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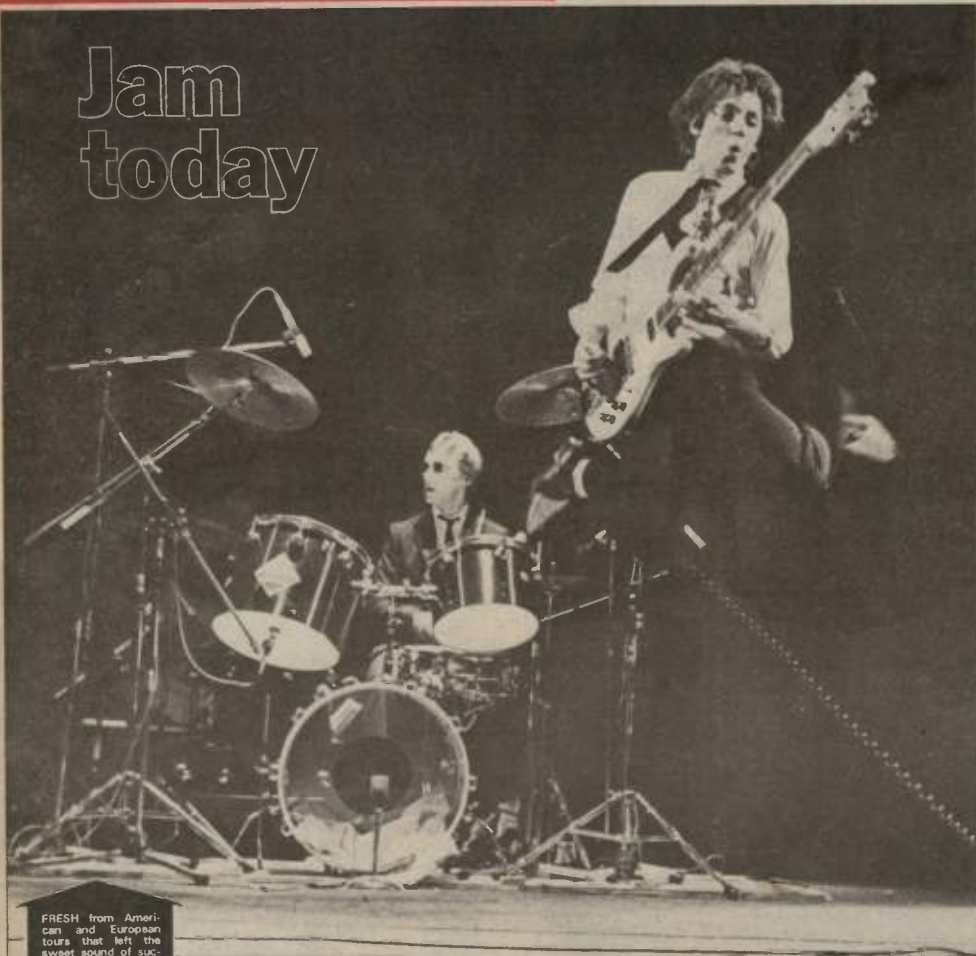
80 pages — still only 15p

THE BLANK GENERATION

War on cassette music 'thieves'

by David Boothroyd

Jam today



FRESH from American and European tours that left the sweet sound of success ringing in their ears, the Jam set off on a month-long British tour last week, their tour ends with their largest British concert to date at London's Hammersmith Odeon on December 18.

The band, Paul Weller on guitar and vocals, Bruce Foxton (bass) and Rick Buckler (drums), have just released their second album, "This Is The Modern World."

© MM reviews the opening of the Jam tour — page 14.

THE WAR against music lovers who rob the music business of about £50 million a year by pirating records, tapes and the radio with blank cassettes is being moved into top gear.

The days of cheaply tape-recording other people's records will soon be over if the British record companies succeed in their attempts to halt the losses they are suffering because of the booming sales of blank cassettes.

This year the music industry will have lost nearly £50 million, according to the British Phonographic Institute.

"It is a real peril now and if we don't do something about it, running a record company in this country will become so unprofitable that it just won't be worth taking risks with new acts. It will become stodgy, boring and dead," says Peter Scapling of the BPI.

Because of this, the industry is redoubling its efforts to make recording impossible — something which has been talked about for a long time, but never achieved—and is also considering imposing a levy on the "hardware," the cassette machines, which have proliferated in the last few years.

"We're putting more effort than ever into making recording impossible. But the amount of unsuccessful research that's been done so far shows how big a problem it is," said Scapling.

But many record companies don't want to stop people making recordings, since it leads to a much greater universality of the music.

A report published this year by the Government-backed Whitford Committee suggested the idea of the equipment levy, with a separate body being set up to decide the amount and how the money raised should be distributed.

A levy of five per cent has been operating in Germany, but record companies there are already asking for this to be raised and for an extra levy also to be put on the tapes themselves.

Sales of blank cassettes have risen dramatically in the last five years. In 1972, eight million units were sold. Total sales for 1977 are expected to be about 50 million.

Most people are breaking the law when they make recordings without an Amateur Recording Licence, issued by the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society, price £1.50.

What worries us is not so much the fact that people are buying blank tapes and recording illegally, but that it has really eaten into the amount the record industry has to grow to remain profitable," Scapling continued.

In 1974 we reached a peak when the music industry accounted for 0.4 per cent of the total consumer expenditure in this country.

By 1976 it had dropped to 0.34 per cent, even though the industry had been growing quite remarkably in terms of turnover.

Sales of recorded music this year have been worth about £300 million. The figure would have been close to £350 million if it had not been for blank cassettes.

Just because someone buys a blank tape and records an album doesn't mean they would have bought the album, and we take that into account. Still, the loss is considerable," Scapling added.

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—fun with Spector

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MULL OF KINTYRE



Graham Hughes

WINGS DOUBLE A



Graham Hughes

GIRLS SCHOOL





ZAL CLEMINSON, CHRIS GLEN and TED McKENNA (from left to right): ex-members of the Sensational Alex Harvey Band who have now formed a new band

NEW WONDER ALBUM

A NEW Stevie Wonder album will be released early next year, and plans are being worked out for Wonder to tour in Britain in 1978. In the meantime, fans will have a triple Wonder retrospective album, "Anthology," that will be released by Tamla Motown next week.

The album was originally put out in America in 1974, but has never been generally available in Britain. It covers Wonder's career from 1962 to 1971, and its 40 tracks include the first song he ever recorded, "Thank You For Loving Me All The Way," plus standards like "Uptight (Everything's A Right)" up to his 1971 hit "If You Really Love Me." The album also contains "Until You Come Back To Me," a previously unreleased track recorded in 1967.

The triple album will be followed next year by "The Secret Life Of Plants," an album of music Wonder wrote to accompany the documentary film based on the book of the same name.

Live Spear

BURNING SPEAR, now just Winston Rodney, releases a new live album on December 2. Called simply "Burning Spear — Live," the album features the reggae band Aswad, plus George Lee on sax, Philip Fullwood on congas and Bobby Ellis on trumpet.

Mouzon cancels

A CONCERT at London's Hammersmith Odeon featuring Alphonse Mouzon, ex-jazz-rock drummer, has been cancelled due to lack of demand. Mouzon was to have fronted his own band at the concert, which was planned for November 26.

SAHB/Flowers form new groups

TWO BANDS are currently being formed from the ashes of the Sensational Alex Harvey Band and the Kursaal Flyers, and both Black Sabbath and the Damned have found replacements for the recently departed Ozzie Osbourne and Rat Scabies.

Zal Cleminson, guitarist with SAHB who bitterly hit out last week at the way Harvey broke up the band, has formed a new group, Zal, with fellow SAHB men Chris Glen and Ted McKenna. A guitarist will be added shortly to the line-up.

Zal start rehearsals this week ready for a tour at the end of January. "The band will be guitar-orientated, and I have a complete mental blueprint of exactly what I am aiming at," said Cleminson. Plans are being made for the first album by Zal.

Will Birch, drummer with the now-defunct Kursaal Flyers, is forming a four-piece band with fellow Flyer guitarist Johnny Wicks. "Johnny and I are writing together at the moment, and I am looking around for other players for the band,

which will be the standard two guitars, bass and drums line-up," said Birch, who is currently producing the Yachts single for Stiff.

Birch revealed that the album being recorded with producer Nuff Winkwood by the Flyers before their split a fortnight ago will remain unfinished. "We completed about five tracks, and that is where we have left it. It is up to CBS what they do with the songs, whether they do an EP or put them out on a compilation in five years' time."

Birch shed some light on the Flyers' break-up. "Paul Shuttleworth died just as we were a couple of weeks before he left. He felt the group had gone as far as it could with the image of a parodying, good-time band, an image he felt largely responsible for creating. He felt that there were many talents in the band that were not being used, and thought the best way to bring them out was outside the context of the Kursaal Flyers."

Black Sabbath have replaced Ozzie Osbourne with former Savoy Brown and Fleetwood Mac vocalist Dave Walker. He grew up in Birmingham, the Sabbath home town, spent some time in America with the San Francisco band Mistrahe. He is now rehearsing in Wales with Sabbath for an album to be recorded in Toronto before Christmas. The band will tour Britain in the Spring, tying in with the release of the album.

Rat Scabies' replacement in the Damned is drummer Jon Moss, on loan from the group London and part of the Moca Bros tailoring empire family. He started rehearsals with the band last week, and played his first gig with the Damned on Thursday last week at Middlesbrough.

BBC ban Kenny Williams

THE BBC has banned Kenny Williams' latest single "You're Fabulous Babe" despite the fact it has been a Noel Edmonds record of the week and is in British charts. The record, distributed by Duxco, has been banned because the BBC says it is too close to an advert for Babe perfume, manufactured by Fabergé Decca object to the ban because several other tunes linked with adverts, such as David Dundas' "Jeans On" and Jingle tunes for

Marini and Coca Cola, have been played by the BBC. In all these adverts the tune from the record is the same as the single.

The BBC said that the Williams single was played originally because producers were unaware of the perfume campaign. Similar records had not been banned, but "You're Fabulous Babe" was considered "unacceptably close to the promotion of the product."

Clash dates set for Rainbow

THE Clash have finally fixed their two London concerts — at the Rainbow Theatre on December 13 and 14.

The problems that dogged the band in Belfast — insurance and security — caused similar difficulties when it came to fixing up London venues, and a newspaper report that the Clash claims exaggerated damage at a Bournemouth concert helped cause further delays and negotiations.

The theatre originally agreed to remove the seats to allow the audience freedom and reduce the risk of damage, but the GLC objected. Now a compromise has been reached that will mean limited use of security men and the fans will be allowed to move around.

Two support bands will be added for the Rainbow shows, and tickets priced £2.50, £2.25, £2.00 and £1.75 will be on sale at the box office from November 25. DeeJay for the evening will be Don Letts.

Two members of the Stranglers, Jet Black and Jean Jacques Burnel, were found not guilty last week of charges involving drunkenness and violence at a Brighton police station. They were arrested after a concert at Brighton's Top Rank on October 27 and charged under the Metropolitan Town Police Act of 1847. The band's assistant tour manager, Dennis Marks, was also found not guilty of obstructing a policeman. The trial lasted one-and-a-half days.

Sailor's London party

SAILOR, currently touring Europe, will play London's Empire Ballroom, at Leicester Square, on December 12, their first appearance in the capital for over a year.

The gig will be a Christmas party, with several acts supporting Sailor, who will be joined again by Phil Pickett. Pickett left the band last April to concentrate on song writing.

The band's new single "Remains" was released on November 11.

Motors show

THE American, currently on a six-week tour of the US, will play their last two 1977 dates with a special two-day Christmas party at London's Marquee Club on December 22 and 23.

The show will be recorded by Capital Radio for broadcast early in January and tickets go on sale on December 7, price £1.25. A fourth British tour is planned for the Motors in April.

Extra Miles—more Jam and Gibbons

JOHN MILES has added four more dates to his December tour. The new concerts are Malvern Winter Gardens (December 14), Bridlington Royal Spa (16) and Redcar Coatham Bowl (17 and 18). These shows are in addition to the five dates announced last week, announced last week, announced at Croydon Fairfield Hall on December 9.

The Jam's concert at Aylesbury's Civic Centre on Saturday sold out so quickly — a last demand for the Centre's David Bowie show five years ago — that an extra matinee performance has been added at 4.00 pm.

Steve Gibbons Band have added the following dates to their current UK tour: Dundee University (Friday), Coventry Leazes (Saturday, 26), Knights Victoria Hall (29), Swansea Nuffield Club (December 1), Penzance Garden (2), Redcar Coatham Bowl (4).

ESSEX SHOWS SET ALL-TIME RECORD

DAVID ESSEX's six Christmas shows at London's Dominion Theatre have outlasted Star Wars, the fastest-selling film of all time, claim his record company CBS, and extra dates have been added to the London and provincial dates with the possibility of more shows if ticket demand continues.

The new London show has been added on December 23 at 6 pm, and 6 pm performances have been added to the following shows: Sunderland Empire (November 22), Derby Assembly Rooms (December 1), Leeds Grand Theatre (3), Newcastle City Hall (4), Southampton Gaumont (10), and Brighton Dome (14).

More performances are expected to be added at the 2,600-seater Dominion Theatre during December. A special set with production similar to a West End musical is being staged for the London shows.

STEELEYE SPAN.

THE NEWALBUM.



'STORM FORCE TEN' IS BREATHTAKING

Steeleye's new album 'Storm Force Ten' is out now. And so is their new single, which you won't find on the album, a track called 'Boar's Head Carol', backed with 'Gaudete'/'Some Rival'.

What's more, don't miss Steeleye Span at the Hammersmith Odeon, Dec. 17th.



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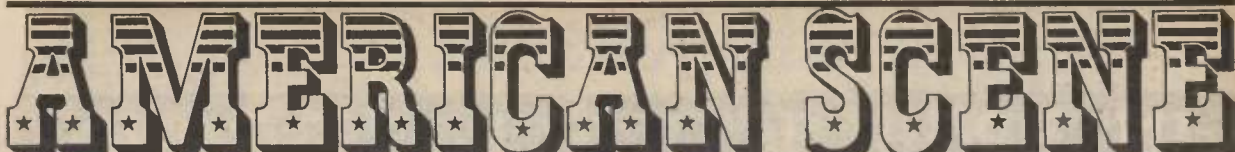
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PHASE SHIFTER



Rods jam the airport

THOUGH there was a well-publicised scene at the airport, they didn't exactly break down the doors at Max's Kansas City for the U.S. debut of Eddie and the Hot Rods. Still, the small club was packed tight enough with enthusiasts who were treated to a fine show by this young British band. They play good, direct, no-frills rock and roll.

The Rods (like the Ramones) are masters of the three-minute song, sometimes the two-minute song, but there's no way their material will ever mesh with the pop jingles on AM radio — Barry Manilow will just have to move over for stuff like "Do Anything You Wanna Do."

The Friday evening crowd at Max's was surprisingly well-dressed and well-behaved (it was full of media people, including a TV crew from Japan), but the late show drew the dregs, who were a little more vocal. Spotted: a shy David Bowie, slinking into a corner table.

Ted Nugent, who is written up in the teen music magazines here week in, week out, occupied Madison Square Garden this week, and many in his legion of fans broke off to catch every mind-bendily loud note.

Nugent presents himself as a rock and roll caveman, concerned with what he can sing over his shoulders (his guitar) and between his legs. Spreading a message is not what he has in mind.

To underscore his flesh-on-flesh animism, Nugent appeared bare-chested, wearing only skin-tight leather pants with a pony tail dangling from his buttocks, topped off by a wild mane of frizzy hair which reaches halfway down his back, or all the way to the floor when he chooses to throw it around.

In his Detroit roots, Nugent relies on sheer horsepower to get by.

Dave Van Ronk, one of the small but influential group of musicians who linked Southern black blues with white in the Fifties, returned to his native New York for an engagement at the Other End Club on Bleecker Street.

He is still on the performing scene, still committed to the blues, and still capable of creating some intimate moments. But Van Ronk's voice is showing its age.

Joan Armatrong was well received in her Avery Fisher Hall concert, her first here as a headliner. Her unpretentious approach to her original material will win her many fans who are a little tired of the histrionics of several better equipped but less sincere female singers.

Dr. Feelgood was the unfortunate victim of impatient fans at the Palladium who came to see the headliner, Gentle Giant, but Feelgood scored nonetheless with a set that was far more engaging than their recent attempts on vinyl.

Jerry Weazer, who, with Ahmet Ertegun, brought to light black American R&B music in the Fifties and Sixties, and pioneered that sound into a multi-million dollar operation at Atlantic Records, is now at Warner Brothers Records here as a Senior Vice-President and A&R consultant to the label.

They will twice place at the New Line, WC2, and the dates are Alexis Kirner, Sunday, January 29, 10:30 a.m. and 10:30 p.m.; Dr. Brown, Sunday, February 26, and Blind John Davis, American singer and pianist who plays blues, ballads and jazz, Sunday, March 26.

NBB sessions
TED NUGENT: rock and roll caveman

The New York Times has recommended Sunday Jamtime sessions after a year. The Earls prize much work at Julliard.

Morrison is back

JEFF MORRISON, the heir of the Street People, is back in the music business. The last time he was in the music business was in 1974, when he was in the music business.

In February, Kim gave a lecture at the Improvisation Club on Wednesday evening on music publishing and copyright law as part of the Alternative Chorus sponsored by BMI. After the hour-long question and answer session, which should have been recorded for an eclectic comedy album, Fowler introduced Tom Johnson, his latest project who blew minds with his four-act set.

Doug Weston was offered Johnson a midnight spot at the Troubadour the following Monday. After that performance, Johnson was back in the spotlight. Fowler introduced him to Johnson, his latest project who blew minds with his four-act set.

Chris Leon, producer of the audience and the demons, has been in L.A. the past week carrying around some impressive tape of the long-awaited Willis Love Alexander record. He has produced that album which he produced that will be out in January on MCA.

A cross between the Sex Pistols and David Bowie, he is a city without an identity. There's a lot of resentment towards it. Cause the place is as comfortable — it's a scapegoat for people's failures instead of them selves.

Steve Hufstetter and the Quick are back from a highly successful two-night engagement in San Francisco at the Mabuhay Gardens. The Quick are doing a demo for Elektra Asylum Records and will be doing some local gigs in December around town.

Hufstetter, the brilliant mind behind this pop-rock outfit has turned vegetarian. The Golden Temple is his favourite food spot and salads and yogurt have taken the place of hamburgers and French fries.

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Halloween fun and games

FOR THE band's annual Halloween performance, Earth Quake prepared a small surprise for the local fans. After the band's own hard-rocking set, Earth Quake returned to the Keystone Berkeley stage, only to be joined by the entire Greg Kinn band and three of the four Rubinows.

It was not a jam session, but, rather, a deliberate, rehearsed set that featured such familiar tunes as "Route 66," the Who's "Boris the Spider," and "Roadrunner," the classic written by Jonathan Richman, the only Berkeley artist not performing that night.

Beskerly president Matthew Kaufman returned to the Bay Area that afternoon, just in time for the show, from England, where he supervised the final mix of "Live in London," the new album by Jonathan Richman and the Modern Lovers, with co-producer Ken Laugha, who follows Kaufman to the West Coast for more Berkeley gigs.

With a new streamlined band and a spiffy new album on Astral Records, Commander Cody returned to action in the Bay Area with a one-night appearance at the Old Waldorf this week.

His current group includes two alumni of the old Commander Cody and his Lost Planet Airmen — "Buffalo" Bruce Barlow on bass and Bobby Black on steel guitar. The remainder was recruited largely from the Virginia City, Nevada band, the Symphonies.

Possibly taking a note from Elvin Bishop, Cody has decided to emphasise his cornball persona. He has decided to emphasise his cornball persona. He has decided to emphasise his cornball persona.

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STEELY DAN: tough being funny

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NEW WAVE: The Spasmas are releasing an extended single — "Your Head Is Placed," "I'm A Spaz," "Baby You String Me Up," and "The World." Exile's band living in L.A. putting a Stateside group together. Dave is living in Pasadena for the moment while their single is in its fourth print run.

City Day did very well in New L.A. debut opening for Mearstar at the Santa Monica Civic. The band earned an encore against a tough audience. "Sunset Blvd." and "Man One" were high points of the 50-minute set. Dear Jean is a big favourite on local radio stations. City Day is spending a lot of time in the U.S. in 1978 and will be touring a lot of this music across the Atlantic.

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LANE anniversary

TRUMPETER Steve Lane and the Northern Souders this week celebrated 25 years of music. Lane, 52, was born in London, England, and moved to New York in 1952. He has been a member of the New York Philharmonic since 1954. Lane is a member of the New York Philharmonic since 1954.

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Ellington musical

PEACH HENRY, bass; Philly Joe (saxophone); and the band under the direction of Side Hampton, who arranged Gordon's, net Columbia album, "Sophisticated Giant," Vistal, Laurel Hampton.

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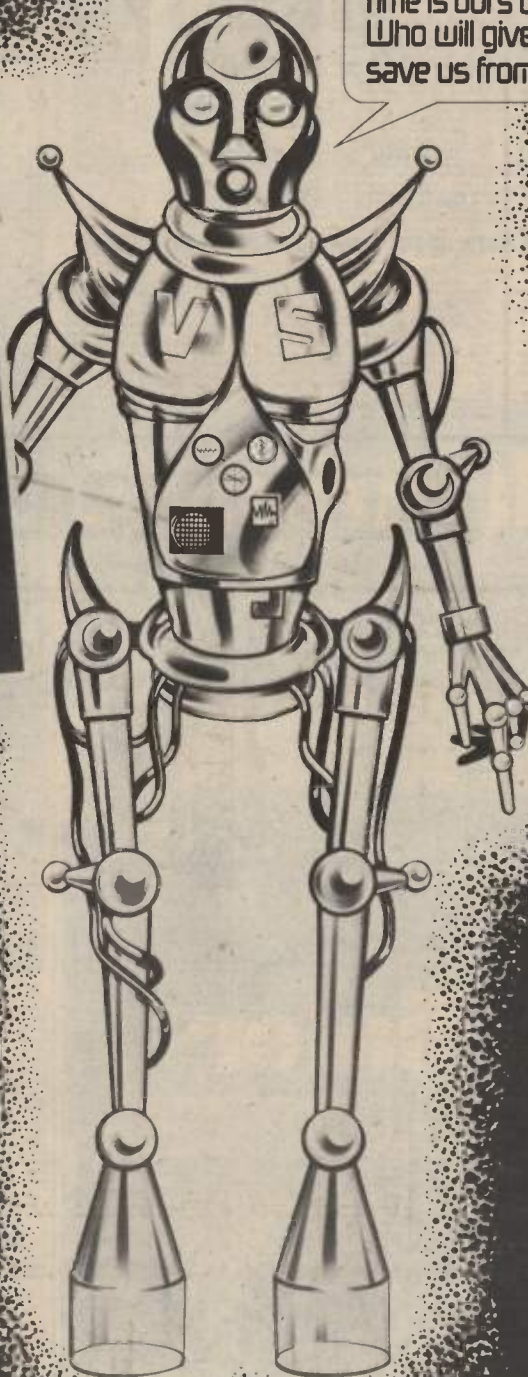
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INTERGALACTIC TOURING BAND

Who will buy, who will buy
time is ours we never die.
Who will give us sanctuary,
save us from eternity.



