', 'Pardon Me' and 'Sunday Morning'. Sagaciously confident performers, The Bolshoi produce clear, charismatic pop that's effervescent, bold and ultimately long-lasting.

ANNA MARTIN



Farley Jackmaster Funk at The Lime-light, London. Photo: Tim Goffe.

## STARS OF HEAVEN

'Sacred Heart Hotel' (ROUGH TRADE)

John Peel, a man with so much to answer for. This heartfelt jingle jangle will no doubt reach your duvet snug soul one night lodged, maybe between a crackling blues classic and some hectoring thrash trash. He'll sigh, and say something along the lines of "I like that a lot." The studied understatement. Just like the songs really. These Dublin boys are almost charming, almost convincing. They could be the product of Spa town angels with scrubbed faces and a penchant for their Dad's country pop collection. The Creedence Clearwater Revival revival? It would be nice to say that this sounds a bit like Prefab Sprout meets Gram Parsons. OK, so it does a little, but it all lacks an edge. If the babies crying in the backroom and the mummies contemplating D.I.V.O.R.C.E. are the underlying spirit, then I must have dropped off. Where's the domestic tragedy? The injustice? With song titles like 'You Only Say What Anyone Would Say' you can get a measure of how badly these boys feel. Is this unfair? No. So keep your bedsit vigil with the indie slot but don't be surprised if this band pass you by.

MARTIN STOCKMAN

# BLACK MUSIC

by Edwin J Bernard

"House music is all a media invention by eager hacks willing to write anything for a free trip to Chicago."

Flavour of the moment is House music: it's generally being hailed by people who don't know any better as Chicago's answer to Washington's Go-Go and New York's Hip Hop. Named after The Warehouse, the hippest black/gay club in Chicago, it's basically 70s disco re-done with 80s technology. Apart from New York's Paradise Garage and London's Jungle, it's all a media invention, a cruel collaboration between eager hacks willing to write anything for a free trip to Chicago, and London Records, who have paid a small fortune for exclusive rights to all DJ International releases, Chicago's biggest House label.

House is unlike Go-Go and Hip Hop in that it's a

retrogressive step, something comfortable for deejays to slip into, since they were either playing similar stuff ten years ago, or grew up on it. House will spawn at least one major pop hit, however, the seminal 'Love Can't Turn Around' (London), is credited to its producers, Farley 'Jackmaster' Funk and Jessie Saunders, but actually sung by a huge camp black American of Welsh ancestry, Daryl Pandy.

You can tell things have got a bit silly when you hear the UK's first homegrown House release, 'On The House' (Cross 1), a total pastiche of the House fad, even down to the credits — Midnight Sunrise with Nellie "Mix Master" Rush featuring Jackie Rawe. It's actually lan

'Iron' Levine, Mr Unoriginal, of 'High Energy' fame, who realised that House is nothing more than his fave Eurobeat with a bit more percussion.