INTERGALACTIC TOURING BAND CDS 4009

CAST (In Alphabetical Order)

Rod Argent, Steve Barth,
Danny Beckerman, David Bedford,
Arthur Brown, Ryche Chlanda,
Clarence Clemens, Irene Conrad,
Dave Cousins, Jim Cuomo,
Frank D'Agostino, Larry Fast,
Annie Haslam, Mighty Young Joe Intile,
Percy Jones, Joel Krantz,
Ben E. King, Jeffrey Leynor,
Wil Malone, Pepe Marchello,
Meatloaf, Kermit Moore,
Mr. Snips, Rick Parfitt,
Anthony Phillips, Frank Prescod,
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Francis Rossi, Shelly Thompson,
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This LP was mixed using the
Aphex Aural Exciter.
You can hear the difference.

ON TOUR

Satellite Club, Mars.
Rocket Room, Venus.
Galileo Memorial Halls,
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Meteor Club, Neptune.
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Mercury.
Solar Palais, Uranus.
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the Moon.
Zodiac Centre,
New Earth.
Astroid Stadium, Pluto.
Rainbow, Hales Comet.



Marketed by Charisma Records

- "I've cut another 'Imagine'" — Phil Spector.
- "Echo is a very interesting musical treatment" — Leonard Cohen.
- "When Phil calls, you drop everything" — Rodney Bingenheimer.
- "The great ones never leave. They just sit it out once in a while" — Kim Fowley.

HAL BLAINE, session drummer par excellence and a seasoned veteran of many Epic Record productions, looks up from behind his kit inside the dark compound known as Gold Star Studios.

Another successful take under his belt, Blaine hustles through the main recording room at the famed Hollywood recording complex to hear the play back in the booth.

Hal has been present on so many sessions over the years that his usual modus operandi is right through the exit door and home. Not this time, however.

The track he just finished is titled "Don't Go Home With Your Hard-On," from the new Leonard Cohen/Phil Spector collaboration, "Death Of A Ladies' Man." Perhaps not tantamount to Churchill and Stalin at Potsdam, but a confrontation, nonetheless, that has the music community's ears pricked in anticipation.

"Phil is like a director," says Blaine, a look-alike for Mort Sahl and even funnier. "Phil is a beautiful guy to work with. Working with Leonard has been really interesting. This is more of an artistic thing. Phil seems a lot

'The great ones never just sit it out once

Phil Spector, Leonard Cohen, Bob Dylan and others in a Los Angeles recording studio... and MM's Harvey Kubernik was there to report and talk to Spector and Cohen about past, present and future

looser during these sessions. "Playing behind Leonard and Phil has knocked me out," says the sticks man with over 50 gold records to his credit. I've seen Blaine in action over the years from TV commercials to recent drum-beating behind Steven

to recording. It's a situation that you can never get sick of. Every five minutes it's a new adventure. I play what I feel and Phil likes it. There is a fraternal feeling here. I've done sessions with Phil for almost 20 years, and worked with the same guys for almost the same period of time. It's super fun," he says. "I do hundreds of sessions

each year and walk out knowing I've done a good job. When I leave a session with Phil I want to hear the results on the radio. We have such a goddamn good time making records, making sound. Phil knows exactly what he wants when he comes into the studio. "These days it's less of a performance. A lot of pro-



LEONARD COHEN: 'I've found some of the musical treatments very foreign'

ducers think they are on stage. Phil is the stage. He loosens the musicians up and everyone works together. Phil loves musicians. He thinks musicians are the straight people and everyone else is nuts.

"I've really dug working with Leonard. Anytime I do a Phil Spector session I play my heart out. It's special and it will always be special." Leonard Cohen, poet, novelist, songwriter, recording artist and spokesman for the human condition, enters the dimly lit booth. He wears a hint of a smile upon his face, as he is not one for elaborate displays of feelings. He, too, is pleased with the track.

Resplendent in finely-tailored dark blazer and grey slacks, he radiates a poise and charm that has captivated the deepest emotional embraces of fans throughout the world.

"In working with Phil I've found some of the musical treatments very foreign. I've rarely worked with a live room that contains 11 musicians: six guitars, three basses, two drummers. Echo is a very interesting musical treatment. A dramatic embellishment," says Cohen in a low, deep, priest-like voice.

"Hard-On" is the album's all-out stomper. Loud horns and a pulsating beat are hammered home by double bass and which, Cohen's menacing, gritty vocal work. "I can really belt them out, you know," he adds over a bottle of Jose Cuervo.

mother's doing expectations prances through the room upon his imaginary high horse. "This is a great song," announces Spector in a theatrical reply, his voice assuming a high-pitched blend of Arnold Stang meets Steve Harley. "We've made some real good music on this album."

Spector is in a fiesta mood as usual and excuses himself to comb his hair. The plate-glass inside the control tower does not take the place of a mirror. Barry Goldberg walks into the booth, Goldberg is playing piano on the session as well as most of the album.

"It's so exciting being in his rhythm section," Phil knows that things aren't gonna happen first or second take. He's the best. What else can I say? I hate the way these people cover his songs, like Shaun Cassidy.

"Once a Phil Spector record is finished it should be retired, like the way they retire baseball jerseys of famous baseball players." It's almost midnight and Spector returns to the mixing board. His eyes penetrate like lasers. "Okay, kids. It's time to work." Leonard returns and action resumes.

Phil knows how to make sound. There is a psychology on display. "Everyone plays off each other's looks until it happens. All the ego is removed."

"Phil takes over. Phil is like a lens. He gave me the lead part on one of the tunes." Leonard was so easy to work with. He never copped an attitude.

"The album is like a concerto of rock. It's so beautiful and delicate. So honest, almost religious. Phil is like a magnet and draws the best moments out of everyone. He's the master. There is no one like him."

"It's so exciting being in his rhythm section," Phil knows that things aren't gonna happen first or second take. He's the best. What else can I say? I hate the way these people cover his songs, like Shaun Cassidy.

and Dan and David Kessel, one of the great jazz guitarists, Barney Kessel, who both play tasty rhythm guitar and would rather discuss the Ramones than Herb Ellis or Joe Pass.

There is much ado among "in crowd" media who acclaim the energy and commitment of new wave bands and neglect the pioneering spirit of the Sixties musicians whose contributions in recent days might be considered marginal.

PHIL SPECTOR: 'Play it louder... this isn't punk rock!'



PHIL SPECTOR: 'Play it louder... this isn't punk rock!'

Crash

Spector spins the track for the tenth time as it crashes through the speakers. A power rocker that reveals much more chutzpah than Johnny Rotten will master in his entire career. "None of us are ready for the glue factory!" screams the forever adolescent Spector. "I'll go one on one against any producer. I can still kick his ass."

After a few seconds Phil stares at the red monitor switch and pauses. "My graduating theme from high school was 'Daring To Be Different'... The minute I dared to... they called me different. Isn't that true, Stan?"

Stan Ross has seen it all before and recorded most of it. A Fairfax High graduate like Andre Previn, Herb Alpert, Wild Man Fischer, Spector and myself, Ross is part-owner of Gold Star, and has 150 gold records and not enough space to hang them all.

all those wonderful Spector sides from 1958 to 1977. "Phil hasn't changed at all," says Stan. "There has always been controlled chaos at a Phil Spector session. There is no one like Phil. A very emotional character. I think that shows in the records that come out of here. It's a very beautiful thing to watch a Phil Spector record develop."

"Phil has always been cocky. In the beginning he lacked confidence. He was never short on determination but was always looking around for approval. These days he's more positive. He's a real record producer. You don't have to deal with a manager or a group of kids. You go and talk it over with Phil."

"Some very talented people have used these facilities over the years but Phil Spector is the most talented individual who has ever walked through the front door. Phil is still a kid. He gets excited about making records every moment. He never forgets. He's still contemporary. That's why his songs are always recorded."

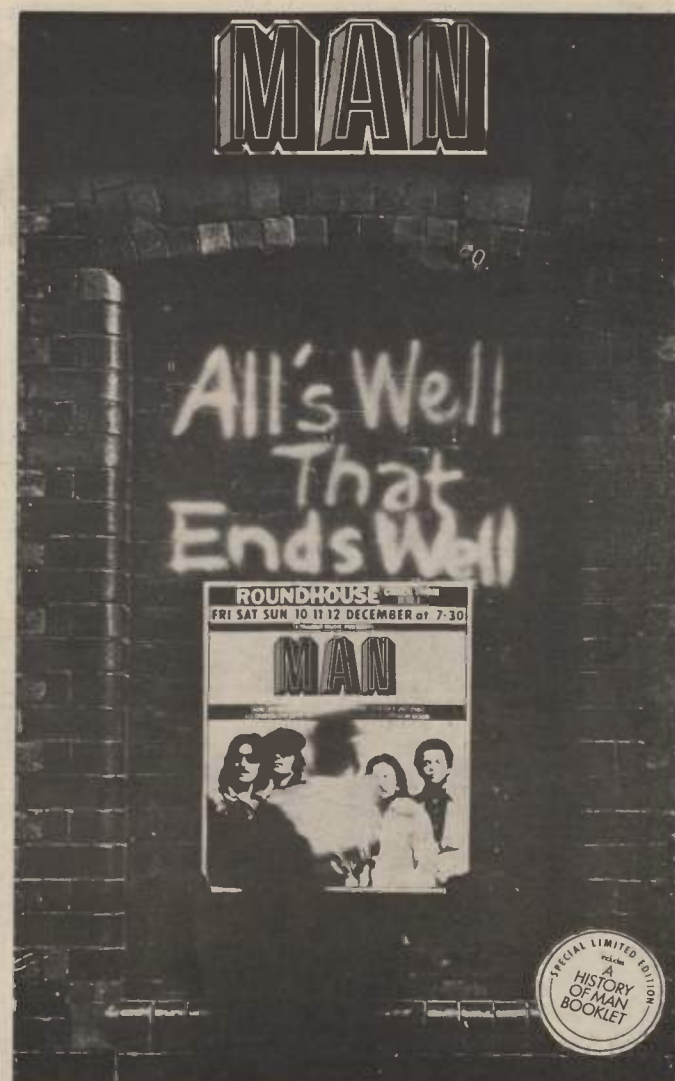
"When Phil calls, you drop everything." — Rodney Bingenheimer, 1966. Phil Spector recording session wouldn't be complete without the presence of Rodney Bingenheimer. The likeable Mayor of Sunset Blvd has carte blanche with Phil and the Gold Star staff. "I love Gold Star," says Rodney. "We sit in the lobby. It's one of the few studios that has Tab (diet Cola) in the Coke machine."

short and substantive. Earlier in the year Cohen was a house guest at Spector's impressive dwelling. By breakfast the duo had churned out two tunes. Cohen supplying the words and Spector pounding away at the piano. The collaboration was set in gear.

At the time Leonard said: "I first became aware of Phil Spector when I heard 'To Know Him Is to Love Him' when I worked in a factory in Montreal in the late Fifties."

Phil is not a great songwriter, but he's bold. Bold enough to use pedestrian melodies. I was always attracted to his earlier work: 'Unchained Melody,' 'Lovin' Feelin'." In those songs you could hear the predicament of the central story-teller. The songs were so expressive. Phil was able to make little moments of poignant longing from the real American heart.

"Phil has always been masterful at capturing the quality of dating, love, romance, longing, passion... the American adolescent heart. I like his voice, he has a beautiful urgent voice. I wouldn't mind being his Bernie Taupin." Soon towards Spector and Cohen formalized a musical partnership.



"All's Well That Ends Well" is a live recording of Man's last three shows at London's Roundhouse.

Featuring seven of their most popular tracks including "Spunk Rock" and "Romain," together on one album.

As an added bonus the first 12,000 copies contain a special history of Man leaflet.

This is a collectors' item — so hurry to get your copy while stocks last. MCF 2815.

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Isn't It Strange.



Radiator

Ex-Lindisfarne members Alan Hull and Ray Laidlaw, together with fellow musicians Peter Kirtley, Kenny Craddock, Colin Gibson and Terry Popple are Radiator. 'Isn't it Strange' ROLL 14 is their first album.

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Produced by Roy Thomas Baker and Freddie Mercury
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A HARVEY GOLDSMITH AND JOHN REID PRESENTATION
IN ASSOCIATION WITH GOOSE PRODUCTIONS

continued from
previous page

on the tape." Says Spector. "To this day I meet a lot of people who can't believe I made records, hits in Los Angeles. They thought Gold Star was in New York. By the way, there are no four- and five-part harmonies on my records. Maybe 32-part harmonies. If anybody is laid-back in this room, get the f— out."

"All people who play on Asylum albums please leave. Yes, the soul is often on display this time," says Cohen as we sit in his Brentwood house just off Sunset Boulevard. This album, and particularly this song, has some of the most autobiographical writing I've ever done. It's direct and confessional. I wanted the lyrics in a tender setting rather than a harsh situation. At times that fusion was achieved. Sometimes the heart must roast on the fire like shish kebab.

"I'm interested in writing good songs. I don't think about reaching a new audience or gaining ears," he says.

I remember the night "Death Of A Ladies' Man" was waxed. Lennard rode and winks. "We started at 7:30 in the evening and by 2:30 a.m. we hadn't done a complete take. Everyone was on double scotch after 12:00. Then it escalated to quadruple time at 2:00 a.m. By 3:30 we hadn't played it through once. Phil then took away everyone's charts. He wouldn't let the musicians play more than six bars."

I recall a craggy Cohen sitting on the floor in the early morning. We were all very tired, and at 4:00 a.m. Phil clipped his hands and instructed Cohen to do the vocal. Leonard approached the microphone and sang the song flawlessly.

The lyric is splendid. There is something really special and beautiful in that song. It breaks down and starts over. "Fingerprints" is a country-influenced song, complete with steel guitar, courtesy of Slinky Pete. This is not Cohen's initial excursion into C&W land. In 1954 he was in the Buckskin Boys.

"It was real country — barn dance, square dance music, hoodown music. Things we used to sing at the camp fire."

"Paper Thin Motel" is the tightest lyric on the album. It began in my hotel room in Frankfurt on the last tour. Sometimes your emotions are so shaken up the soul has to react. You thrash at the pillow and a feather comes out. It's a good song. I worked very carefully on the lyric. I had hundreds of verses. There were scores of alternate lyrics.

"I Left A Woman Waiting" is an intimate lyric published after it before as a poem in *Energy Of Slaves*. It then wrote additional material and extended it through the song."

FOR ME, the highlight of the six-month sessions was the actual recording of "Don't Go Home With Your Hard-On."

The night before the tune was recorded, Leonard and I went to the Troubadour for a poetry reading by Allen Ginsberg. The next evening, Ginsberg, Bob Dylan and Ronni Blakely turned up at Gold Star late in the night.

By 2:00, wine and pizza were all over the studio and it looked more like a fraternity party than a recording session. Blaine, who hadn't seen Dylan since Simon and Garfunkel session years back in New York, directed Dylan and Ginsberg for backing vocal parts. They can be heard howling in the chorus.

Phil was delighted to see Allen and Bob. By the end of the morning, Bob had become

LEONARD COHEN: "The album has some of the best lyrics I've ever done"

Bobby, and Phil was telling worse jokes than Blaine. He announced Phil at his short hands with all in distance. "There are so many Jewish people in the room we could have a bar mitzvah. Maybe we could record some poems. Then we could put out a discy version of it."

"I originally wrote the lyrics in an Italian restaurant in the Village," says Cohen. "It reflects a dilemma."

A COUPLE of months ago, Phil invited me to his house for a conversation. The 40-room fortress of solitude is surrounded by a wire fence and the long, narrow entry hall to the front room is lined with photos of Spector's heroes: Lenny Bruce, Muhammad Ali, John and Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King, John Lennon and the Beatles.

Rare masters are piled up in boxes next to a pool table and Phil's jukebox upstairs plays Elvis, Otis Redding, Waylon Jennings, Bob Dylan, Gene Vincent, the Coasters and the Drifters constantly.

I ask Phil if he identified with "He's A Rebel." "Everybody used to say 'A-ha, that's the thing that most classifies Phil. Nobody used to ask if I used to walk uptown' or if I lived in 'Spanish Harlem. But yeah, I identified with that."

"I always thought I knew what the kids wanted to hear. They were frustrated, uptight, I would say, no different from me when I was in school. I had a rebellious attitude. I was for the underdog. I was concerned that they were misunderstood as I was."

What about "Then He Kissed Me?"

"That was an experimental record. John (Lennon) told me the Beatles got the idea to use the 12-string guitar from that record. But I thought it was too spaced out."

I was against it coming out. I was gonna own it. I didn't know if everybody was going to except the vastness of it. That's about the 'Life Magazine and the Beatles got the idea to use the 12-string guitar from that record. But I thought it was too spaced out."

The song flopped in this country but was a Top Five smash in the U.K. Spector retired. Spector said it was due to the record's lack of success.

"I believe the public makes mistakes," Spector said, talking about the record. "But

there's no bitterness, no hard feelings. That's part of the reason for the 'Greatest Hits' album. It means people will get to hear what they didn't hear before."

I don't think a lot of people realise how I had retired long before that record. I think they feel that's the reason. I retired before "Lovin' Feelin'." I retired after "Lovin' Feelin'." There were lots of periods of retirement. I'd just say dissatisfaction."

Spector, a virtual recluse and hermit over the last few years, is getting ready to play ball again. The Cohen guards have been somewhat therapeutic for the volatile producer. Nowadays he's less theatrical in the studio and there's less of a circus atmosphere that surrounds his work.

These days Spector has settled down a bit. Of his wild stalling, he says, "It had to stop. I realised it was detrimental. It doesn't take extraordinary strength. I just objectively viewed it and saw it was a fictitious role for me — being the rich millionaire in the mansion and then dressing up like Batman. I have to admit I did enjoy it to a certain extent, but I began to realise it was very unhealthy. It was unproductive."

Sick

In a profile last year, Spector said "I'm an image. I'm the Howard Hughes of rock or whatever. Fine. How do I feel about it? I don't mind."

"When I used to sit around with Lenny (Bruce), we used to try to figure out why he was called the 'new wave.' Some writers had come up with the name. That's what we'll call him the new wave."

Lenny never said he was sick. The fact that I live in a mansion, secluded with bodyguards, it's easy for someone to say 'I'm this or that. It just makes for good reading."

But is the Howard Hughes tag accurate? "Yeah," he said, smiling slightly, after a slight pause. "I'd have to say it was pretty perceptive in their part."

"I'm ready to say anything now. Nothing frightens me. I feel I can do more than I ever could do before. I feel extremely ready, mentally. I'm more comfortable, more relaxed, more together."

"I understand what I want to do and I will do it. It's time to get serious again. Come in the other room and I'll play you some of the things I've done with Leonard."

While 1977 has been a Phoenix-like rebirth for Spector, Cohen's year is reflected in the lyrics that will accommodate the album.

"I was a little off-balance this year," he shrugs. The current batch of compositions are a continuation of post-Cohen concerns. "Idioms," "Whatever Happened," "True Love Leaves No Traces," and the title track, rehashes themes of lost love, personal change, romantic dilemma, lust and vulnerability.

"Don't forget humour," he says. Spector's production is sensual, often gorgeous in times. Cohen would use the lyrics to Phil who we weave a melody around them.

"I worship women" he says. "Everybody will now know that made this serene Buddha-like exterior beats an adolescent heart."

I've never fronted such a powerful sound. The album has some of the best lyrics I've ever done. I've done it times there was more space for the personality of the storylines to emerge. There's a lot of disappointment, negativity, bitterness, I think it's absolutely open, the tone of the album."

Boz Scaggs a silk degree further on

It's funny to think that less than a year ago we took space for Boz Scaggs' classic 'Silk Degrees' album and spent most of it explaining just who he was. Then he was known to a handful of British fans who'd stuck by him through many long years of dues-paying.

The outstanding success of that album, the three hit singles it contained and two sold out shows at the Rainbow Theatre in London make such exercises redundant.

So what this ad contains is simple information.

Boz Scaggs' new album 'Down Two Then Left' is now on release. Ten new tracks including his new single 'Hollywood' produced by Joe Wissert. Great songs, great arrangements, great productions.

What else do you really need to know?

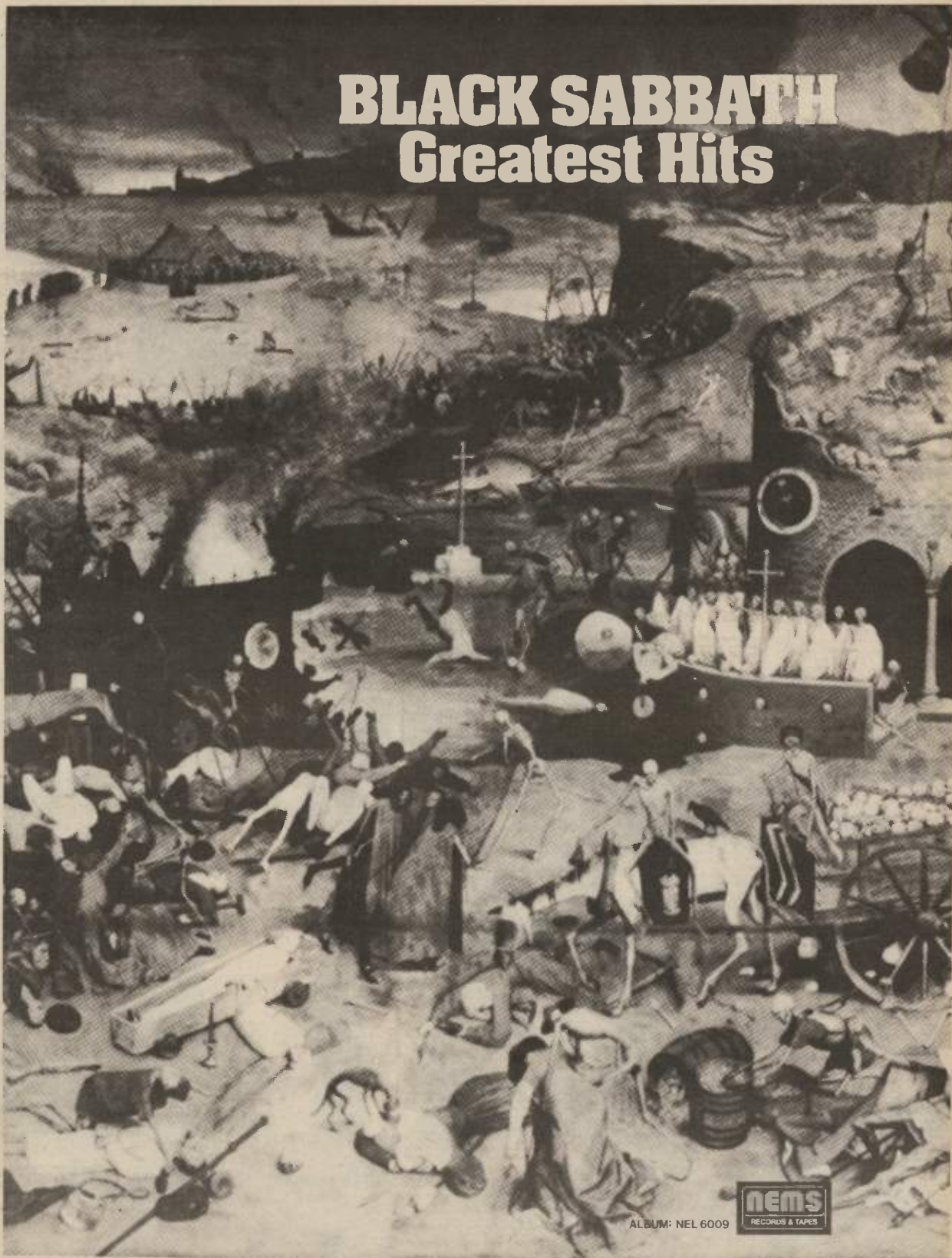
Album: 'Down Two Then Left'
Single: 'Hollywood'

Down
two
then
left



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Greatest Hits



ALBUM: NEL 6009

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RECORDS & TAPES



YES are now approaching their tenth anniversary as a group, and they have stuck to their musical beliefs over a decade of change within and without the group.

They have known a struggle for recognition, for financial stability after years of being permanently in debt, ultimate success on records and in concert around the world, and they have known the pressures of internal dissension and outside criticism.

Some of the strongest criticism has been from ex-members of the band, but somehow they have managed to retain love and respect, along with international success.

And now Rick Wakeman, who left them to go solo, has back the band have a hit album and even a single under their belts, and a unique series of British concerts, including six nights at Empire Pool, to look back upon as major achievements of 1977.

In fact, the band say their anniversary is next year, so they will have to do something startling to make 1978 even more memorable.

Jon Anderson promises, however, that they will come up with a hot new album next year and has some secret plans of his own, which will probably materialise as another solo album to follow up "Olias Of Sunhillow."

Rick Wakeman already has a new solo album, "Criminal Record," and seems very happy to be back among the Yesmen after a spectacular few years out on his own.

Damn

How did Jon sum up the Empire Pool concert? "The Monday night we came off feeling very pleased, and I'd say there were two nights that were excellent out of the six we played."

It seems to have been a highly successful year for the band altogether. "Well, right last year, when we were touring around, there was a feeling among us that we should celebrate the fact the band has been together for such a long time."

"We've all had the opportunity to look into our individual ideas with the solo albums, and then the idea of doing an album which had a celebratory feel about it grew and by the time we got to record 'Going For The One' the songs were pretty much organised in our heads."

We recorded in Montreux, Switzerland, at the Mountain Studio, just after ELP moved out, and it was a coincidence that ELP had just left. Advision when we recorded 'The Yes Album' there. I think this album had the same flavour as 'The Yes Album' with melody, technique and lyrics.

"We were determined to make a damn good album which we hoped would touch all the Yes fans who had maybe gone off us a little bit, or had stuck with us. It was a conscious attempt to try to get back in touch because we had the experience with the solo albums."

Had that been a drifting period for the band? "It wasn't drifting at all! It had been a very positive step to work towards

Jon Anderson talks to Chris Welch

New ideas. "Relayer" was another step forward: it was a bit weird in parts as we got involved in electronics in the battle sequences. On stage, though, it worked extremely well, I felt. On record, in retrospect, it was slightly unright.

"So we decided, 'let's do the solo projects'. We all found out a helluva lot in the act of making them."

"I can see Steve in the future going off and doing some really marvellous guitar pieces, and I thought Chris did a marvellous production on 'Fish Out Of Water'. Over the next three or four years there will be at least one album from each of us."

"I hope to do an album next year. I'm not quite sure how it will turn out. I'll have to wait and see. But the important thing is the next Yes album, and to make sure we're going along the right way. And the next album is already getting embedded in our heads."

Had the group started work on that yet?

"I've been juggling around with some things I did on the tour that came up during jams and soundchecks. I've got one or two songs that are very strong which the boys have all heard."

"We haven't dried up and we aren't twiddling our thumbs! We could make an album that centred on Rick or Steve, but I think the next one will show the versatility of the band, rather than individuals."

"We did go through a period of thinking of pieces of music for either Rick or Steve or myself. But now the band comes first."

"Happily, we've come through that period when people thought perhaps we had become a little self-indulgent. All we were doing, though, was spreading out our roots for a solid future."

"Yes, 'Close To The Edge' and 'Fragile' were all strong developments for the band, thought Jon, adding: "A lot of people didn't mean 'Close To The Edge' at the time, but now it's just part of the repertoire."

"We're in a relaxing period to look back on. Sometimes we got a bit of egg on our faces, but at least we tried to do something different."

"We never said we'd play it safe. That isn't what the band is about. It's always been about trying anything that comes along and hoping that it appeals."

"We had great success with 'Fragile' and 'Close To The Edge', and we didn't go mad, didn't go raving off, and, in fact, hid into ourselves. We became very nervous and worked for six months on 'Tapestry' and eventually went out and gave away."

"No matter what anybody says, it became marvellous on some nights. It was exciting because the audiences were behind us and helping us along. In America, too."

Jon admits that sometimes he has had difficulty communicating ideas to people, which might have led to tensions within the band in the past.

"Sometimes I don't know what I'm saying, myself just thinking thoughts aloud... you try to explain it, and sometimes you are not quite getting through."

"Maybe it's my fault because I haven't got the talent to write the music down and say to people, 'play this'. Frank Zappa can do it — I can't!"

"It was more of a problem for us when we were doing 'Close To The Edge', a large-scale piece of music that had to keep going, with a good tempo all the way through."

"On 'Going For The One' the tempo became much more natural and I didn't have to guide the thing. I was conducting away and having a great time, but everybody knew where we were going, anyway."

"We and Steve got together on 'Awaken', and 'Turn Of The Century' was one Alan and I wrote together."

Recluse

"Wonderous Stories" was about the joys of life, as opposed to the uprightness of some aspects of life. Romantic stories from the past and future really — a kind of dream sequence."

"I'd like to have a hit single, and we've got a couple more songs, not the same kind but equally good as singles. I think we'll try for singles if it's going to get us more airplay and get more people interested in the band."

"I'm not sure about 'Going For The One' as a single, however. It's a very high song to sing, which is good for my range. It helps strengthen the vocal cords! My voice has got a lot stronger over the past year."

"The whole group has taken a deep breath and got its second wind, and we shall carry on, hopefully, for the next few years. Rick is settled right back into the band again, as he was from the earliest times. And he's found doing a solo album like 'Criminal Record' again isn't such a taxing experience."

"Rick enjoys himself and it's good to see him play so well. We were always in touch with Rick, even when he left us, and he was very ill for a while. He took on a helluva lot."

"His heart is totally in the right place, but when you start taking a big choir and orchestra on the road, it must have been exhausting, all that responsibility on one person. He likes to get people together like that and put on an extravagant show, rather than being a recluse."

"Next year we'll put out a really hot album and we've got the makings of a good one coming up. Hopefully, we'll do a comprehensive tour, including Britain."

"And I hope everyone enjoys it, because I think we're a damn good band!"

"We're a happy band that plays good music, and puts on a good show. Sometimes the critics don't want to see a good visual show, but only because they see so many shows. We like to put on a bit of magic for our fans. That's who we play for, not the business people."

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Three young musicians and songwriters with their own brand of relaxed acoustic country rock and exquisite vocal harmonies, all captured on this their debut album.

NEW YORK: So here we are in Max's Kansas City, the club that first brought the Velvet Underground into the world's eye, while its more recent presentations boast some of the currently most thrilling American acts, principally Television, Talking Heads, and Jonathan Richman, so packed with tables and chairs that standing is devoutly discouraged, its atmosphere is the very antithesis of the kind of sweaty, steamy ambience that best suits to indie rock. It's a tribute they're almost falling off their seats.

I am not impressed by the joint at all. And The Hot Rods made their New York debut at the club last weekend with six distinctly impressive and surprisingly accomplished shows in three nights. Having viewed the Rods on some dozen of four occasions already this year and found the experience anything but interesting — more often, alarmingly tedious — it was indeed most confounding to encounter them in such sharp and uncompromising form.

It seems hard to believe that this was the same band that seemed to be comfortably disinterested for oblivion, with little apparent capacity to arrest the decline. Their obituary was already half-written, it seemed.

But on the evidence of the night they have recaptured all the vitality that made their earlier gigs memorable, whilst their music is now performed with a renewed sharpness that takes them a great deal further than the simple rhythm and blues structures that formerly preoccupied their work.

The reason for this transformation is simple. It is the arrival of Karsal Fyler, renegea drummer, to their new album, "Life On The Line." Reclaiming his has reawakened them from a more than pleasant but largely forgettable high-energy outfit into a band that, although not compromising their roots, have begun to invest a little thought, melody, and sense of pacing into their music.

Surprisingly, Barrie Masters, who in the past seemed a little out of sync with the band, and the stage to the detriment of his vocals, whether through ignorance of the location or maturity seemed far more subdued, although retaining a certain implish conceit, and consequently produced a far more compelling performance.

Was impressed. The local cognoscenti, who are never known to get up off their seats, stood up and applauded, so I knew they were, too. The Rods have indeed begun in The States. — SIMON KINERSLEY.

PHIL RAMBOW

A FEW credentials. Phil Rambow tramped the Canadian Indian coffee circuit, discovered electricity. Came to Britain and linked up with the long-limbed post-rock connoise, forming the Winkles who landed a contract with Chrysalis, supported Eno on a live tour and became the first wily erratic album before being upped to the top of the Apple, and recently a track on the Max Kansas City Volume 2 compilation.

With the Chrysalis connection now again renewed, Rambow is in a stronger position than ever. He's been to the top of London dates with Dave Cotman (ex-Sharps), Laurie Jayman on drums and lately blonde-haired guitar hero Nick Ronson (you all know who he is). Completing the line-up are Steve and Della, who bring some energetic harmonies.

London's Dogwalk last week the sum of the parts gave a tantalizing performance despite an unimpressive noise level and muffled vocals from Phil. Virtually every number was a power-driven onslaught, short, snappy and thick with leaden hooks — which recalled the type of compacted inner-city intensity that Bruce Springsteen, for instance, excels in. In this, in fact, is the one of the most obviously false dividends.

The rhythm section was undeniably faltering, while Ronson,

as self-effacing as ever on stage, embroidered Rambow's guitarcranking leads with intricate slides rather than actually coming into the guller spotlight. Rambow himself sings in a nasal twang, filling the audience with those unsettling, bug-eyed glances and decked out in a black T-shirt that reads PETISH.

Forget the Winkles. Rambow has returned in style and is living on all cylinders available. Catch him now so that you can boast to your friends / relations / grandchildren how you saw him when there was still a clear line either to the top or the bar. — IAN BIRCH.

GARNER TRIBUTE

IN THE custom of giving a little to jazz packages I can accurately label last week's Concert Tribute to Erroll Garner, a soloistic elegy for Erroll's Lennie Fells, opened with Erroll's piano, "Memories Of You," with a nice walking bass, "Ain't Misbehavin'" with little predominance in the treble, and "Easy Living" with some of Erroll's stashed octaves before his own rebound stride took over.

Bill McGuire brought out a true Garner chordal intro, and then went into almost pure understated Erroll on "Ain't She Sweet," right down to the single keynote ending, another Garner hallmark. "Girl Talk" was rather more clinical and a bit stiff, and Bill was happier with his own "You Must Meet My Wife" and three themes of his "America Suite" — not the stuff of great improvisation, perhaps, but put over with infectious sincerity.

Eddie Thompson was a perfect contrast, immediately knitting the fireworks on his opener, and heading into locked-hands unbroken patterns for "Milt Buckner?" boogie left hand and then aggressive stride — all in one number.

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content with and who can each relate to his own soulful style. Even at this early stage — it was only their fourth gig — the band swung through the set with the mastery of musicians completely sympathetic to each other's aims and talents.

For the record, Chrissie Stewart on bass is the sole remnant from the original Full House, and he has been joined by Procal Hamm's former drummer, B. J. Wilson. Ace's keyboard man, Paul Carmack, looking much more at home in this complementary role, and Mickie Moody, who has added some welcome attack on guitar. And there's also the brass duo of Chris Mercer and Martin Grove, combining to get an incredibly beefy sound.

But of which has made Frankie himself more confident that he's been in a long time; he's even displaying a cutting humour between numbers that kept his audience amused. But the music has benefited most from this general improvement in group atmosphere and this is best emphasized in the new numbers. Miller has been writing, some of them with other members of the band. The best of these, on one listen, was undoubtedly Tennessee bloodsucking rocker with Moody building a clapping pace.

Otherwise, Miller wisely settled for a fairly representative set of his best work, with "Frickin' Blues," "Jealous Guy," the classic "God For You" and, of course, "Be Good To Yourself" (the hit single) ensuring that the sweetie bites never high.

"Here was an artist on the verge of great things. Miller is now mature as a writer and singer and, with his threatening side Charming, you've got the ingredients of an artist ready to challenge the world on his own terms."

After witnessing the hysterical reaction of the Coventry audience last week, I can't see that there's anything capable of stopping him. Frankie Miller, at long last, is ready. HARRY GOBERTY.

TOMMY TUCKER

BLUESMAN Tommy Tucker (New Into Britain from New York on Sunday for a solitary appearance at London's 130 Club instead of the nationwide tour which was originally planned. He played two very contrasting solo sets in London. The first was almost entirely devoted to reflective interpretations with sparse piano support of Ray Charles, among them "Elevated" and "Blues For Ray."

After the interval he played a lot more piano and concentrated mainly on original material, including not only the expected "Hitler Snakes" ("Allman" but also "Is That the Way God Planned It" — the Billy Preston number). A case, serene piece with piano intelligent lyrics. It is crying out for a more single. The ways of record companies are indeed difficult to understand. Tucker has recorded a fine version of the song, but he has been unable to interest a single label in it. When it finally does get issued — as surely it must — it could become a standard on a par with "Snakes."

The evening ended with a rousing "The Blues Had A Baby" containing slay but after a lengthy vocal parodying "Lightin' Hopkins, Howlin' Wolf and Ray Charles. — RICHARD KLEE.

FRANKIE MILLER

IF THE opening night of Frankie Miller's tour was anything to go by then this little jaunt through Britain might be the one to finally establish him in this country. At last Miller appears as a musician that he is totally

Mythology

The other end of new wave

SOUL

- **LEON HAYWOOD:** "Super Sexy" (MCA). The near-veteran's first MCA single and a piece of energetic dance soul powered by a "Clean Up Woman"-style riff. It cuts it.
- **BILL FREDERICKS:** "Love With You" (Polydor). Goosy but likeable life-a-go-go ballad from the ex-Drifter. Produced by Lou Reizner.
- **VIOLA WILLS:** "Let's Love Now" (Arista). Singalong-Viola down at the disco. A misuse of genuine talent.
- **CISSY HOUSTON:** "Morning Much Better" (Private Stock). Church treatment of "sex is better in the a.m." theme erected (?) on a funk base. Good record, great singer.
- **SONNY BLAKE:** "Curiosity" (Satri). Stiff but convincing Swamp Dogg pastiche.
- **JALIN BAND:** "So Good" (Magnet). Unremarkable disco.
- **HUMMINGBIRD:** "Madasta" (A&M). Snug sassy funk containing enough acidic guitar licks to satisfy Jeff Beck's most ardent followers.
- **SILVER CONVENTION:** "The Boys From Liverpool" (Magnet). Der Beedies were a very gut group who sold very many records, unless Fraulins, we will now try to sell very many records also by making some of der Beedies' songs loveable to the dizzies. My apologies to any German readers but this record is a joke.
- **INTERGALACTIC TOURING BAND:** "Love Station" (Charisma). Filippant disco of unknown and unimportant origin. Mind you, it does harbour a lovely, if very brief, Bensonian guitar break.
- **CHIC:** "Dance, Dance, Dance (Yowsah, Yowsah, Yowsah)" (Atlantic). Mediocre disco full of mix trickery and Edmundo Roy strings.
- **MUSCLES:** "I'm A Girl Watcher" (Big Bear). Chicory tip meets the Moments on an uninspired day all round. The Brummies can do better than this.

Bob Gallagher

REGGAE

- **HORACE ANDY:** "Girl I Love You" (Chanan-Jah). One of the better versions of a much-recorded song. A Channel One production with Ranking Trevor's above-average (for him) toasty, "Auntie Lulu," on the B side.
- **V. BROWN AND JAH BUNNY:** "Six And Seven Books" (Main Line). Rerecording of the early Maytins classic. Reasonable but can't come near the original.
- **EDDY GRANT:** "Hello Africa" (Ice). Lightweight but attractive and well-produced Afro-calypto.
- **JUDGE DREAD:** "Up With The Cock" (Cactus). Infantile leering nonsense with a feeble semi-reggae rhythm. Pathetic.
- **POET AND THE ROOTS:** "All We Do Is Defendin'" ("Five Nights Of Bleedin'" (Virgin Disco 45). Poet to Linton Kwesi Johnson with two pieces from his book Dread Beat And Blood, dealing mainly with violence by and against black youth. An interesting and fairly successful experiment setting his poems against reggae rhythms in the style of deejay toasters, but far more serious than they usually are.
- **DENNIS MATUMBI:** "Blood A Go Run" (Serious Business). Matumbi's unmistakable style and a powerful song. Another brilliant number from one of London's best bands. Stunning dub on the B side.
- **DILLINGER:** "Musical Music" ("Rockers" (Jamaica Sounds Disco 45). Dillinger has been very erratic lately, making too many run-of-the-mill records and only occasionally inspired. This is an especially banal and dull effort.
- **NATURALS:** "Falling In Love Again" (Magnum). Pleasant but ordinary song competently performed but nothing special.
- **CLINTON SENIOR:** "Son Of Man" (Stonehouse). Strange theme, I assume it refers to Jesus. But it's done with energy and isn't at all bad.

Dave Ramsden

Method acting

On the street

- **METHOD:** "Kings On The Corner"/"Dynamo" (Do It Records). Don't know who they are or whence they come (Richmond in Surrey has been whispered as likely), but they are impressive. "Dynamo" is an "educated" reworking of the later Velvet/Reed formula, even down to the off-the-shoulder lyrics. "Well, now, Johnny said to Bobby/I can see there's a riot going on/Bobby said to Johnny/It's just the beat, beat, beat of that dynamo." In odd contrast (are they music students?) "King" reverts to a bluesy, small big band sound with a punchy horn section and an echoed mouth bap that walls in the middle distance.
- **HURRIGANES:** "Hey, Hey Hey" / "Elephant's Boogie" (Sone). Funkish stomp rock ("Elephant's Boogie" is a particularly apt reference to rusty tank-shaft lovers everywhere).
- **KILBURN AND THE HIGH ROADS:** FEATURING IAN MACDONALD (The Beat Of) (Bona parte Records). Re-discovery/re-assessment time now that people are running to change into Ian's new books and panties. The five tracks (starting value at 99p) are culled from the Kilburns' only album, "Handsome," released on Dawn in '75. It's an extraordinary ragbag of Dave Payne's sax snorts, Ian's mumble-rumble vocals and often inspired Cockney tunesmanliness. "Bonaparte brings you bits others like to bury."
- **NEON HEARTS:** "Venus Eccentric" / "Regulations" (Neon Heart Records). The sax makes it sound like watered down X-Ray Spex, minus the lovely Poly Styrene of course. Now was that number 376 or 367 in the queue for stardom?
- **STORMTROOPER:** "I'm A Mess" (Solent). Record like title. A howling confusion that was cut two years ago and for some reason only now released. One for buying at the moon.
- **STOAT:** "Office Girl" (City Records). Genial pop-pop from a new three-piece on a new label. It sounds the kind of song that Graham Gouldman would have written ten years ago before the advent of 10cc (east your memory back to "No Mill Today" and "Bus Stop"). "Now OK" but given the forest fire bias of 1977.
- **JIVE BUREAU:** "School Daze"/"You Say That You Love Me" (Gull). It says here that they are a new wave act from South-East London but avert your ears from forked tongues. The Jive Boys are lodged firmly in mainstream boogie music with rollicking keyboards (Rob) and the kind

DR FEELGOOD: "Baby Jane"/"Looking Back"/"You Upset Me Baby" (UA). You'd be hard pressed to find a better contemporary rivum'n'booze (skip the glass, just leave the bottle) bunch of lunatics than the Canvey Island Cohorts.

The first two are from the new album, produced with belt-driven ferocity by man-of-the-moment Nick Lowe. "Baby" is a sizzling live version of an old B. B. King number. John Mayo brings home guitar honours with some brilliant fret work while Lee Brilleaux hollers and humps with the fury of the converted.

of cheerful, well constructed sloppiness the Small Faces once beamed forth. The Doie Q is being a token nod. Lay it while it plays.

● **MANIACS:** "Chelsea 77"/"Ain't No Legend" (UA). What do you say? Maniacs debuted at the riotous Mont De Marsion festival in August. This is their first single. Dave Goodman, formerly of the Pistols and now Eater, produced. Otherwise it's down to every cliché under the power. As untrammelled as a run away... tram; as powerful as a peeled onion?

● **LEFT HAND DRIVE:** "Jailbait" / "Motorway Crow" (Banquet Records). Milton Keynes, Bucks, in HQ for the Drive. The sound is homogenous, lusty and a technical mess, which matters not a whit. "Jailbait" sounds unnervingly like "Radar Love" by Dutch crotch-rockers Golden Earring. If neo-Heavy Metal is your wont, give this a listen.

● **RIKKI & THE NUMBERS:** "The Heartbreak Kid" (Rainbow). 1977 must be the year of the independent record

label. They virtually eclipse the independent artists. Rain-bow is run by the famed London venue of the same name with its fading-glory decor. Their debut is a trifle on the stodge side as it struts along like a more melodic Status Quo headshaker. Gary Benson wrote and produced, which may explain why it comes across as Resuscitated Middle Age.

● **MICK FARREN AND THE NEW WAVE:** "Play With Fire" (Ork) / **MICK FARREN & THE DEVIANTS:** "Screwed Up" (Suff). The typewriter drain continues. Wilts producing the Adverts. The Snivelling Shits having a new hire in the can. And now Mick F., who's no newcomer to the den, having been part of the original Social Deviants way back in '67 when gigs were called total assaults. Suff resurrect the "legendary" combo (an E.P. consisting of "Shock Horror Probe Is Coming," "Outrageous/Contagious," "Let's Loot The Supermarket Again, Like We Did Last Summer," and the title track) while Ork go for the modern-lok New.



the stoat... office girl



Impress

Medicine men

The manic and the mechanical

One of the few times when included applause is easily justified



WIRE: "Mannequin"/"Feeling Called Love"/"12XU" (Harvest). An uncanny sign of the times. That's Wire, who are being unilaterally hailed as something or other. Three tracks from their forthcoming "Pink Flag" album.