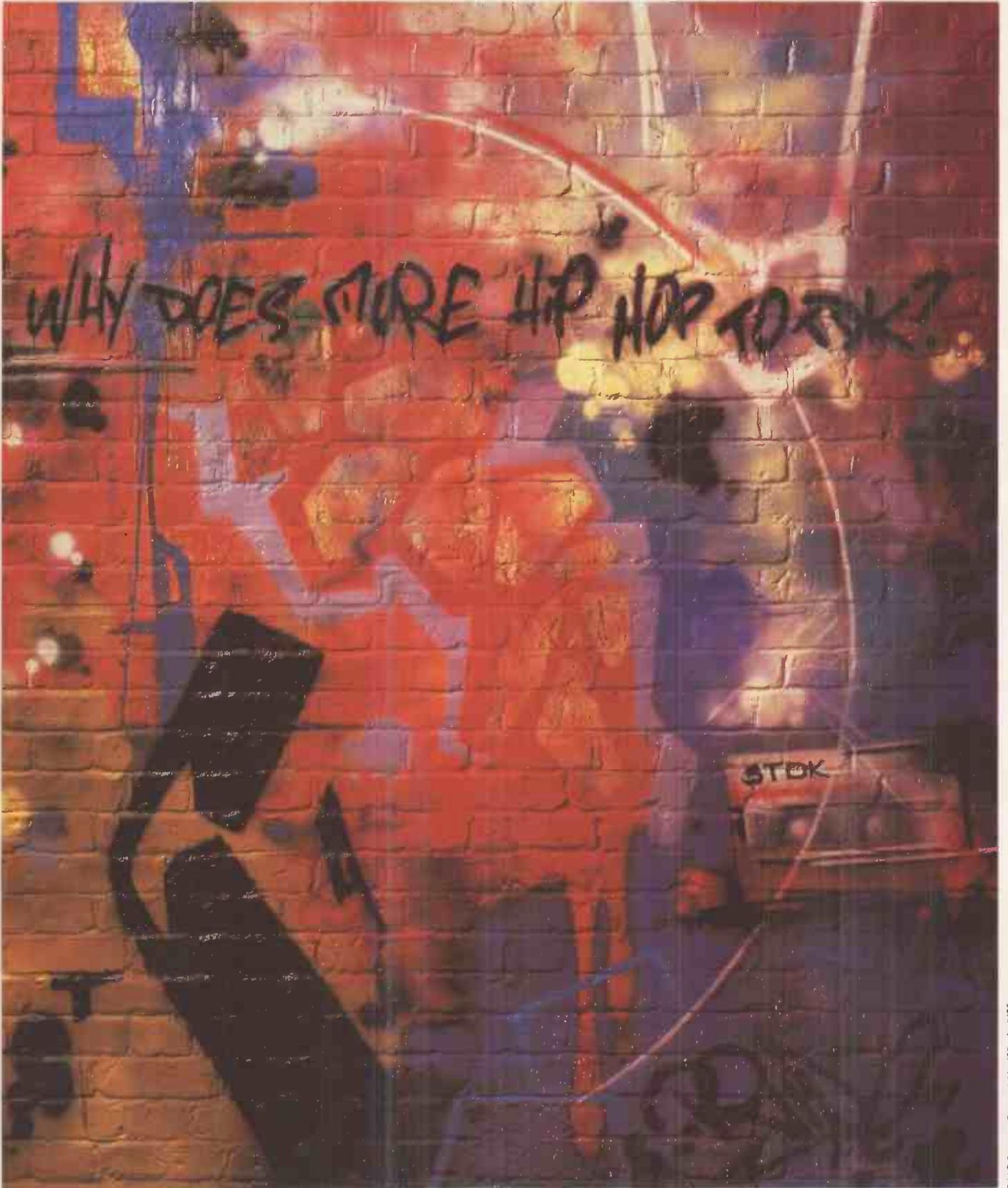
If you want to hear more House, listen to the following: 'Set It Off', Harlequin Fours (Champion), the seminal House record; 'Music Is The Key' JM Silk (US DJ International) and 'Jack Your Body' Steve 'Silk' Hurley (US Underground) — it's the same guy; and my personal fave 'People Of All Nations' by Shawn Christopher (US DJ International).

The latest merging of Hip Hop and Go Go in the form of Washington's junkyard Band, whose 'Word/Sardines' (Def Jam) adds a new dimension to banging around. The hottest mainstream soul/dance record comes from a brand new act, Timex Social Club, renamed The Social Club here, with 'Rumours' (Cooltempo).

Already a Stateside smash, the hypnotic dance beat from Michael Marshall and friends should have already infiltrated your homes. Try and get the Shep Petibone re-recorded remix, which is much harder. Following closely on its heels is Cameo's 'Word Up' (Club), which sees them also in a welcome harder style.

The UK has produced some great dance stuff recently in the shape of productions by Pete Waterman and Co. After hitting the top of the US Dance charts with O'Chi Brown and Bananarama, they've gone a lot more soulful with Austin Howard's 'I'm The One Who Really Loves You' (10), featuring Helena Springs' incredible voice on backing (she did Live Aid with Bowie, and has a solo contract too). Search out too the inventive 'Bobby Can't Dance' (Oval) by Bobby's Boys, a Hip Hop inspired cut up of all the best moments from the de Niro/Scorsese movies.

Other recommendations are Michael McDonald's most danceable moment since 'Yah Mo B There', 'Sweet Freedom' (MCA) THAT VOICE!, and ex-Shalamar vocalist Howard Hewitt's 'I'm For Real' (Elektra) which sees him in truly soulful form.