"You're an energy void/a black hole to avoid/no style/no heart/you don't even start" ("Mannequin"). Bleak neurosis for the lip-biting robotoid on the cover. "What is this feeling called love/what is this thing I can't work out no how." The Mannequin has a bright-red heart glued awkwardly on its chest. "Saw you in a mag/kissing a man/I got you in a corner" ("12XU"). Almost rhymed Ramones. The refrigerated side of drone pop.

was though? Pull the other one, it's got joss sticks on it. Both outings are more than respectable, especially when laid side by side the present dismal spike-haired crop. Mr Larry Wallis, as well as producing, plays some fine rambling guitar. Leather-coated, Stones-like sleaze ("Play With Fire" is the Nanker/Heise epic) when they shopped around Woolworth's rather than Fortnum & Mason.

● **DIODES:** "Red Rubber Ball" (CBS). I can't help liking this against all better (?) judgement. The Diodes are an art school quartet from Toronto who emerged from that city's punk sweatshop. Crash 'n' Burn. They've updated Paul Simon's piece of whimsy, but instead of turning it into a sulphate scream (e.g. Damned and "Help") keep it on the sophisticated side with cornily mannered vocals from Paul Robinson. I did say they were ex-art school.

● **SOME CHICKEN:** "New Religion"/"Blood On The Wall" (Raw Records). What was that about a conveyor belt? Chicken are Nothingham-

based with Ivor Badoek (vocals), Jess Chicken (guitar), Galway Kinell (drums) and Terry Bull (bass). Landlocked punk. Dull, thudding, nothing new.

● **THE ELECTRIC CHAIRS:** "F--- Off" (Sweet F.A.). What a surprise. I've resolutely loathed the Chairs since their exposal of the British shores. But this is ger-rare, apart from the dumb lyrics that are all spite and spite directed against anyone with that wind-up approach. You know, lead you on and let you down. Wayne County snarls. "In other words, if you ain't got time to take a walk with me on my meat-rack/Then you just get the hell out of my breadline."

Two of the best lines.) He sings first over a cupful of Chicago blues provided by the piano of Jools Holland (on loan from Squeeze) and the ringing guitar of Greg Van Cook. Towards the end Wayne hollers "One-Chu-Free-Faw" and polished breakneck takes over until the final bar-room fade out. Mervyn Silme produced... exactly.

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REVIEWED BY



IAN BIRCH

Shakin' a mop-top

Resurrection special

science-fiction effect probably best evidenced on "Johnny" and the intergalactic smash-croo "Telstar."

● **SCAFFOLD:** "Lily The Pink"/"Thank U Very Much"/"Do You Remember"/"Gin Gin Goolie." In 1968 over a million people paid hard cash to own "Lily The Pink." It's difficult to believe, but they did and may do so again in 1977. Mike McGear (Paul McCartney's step-brother), Roger McGough (archetypal Penguin Poet now immersed in colour supplements) and John Gorman (comedy actor) were inescapably part of Liverpool's Fringe Theatre Bohemia. They charmed out fourth-form doggerel set to traditional/locker room chants and delivered in cocky Scouse.

● **SHANE FENTON & THE FENTONES:** "I'm A Moody Guy"/"Walk A Way"/"Cindy's Birthday"/"It's All Over Now." Shane sure has had his fair share of personality changes. Born Bernard Jerry, he was Fenton in the early Sixties and Alvin Stardust during the early Seventies. If nothing else, our Bernard is adaptable. These four cuts date from '61/'62 and reflect the transitional period between Fifties rock and encroaching Beatlemania when British slicked-back silver lame was limp and derivative.

● **CHILLA BLACK:** "You're My World"/"It's For You"/"Alta"/"Just A Broken Heart." Priscilla White (for that is her real name) was once the cloakroom attendant at the Cavern. Then Brian Epstein brilliantly groomed her (using in part the above big-balled-full-production horrors) to become Our First Lady of Family Entertainment. All gawky charm and a two-tone voice that either blasted like a congested foghorn or burbled like a wallflower, she didn't come near the macabre heartbreak that was Dusty Springfield. Had her debut single "Love Of The Loved" (written by John and Paulie) been included, there might have been a glimmer of interest.



EMI have delved into their vaults (some might say have scraped the barrel) and unearthed the following "nuts," EPs in glossy picture bags. As with the Beatles' singles, you can either buy them individually or in a super-deluxe set. Safety belts securely fastened? Let us step into the wind tunnel. (They are all on EMI, naturally enough.)

● **FOURMOST:** "Hello Little Girl"/"I'm In Love"/"A Little Lovin'"/"Baby I Need Your Lovin'." Part of Brian Epstein's empire, the Fourmost broke some ground with two catchy but insubstantial Lennon & McCartney songs in '63 (the first two listed). Ironically it was a non-Beatle composition, "A Little Lovin'" that gave them their biggest hit the following year. Unassuming Marseybeat in its innocent daze.

● **SWINGING BLUE JEANS:** "Hippy Hippy Shake"/"Good Golly Miss Molly"/"Don't Make Me Over"/"You're No Good." Another classic example of the Mersey Boom. They generally took American originals (like all the above) and moulded them to fit their instantly identifiable sound. Slightly graysay vocals, plucky guitars and crisp harmonies. Ideal for shaking a mop-top to. The killer here is Betty Everett's "You're No Good" with its clipped rhythm and bone-deep guitar break. Pulls a half-nelson on Ma Ronstadt's version without blinking.

● **JOHN LEYTON:** "Johnny Remember Me"/"Son This Is She"/"Wild Wind"/"Capboard Love." Hands up who remembers the TV Biggles series? Ahem, not me. Gux, John played his intrepid lap-dog singer, being originally an actor before exercising his pop vocal cords.

The real interest lies in the fact that Joe Meek produced all four tracks. Meek and his so-called RGM Sound recently became ultra-fashionable in the academic circles, and without doubt he was a true pioneer in his self-built North London studio during the early Sixties. He created a heavily echoed, eerie, almost

Life" album: "Pool In Love" from "The Rock" and "Jealous Guy" from "Full House." Number four is the long-standing stage-stopper "Sail Away," one of those never-before-released carous, and it's outstanding. Frankie's whisky-ravaged voice offsets the Randy Newman venom perfectly.

Still, the man's greatest period remains the Allen Toussaint association on "High Life." Light but always tight, loose but always disciplined soul that is feeling itself. "Play something sweet / Play something mellow/Play something I can sink my teeth in like Jell-O..."

BOBBY OGDEN: "Outlaw Blues" (Capitol). The John Oates song from the film of the same name wearing Bobby Ogdin, alias Peter Fonda. The story goes that Bobby writes tune while behind bars. CAW singer with strong Johnny Cash overtones nicks it and has a smash. But Bobby gets his revenge. Fonda croaks and stumbles along, shored up by chorus and campfire harmonica. Better on celluloid than vinyl.

assured as a Swiss bank's collateral. The style he evolved on "Slow Dancer" with Johnny Bristol and developed on "Silk Degrees" with Joe Wissert has been further fed through a music sieve. Impeccable white soul, the "Camera-Action-Do It Again" chorus makes it undeniably infectious. Supporters of early Scaggs will hate it; post-Dancer fans won't be able to wrest it from the turntable.

FRANKIE MILLER: "That's Who" (Chrysalis). Unquestionably magnificent stuff, if you're a Miller maniac (like myself), the four cuts will have already ushered you into oblivion on many an occasion. Chronologically speaking, "Brickyard Blues" is from the "High

Ricky, don't lose that number...

On the boulevard

supply further backing. Joe Boyd and John Woods produced with care. Enough information? It falls short of the wrecked grandeur that (I think) it was striving for.

● **GRATEFUL DEAD:** "Dancin' In The Streets" (Arista). Who'd have thought in the heady Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test of the Sixties that the Dead would, ten years on, be doing a lightweight disco version of the Motown chestnut, "Dancin' In The Streets." Is that progress? Or topicality? Or mellowing into maturity? Desperately dreary.

● **BOZ SCAGGS:** "Hollywood" (CBS). A cut from the new Scaggs album "Down Two Then Left," whose platinum success is as

RICK NELSON: "Garden Party" (MCA)/"You Can't Dance" (Epic). Two different labels and a five-year gap have to mean some, though not necessarily dynamic, changes. "Garden Party" was Rick's (fairly amiable) reply to the Madison Square rock n' roll revival show in '72 when audience expectations didn't tally with Nelson's new direction. "If memories are all I sing/I'd rather drive a truck." Constantly coasting soft rock.

"You Can't Dance" is today, but with mining the same seam. More uptempo, it's unimproved for the Fleetwood Mac Market.

● **JULIE COVINGTON:** "Only Women Bleed" (Virgin). Watch this conquer the Christmas chart. Julie is a person of many parts: everything from not sobbing for Argentina to The Rocky Horror Show and wailing Tom Stoppard's Jumpers. Alice Cooper and Dick Wagner dreamed up the wordplay. John Cale plays keyboards and arranges the agony in "Paris 1919" fashion. Several ex-Fairporta

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RAMONES: "Rocket To Russia" (Sire SR 6042). Johnny Ramone (guitar), Joey Ramone (lead vocals), Dee Dee Ramone (bass), Tommy Ramone (drums). Produced by Tony Bongiovi and T. Erdelyi. Engineered by Ed Stadium. Recorded at Media Sound, New York. Mixed at Power Station, New York. Mastered at Sterling Sound by Greg Calbi. Import available from Virgin.

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Ramones: fun and winter

THE problem with this whole new wave schmeer is that hardly anyone seems to have a sense of humour. Without that, all the football-terrace politics are never going to get beyond hurling vacuum abuse and toilet rolls. When did you last laugh along to an album? Probably the Ramones' previous offering in fact.

In my book the Ramones come close to being the greatest pop band in the universe. Pop, that is, for 1977 and that means meat-cleaving fuzz-guitar which is irresistibly sharp, melodies that connect on ignition and the best-natured grasp of cartoon madness.

Armed high school heroes reared on Marvel comics and street aggression, sneaking in the backdoor to see cruddy imported horror B-fests.

Look at the illustrations by John Holmstrom that decorate back cover and initiate a world of deranged pinheads with massive mouths and spiv rabbits munching — with calculated cool on carrots at a seaside fair.

Grotesque burlesque in **DR. HOOK: "Makin' Love And Music" (Capitol).**

ALTHOUGH I never particularly liked "Sylvia's Mother" (I've always had a soft spot for Dr. Hook's brand of combining a rocking beat with zany lyrics about booze and love), I'm glad to find with the latest album that they haven't changed, but things have got a lot fancier.

Augmenting them on this outing are the Muscle Shoals Horns and a string section as well as six other musicians. The opening title track suns the with its throbbling rhyme, trailing guitars and punctuated brass, and the boys come on at times like some of those Southern boogie bands.

The tempo subsides on occasions, such as on the delicious slow "Sleeping Lady," the best anthem to reluctant risers I've ever heard. But it's the raucous bar-band image of Dr. Hook that I really like, and that image is

short sweats is their forte. It always has been, throughout their last two albums, and, truth to tell, "Rocket To Russia" marks virtually no new departures. But really, that's not what the band are all about.

They have set their parameters, stated them clearly and want to distill and refine as much as possible within those self-imposed limits. If anything, they have moved even closer to ingenious Sixties trash pop of the best kind, all chewing-gum melodies and makechit Jan and Dean harmonies. "Rockaway Beach" opens with "Chewing out a rhythm on my bubble gum."

The real expression of this Saturday morning surf lunacy is their re-working of "Surfin' Bird," a novelty hit by the Trashmen around '62/63, and containing some of the most exultantly dumb lyrics ever sent / Daddy like men."

The kids who hang out all day long may wear dark shades. But they use their eyes to see.

As ever, the sound is instant, urgent and ferocious. It's like skating on diluted ice in New York's Central Park with blue knees glowing in shredded jeans and dark pretzels stuffed in woolly mitts.

Well, I can't admit to ever having performed such an act, but you can fantasise. Buy this album and start smiling again. — I.B.

personified in three cuts. "What A Way To Go" is a title that almost tells it all anyway. "Women gonna be the death of me but what a way to go."

The other two also have explicit (and why beat around the bush) titles. "Weird" and "Sexy Energy." "Tremble" is about a plan for a living woman, while "Sexy" is just full of energy.

Another standout track, but with different subject matter is "Who Dat," a free-to-blow anywhere song which hits the first groove with a growling baritone sax and a feeling not unlike those old jump-band records.

"Walk Right In" has been played on the radio enough for it to be well-known and it can be used as a yardstick to the general feel of the album. Yap, it's good music for the boozing and lusty brigade, but maybe it lacks a little bit of variety. Every track gets a funky treatment and the tender ballad doesn't

get a look in to dark things up. Anyway, that's a minor grumble, and after all, Dr. Hook are a partying group and this is just the kind of disc for the partying. Like the man himself, a capital album. — R.G.

FLINTLOCKS: "Tears 'n' Cheers" (Pinnacle).

ALF to prove that pop is not all soft and pill, and that punk/heavy metal/hard rock/jazz-rock have not taken over the world, along comes this refreshing group evoking memories of the innocent Sixties.

Flintlocks are instrumentally more proficient than most who fall into the teenybop category, and their songs have a zest plus variety which stand them apart from the rest. Derek Pascoe's lead vocals are excellent, and the drum work of Mike Holoway

is fundamental to the tightness of the sound.

Holoway also wrote much of the material on the album, and he proves a writer with plenty of attack and ideas. Mike Batt, of Wombles and other fame, wrote "Sea Of Flames" for Flintlock, and their own "Window."

"Silbury Hill" forcibly demonstrate that there is creativity at work in the group that should keep them going long after safety pins are shed by other groups.

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given to all idiot dancers everywhere. "Crein Hog" (pronounced Creeze-ten by the by) is gloriously ridiculous. "Teenage Laboratory," which echoes "Shock Treatment" from album two is equally joyous and naive.

"Slugs and snails are after me/DDT keeps me happy/ Now I guess I'll have to tell 'em/ That I got no cerebellum/Gonna get my Ph.D./ I'm a teenage lobotomy."

"Probably 'Russia's' most adventurous stooge (ouch) is "We're A Happy Family, certainly as far as the lyrics go. The humour runs a fine line between pantomime excess and savage, ahem, documentary.

For instance: "Sitting here in Queens/Eating refined beans/Were in all the magazines/We ain't got no friends/Our troubles never end/No Christmas cards to send / Daddy like men."

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Sizzling Hot Rods

EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS: "Life On The Line" (Island).

THE band that only a few months ago were thought to be on the fast lane has soared back with a superb shot of exhilarating hi-speed rock 'n' roll.

The album for a great ex-corporate clear, Graeme Douglas (the ex-Kurama) Flyer) joined, giving and putting a new twist in the arms and taking a lot of the guitar responsibility off the perennially-shaded Dave Hogg.

Then came the single, "Do Anything You Wanna Do", which effortlessly ranks among the best seven-inches of the year. An effortless rush of delirium jam-packed full of lyrics that managed to stay on the right side of the doobie-cox rebellion. "Don't need no politician/ Tell me things I shouldn't need/ Neither no politician/ Tell me what I oughta see."

Now the album, and although none of the other songs have the instant, immediate appeal of "Do Anything", they are only marginally short of the mark. The lion's share of the duties have shifted from Hogg (responsible for all the material on "Teenage Depression") to Douglas and producer Ed Hollis.

Hogg has moved almost exclusively to rhythm guitar which is in no way a relegation. His beautifully cited underlay contributes the vital, breathless propulsion that

drives one track into the next with scarcely a commercial break. The James Hunt of the Westwood (They are after all called the Hot Rods — sorry about that).

But that's not to overshadow the rest of the band. Douglas aims to lead, and his punchy vocals rather than extended breaks. Paul Grey's bass rarely falls in its heartbeat while Dave Hogg's sax calls to the ears of the Third Army. However, special mention must go to vocalist Barrie Masters, who has transformed into a great singer in frantic yet crystalline-clear mood. All seeking rage that has been harnessed so as to become music.

It's this collected teenage rampage that makes the "angry-young-man" lyrics acceptable. Like "Ignore the things I tell you/ The truth's the same as lies/ Don't believe your elders/ And don't believe your eyes." Everywhere with clarity and accuracy, grey hair, history books, corporations and gritted teeth, refusals to do anything you don't wanna do.

There's even an effective instrumental called "We Song." The "Cross" which wickedly starts with a sort of sickly, less Yates pontification.

My advice, intercept and acquire without delay. I request to Island Records Ltd? Any number of the tracks could be singles. Why not take a chance on them. "Life On The Line" — an inspired title — or "(And) Don't Believe Your Eyes." They sizzle. — I.B.

ELVIS

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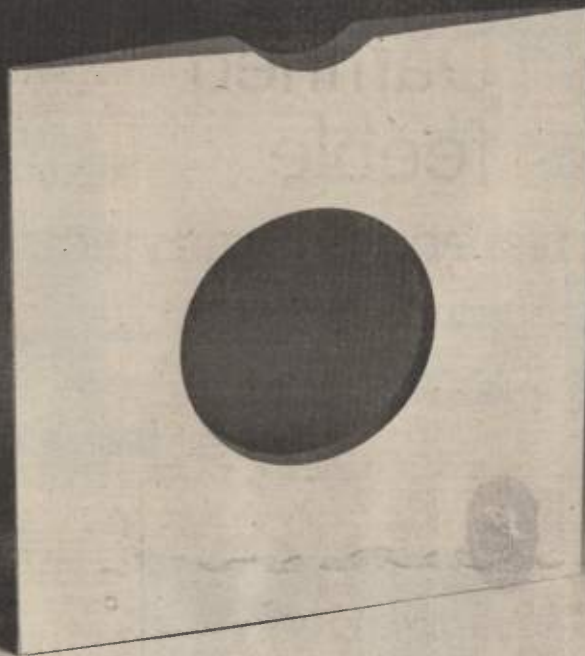
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Reviewers: Allan Jones, Michael Oldfield

Ten up—long may he run

LET'S make one thing immediately clear, amigo: "Decade" is certainly no mercenary enterprise intended to exploit the dedication of Neil Young's audience. The apparently indulgent and extravagant design of this triple album retrospective is powerfully justified by the impressive authority and diversity of its contents, and the invaluable comprehensive account of Young's artistic development and maturity into one of rock's most individual and arresting performers that it so generously and lucidly offers.

The compilation follows a vaguely chronological course through Young's career, from the precocious adventures of his work with Buffalo Springfield — "Mr Soul," "Broken Arrow" and, especially, the immaculately conceived "Expecting To Fly," remain startlingly fresh and vivid — through his stirring alliance with the robust, bar-room rock of Crazy Horse and beyond the mellow pastures of "After The Goldrush" and "Harvest."

It passes through the sombre landscapes of "On The Beach," "Tonight's The Night" and back out into the light again with the resigned dignity of "Zuma," and the dry charm of "American Stars 'N' Bars," (one of his most underrated albums).

The selections from these albums is discriminating and calculated to reflect the consistent pertinence of

NEIL YOUNG: "Decade" (Reprise 3 RS 2557). Triple album retrospective of Neil Young's career featuring the Buffalo Springfield, CSN&Y, Crazy Horse and the Stray Gators. Compiled by Neil Young, Tim Mulligan and David Briggs.

Young's emotional perceptions: whether, for instance, he is writing a love song like the moving, defiantly unsentimental "The Old Laughing Lady," or composing a piece as uncompromisingly indignant as the vehement "Ohio," his tone is always assured and the various moods he has sought always precisely evoked.

Similarly, the albums illustrate Young's determined pursuit of integrity, often at the expense of commercial prosperity and an even wider popularity than that which he presently enjoys (that it is still considerable offers further evidence surely of the enduring universality of his themes, and their accessibility,

even when Young examines various emotional and physical predicaments in harrowing detail as he did on "Tonight's The Night" and "On The Beach").

Curiously, though, there is no reference to Young's seminal masterpiece, "Time Fades Away," one of the most extreme performances ever captured on vinyl. Still, that's a minor note of dissent, and this set must be regarded as essential to any Young aficionado for the inclusion of five previously unreleased cuts and the terse, but illuminating sleeve notes Young has written for each track included here.

There's a particularly telling observation in the note on "Heart Of Gold," for

NEIL YOUNG: no mercenary enterprise, rather a comprehensive account of his artistic development

instance, "This song put me in the middle of the road," writes Young. "Travelling there soon became a bore. So I headed for the ditch. A rougher ride, but I saw more interesting people there."

That much is evident from the chilling episodes from "On The Beach" (but why no "Ambulance Blues"?), and "Tonight's The Night," especially "Tired Eyes" — "a bleak view of a drug murder in a Los Angeles canyon. Out of pitch but still in tune." Of the five previously unissued tracks, "Down To The Wire", recorded originally for the Springfield's album, is unremarkable but

serves its purpose here as an introduction to Young's contributions to that band; "Love Is A Rose", recorded by Linda Roustadt — "a soulful girl with big brown eyes" — is similarly slight, but rescued from inconsequence by its rustic humour.

The remaining three cuts in this category, however, are all vintage Young: "Winterlong", has the seductive charm of the classic "Walk On" (it was recorded on the same day, we learn), and a reflective tone that it shares with the more introspective "Deep Forbidden Lake," whose solitary atmosphere

and air of resignation recalls "Borrowed Time". "Campaliga" is the penultimate track on this collection — it was written while on tour with Stephen Stills — and it's a measure of Young's enduring talent that its evocative, if elusive, power is challenged in its reflection of a contemporary mood of weary resistance by very few recent tours by either his peers or those who have sought attention in the ten years since he first emerged. Long may he continue to run. — A.J.

JUNIOR PARKER & BILLY LOVE/ROSCO GORDON / CARL MANN: "The Legendary Sun Performers" (Charly — three separate albums).

INSTEAD of heaping yet more awards on Simon & Garfunkel, it's about time the British record industry recognised those who are delving into the archives to establish the roots of the music that generates so much money.

Alone among the pop companies, whose policy towards rock roots veers from the haphazard to the more common cheap cash-in, Charly have actively pursued a policy of unearthing historic recordings, many previously unused, with the dedication of any respected archaeologist.

The three albums under review are all from the rich vaults of Sun, the Memphis label that proved to be a major catalyst in the merging of country and blues to form rock 'n' roll; the four artists all draw from one side or the other — sometimes both. Junior Parker was a respected bluesman; these tracks come from 1953, when his

traditional blues was homogenising into driving rhythm and blues. There's no better example of this on the eight tracks than the stomping "Shut 'n' At The Bar," complete with cutting lead guitar, which sounds barely four, never mind 24, years old. Also of interest is the original version of "Mystery Train," later recorded by that even more famous Sun artist, Elvis Presley.