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# QUANTICK

## IN DEFENCE OF SIGUE SIGUE SPUTNIK

I first met Tony James in 1984. We were sitting in a club, Tony still looking like an ex-member of Generation X, all black hair and leather jacket. A young couple walked by, apparently unaware that swastika chic was no longer terribly bright. "I used to be in a band called London SS" reflected Tony. He added apologetically, "It seemed like a good idea then." Tony was then in the throes of a better idea; he was going to start another band. He didn't actually *have* the band yet, but he did have a clothes stall that sold the gear – T-shirts emblazoned with a nude transsexual and the motif "SIGUE SIGUE SPUTNIK" in Russian letters. He had a friend called Neal who looked like Billy Idol and could sneer like Elvis, and Neal had a great Eddie Cochran-type white guitar that used to belong to Mick Jones. Me and Neal went to Tony's flat – the one that used to belong to Sid Vicious – and watched videos, *Stardust* with David Essex and Adam Faith, *The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle*, and the unreleased Rolling Stones movie *Cocksucker Blues*; and Tony talked about his band.

Two years later, all is history. Every schoolboy knows how Tony James discovered Martin Degville, put a stocking over Degille's face, and took EMI to lunch, leaving them to pick up the tab. This story should have been pure pop flimflam, crossing David Essex with the Pistols, but it all went wrong. On air, Simon Bates attempted to destroy Sigue Sigue Sputnik's debut single, Billy Idol said "Well done about the number one hit, Tony, ha ha ha!", and the press, with the desperate lickarse exception of *Melody Maker*, slagged the group mercilessly.

The reason people took against Sigue Sigue Sputnik is one rare in pop history – it wasn't really the music, it wasn't even the hair, it was the hype. People saw hype in everything Sigue Sigue Sputnik did – even their name was considered a scam, judging by the amount of inane parodies the press made of it. How did they get their hair to stand up? It was *hyped up*, natch.

It was a case of "Won't get fooled again" really. After years of McLaren and his acts (anyone remember She Sherriff?), Morley and Frankie, and for all I know the great Kenny scandal of 1975, even the great British public and its DJs had noticed how people exploit the media to get loads of unearned cash. And Tony James' very *open* scamming was too much – good Lord, the man started off announcing he was going to take the music biz for a ride. "We've signed to EMI for four million!" he proclaimed. Greatly to the surprise of EMI, it must be said, who did not recall such a sum, but there it was – the man was boasting about how he'd got loads of free money. And there's nothing people hate more than unearned money – even our talentless DJs who get paid thousands for being stupid. People didn't like a group that were proud of being into business – they obviously assumed that the charts were full of little minstrels who were perpetually astounded at their houses in the South of France – or their artificiality. Even in 1986, the nation can still be shocked by the idea of backing tapes; it seems we are a land of closet folk fiends.

The press were more upset – this music is old hat, they cried, video games and computers and Rambo are not

novel. James proclaimed the band, pointedly, as "the fifth generation of rock'n'roll". Rock'n'roll? cried the critics. In those wigs?