Billy "Red" Love is — or was, nobody seems quite sure, a real obscurity, a session pianist who worked with many of the greats, heard here on vocals as well on material cut between '52 and '54. His style incorporates just about everything that was going at the time — from slow blues to boogie, jump blues to r&b. Also in there is a Fats Domino soundalike, "If You Want To Make Me Happy." — s

We go back even further for several of the Rosco Gordon tracks: to '51, though there are later recordings running up to 1957. The mixture of musical styles is much the same as Junior Parker, though, as Martin Hawkins points out in his excellent, informative sleeve notes, it's possible to hear a rudimentary form of bluebeat in the boogie style of songs like "T-Model Boogie."

Carl Mann is a completely different kettle of fish. A pianist and singer, Mann was a rockabilly artist who specialised in rocking up oldies — "Mona Lisa," "Kansas City" and "Baby I Don't Care" among them. Recorded between '59 and '62, all the songs on the album are very easy on the ear, Mann choosing a softer path than the usual frenetic Jerry Lee Lewis style. These three albums are, of course, aimed at the collector; but that doesn't mean they're of academic interest only — good music abounds — M.O.

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Albums

Reviewers: Michael Oldfield, Colin Irwin, Chris Welch

Mahogany: solid metal

DON'T get too excited — although this album is new to Britain, it was, in fact, issued in the States last year before Mahogany Rush's last set, "World Anthem."

And the question its release poses is: Why the hell wasn't it released here before? For, like "World Anthem," this is a superb example of the band's very special brand of progressive heavy metal (for want of a better term).

For those who have foolishly ignored Mahogany Rush before (and not only do you now have a chance to pick up on their album but see them also, as their first British tour opens next month) it should be explained that the "band" hails from Canada and specialises in ultra-heavy rock that goes much further than the usual thud, thud, thud.

The reason for this, and the inverted commas around "band," is that they depend entirely, save for a particularly solid rhythm section, on one man: an outstanding guitarist who claims to be guided by the ghost of Jimi Hendrix (who you believe), Frank Marino. He stacks the deck in his favour by playing lead guitar and occasional synthesizer, singing, writing all songs, producing and arranging.

MAHOAGANY RUSH: "TV" (CBS 81417). Frank Marino (guitar, vocals, synth bass, Mellotron); Jim Ayoub (drums, percussion); Paul Harwood (bass). Produced by Frank Marino at Tempo Studios, Montreal, 1976.

In most hands, this would result in a grotesque musical ego trip, but Marino carries the wah-wah pedals in "Live Baby." Not for Frank the easy way out of repetitive disco-driven music.

And again, on a ritual metal thrash, "The Answer," his monotony that might have transpired is driven away by angry howls of his guitar. He returns to black music rhythms for

"Dragonfly," but while with one guitar he picks out a simple soul riff, with another (such are the wonders of double-tracking) he draws out long, unsettling sustains, bringing them both together for a thundering metal chorus.

Unsettling, in fact, is the word that best describes Marino's work. He loves to establish a standard riff, then, just when you're beginning to predict the next line, he twists and bends it with the same malicious glee as a young boy pulling the wings off a fly.

Among his other specialties are unusual time signatures ("Man At The Back Door") and setting the rhythm section off at a frenetic pace, appearing to lag behind on guitar, and then catching up with a frantic solo ("Little Sexy Annie").

Marino also likes (don't they all?) The Big Number. On "TV" he gives us 11 minutes-odd of "Try For Freedom," here it's a suitably bombastic, and, oddly enough, the straightest track on the album — but none the worse for that.

If you haven't checked out Mahogany Rush yet, then either "TV" or "World Anthem" should serve — and there aren't many bands of whom you can recommend successive albums equally. Those who have already investigated will need no second invitation. — M.O.



FRANK MARINO: more than an ego-tripper

MADDY PRIOR: relishing the rare opportunity of singing of things other than elves and milkmaids.

Ex-Span-sions

STEELEYE SPAN: "Storm Force Ten" (Chrysalis).

THEY really couldn't win with this one, could they? The massive volume of excitement and excitement that greeted the staggering news of Martin Carthy and John Kirkpatrick's inclusion in the band in place of Bob Johnson and Peter Knight was such that, however good, the actual product was never gonna live up to it.

Carthy is by the most important singer and guitarist the folk revival has produced, but is his mere presence immediately going to utterly transform a band in its eighth year? No... but that's what a lot of us, completely unreasonably, expected.

The first few times I played this album I was desolately disappointed. I couldn't believe the new Steeleye, which should have been the ultimate in trail-blazing, could be so empty and dull, so ordinary. Later, a more rational assessment shows it to be a pleasing work, eminently enjoyable and much more varied, looser and more flexible than in the Knight-Johnson incarnation, even if it can't be said to break new ground or cast fresh light on the weary face of electric folk.

Naturally enough, the sound is quite different to later Steeleye; that is, the precise arrangement and calculated drama, and the prominence of Kirkpatrick's melodious in place of Knight's fiddle gives the band a more spontaneous, more English feel that moves vaguely in the direction of the underground of the folk scene at present.

Yet there are unexpected twists in the new album which break totally fresh for the band. The band's namesake Tenorite Brecht songs, "The Black Freighter," by Brecht and Weill from "The Threepenny Opera," and "The Wife Of The Soldier." And these work beautifully. Kirkpatrick's mellowed coming into obligatory use and Maddy Prior relishing the rare opportunity of getting her tongue round lyrics a long way from the more common ground of elves and milkmaids.

Presumably Carthy's initiative, it's the most radical move ever made by Steeleye and is to be applauded — one of the most frustrating aspects of the old band was their rigid adherence to songs linked, however tenuously, with the tradition, and their fear of taking risks.

Kirkpatrick gets his head on "Seventeen Come Sunday," with generous instrumental interludes and Prior's mellowed as Maddy Prior it could almost be a track from a John Kirkpatrick's Blue Harlequin album.

And Carthy's vocal track, "Treadmill Song," is also very characteristic, with deliberate, measured vocals and arrangement, accentuated by the Kemp-Pegrum rhythm section, less restrained than on the rest of the album. The enchanting "Some Rival," for example, is given sparse, low-key accompaniment.

The album also includes one of their vocal harmony specialties, "Sweep, Chimney Sweep," a catchy sea tale "The Victory," which is the only track truly in the style of their association with Mike Batt; and the drab "Awake, Awake," horribly produced with Prior's voice sounding as inlaid as a pot of tea in which somebody has neglected to put the tea-bags.

Don't expect Steeleye reborn and you might not be disappointed. — C.J.

ENGLAND: "Garden Shed" (Arista).

AN interesting project by a talented group who sound incredibly early. Yes, there are moments in the second section of the opening track, "Midnight Madness," where the elapsed drums could well be played by Bill Bruford, the high single-note strumming on the bass guitar is pure Chris Squire and the vocal chorus could be Jon Anderson and Chris Brownlow in time-honoured fashion.

The effect is quite startling, and yes fans could be forgiven for thinking this was an outtake from "Tas and A Word" or the "Yes Album." I'm sure the band never intended wholesale plagiarism but they must have been unconsciously influenced by the band as children. Perhaps at the age of 12 they were all taken on a school trip to the Festival Hall to see Yes when Tony Kaye was still in the band.

But as the music develops they do try and bring their own stamp to proceedings. Instead of sounding like Tony Kaye and Bill Bruford, for example, they begin to sound like Rick Wakeman and Bill Bruford with lots of atavistic accents and heavy chords.

I can't get over the use of Bruford's clipped, crisp snare drum behind the keyboard arpeggies — the record company should send copies to Brian Lane, he might be looking for a deep band in case they go down with pneumonia.

They are talented musicians though, and deserve a name check. We have Martin Henderson (bass, vocal), Francis Holland (guitar, vocals), Robert Wilson (keyboard, vocals) and John Latham (percussion, vocals, bass).

After they have proved they can write an album and have fun making music together, they should now sit down and have a drastic rethink about their policy.

Much as I love hearing the old Yes (guitar, vocal) reproduced with almost unerring skill, it's no future for a sound band — C.W.

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Reviewers: Chris Brazier,
Robin Grayden

A nice pair of Runaways

THE last album from the Runaways' original line-up culled from their Japanese tour earlier this year, and the first studio offering from the new four-piece.

The "Live In Japan" set is proof positive that they pack a helluva punch live, even without a visual dimension. The Nips certainly believe in gaudy packaging, as befits their gross preoccupation with pseudo-American consumer capitalism gone mad.

There's a gatefold sleeve with leggy pose outside and action shots within, lyrics in both Japanese and English (many mistranscriptions, the most amusing being "I am the L.A. Song star" which here becomes "I am the air, the sun and the stars"), and all those trivial fax, likes 'n' dialkies beloved of teeny mag the world over.

There are even personal messages "to all our truly wonderful Japanese fans" full of gushing insincerity apart from Jackie Fox's "It's unfortunate that my health can't keep up with the exciting pace" — she was rumoured to have attempted

THE RUNAWAYS: "Live In Japan" (Mercury import, available from Virgin). Joan Jett (rhythm guitar, vocals), Charlie Currie (lead vocals), Jackie Fox (bass), Sandy West (drums), Lita Ford (lead guitar). Produced by Kent J. Smythe and the Runaways.

THE RUNAWAYS: "Waitin' For The Night" (Mercury SRM-1-3705). Joan Jett (lead vocals, rhythm guitar), Vicki Blue (bass), Lita Ford (lead guitar), Sandy West (percussion). Produced and directed by Kim Fowley.

suicide on this Japanese jaunt, and after it she left to go back to college. One life that, unlike Lou Reed's Glims (from "Rock 'n' Roll" included here), wasn't saved by rock 'n' roll. But before she quit, Jackie was party to what is undoubtedly the Runaways' best album, a sustained orgasm of street-girl fire streaming down the freeway to hell.

The bag is post-glitter pop (fashy 'n' hooky, Joe) mated with heavy-metal, and the band explodes from Sandy West's skins through Joan Jett's rhythmic propulsion into flash-quick peanos to uninhibited sexuality as supposed liberator from the traditional female role. Side one has a little in the middle, but the second is among the most exciting live sides I've ever heard.

It's relentless in its quality and power as Joan Jett hurls her desperately asser-

tive way through "You Drive Me Wild" and "I Wanna Be Where The Boys Are," and Charlie Currie runs the range from wild and foxy on "Cherry Bomb" to insane and decadent on the astonishing "Neon Angels On The Road To Ruin" (originally done by Kim Fowley's other proteges, Venus and the Razorblades). You couldn't hope for a more representative or potent encapsulation of what the first incarnation of the Runaways was all about. Too bad it's only available as a Japanese import for about nine quid (2cmon, Phonogram, what're ya playin' at?), but the word is that cheaper imports from Australia will hit the racks soon.

The new studio album, "Waitin' For The Night," is bound to pale alongside the wild intensity of the live effort — for a start you're not distracted enough from the lyrics, which are often



RUNAWAYS: sustained orgasm of street-girl fire

inadequate (samples: "I met you last night it was really alright" (yawn), "You touch my body and set my soul on fire/Oh yeh").

I'm sick to the teeth of all this trivialisation of "the soul," and can't songwriters do anything else with it except set it on fire. Still, the only entirely dispensable track is Lita Ford's nonsensical "Trash Can Murders" — all the rest have something or other going for them musically.

Joan Jett takes all the vocals in the absence of the much-maligned Ms Currie — her enthusiastic raunch has been under-estimated recently, while Lita Ford's contributions on lead guitar are at their best when restrained, as with the short harmonica solo on "Don't Go Away" and the Japanese-flavoured playing on her own "Bambule".

Too often they write glibly

about teenage kids in general — the facile alignment with the supposed sentiments of the British new wave of "it's too late to be a kid in love/We're the kids in hate" spoils the otherwise attractive "Little Sister." The Runaways as a whole work much better when they write about personal situations as in the simple love-song "Wait For Me" and the bitchy "You're Too Possessive" (which contains the great couplet "go away and don't come back/I don't want my mirrors cracked"). I won't play it much but it's okay. The next album will be the test, the first without Fowley as overseer, but I don't think they'll miss him. The first thing they ought to do now they're free of him is cut out the dumb Lolita-meets-S&M posturing to be found on this cover. Less sex, more thought, sisters — C.B.

EVERLY BROTHERS:
"The New Album"
(Warner Bros.).

THERE was a time, back in those heady yet overrated days of the late Fifties and early Sixties when Don and Phil could do no wrong. Every single was a double-sided teenager flower pot and sold by the ton.

Every gig was SRO where adulatory fans would watch opened-mouthed as the brothers, sporting gigantic quiffs and graced-back hair, would depend on the microphone and wall into it so closely that their lips would almost touch.

But then, they got drafted into the Marines and lost momentum. Things got worse when they lost the services of their songwriters, the Bryans' through changes in contracts, and the brothers found themselves without a proved source of hit material. To compound the whole trauma, they were no longer teenagers and were trying to adjust to the adult medium on their albums. Suddenly it was all tough going. They dipped into most musical bags in search of good material.

Some of it clicked and some of it bombed. Some attempts to recapture their zenith were just distasteful, never again, chucked in the vaults to collect dust... until now.

This "new" album comprises 14 unsung tracks recorded in the early Sixties. The songs can be split into two types, and slow ballads of love, and the uptempo pieces. The slow ones were always destined for the cut and some of the songs were never played live. But on all tracks the Everlys do the occasion and make even the most mediocre songs like "It's Not Me" and "When Snowflakes Fall In Summer" sound sweet — well, sweeten

The sole exception to this is Don's "Dancing On My Feet", which sounds more like a rehearsal than a take. But for the rest, well, it's vintage Everly all the way, three high harmonies floating effortlessly above the backing, a sound often limited but never equalled. "Gran Old Man" is a real Cajun hoe-down song in French and straight out of the Kershaw bag. Roger Miller's "Murna Shave" has a wailing harmonica and a guitar figure similar to the Esv version of "Lucille".

A great thumper which should have been the single instead of "Silent Treatment", which is just average. "Nancy's Minuet" starts off with a guy in the studio saying "Take 28". How many more takes were there, then, Chrissake? It's a great, slow weeper similar to "Ferris Wheel" with stunning reverb guitars and minor chords, and a harpsichord solo at the bridge.

Side two tends to feature slow ballads more, "Omaha" is a low-building ballad with soaring strings about a love in that US city, but "I Can't Say Goodbye" is a faster-tempo high spot with sa-chumping drums and effective tempo changes. "I'll See Your Light" with its lancing guitars and joyous sound of love found reminded me of the Byrds, or is that just the cart before the horse?

Anyway, it's a great track, and so is "Why Not", a John D. Loudmilk song similar in feel to "Walk Right Back". For a collection of rejects or whatever, it's a swell album bar a couple of tracks. Listening to it makes you sad the boys have split up, but it's a pity they didn't have a lot to share, and still as I hope they put up the and get it all together with the old. In the meantime, their album will come down again, and it's hard to believe again — R.G.

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Reviewers: Michael Oldfield, Robin Grayden, Bob Gallagher

Fats Domino and Cher

ALLMAN AND WOMAN: "Two The Hard Way" (Warner Bros. 556436). Cher Allman (vocals), Gregg Allman (vocals, organ), Willie Velma (bass), Bill Stewart, Bobby Hall (drums, percussion), Neil Larsen (keyboards), Ricky Hersch, John Hug, Steve Beckmeier, Scott Boyer, Fred Tackett (guitars), Mickey Raphael (harmonica), Jim Horn, Ronnie Esdes, Dennis Good, Harvey Thompson, Randall Bramblett, Ben Cauley, Harrison Calloway (horns), Clydie King, Sherlie Matthews, Pat Henderson, Tim Schmit, Russell Morris, Doug Hayward (backing vocals). Produced at the Record Plant, Los Angeles, and Sunset Sound, Hollywood, by Johnny Sandlin, Gregg Allman and John Haeny.

WHEN The Clash cut "I'm So Bored With The USA" they couldn't have heard this album, yet it's eminently applicable. And it could only have happened in the States; it's hard to think of a British couple who would have the arrogance to come up with this collection of mediocrity.

The bad news starts with the grossly sexist title *Gregg and Cher Allman* have chosen for their duo status, Allman And Woman, which reduces one of the music's outstanding female singers of the last decade or so to the role of mere chattel of an average Southern rocker (whether the pun is intentional or not).

Perhaps, however, Cher contributed to be relegated to women than having been in an attempt to keep her own name off the album, in which case she's taking a wise step. Her subversive role continues through the music, where she's forced to sing far too low to get down to the level of baby. Even when she's singing as her own, on "Islands," she barely speaks, but her understated sexuality comes through. In contrast, Gregg's solo part, "Shadow Dream Song," is all that he can do, as he breathes out the ballad, bum notes and all. As a duo, they seem to have started out with the

intention of becoming a white Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell and get off to a good start with "Move Me," a lively Sixties-style soul song on which they give a fair impersonation of the Motown pair. They keep up the momentum through "I Found You, Love," bright and breezy and not unlike "It Takes Two," then start to go downhill with "Can You Fool." They meet their Waterloo on the fourth track, an utterly unappealing version of Smokey Robinson's "You've Really Got A Hold On Me," which they manage to turn into a dirge. There's no way that anyone can match the wretched definitive original, of course, but there's plenty of scope for a good reading of this song, as Gregs Money has proved on his debut album.

From here on, "Two The Hard Way" resembles a disaster area. Gregg's singing gets worse, Cher loses enthusiasm and the songs mostly become maudlin ballads. If it isn't representative of a waste of talent, this album would be a joke. Perhaps they should have called it *Funny And Cher* — M.O.

FATS DOMINO: "The Fats Domino Story. Walkin' To New Orleans, Volume Five; Let The Four Winds Blow, Volume Six" (United Artists).

THESE are the last two albums of what seems to have been this year's overrated story of Fats Domino. During the epic six-album series we've heard Domino rise from R&B obscurity to 'n' roll fame and now, a little sadly, Domino's story is beginning to descend.

All those clean 'n' white pop songs, rock and roll, Bobby, are gradually invading the scene with their dulcet, weak-sister offering, moving far away on the distant horizon as the stirrings of what later are to become the raw, the Rolling Stones, and, to a lesser extent, the Beatles. Domino's predicament is to be found on the title track of volume five, "Walking To New Orleans." The raw R&B sound of a few years previously has been replaced by a smoother, string-laden treatment.

But in this volume of cuts made between 1954 and 1964, even if it was going out of fashion, The Fats Domino's "I'm Ready," "Sho' Nuff," and "I'll Grow Too Old" still



CHER: if it didn't represent such a waste of talent, the album would be a joke.

have that great rolling sound, while "I Want To Walk You Home" is an ace slowie of the genre.

All good rocking stuff, apart from the dire "Margarita," which I could never quite stomach. By the time we come to the next, final, album the writing is on the wall for Fats. The old fire really isn't there any more, as epitomized by "Stop The Clock," on which he sounds a pale imitation of his old self.

"Jambalaya" isn't so hot, but in the face of changing tastes and styles Fats presses he could still come up with minor classics, such as the infectious, almost ragtime-like "It Keeps Raining" and "What A Party."

Sadly, this album of old dates between 1960 and 1963 shows the decline of Fats and his ultimate departure from the US. Important label to you bigger deals with a less effective and less consistent style, leading to a security in the recording field.

Domino's last album contains some of Fats' best pop for as long as he's been in the music business. It's a pity that the album is so weak, but it's a pity that the album is so weak, but it's a pity that the album is so weak.

THE ISLEY BROTHERS: "Fomvie Gold" (Epic).

IN bare terms, the story of the Isleys' journey to superstardom reads like something the brothers might have dreamt up had they indulged in chemicals or the conventional expanding variety.

It's 1959, and the three Isleys, Otis, Rudolph and O'Kelly, are in the R&B vocal group and they have a couple of big hits that even unhappily England gets to hear about, "Shout" and

"Twist And Shout." Then, in the early Sixties, they join Motown. Everybody's heard of that company, and everybody gets to hear "This Old Heart Of Mine," "I Guess I'll Always Love You," and "Behind A Painted Smile." Then, after leaving Motown, the Isleys fade from view for a while.

In 1969, they reappear with their own record, Y. Neck company and two new members, their considerably younger brothers, Ernie and Marvin.

New they're not just a singing group, they write and produce themselves while Ernie's guitar and Marvin's bass largely define the instrumental sound. More his style, including "It's Your Thing."

In 1973, their "3+3" album, a truly fantastic collection, showcasing up-to-the-minute soul funk, contemporary soul, and funk, and it's a new high level of popularity, a level maintained by the Isleys on their four albums since. "Let It Rip," "The Heat Is On," "Harvest Time," "The World," and "Go For Your Guns."

What this hardheaded story doesn't tell you is how incredibly enduring the Isleys are. They've been in the music business for over 15 years, and they're still going strong. They've been in the music business for over 15 years, and they're still going strong. They've been in the music business for over 15 years, and they're still going strong.

This album, a collection of their greatest hits from 1973, goes a long way towards putting that right. From "3+3," it includes "That Lady," "The Highway to My Love," and "Summertime." From "Let It Rip," the title track, and "Hello It's Me," from "The Heat Is On," "Faint Power," and "For The Love of You," from "Harvest For The World," the title track, and "You Are Love." La creme de la creme B.G.

Short takes

L.T.D.: "Something To Love" (A&M). L.T.D. is one of those multi-personal American pop bands — somewhat bizarrely decked up like extras in a movie on the cover — who for the most part produce good, strong music but will degenerate into "paazzy" at the drop of a hat. Thus this album sees between the excellence of the title track and "Yes, Come First And Last," and the dreariness of "We Part Hearts" and "Make Someone Smile" today, a spectacularly dreary ballad.

MIKE GRAM: "People Walk" (RCA). Deeply underrated Canadian singer who writes an attractive line in songs and gives them a sophisticated post-modern treatment. Unfortunately, the market for

this kind of country is crammed with better-known artists having more distinctive styles and voices for Graham to stand much chance. Pleasant but ordinary.

THE MIKE THODDOR ORCHESTRA: "Cecilia Wind" (Atlantic). You'd have to go a long long way indeed to find disco music more clinically put together. The orchestra is a superb producer and arranger, and his orchestra is a collection of music city sessionmen that includes such respected names as David Nazario (guitar), Gary Shuman (keyboards) and Ursi Jovanovic (drums). Every cliché in the disco book is employed, including a girlie chorus mixed way back in. Silver Convention, a plethora of other brwals,

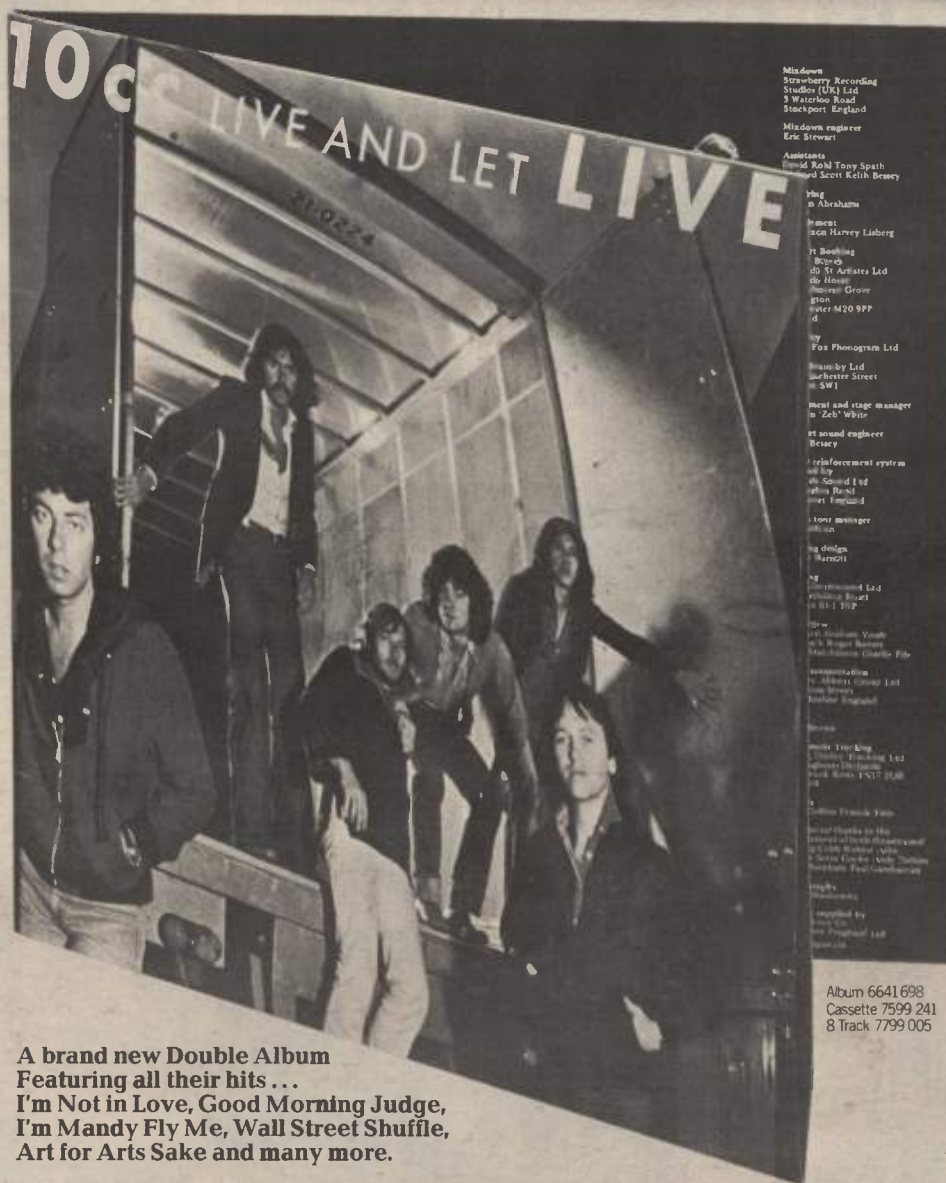
and an ersatz Latin-American track.

GIBSON BROTHERS: "Non Stop Dance/Come To America" (Polydor). Cherry but a imaginative disco-pop debut by a trio of Manhattan-born brothers now resident in France. Recommended in Brussels.

VARIOUS ARTISTS: "Good 'n' Country" (London). Bright and cheery collection of anti-theatrical country songs from Gene Autry's Republic Records. Most of the music is newsworthy and sound rather stiff, as it's left to history. David Byrne's show does have its done with his excellent "Whisper And I'm Gone" (BLACK). One of the more

appreciated British pop bands, C.R.S. existed from 1970, 74, and featured superb musicians against the blues vocals by Alexis Korner. There was never any danger of the music being performed badly, or lacking improvisation, because the players included Harold MacNeil, Tony Che, Pete King, Danny Mind, Bob Efford, and Ronnie Ross the trumpets Harold Beckett, Henry Lowther and Kenny Wheeler, the blues guitar Herb Flowers and others equally impressive. The music is punchy, lyrical and thoughtful, reminding a flood of the best of jazz and soul influences. "A Car Got No Satisfaction" and "Quit It" "Cap Turn" to the Water."

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IN AMERICA, THIN LIZZY HAVE A BAD REPUTATION—AND IT'S SPREADING.

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"For straight-ahead rock and rollers the Lizzies are about the only good news on AM radio lately." *San Francisco Examiner*

"Thin Lizzy has been called the best performance band currently at work and last night their brilliance showed." *Seattle Post*

"Lizzy, long a hit pick of this publication, once more received tumultuous adulation from its fans this evening." *Performance Magazine*

"'Dancin' in the Moonlight', the highlight of the set last night, has more polish and less aggression than many of Lizzy's efforts and it exemplifies why this band are a cut above most of the newly emerging hard rockers." *San Diego Evening Tribune*

"Thin Lizzy have responded to this promising moment with 'Bad Reputation', perhaps their strongest set yet." *Creem Magazine*

"Lizzy is a power band, with thundering bass lines from leader Phil Lynott and furious drumming by Brian Downey propelling songs of overwhelming force. Spinning off from the granite foundation are

two lead guitarists, Scott Gorham and Brian Robertson, who zip all over the stage playing solos and duets, sometimes selfish and emotional, other times raging and rampaging." *Chicago Sun-Times*

"Lizzy followers won't need to be told that Downey is in the upper ranks of rock drummers or that Gorham knows exactly how to phrase every sound or that Lynott plays a pretty mean bass aside from his other virtues." *Unicorn Times, Philadelphia*

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The shape of things to come

entirely pleasing effect. Affronz', a Japanese import, makes the ideal complement to Delmark within the minute. Affronz' plays his mastery of mandoms from the Jarrettque to the Jarrettque, and tracks through the charming stride piano of "Roots" to the pre-war walking bass of "The Settling of Silence." The settling of silence in the freely improvised "New People" commensurators have already noted the difficulty of pinning down the Abrams' style, but it's easier simply to accept the resources of the tool of an unorthodox thinker. While neither of these two albums is a success, they add powerful weight to the constant elegance of his former pupils, and preserve Germany. The tracks with horns on the Delmark album are certainly among the most exciting I've heard this R.W.

PHILLY	JOE JONES	'Mean
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	nd	Sam

The only less than successful tracks are "New Souls," a flute/piano duet which skims the surface, and "1 And 4," on which Abrams switches from piano to organ halfway through with a not

A cartoon illustration of a woman with glasses and a large nose, sitting at a desk in a church. She is holding a book titled "Melody Maker YEAR BOOK AND DESK DIARY 1978" and pointing her finger. The background shows church windows and a candle holder. The signature "Kipper Williams" is in the bottom right corner.

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MAX COLLIE: "Gospel Train" (Black Lion BLP 12147). Collie (trombone, vocal); Phil Mason (cornet); Jack Gilbert (clarinet, alto); Jim McIntosh (banjo); Trevor Williams (bass); Ron McKay (drums).

Produced by Alan Bates; recorded live at the Tram Shed, Woolwich, April 1977.

WELL, at least the concept of this album suggests that Max Collie has a credible realisation of the roots. His band often seems so hell-bent on applying showbiz techniques to traditional jazz that it's always been a source of concern to me that he should be achieving such sweeping successes while others who remain true to the music's origin are relatively unpopular.

It's also indicative, perhaps, of a fresh Collie stance that he does not add "Rhythm Aces" to his name on this album. A shift in emphasis, perhaps, certainly the tone of the record is worthwhile, even if the title is a misnomer.

No matter, it's the music. There's a rabble-rousing "Woodwork Stomp," a pretty convincing vocal from Max on "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out," a fair swing achieved on "Over The Rainbow," and "My Blue Heaven" may have been OK as a piece of timeworn when it was played live, but on record it's pretty thin. There's Brahms' "Lullaby," arranged by Collie to interesting effect and featuring a pouncy, imaginative solo by Trevor Williams, punchy horn from Phil Mason, and solid work from the leader's trombone. All in all, by far the most swinging track.

Throughout the album, Ron McKay's solid, rolling drum work is a splendid bedrock for the band, and in fairness to the overall sound, it never falls below a level of competence at the very least.

And yet, sadly, an X-factor prevents the Collie band from stepping from good to great. They can swing, sure, but it's somehow an enforced swing that doesn't come naturally. An adequate album, not to be spurned, but a little shallow.

WASHINGTON/DELMAR

DINAH WASHINGTON: "Spotlight on Dinah Washington." Record One: Tears To Burn; I'll Close My Eyes; Love Letters; Everybody Loves My Baby; More Than You Know; Stormy Weather; I Can't Get Started; Tell Me Why; You Don't Know What Love Is; Smoke Gets In Your Eyes; Every Time We Say Goodbye; Ain't Misbehavin'; On Green Dolphin Street; Just One More Chance. Record Two: Ain't She Glad; I Could Have Told You; Feel Like I Wanna Cry; Mad About the Boy; Honey, Suckle Buns; You Don't Believe Me; Goodbye; You Let My Love Get Cold; I Ain't Nobody's Business If I Do; I Shouldn't Happen to Be Dreaming; Pindino; Christopher Columbus; Don't Go To Strangers; I Cried For You (Philips International Series double album 6640 012).

ELAINE DELMAR: "I've Got The World On A String." I've Got The World On A String; My Funny Valentine; Honeydripper; Rosebud; When The World Was Young; I've Got It Bad And That Ain't Good; September; Basin Street Blues; Mountain Greasy; More Than You Know; Don't Get Around Here No More; Stranded; I Gotta Right To Sing The Blues; World Record (VRS 1004).

Disc (local) Tony Coe (local) Dick Allen (local), Alan Freeman (local), Chris Lawrence (local), Harold Fisher (drums) on "I've Got The World On A String"; Edna Thompson (sax) on "I've Got The World On A String"; Edna Thompson (drums) on "I've Got The World On A String".

T STRONG, often stirring vocal interpretations of popular songs and jazz material appeal to your fancy, then you can rely on hours of real enjoyment from this latest collection of

Jazz about

Reviewers: Ray Coleman, Max Jones



MAX COLLIE: an enforced swing that doesn't come naturally.

Collie's slow biz'nness

old Dinah recordings. For me, she imbues everything with the spirit of jazz.

All the stuff here is pretty high quality. Many songs are standards by such as Harold Arlen, Gershwin, Kern, Youmans, Porter, Ellington and Waller.

Coward's distinguished "Mad About the Boy" is present in an effective arrangement with strings, and sung with earthy feeling. "I could Have Told You," one of the less famous numbers, is typical of the worthwhile songs which draw well-liked and cunningly phrased performances from "the Queen."

With so much of interest in this big set, I need to cut corners. Exact recording details of every track were hard to find but the selection seems to go back to around 1940 (with a nice "I Can't Get Started" accompanied by trombonist Gus Chappell's band) and cover various stages of her career up to 1961 with Quincy Jones in charge.

The backing is utterly varied. "Just One More Chance" is from '51, with Ike Carpenter and band; "You Don't Know What Love Is" (from '55) is a relaxed collaboration between singer and Jimmy Cleveland (trombone), Paul Quinichette (tenor), Harry Gebhardt (sax), Wynton Kelly (piano) and others in a stellar octet directed by Quincy Jones. This one was issued on a jazzy Fontana set called "Dinah."

I don't know how many of the others have been released here previously, but I'm sure quite a few have not, and some appeared only on 78s. It should be noted that 15 of the tracks are mono, "enhanced for stereo," and they don't sound spoiled.

A wailing "Tears To Burn" and beautifully phrased "Close My Eyes," both made with Quincy and a right royal ensemble in '56, are two of them. The latter finds Dinah opening "cold" with an unaccompanied verse, before swinging gently into the chorus.

So many good things sold the album. Solid Herb Geller alto on the excellent '55 "More Than You Know." "Ain't Misbehavin'," a swinging song over heavy brass and drums much of the way, is knowing "Green Dolphin"; even "Smoke Gets" is holler-ed from the heart, as are parts of "Ev'ry Time," "Ain't Cha," "Vanna Cry" (with Quinichette and organ) and "Stormy Weather."

On "Nobody's Business," Dinah ad-libs: "If Edna and I was and right," a reference to tenorman Eddie Chambers who was, for quite a brief period, her husband (the fifth). The couple dined with humour and "you" on a slow "Honeydripper" and bounding "Everybody Loves." Such belters as the bluesy

electric piano alone, for confirmation, also "Valentine," the charming "When The World," and "More Than You Know."

So far as swing-power goes, it seems that tempo has much to do with how subtly Elaine places the notes. The medium-slow of "Honeydripper" suits her, as do the tempos for "World On A String" and "More Than You Know." Instrumental settings fit her style and, in general, emotional range and a dash of fine jazz playing is heard from Coe's saxes.

As you can see, all are very clever songs, and those treated more intimately are pretty sung, even though traces of monkey creep in here and there. What I miss, I say, is the electricity of, say, a Dinah Washington performance.

Which is judging hard, but then Ms Delmar is one of our better singers, perhaps a touch too nice a comparison with the evil-streak sound which colours so many of Dinah's interpretations. I'd say it was almost a very good record of jazz-inflected popular songs, and perhaps Elaine's best yet. — M. J.

in brief

A S AN example of the great British traditional jazz boom of the Sixties, Sounds True (Dessa MGR 12) is excellent.

McDonnells of the bands of Ken Colyer and Chris Barber will be very familiar with the mood of the music, drawing as it does on the catalogue of a label that was in the vanguard of the movement.

Barber's early band, with Monty Sunshine blowing searingly pretty clarinet solos on "Bobby Shaftoe" and Pat Halford's trumpet as tight and incisive as the electric of Orleans Blues, are contrasted with the earthy Ken Colyer sound, just after the notorious split between Ken and Chris which was to provide us with two fine bands.

Colyer is there with a rouser, "Oh! You Beautiful Doll," "Dinah" with swinging vocal, and "All Of Me," featuring trombonist Max Duncan on crackpot vocal. Ian Wheeler was with the band in those days, on clarinet, and his playing is dazzlingly fluent, warm and at all times lyrical.

Welsh band is represented with "Hard Hearted Hannah," showing some of the trad from the Clyde Valley Thompsons—sorry, Stompers—on "The Salome" and "The Bailey," and Alan Eldon's ambitious little unit, with "Twelfth Street."

Topping it off is the utterly irrepressible George Brett with the Mick Mulligan band. Absolutely hilarious, he is, on songs he still lacks the performance with spellbinding effect: "My Canary's Got Cries Under His Eye" and "Waiting For A Train."

Interesting to note too, that George's singing today is as powerful as ever it was. Many musicians emerged totally unscathed from the great British trad boom; this album is a pleasing reminder of some of the better aspects of the decade. — R.C.

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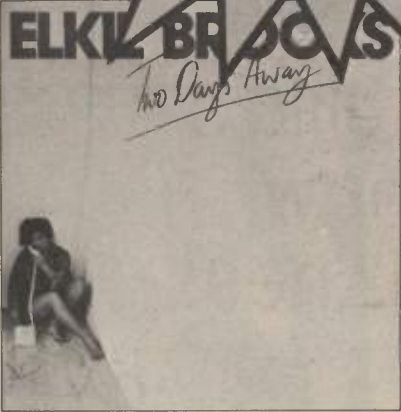
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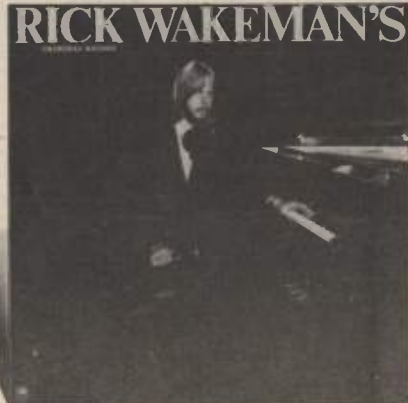
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**A&M RECORDS AND TAPES
BEST SELLERS...NATURALLY**

Chris Brazier on the link between reggae and new wave

FROM Genesis to Revelations . . . 1.30 in the Vortex — apres-gig wasted toll drunkenly, I think of home, and then the crystalline purity of Junior Murvin's falsetto stops me alive in my tracks as the deejay spins "Police And Thieves," both beautiful and angry.

Diamond Dewier, skinned trash, arrogant pink-skinned abortions like McCartney's 'orrible "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Bah" (hey there, white boy, what you doin' uptown?), that's all reggae used to be to me.

My first real exposure to reggae came through punk (always excepting the crossover majesty of "No Woman, No Cry"), and I'm sure the same must go for many other whites. So—origins of the punk-reggae connection. The Roxy opened officially last New Year's Eve, punk's first home, much-needed after the debate of the Anarchy Tour. Donovan Letts, a Rastafarian and proud of it, filled in as resident deejay.

"When I started playing, there wasn't much good punk to play anyway so I had to fill it out with something, and, figuring that the punks had their club, I thought I'd play some reggae for myself.

"And I was shocked 'cos, funny enough, they really dig it, they really did like it. I mean, a lot of guys preferred the reggae to the punk."

It's appropriate that the Roxy was officially opened by the Clash, because they were responsible for chapter two by breaking up the two-minute slices of aggressive awareness on their classic debut album with a six-minute version of the aforementioned "Police And Thieves."

No pink-skinned abortions this time, but a revolutionary success. You see, Joe Strummer really does love reggae and aspires towards it rather than condescends to it. The relationship between the two musical forms doesn't by any means stop at the love for reggae of punk artists like the Silts and Tony James of Generation X. If, just for the sake of convenience we count Eddie and the Hot Rods as punks, the first attempt to present the two musics alongside each other came with their short-lived Island package tour with Anava.

Since then there have been punk-reggae gigs all over the country, many of them set up by Rock Against Racism, who try to break down the colour barriers by mixing black and white music — Generation X/Climmasons, Silts/Sleeze Pulse; Sham/Black Slate; Fall/Exodus; the list is, thankfully, very long.

You could even say punk has opened up the minds of black kids to reggae in that they now see the possibility of starting a band themselves instead of assuming that all reggae has come from Jamaica.

But why is there an affinity between reggae and punk? Don Letts reckons it's obvious. "People keep asking me that — to me it's quite simple. They're both underground musics, made by young people in the same position — people off the streets, people in poverty, people feeling pressure, and in a way they're both protesting about the same thing.

"Reggae musicians may be older but they're dealing with the same pressures, believe me, and they've got the same attitudes — they've got young feelings, young hearts."

But there is one big difference. In Jamaican reggae, at least, the solution is nearly always "Jah will provide, Jah will look after you."

Punk, however, has no answers, and is still at the point of wild and angry rebellion. But the righteous indignation is the same. The words "Get up, stand up/Stand up for your rights/Don't give up the fight" could just as easily have been written by Strummer-Jones as by Marley-Toots.

And it's the Clash who continue to do most to develop punk's relationship with reggae. They played Toots and the Maytals' "Pressure Drop" on the White Riot Tour; it was their reading of "Police And Thieves" which won punk the sympathy of Bob Marley and producer Lee "Scratch" Perry

Dave Ramsden on the upsurge of local reggae talent

FEW musicians have suffered more in getting their music accepted than black reggae musicians in Britain. Reggae emerged as the distinctive cultural expression of black Jamaicans, as original an achievement as soul or rhythm and blues.

Although its roots remain in Jamaica, it is also the music of the black community in Britain, and that community has produced many fine musicians, too. They have not yet found the success they deserve.

Until recent years, British reggae has suffered from an inferiority complex compared with the Jamaican music. It has too often been either mere imitation of Jamaican music (something which still goes on, through numerous cover versions) or watered down in an attempt to reach beyond the limits of the relatively small black audience here.

But now it's finding its own voice. A new generation of bands playing their own music has emerged, and both blacks and whites are beginning to give them some recognition. The success of Black Slate's single, "Sticks Man," was perhaps a turning point, one of the best reggae records ever to come out of Britain and as strong and uncompromising as any JA product.

Black Slate are not an isolated phenomenon. There are many more British reggae bands waiting for a chance to show what they can do. This is a survey of a field which is just as wide and lively as the entire new wave.

Many problems are still holding British reggae back: lack of radio play, unsympathetic record companies and promoters and the general neglect of all aspects of the black culture which has developed here. A more detailed look at one band shows how some of these forces operate.

MERGER: Merger consists of Barry Ford, vocals and guitar; Winston Bennett, vocals and guitar; Ivor Steadman, bass; Tony Osei, keyboards; and Mike Osei, drums. They've only been together a few months but they all have long experience.

Between them, they've played with Rico, Jah Stitch, Desmond Dewier, Jackie Edwards, Onibus and B.B. King, to name a few. They came together because, to quote Barry: "No matter where we've been in the past, we've always ended up meeting one another again, so we had to do it."

Already they've released an impressive first album, "Exiles In A Babylon," on their own Sun-Star label, on which they have developed a style which shows a wide range of influences but is distinctively their own.

Winston says: "We're open to all the various influences. London is the music capital of the world. We're exposed to blues, rock, reggae, calypso, soul, church music. It's all coming from the same roots."

"I don't care what's in it, what anybody can hear. All I care is that I enjoy what I'm playing and I'm hoping that while I'm enjoying it no many other people can hear the vibes and they become happy as well. The music is just freedom music."

It is this willingness to assimilate other influences without losing the roots which makes British reggae such a vital force. Since the album, they have already changed. They want to go on finding new sounds and keeping a raw alive edge to the music. As Ivor puts it: "I hate these rehearsed artists — rehearse and get it right, yes, but not rehearsed to the last word."

"You start and play how you remember it, but each time you're going to play it and make it better to the people. Each time you play you know you're going to rock to rock. That's why, when you put things on record, you should give out about maybe 20 different mixes."

It's not so easy to win acceptance for music that's any way different, however. Barry describes his experience with some record company men: "We checked out the man. He's moving to the music. All the time he's playing, he's moving. Then at the end of the last track on side two he says, 'You know the trouble with that, don't you? It's not white enough.' So what do you do? Where do you go? You go to another one and he turns round and says, 'It's not really roots, is it? So how do you answer, how do you fight that kind of attitude?'"

"The Establishment's not ready to give the people what they want so that's why it was important for us to get involved with our own label. We're on a parallel with the punks. The Establishment didn't want their music, but there was something there that had to be said. Now they're signing them up for some colossal amount of money."

"The thing about reggae is it's a cultural revolution. We want to take it to the people. We want the people to be involved in the revolution, but there's the thing there saying, 'I can't try and walk too fast, you've got to creep.' There's a lot of bands but they're still creeping."

Promoters and club owners also restrict the chance for reggae to play. Part of the problem is the over-rigid compartmentalising and labelling of music. It's difficult to break out of the small circuit of black clubs and difficult enough to get into it.