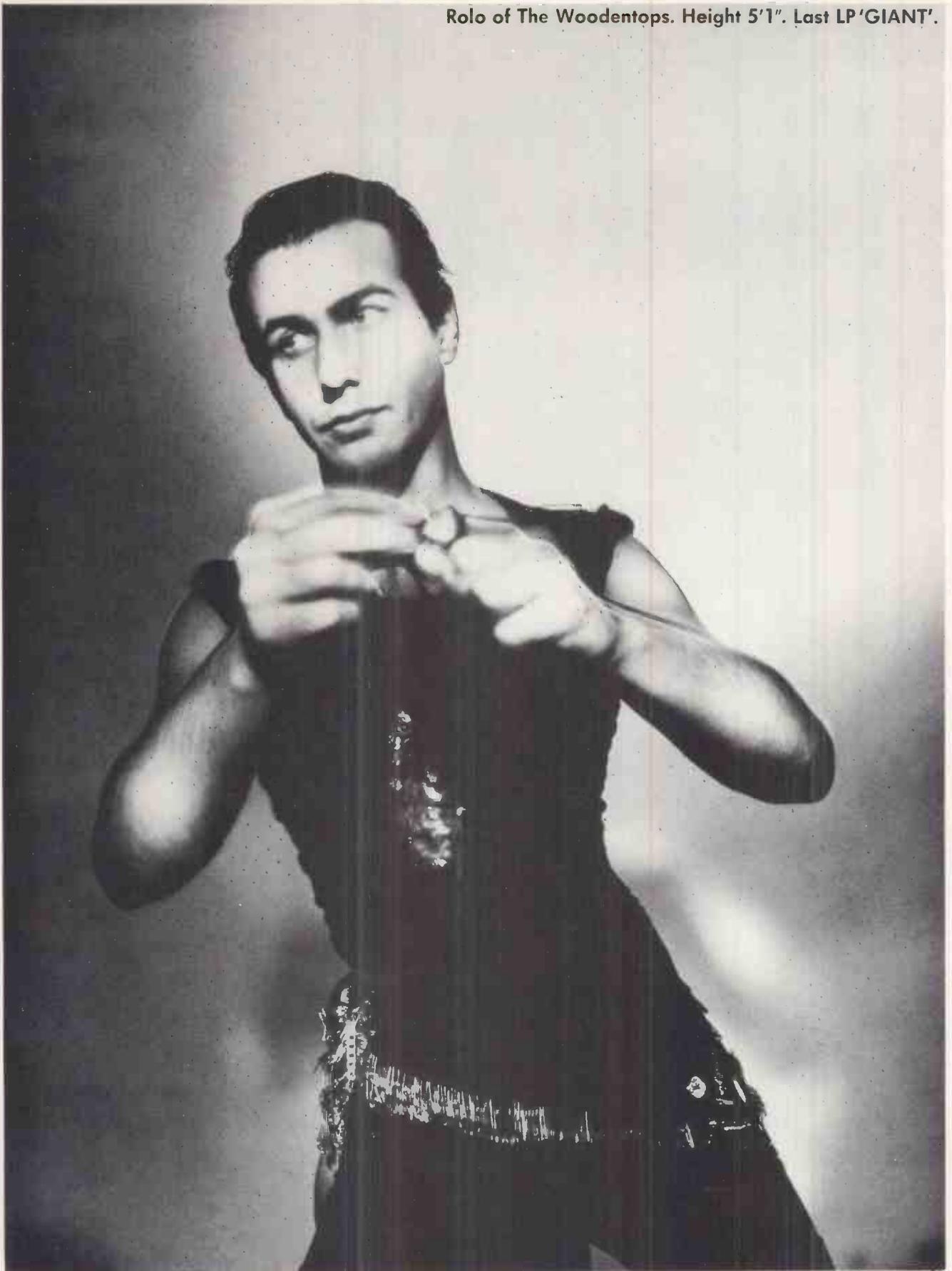
And in it all, no-one professed to notice the humour. Martin Degville's no oil-painting – but is he really meant to be? Those riffs, they aren't meant to be complete originality, they're meant as knowing references to James' loves, Johnny Thunders and Marc Bolan. And the special effects and boasts – they're a look, as much as the po-faced garbage of The Cult and Billy Idol are a look. That the likes of those are praised for their authenticity and SSS are condemned for a lack of sincerity that they never claimed for themselves is the wildest hypocrisy. Learn this, dear reader; there are few bands who actually have a real regard for the rock'n'roll Truth they preach, and while insincerity is not in itself a virtue, when it's tempered by a self-deprecating humour and a desire to show up the music business for the daft nightmare it is, the "product" that results can often be admirable.

Their records are not to be taken "seriously". One would be foolish to learn their lyrics and listen on "cans" for inspiration; but one would be wise to play them for such purposes as cheering yourself up, enjoying the joke, and admiring the ingenuity that has gone into them. Their mix of effects, cheesy old rock, tacky remodels of Suicide and Moroder, are a far better use of pop than, say, Feargal Sharkey's or Wham's. Sigue Sigue Sputnik were never meant to be taken *seriously*; and they should be laughed with, not at.

DAVID QUANTICK

Rolo of The Woodentops. Height 5'1". Last LP 'GIANT'.

"LOVE AFFAIR WITH EVERYDAY LIVING"