Things are improving, and more white clubs are giving reggae bands a chance, but the people we're making money out of are not the people we want to be involved in the revolution, but there's the thing there saying, 'I can't try and walk too fast, you've got

Black music

Steel Pulse talk about their music

STEEL PULSE onstage dressed as Ku Klux Klansmen. Picture by Barry Plummer

THE first time I saw Steel Pulse they were acting as "the break-up act" on the penultimate night of the Electric Circus in Manchester. Break up the evening they certainly did, with by far the best set of the night. Their music seemed so warm, refreshing, and revitalising amid the frantic idleness on either side of it — you could almost feel the people around you being uplifted.

It was a seven-piece band from Birmingham who've been playing for three years. It shows. But they only picked up momentum when they started taking gigs at punk venues. "The first time we played with punks we were very apprehensive," said Michael Riley, their vocalist.

Doesn't sound very different from the targets of the new wave to me. "I admit there's a parallel, but it's not every punk band that says something like that — there are a few. Reggae usually talks about a man's problems as an individual — the artist talks about his own problems and only occasionally about an outside, general problem."

"It was our first confrontation with these funny-coloured people, 'cos in Birmingham things are just that little bit behind. We were told, 'they spit at you and chuck things at you,' so we went up there with our hearts in our jobs, but we went down really well."

And putting them together and they call it art. So what's wrong with my art?"

MATUMB: Of all the British bands, Matumbi have perhaps the strongest achievements behind them. Founded in Battersea in 1972 by Dennis "Black Bear" Bovell, their lead guitarist, they have found a unique style equally effective in the sweetest and softest love songs and the heaviest rasta numbers.

His two current solo releases demonstrate their range. The new song, "Still Not Enough," is a "drop" and the apocalyptic "Blood A Go Run," using very similar rhythm tracks, and both very popular.

The rest of the band are Glen Fagan, rhythm guitar, and Desmond "Misho" ney, drums. The band has existed in one form or another for about five years, but the present line-up has been stable since the middle of last year.

Their early records like "Mixed Up Man" were pleasant but unspectacular. It was "Sticks Man," written and sung by Ras Elroy, which made their name. In a completely different and heavier style, it was a powerful attack on pickpockets and other thieves. Issued on their own Slate label, it marked a new direction both for them and for British reggae in general, and is still an important part of their live performances.

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Meet Stevie Wonder

... and Yabby You, The Cables, Dennis Brown, Marvin Gaye, Culture, Rose Royce, Carl Dawkins, Ranking Joe.

And win albums by Johnny Bristol

Gloria Gaynor

Joe Simon

All in the December BLACK MUSIC Out now!

three albums. "Rico In Reggae Land", "Come Blow Your Horn" and "Brixton Cat".

He returned to Jamaica in '78 to cut his first album for Island, "Man From Warreika", which showed his lazy style to fine advantage. Meanwhile, he has his own excellent band in London, the Undivided, one of the best instrumental groups around, who supported Bob Marley on his last tour.

Probably the best on his instrument next to the late Don Drummond, Rico is currently doing his best work yet and is a vital part of the British scene.

ASWAD: After an excellent debut album for Island, they are at present without a recording contract. Backing Burning Spear recently at the Rainbow, they showed themselves to be instrumentally brilliant. With considerable writing talents too, it's to be hoped that they will return to recording soon. Their next album, if and when it appears, should prove a major event.

THE CLIMMATIONS: A long-established band with numerous singles and an album already to their credit. They have had a good deal of success in playing to a wide variety of audiences though little has been heard from them lately.

THE BLACK STONES: A band in the mould of the Heptones and Mighty Diamonds. Two singles earlier this year, "We Nah Go Suffer" and "Revolution Time", won them some success and their forthcoming disco 45 should add to it.

TRADITION: A fine backing band for other artists and who also perform some of their own material. "Mornin' On" was a hit for them last year and the recent "Why Why" has also been popular. A dub album, "Tradition In Dub", demonstrated their instrumental prowess.

THE EQUATORS: Along with Black Slate they are one of the best-recently established backing bands. The worked with Dillinger on his recent tour.

Many other artists, some of them equally talented, have tried to contribute to the scene that is at last really coming alive. There are also a number of Jamaican artists, who now spend most of their time here, becoming familiar figures on the British scene. Tapper Zukie, who made his first records here, now resides in Britain and is one of the most popular artists around since his monster hit "MPLA".

MERGER/RICO/ASWAD/DELROY WASHINGTON

BLACK SLATE: Black Slate are Keith Drummond, vocals, Ras Elroy, bass, Chris Hansen, lead guitar, Anthony Brightly, keyboards,

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MM'S

Four-page MM Factsheet

Singles

- **MIKE OLDFIELD:** "Cuckoo Song" (Virgin VS 148). It's two years now since his last album — apart from the box set — and he hasn't exactly been swimming the market with brilliant albums.
- **STEVE HILLAGE:** "Not Fade Away (Old Favorites)" (Virgin VS 157). The cosmic maestro with a track of his latest album, "Motivation Radio," which was more accessible than much of his earlier work.
- **MARY O'HARA:** "Forty Five Years" (Chrysalis CHS 2154). She didn't spend quite that long as a nun, but her recent concert in London proved that the music world had been missing something special.
- **IAN DURY:** "Sweet Gene Vincent" (Sire BUY 23). One of Still's leading lights, as shown by his recent album, "New Boots and Panties."
- **FOUR TOPS:** "For Your Love" (ABC 4197).
- **SLADE:** "Merry Christmas Everywhere" (Polydor 206422).
- **RADIATORS FROM SPACE:** "Why Can't I Be A Teenager In Love" (Chiswick NS 24).
- **JOHNNY AND THE SELF-ABUSERS:** "Saints And Sinners" (Chiswick NS 22).
- **BURLESQUE:** "Space Age Blues" (Arista 154).
- **GARY GLITTER:** "I Dare You To Lay One On Me" (Arista 154).
- **THE KINKS:** "Father Christmas" (Arista 153).
- **THE BEACH BOYS:** "Little Saint Nick" (Capitol 15954).
- **NEIL MARTIN:** "Let Me Go" (SMT 2731).
- **TALKING HEADS:** "Psycho Killer" (Sire 802860).
- **NEIL DIAMOND:** "Desires" (CBS 5989).
- **PATTI LABELLE:** "Dan Swirt Ma" (Epic EPC 5006).
- **BILL WITHERS:** "Lovely Day" (CBS 5770).
- **DEAD END KIDS:** "All My Love Always" (CBS 5428).
- **JETI BRONX AND THE FORBIDDEN:** "Anythin' Doin' Nothin'" (Lightning LIG 501).

Albums

- **10 C.C.:** "Live And Let Live" (Mancry CMA1628). The band have been rather successful in recent months by doing live recordings of their own work, and they need a further release to restore their reputation.
- **THE RUNAWAYS:** "Wettest For The Night" (Mancry 91047). Released as they tour the country.
- **THE DAMNED:** "Music For Pleasure" (Island SEZ 5).
- **CLOVER:** "Love On The Wire" (Verbo 638095).
- **SARRA STREISAND:** "A Christmas Album" (CBS 83158).
- **TAMMY WYNETTE:** "Christmas With Tammy" (Epic 85214).
- **BRICK:** "Brick" (Bang SHOT 4).
- **SPORTS AND FOUNDATION:** "Supermarket" (Verbo Sport 1). A collection of tracks from bands such as Jethro Tull, Pink Floyd and Genesis.
- **MARTHA REEVES:** "The Rest Of My Life" (Arista Sparty 1029).
- **GIL SCOTT-HERON:** "Bridge" (Arista Sparty 1031).
- **CAPTAIN AND TENNILLE:** "Captain And Tennille's Greatest Hits" (A & M AMLH 64667). The duo are appearing at the London Palladium next week, November 30.
- **ALESSI:** "All For A Reason" (A & M AMLH 69446).
- **DAVE MATTHEW:** "June" (CTI 5005).
- **JOE SIMON:** "Beat Of Joe Simon" (Polydor Spring 2391311).
- **THE SPOTNIKS:** "The Best Of The Spotniks" (Chrysalis CHM 1171).
- **U ROY:** "Rasta Ambassador" (Virgin V2082).

Imports

- **FUTURIC BAND:** "Man With The Mind" (Spring SP 1977). So far, the band's discography is one of a number of singles who are too concentrated on a few releases to make a big impact.
- **OTIS CLAY:** "I Can't Take It" (M HLP 8020).
- **TROUBLE:** "Trouble" (JUA JALA 877).
- **BRUCE ROBERTS:** "Bruce Roberts" (Elektra ZE119). Singer-songwriter.
- **TRIMMURATE:** "Pompeii" (Capitol FTY1407). Rock.
- **ISAAC HAYES:** "New Horizon" (Polygram PD 18120). Ultra-sophisticated soul funk from the soul-sounding Shitman.
- **LOU RAWLS:** "When You Hear Lou, You've Heard It All" (Philadelphia International FZ 30089). Soul-sung MOR ballad.
- **DISCO BOOGIE:** "Super Hits For Non-stop Dancing" (Salsoul SS 001).
- **STEVE GOODMAN:** "Say It In Private" (Asylum YE 1118). Witty and intelligent singer-songwriter who gave Ario Guthrie a hit with "City Of New Orleans."
- **GERRY MULLIGAN:** "The Arranger" (CBS JC 3480). Jazz.
- **THE CONTROLLERS:** "In Control" (Juana 200 001). Disco.
- **JOHNNY PAYCHECK:** "Take This Job And Shove It" (Epic KE 35045). Country rock.
- **MICHELLE:** "Happie Love" (West End Records WE 103).
- **THE JOY:** "The Joy" (Fantasy 19538). Former Joy Of Cooking members.
- **PATTI AUSTIN:** "Havana" (CTI 76008). Jazz rock.
- **FRANKIE YALL:** "Lady Put The Light Out" (Private Stock PS 7003). It's hard to believe that he was once a member of the allegedly excellent Four Seasons. When bar dross.
- **WAR:** "Galaxy" (MCA 3000). New label seems to have given the popular disco outfit a second lease of life.
- **KELLEE PATTERSON:** "Turn On The Lights, Be Happy" (Shady Brook SB 33007). Soul.
- **DAVE GRISIN:** "One Of A Kind" (Polygram PD 18118). Jazz.



BEACH BOYS: single/RUN-ALWAYS: album / STEVE GOODMAN: import

Coming events

THE DAMNED/DEAD BOYS: Brighton Polytechnic (16 November 30). Derby Kings Hall (December 3). Hastings Pier Pavilion (3). Chichester V.P. Bank (4). Cardiff The Bank (4). Luton Road University (Barnford Hall) (4). Huddersfield (4). Solihull (4). Leeds (4). Glasgow (4). Newcastle City Hall (11). Guildford (11). Surrey University (12). Bournemouth Village Bowl (13).

STREETS YOUR LUNKERS: (3). THE DOLE (2). REACTION (R). ART ATTACKS (A). PORK DUKES (PD). JOHN COOPER CLARKE (JCC). London Rochester Centre (December 3) (L & D). London Roundhouse (4) (L). Luton Royal Hotel (7) (L & D). Birmingham Rebecca (8) (L & D & B). London 100 Club (L & D & B). Blackburn Lodge Star (14) (L & D & JCC). High Wycombe Nags Head (18) (L & D & A). London Vertex (18) (The Members, Reaction, Cane, the Drones).

DARTS: Uxbridge Brunel University (December 30). Coventry College of Education (December 3). Manchester Polytechnic (3). Bournemouth Tiffin (6). Birmingham University (6). Brighton Polytechnic (10). Teasdale Polytechnic (13). Preston Polytechnic (14). Leeds University (18). A.M.A.M. College (18). Bolton Institute of Technology (17). London Tottenham Hotspur Football Club (18). London Rainbow (21).

SPUD: Oxford Polytechnic (3). November 30. Uxbridge Brunel University (December 1). London School of Economics (3). Leicester University (3). Belfast Queens University (6). Huddersfield Polytechnic (7). London Marquee (9). Manchester Polytechnic (10). Reading University (13).

GRAND HOTEL: Gloucester College of Education (December 2). Bradford University (3). Bristol Clifton Hall (4). Exeter University (5). London Rock Garden (5).



RACING CARS: on tour

London Tramehead (6). London Pegasus (3). Chalkhill St Giles (6). Newcastle College (9). Vate Stars and Stripes (10). London Duke of Lancaster (11). London Woodward Polytechnic (12). Norwich RAF Benson (13). London Whitehalls College (16). Slough College (17). London Brecknock (18). London Duke of Lancaster (January 3). London Brecknock (13). London Tramehead (13). London Golden Lion (4). London Pegasus (5). London Rock Garden (6).

RACING CARS: Manchester Salford (December 3). London Marquee 15 (4). London Westfield College (6).

ADVERTS: Sheffield Polytechnic (November 30). Edinburgh University (December 2). Newcastle University (3). Shrewsbury Tiffin (6).

MUD: Warwick University (December 1). Sheffield University (2). Bradford University (3). Bristol Clifton Hall (4). Exeter University (5). Plymouth Castaways (6). Truro

Plaza (7). Weston Super Mare Webington (8). Pontypool Leisure Centre (9). Swansea Bournemouth Winter Gardens (12). Portsmouth HMS College (13). London Music Machine (15).

THE PIRATES: London Central Polytechnic (December 3). London Chelsea College (3). Newcastle Polytechnic (6). Doncaster Bircotes Sports Centre (18). Loughborough Town Hall (12). Manchester Elizabethan Ballroom (13). Swansea West Glamorgan institute (16). London Marquee (13). Sheffield Top Bank (18). Edinburgh Tiffin (19). Liverpool Eric (21). Stafford King Edward High School (22). London Dingwall (23).

ALBERTO Y LOST TRIOS: PARAMOIAS: Uxbridge Brunel University (December 3). Nottingham Trent Polytechnic (3). Huddersfield Polytechnic (3). Durham University (18). London Kings College (18). London Gurs Hospital (18). Glasgow Strathclyde University (18). Liverpool Eric (18).

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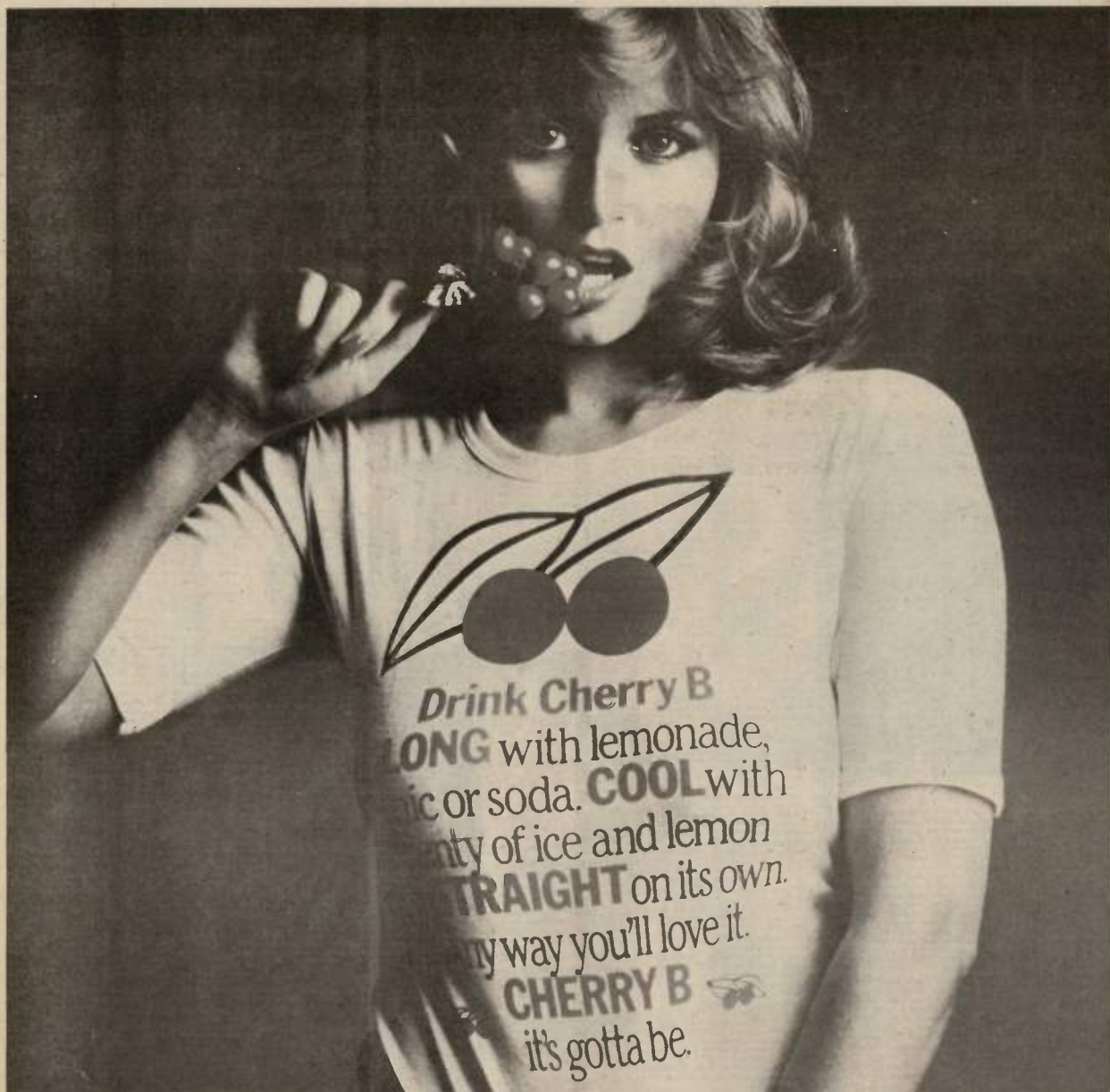
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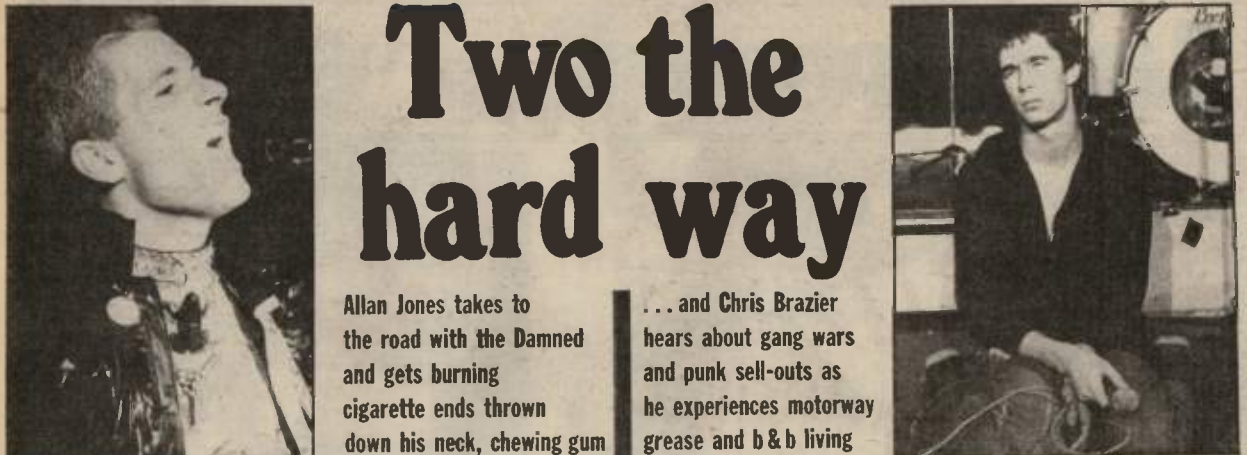
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CAPTAIN SENSIBLE: pyromaniac tendencies

RON is the Damned's tour manager. And this Ron, if we are to believe the original schedule for this freezing Thursday a.m. (so cold that pedestrians stagger like arthritic penguins through the backstreets of West London), should have arrived smartly at Stiff Records HQ at 11.30 to bundle into the trusty transit shivering members of the group and shuttle them along the frozen motorway wastes to Middlesbrough where — to the combo's immense chagrin — they are due this evening to open a British tour.

Well: it's now one o'clock and Ron's arrival is still no more than a vague rumour.

Not that the Damned have any substantial grounds for bitter complaint, having themselves displayed no profound appreciation of the virtues of punctuality.

When yours tired and emotionally stumbled like a binary waltz into Alexander Street to find the Stiff office in a state of predictable panic with the telephones ringing with irritating persistence like a chorus of operatic confusion, only Lu, the Damned's second guitarist, and Jon Moss, who only last week replaced Rat Scabies as the ensemble's resident skin-healer, were present.

Lu cut a particularly individual presence amid the morning confusion, dressed in a ridiculous overcoat (only three sizes too large, its shoulders hung loosely about Lu's skinny elbows), and a battered black bowler.

It is, initially, uncertain whether Lu is decked out in such an absurd fashion to promote a crude eccentricity or evidence of an essentially idiotic temperament. It will later emerge that the latter is the more plausible excuse.

We are joined shortly by the black-caped figure of Dave Vanian limping this morning from some mysterious growth on his thigh — "Something got in an' bit me, I think," he explains to Brian Jones, who follows him into the increasingly impatient atmosphere of the Stiff office.

Captain Sensible finally graces

us with his idiosyncratic presence, his arrival prefaced by the noisy clanking of the chains he wears about him with the panache of the delighted victim of some heavy metal bondage escapade.

With Ron's arrival still as unlikely as the prospect of Lu mastering the art of articulate conversation, we retire to the boozier, where Captain Sensible briefly describes the procedure the Damned adopted for their search for the replacement for the departed Scabies.

"First thing we asked them was if they were the best drummer in the world. If they panted we'd hang up."

"If they said yes, we'd ask them if they were obnoxious. 'Awright,' we'd say, 'abuse us.' Most people couldn't handle it." He wanders out to the jukebox, flips in ten pence and out comes Fleetwood Mac. Jon Moss is appalled.

"I hate Fleetwood Mac," he declares with fashionable vehemence. They remind me of velvet curtains and cushions on the floor. You don't really like them, do you, Captain?"

"Not really," muses Sensible. "I just like groups with boilers in."

Ah, the true voice of musical appreciation.

WELL, this is a novel experience: we're actually the motorway and — would you believe it? — we're actually heading north. The right direction, that's all.

It's only taken a two-and-a-half hour wait at Stiff, one stop-over in Weymouth Street while Vanian seeks professional advice on his infection (turns out the boy's got a carbuncle on his thigh caused by an infected hair follicle — yeeuch), and the Captain screams down Weymouth Mews to the toilet, and one more lavatory-stop — for Brian Jones, this time — but at last we're on the case and heading (oh the dread in our hearts) toward Middlesbrough's bleak embrace.

"SOMETHING'S burning!" screams Marty, the Damned travelling security agent, as the transit alights through Mill Hill.

No cause, really, for concern: it's only your reporter that's smouldering here, a victim of Captain Sensible's pyromaniac inclinations. The Cap'n, you see, is one of those enigmatic individuals who constantly inhabit an alternative universe, his mental state divorced entirely from immediately conventional considerations of reasonable behaviour, where every passing

Alan Jones takes to the road with the Damned and gets burning cigarette ends thrown down his neck, chewing gum smeared in his hair, etc ...

moment has to be occupied by some desperate prank or mischief-making joke.