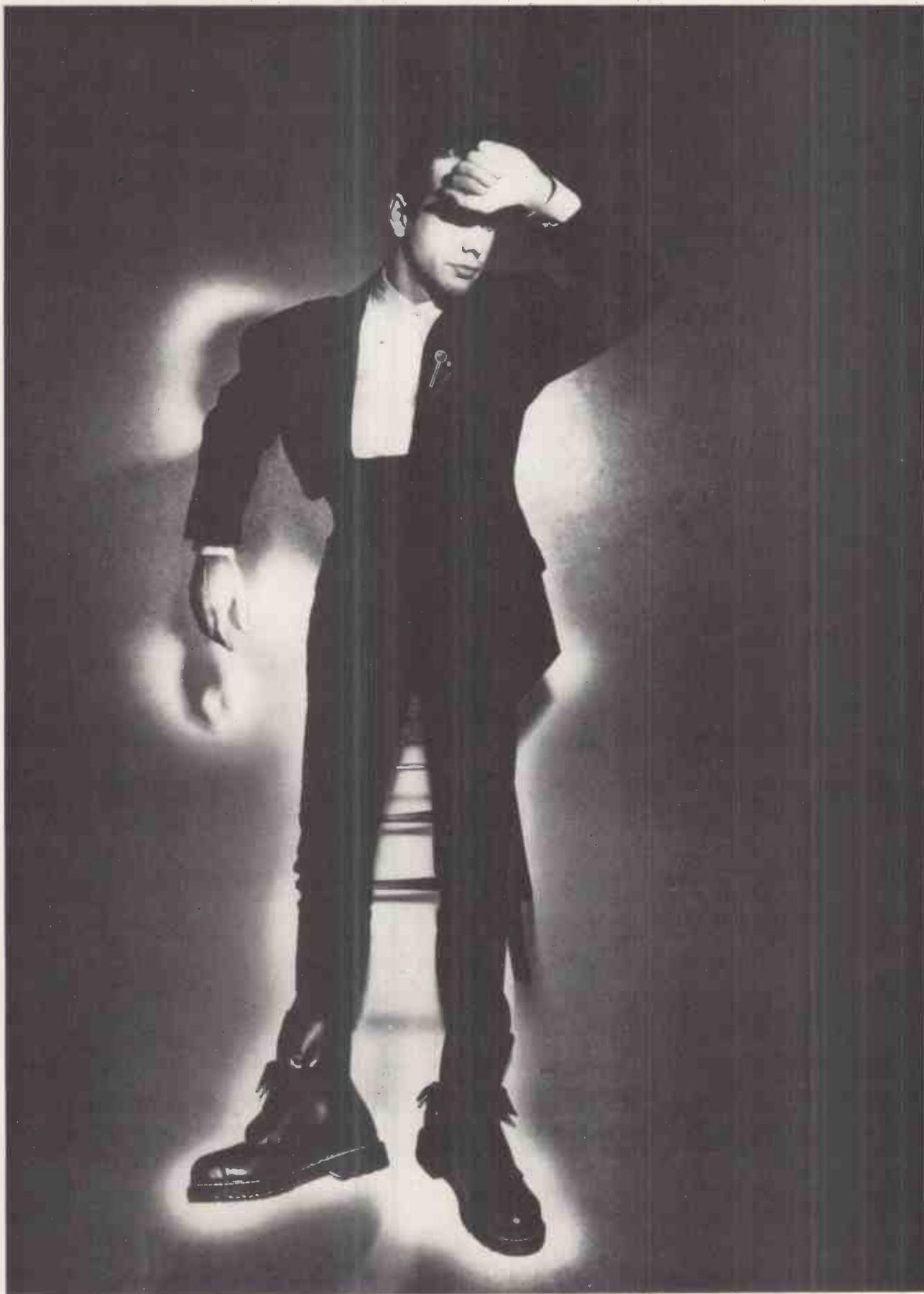


Neckscarf by Judy Blame £80 from 'BAZAAR', South Moulton, St London W1. Slim Barrett 'DOG TAG' necklaces (in Rolo's hand) £15 from 'BAZAAR', South Moulton St, London W1. John Grancher trousers from L'Anardrie, Kensington Market, £20. Shirt £3.50 from 'FLIP', Longacre, London W1.

"YOU'RE SUCH A GOOD THING"



Public Top £115, trousers £90, both from Jean Paul Gaultier of 'BAZAAR', South Moulton Street, London W1. Wraparound glasses £24.99 from 'For Eyes'. Walkmon by Toshiba. £69.95. Computer Watch by Cosio. £35.



Jacket — Joe Caseley Hayford £241 from 'ONE' at Harvey Nichols, 'JONES' Kings Road, London SW1, 'JONES' Floral Street London WC2. Shirt also by Joe Caseley Hayford £94 from 'A La Mode' Sloane Sq, London, Square in Bath of 'WAREHOUSE' Glasgow. Sta-Press Trousers £18 from 'AMERICAN CLASSICS' Endell St, London WC2 or Kings Road, London SW10. Doc Martens £24.99 from 'Shelly's Shoes' Foubert's Place, London W1. Pins by Cadres £609 from 'BAZAAR' in South Moulton St, London W1.

# No 1: DON LETTS of Big Audio Dynamite

The first in a series of last wishes.

"Let's get this straight," announces Don Letts, practically the first thing he says. "I don't deal in death, OK? So when you say 'My Last Day On Earth' I'm not talking about me dying or getting blown up. I'm going off in a space ship, and this is what I'm taking with me. All right? I'm assuming that we're boldly going where no man has gone before. Hence the four birds."

The awsome hyperactive figure of Don Letts, film maker and supplier of inspiration and odd noises for Big Audio Dynamite has just emerged from a London studio where the group have been finishing their second LP. Last night he worked up to six in the morning; today he's been in there all afternoon and wants to stretch his legs. "Let's go for a walk," he says and strides off around Soho at a fearsome pace. Bemused tourists stare.

"I don't deal in all that destruction stuff. Very miserable," he burbles on obliviously. "Life is just a party... Dance when the rest of the world is burning. You can't get depressed about that stuff, can you? Everybody should try and get in everything that they want to do because we're only going to get blown up, aren't we? Get it all in folks, before they radiate you!"

"I hope the people on other planets make a better job of it than we do. I mean we don't seem like we love life, do we? And I'm assuming that if I'm travelling to another planet they'll have the obvious stuff like food and TVs..."

## THE WOMEN

"I would really like to have taken Big Audio Dynamite, but on a long trip I figure I could make more use of the ladies. I do have to confess that I know the women who I asked along for the photo session. They're not professional models. I just know exceptionally good-looking women.

"There's TRISHA, Trish the dish (who's actually B.A.D.'s publicist), DAISY (who's actually Mick Jones' girlfriend), KAREN and Audrey (holding baby). She's my wife. I don't know how she'd feel about all the other women but on a long space flight I figure we'd have time to work that out.

"I would have liked to bring Mick Jones along, because he's very amusing. He's great at rock-'n'-roll and maybe where I'm going they ain't got none of that and so he could cover that department... but then we'd be fighting over the ladies, so I'd have to leave Mick and take the Big Audio Dynamite LP instead."

## THE STEREOS

"Four women and a blaster. Are we rocking or what? When I get to where I'm going I figure I could always set up the first reggae sound system with the blasters. Of course with the blaster comes blank and pre-recorded tapes. I'd take Prince's entire record collection, and all of my reggae tapes... things from various characters from punk rock times too. New York hip hop stuff and all the other multicultural stuff from across the world.

"I like cassettes. Especially as you can only ever find a couple of good tracks on an LP these days; you can just strip it out and save yourself space."

## THE BABY

"Jet, my son. I brought him along because I figure he could carry on where I left off. The next generation. Do I ever regret calling him Jet? Nah! I like it because it's very modern, très moderne. And it's also timeless because Jet is a stone, a precious black stone, which is somewhat appropriate."

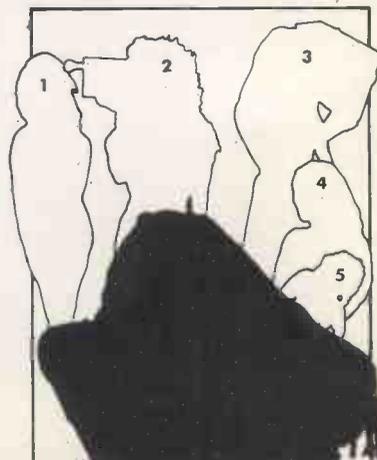
## THE VIDEO CAMERA

"Well, I made my name in films and videos. I like the immediacy of video. It's accessible. What you get out of it is down to how intelligent you are. I mean I did 'The Punk Rock Movie' on a Super-8 camera. Just think of the films I could make on the way."

"Complacency, lethargy, pessimism... I'd like to leave all that shit behind. I wouldn't mind not seeing Margaret Thatcher any more either. That'd be a big bonus.

"Do I believe in the afterlife? Yeah, I think the spirit lives on, but I'm not going to let that fool me into putting up with any bullshit now like some people do. The meek will inherit the earth; that's shit. I want it all, now."

1. DAISY, Mick Jones' girlfriend. 2. KAREN, singer, dancer and friend of Letts with Sany Video-8 camera. 3. TRISHA, B.A.D.'s press officer with Ghetto Blaster. 4. AUDREY, Letts' wife. 5. JET, Don and Audrey's son.





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