So, the Cap'n, in collaboration with the hopelessly bewildered Lu, transforms the journey to Middlesbrough into an approximation of a St. Trinian's school outing.

This means the Captain and Lu, rickling blazng matches the length of the transit, followed by the occasional burning cigarette and flying down the necks of unsuspecting victims (most often the necks of your hapless correspondent).

The Captain and Lu, who otherwise occupy their time wrestling each other into various stages of temporary exhaustion, find this passing source of considerable amusement.

Me? Well, I've been wound up by experts and after six days on the road with the Feelgoods such behaviour is no more outrageous than a nun flashing her underwear in Oxford Street during the rush-hour. A little tiresome and juvenile, but tantamount to nothing more serious than a minor irritation (though the Captain's habit of trickling wine down me back was a little irksome, I must admit).

Grits will be grits, though, and short of carving in Sensible's skull with a brick there seems no available method of preventing his imbecile antics.

Brian Jones, though, makes a valiant attempt to calm Lu — who, by the time we hurdle through Wadford Gap is flushed with delicious excitement (and smarting from a recent beating from Sensible).

"C'mere, Lu," snaps Jones, grabbing Lu by the hair and dragging him across the seats. Lu screams. Brian has just bitten him quite ferociously on the ear.

Lu's ear is inflamed for an hour and the teeth marks are still visible as we scooter across Sheffield's smoketack landscape. A primitive, but effective deterrent, you will agree.

It doesn't, however, compromise Sensible's amateur attempts at outrageous: tired, by Birmingham, of his incendiary activities (he's apparently bored, by this time, of setting my hair alight), he resorts to surreptitious farts in a laboured attempt to draw attention upon himself.

He offers some amusing relief, though, with his account of the Damned's recent abuse of Elvis the audience insulting him, willing him to speak for them.

Something inside me tells me I should be getting up on stage and being a voicebox for those

... and Chris Brazier hears about gang wars and punk sell-outs as he experiences motorway grease and b & b living on tour with Sham '69

As soon as you're born they make you feel small. By giving you no time instead of it all. Till the pain is so big you feel nothing at all. A working-class hero is something to be (JOHN LENNON)

SHAM 69 — the name positively vibrates with possible meanings. There's a story that those were the only letters left on a painted sign outside the home-town football ground which had read 'Walton And Hersham 1969' until the rain set in.

If, you were pseudous, you could see it as an attack on the mechanical loveless pretence to usefulness of sex manuals (heaven is yours in room solitaire), nudge nudge say no more).

Or, more likely, a blast against the ostriches who reduced the hippie romantic revolution to the flash of a peace sign.

Whatever, calling the group's front-man Jimmy Sham, as people seem affectionately to do these days, might convey completely the wrong impression of him.

Jimmy Pursey is one of the most real people I've ever met (whatever that means). He's genuine, earnest, hilarious, committed, and he talks 'la ved git'.

He dominates, is the focus for attention in all situations. As soon as you meet him you understand why the other members of the band are hardly ever mentioned in the (recently extensive) press coverage of Sham 69 — they're nice blokes, but they're quietly normal.

And yet despite his extrovert free-wheeling monopoly of the talk time / attention centre, Jimmy Pursey is a normal working-class kid too.

That's important. When he's on stage he says he only exists as a mouthpiece for the working-class kids without a voice but stuck with plenty of frustration and the much - pain - you're namo state Lennon was talking about.

He genuinely feels the kids in the audience insulting him, willing him to speak for them.

Something inside me tells me I should be getting up on stage and being a voicebox for those

people, relaying back what I've felt from somebody else. It's like they're givin' me the inspiration to write a song — I have to speak out for the people that inspire me. If I didn't I might just as well be in a pop group.

You really feel inspired by other kids when you're writing alone in a room somewhere? "I do. Oh, Christ, yeah, I do. I wouldn't write otherwise, I guarantee you that now, mate."

"I carry on writing songs till I get one that really does sum up what I'm like to be a kid, and I regard myself as just a normal kid."

And Jimmy gives me a crash-course in just what it's like to be a frustrated working-class kid as we travel up north in the back of a battered old van, while I simultaneously taste roots rock 'n' roll on the road for the first time, which means motorway grease and bed 'n' breakfast and NOT first-class travel and deluxe hotels.

In more ways than one, Sham 69 put me in touch with the true street-level spirit of rock 'n' roll.

JIMMY pours out the life-lessons of ... how he used to persuade girls to strip off in the woods and charge boys threepence admission; how he was chucked out of school at 15 and copped his Cockney accent working on a fruit-barrow in the Big Smoke after he'd left home for the third time.

And about the gang-warfare when he was a skinhead. "I was always a bit of a nutcase. There used to be gang wars with the next villages. One time this gang came round to beat us lot up at the youth club, so we rushed upstairs and dropped a table on their heads from the balcony."

"Once we smashed up a bus 'cos we didn't like the driver. Just smashed all the windows with bricks while the poor c— was sittin' there coverin' himself up in the driver's seat."

"I should have been put away loads of times but I never was. I was great — everyone around me was getting done but I always got away wiv it."

"But this mate of mine was the unluckiest bloke I ever knew. He did this job, right, where he and the other blokes were gonna do over an office while his kid kept watch in the car and started the engine — sort of like Bonale and Clyde."

So they broke in and started burnin' open the safe with this oxyacetylene torch, but 'cause

they had it at the wrong temperature they spent half an hour welding the door to the safe. "So then they tried carryin' out the safe, but they dropped it and set off all the alarms, dogs set loose, everything. The dogs ripped my mate's jacket off and his trousers and tore his wrists, but he made it to the car."

"Then it wouldn't start, so he got caught. Then he was in Borsal and he and this other bloke made a break-out: they hitched all the way from Ipswich to Notting-ham then got picked up by this bloke with a blue shirt and the — first stop was a police station."

"Mick made a run for it straight away and got chased towards this wall. He jumped over it but what he didn't realise was that there was a 40-foot drop down a railway embankment on the other side, and he broke both his legs."

"He was so unlucky, that bloke. He'd only been goin' out with this bird for three weeks when he found she was up the spout and had to marry her."

That kind of law-border living hangs over into the present — when the band were arrested for playing a rooftop concert, Jimmy maintains he was beaten up by the police. "I've never been so scared in all my life."

Not surprisingly, he's very sympathetic towards delinquent kids: "I think lots of kids feel they can't get over to anybody in any other way but by being violent or stealing," he says, his heavy eyebrows knitting with concern.

Lots of them are much happier in Borsal than outside 'cos they finally find people who are like them — one bloke I knew did a job and deliberately plastered his fingerprints all over the place so that he could get sent back to Borsal."

SHAM's next single will in fact be "Borsal Break-Out", with its aggressively insistent chant, along with "Hey Little Rich Boy", one of their best numbers.

"Hey Little Rich Boy" take a good look at me / I don't need a fast car to take me around / I can get a bus to the other side of town / I didn't get no OCE / It makes you think you can't talk to me ... / Why it worry me? / I'll never believe you're better than me."

Not a bad Sin song — short and simple, directness the prime

JIMMY PURSEY: mouthpiece for working-class kids

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...thus Robin Trower explains why he's reluctant to tour Britain. So Harry Doherty went to see him in New York

"I'm not killing myself for nothing"

THIS is what you might call the American hard-sell. In his plush Plaza Hotel suite, Robin Trower is being shown graphics of a stage set-up that would, according to the hustler displaying them, "cure all his problems."

The drawings of this would-be stage look like spare props from Space 1999, but the hustler is adamant that this is what Trower needs, pointing to the various levels on the stage and their advantages. In the background, there is a moon (fronted by a sinister silhouette of a model guitarist) (presumably Trower).

"This may be expensive, Robin," the salesman says, "but you gotta think about it. How I figured it out is that there would be a billion on each one of these platforms and you would be the guy who would press the button with your foot as you control it. I would love to see you like that."

Trower is chuckling in the background, a little impressed by the project but not really seeing himself fit into the grandeur of it. "Whaddya think?" Trower is asked.

"I think... I think it looks real... ah... DIFFERENT."

Trower's manager, Neil Dixon, senses that his trip is a little superfluous for this barrage of commercial jargon and suggests that the salesman give them time to consider his offer.

"I still think this is right for me," says the hustler, "it would solve all those problems."

Surprisingly, Trower takes the reference to "all these problems" quite literally. He has, after all, been told that he needed something to do to back up his appearance on stage and seemed to accept the fact.

"I would be first to agree that Trower requires an injection of some sort of stimulus to brighten his stage set. I had seen him two nights before at New York's premiere Radio City Theatre, a 6,000-seater, and not me Trower, which was very much the same."

At the New York gig, though, I was in the minority. With his live album, Trower and his band went a long way towards making the grade in the States, and this time were out in force at Radio City to endorse the British guitarist's blues-tinged comeback, *"In City Dreams"*. He's an artist who has won considerable acclaim in foreign lands as well as here, so I'm sure.

Trower's arrival American tour takes in something like 50 dates, a massive schedule (even if you consider the success of the live album will introduce the mass of "In City Dreams"). The success of the tour is heralded by Trower as an increasing and successful musical career.

The chances are such a bright tour was there. The two mentioned above and, as Trower himself, to make a lot of money. "I wouldn't do it otherwise," he says, "I wouldn't get around, I wouldn't get anything. I get to have some money, the jacket at the end of the day. Otherwise I can't survive."

When the publication of his book is out, England, the only part being noted, Trower says that they have a lot of money. There was the added frustration



ROBIN TROWER: "We don't want hit singles"

tion of the British was doing much to help further Trower's career.

"Had it done something for our career, the loss of money would have been a worthwhile investment. It didn't make us any bigger than we were. Frankly, we were preaching to the converted."

There doesn't seem to be any way through for us to a bigger audience, apart from a hit single in something like that, and we don't make hit singles.

So, for the meantime, England has been pushed firmly into the background by the success of a man with briefs by his accountant. It's a bit unfortunate that these primary factors have to be taken into account. I tell him. He agrees. "Everything I have in there America is not my home."

But he does it.

VARIOUS critics and Christy Mullins' representation have forcefully projected the notion that "In City Dreams" is a radical departure for Trower.

With the aid of his black pianist, Don Davis, it's said that "In City Dreams" represents a deeper move into the funk and soul areas that Trower has long been saying he has made influences.

Thus they have to tell once and for all the guitar hero syndrome. The beautiful music is to be told with any kind of a rock guitar.

Trower doesn't totally agree with these "expert" opinions. He says he's surprised that anyone has read on deeply into what is really a slight change of emphasis.

I think that the main emphasis is on the guitar player to a singer. I've always written songs before, but it's just that I've concentrated solely on the material for this album."

As far as guitars are concerned, Trower says there was no working guitarists around as the record was being made. He says he

was, apart from perhaps Albert King and George Harrison.

"If you're talking about Jimmy Page or any of that stuff, they're all just lightweights to me. I don't really listen to it."

He agrees that the Hendrix phenomenon, stuck to him for as long as it probably will be, is a very big part of his music. Anyway, says Trower, the "controversy" helped him more because it made people more aware of his work.

"I can't change my identity," he continues. "I am what I am. I make the music that I make. Maybe the music on the new album is being perceived to people in a different way so they're seeing different things. It's all about people and I can't relate to that at all."

I've now proved everything. I can't do as a guitar player and now I'm looking for other things. I needed a new horizon, but that I've achieved perfection in guitar playing, but I need to do something else and songwriting was the next thing I wanted to concentrate on. I didn't realize, you see, that I wanted to learn about it."

To someone not exactly immersed in Trower's music (in me) there was always the sense of Trower as a kind of surrogate Rory Gallagher, the "blue-eyed soul" always there but...

I can't really see that. Our greatest success was "Badcase of Love" so all through our live work we've done instrumental in our success. I would say that the more because I come up with a classic piece of music, that is what you succeed in being."

The boy knows me. I don't think I'd ever do another piece of music as good as that rock. I'm happy. I don't even know how I came to work it. It's so heavy. It's just what I was given. It's amazing. There's not many pieces

of music outside classical that you can apply that description to. That track is definitely awesome in its power. I'll tell you, I'd like to write me like that every year, but I don't think I ever will.

Yes, but only do one thing like that. There's only one of those in a person. I don't believe in trying to recreate something. I'm always trying to get another look at something, musically within the scope of what I do.

I think that the next heaviest piece of music that I've ever done is probably "Little Girl" on this album ("In City Dreams"). I consider that to be a beautiful piece of music, as deep blue as anything I've heard since Donny Hathaway's "Giving Up."

"In City Dreams" is the best album I've ever made. But wasn't every artist's latest album the best album he had ever made, until, of course, the next one?

"No, it's the most rounded and accomplished piece of work that we've ever put together just from the viewpoint of being today. It's a very busy piece of work. I think that in two or three years "In City Dreams" will be looked on as a classic album. It will take people a little bit of time to get into it because there's so much on it. People are talking about the old side of it and that's just a minor point."

THIS being his newest and roundest album, what next? Ask a stupid question. Trower wants to continue the shift of emphasis from guitar player to singer, although songs would still be geared to his work on guitar.

"Now I am going to pursue every single musical idea I ever had. I always shied away from that because it wouldn't fit into what I was into instead of writing the song and making it fit. I was

just writing songs that already fitted and that's a very narrow outlook."

As an extension to his newly found songwriting prowess, Trower is working on a solo album for his vocalists. Jimmy Dewar, Dewar will also be helped by Don Davis. Sounds like another Robin Trower album to me.

The introduction to Davis has also led Trower into the session field for the first time. Worked album.

"The right people have never offered before. It has to be someone I admire and Don has more to produce all the people I like. I certainly was never too keen on playing with other people in Britain. In the main, I find that all the stuff that comes out of Britain is a bit lightweight."

I think that's why I never liked British rock. It was all kind of huff and puff. There's no depth to it. I don't like

stuff like the European music, like Yes. It sounds just too clever.

They put it into the rock category, but it's really a bunch of jazzmen. I wish they'd own up and just play jazz. It's a compromise that doesn't work.

There's no such thing as technical rock. Rock has never been technical. It has always been technical. Compromises in rock music just don't work. Compromises all good music to me.

My only compromise is that I am British and white. That's the biggest hang-up I've got in my music. The fact that I am not black. I'd have anything to have that background, but I'm working it out. I consider I would have had a much better start in music had I at least been born in America.

The language I speak is more black than white, musically. That's a bit of a hang-up.

Sound Creators

MM's regular spotlight on instruments

Jack of all basses

HOW to become a bass player in two easy steps — become a rhythm guitarist and when the bass player in your band leaves, step in and take over.

Not the simplest route imaginable, but it's the one that has enabled Jack Brand of Meal Ticket to become the fine, economical player that he is — in a group that has invited comparisons with Little Feat and the Band.

"Playing rhythm guitar helps a lot when you go on to bass, because of its tie-up with the percussion, but even so, when I took over I'd never touched a bass guitar before and it takes a long time to learn."

Jack started on the rhythm guitar at the tender age of nine, playing at home with friends, and then joined a local band in Kingston when he was about 15. That was when the bass player left, and Jack, armed with a brand new Hofner violin bass, bought for the princely sum of £51, took over.

His next move was to work in a local music shop, where he got hold of one of the first ever Hi Watt amps, which was also the first powerful amp he owned. He changed jobs, to work at the famous Sound City, and two months later got his first Fender Precision bass, costing £75.

"That was about 1968, and I loved it. I thought it was the greatest thing in the world — which I suppose it was, then."

Now he's not so sure. "One of the drawbacks of the

JACK BRAND and RAY FLACKE of MEAL TICKET: 'playing rhythm guitar helps a lot when you go on to bass' says Brand

Fenders is that while the top two strings are really full and rich, the bottom two lose some of the punch. That seems to be the case with most of them, but I'm not sure whether it's my preference for a particular type of sound or whether it's something to do with the pick-ups."

A Custom Precision Bass with a white maple neck followed the Fender, costing about £125. A year later it was sold to raise some cash, and Jack was without a guitar for some months.

"Eventually, I couldn't stand it, so I bought a Fender Mustang bass. By that time I'd learnt a bit through working in the shop, and I improved it by adding an extra pick-up, a Fender Jazz bass, which meant I could get a greater combination of sounds from it."

But the neck was too

small, so he swapped it for another Precision, which he still has in a modified form. "I've put Antoria pick-ups on it, which are a copy of the Fender ones but which give a more balanced sound. I also bought a new amp, an Acoustic 360, the classic bass amp, with an 18-inch speaker."

The search for the perfect instrument is probably unending, but Jack's current guitar, bought about five months ago, is as near to perfection as anything he's played so far. It's made by a friend of his, Ian Waller, who has designed every part of it. Called the Wal Customa Bass, it has a five-piece neck with strips of carbon fibre in it to prevent any bending, and is hand-finished.

"It's simply the best bass I've ever heard," Jack said. "It has a D.I. outlet built in,

with a plug attached so that you can plug straight into the p.a. system at a gig and use your own amp as a monitor, giving a much clearer sound."

"But I've found it even more of an advantage in the studio, where you can plug straight into the mixer. You don't get the bass going all over the studio and the separation is superb."

Jack also reckons he's found the perfect amp — an Ampeg SVT, with an eight-by-ten cabinet. "It's the best amp, the governor, I've never heard anything like it."

"It's very hard for bassists to get good sound," Jack continued. "The only way, as far as I'm concerned, is to get the most powerful amp you can afford — and then turn it down. You hear so many people playing with their amp turned up full, and you just get overloading and the speakers start to flap. The bigger the amp, the better the sound."

Another crucial factor in the sound is the strings, and at the moment he uses heavy-gauge Roto Sound Super Bass strings.

"They're different in that the inner core of the string goes over the bridge before the winding starts, which makes for more sustain and a clearer sound. Strings are such a personal thing, though. I used Fender Flai Wound Heavy Gauge strings for years, and they certainly lasted."

"When I got into a rock band I needed more attack on bass. Everybody says put more treble on, but if you do that with these strings it sounds a bit empty, sort of 'clicky.' You need more raunch, which is what you get from wire-wound strings."

DAVID BOOTHROYD

Trade Winds

SINCE Professional Keyboard Products introduced the Cat synthesizer in the UK during August, there has been an overwhelming demand for this unique American instrument, which is already being used by Rod Argent, Dave Greenslade, David Bedford and Dave Friedricks.

The Cat is a compact instrument and has the advantage of being easy to operate during live performances, having a panel layout which is very clear to understand. It has such features as a mixable waveform on both oscillators, including a "sub-octave" squarewave on each, which adds a fatness to the sound, and a "poly" switch that allows two notes to be played at once.

It costs £645, and is claimed to be as versatile as other synthesizers, costing twice as much, which puts it within the grasp of the semi-pro musician. "It's tremendous value for money," says Dave Greenslade.

SKILLED luthier Michael Saunders, who has made a variety of stringed instruments for star musicians, has moved from Brighton to a new home at 1 Waterloo Cottage, Waterloo Road, Linton, Hertfordshire. His output ranges from folk and classical guitars to lutes, rebecs, bardic harps, plucked and bowed psalteries and Appalachian dulcimers, with a high degree of accuracy and craftsmanship.

With early instruments he takes every possible step to ensure authenticity. Where possible, these are built as copies of exact instruments. If this isn't possible, he bases them on all available contemporary pictorial and written evidence.

He takes enormous care with his choice of materials, selecting his timber personally — all air-dried and quarter-sawn — and showing as much concern over every little detail, right down to the glue. As he makes every instrument himself, he is able to exercise control over every stage of manufacture. He also undertakes repairs, alterations and refinishing of all stringed instruments.

THE story of the much-publicised rock opera Evita, based on the life of Eva Peron between 1919 and 1962, is contained in Music and distributed by Leeds Music/Belwin Mills at £3. The book provides the music of Andrew Lloyd Webber and the lyrics of Tim Rice, with piano transcriptions by Frank C. Marlow, plus the synopses of the show.

TELEPHONE Acoustic Research have introduced a completely new look for their loudspeakers, which extends to the entire activities of the company. Starting with a new bold but elegant line, it covers packaging, graphics, product appearance inside and outside the grille, with brushed aluminium logo plates and serialised metal decals for identification.

To round off the programme there are new catalogues, adverts, posters and point-of-purchase materials, combining the old approach with a versatile contemporary signal. Three new models join the ranks of the larger speakers — AR 13, AR 17 and the bookshelf AR 18. Innovations include acoustic suspension, dome tweeter and the new "liquid cooled" speaker. Every one of the seven speaker systems utilises a unique magnetic fluid to position the voice coil and dissipate heat.

JIMMY BLADES, the busy dance-band drummer who became a professor of percussion awarded the OBE, has written a dramatic autobiography illustrating his adventures from the circus to the concert hall, via such famous bands as Gerald, Jerry Hoey, Louis Armstrong and Jan Rafail. It is called Drum Roll and is published by Faber at £6.50. — CHRIS HAYES.

An easy one



Not unless you get them both. On the one hand you've got 'Front Page News,' a stunner from the band who've consistently come up with the goods.

Then again there's Lynyrd Skynyrd's 'Street Survivors,' another fine album.

With a choice this difficult, buying them both isn't just wishful thinking — it's plain good sense.

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signals the start of a new stage in his career. An important stage and a vital album, show-casing the versatility and warmth of an artist who's never lost his musical integrity. Includes the single Prime Time. INT 542.



Don McLean's prime time

'Prime Time' his new album.

THE STUDIO looks more like a scrap-metal slaughterhouse than the nerve-centre of Britain's top rock TV show, with metal ribbons of spotlights hanging in tumult from the ceiling like mechanical entrails.

Beneath the lights the stubby, silent cameras are moved effortlessly on the vulcanised rubber floor like obedient robots auditioning for Son Of Star Wars.

Camera shots are lined up, cues are calculated and noted, the atmosphere is as frantic as a good night's sleep. The preparations for Old Grey Whistle Test are running exactly to plan.

One of the evening's live guests, Ben Sidran, is hunched at a piano, his face a cross between the craggy features of Pete Townshend and Michael Nesmith, and craned in concentration as he runs through a few fingerings.

Over the other side of the studio, a few members of Gregg and Cher Allman's band, the other live act, have decided to have themselves a little warm-up jam. Ricky Hirsch, former lead and slide guitarist of great earthiness and gusto with Wet Willie, starts ripping out some of the most devastating freewheel heard for an age while the keyboard player straps on a bass and one of the horn men works ineptly but with monastic determination at the drum-kit.

Another of the Allman season-man band cuts in on rhythm guitar, and the impromptu unit locks into a fervent Southern Kentucky-fried groove that combines rhythmic monogony with the piercing brilliance of Hirsch's guitar fever. Faced with such a bar-

From Steve Miller and Boz Scaggs to Sussex University to a British live debut last week—John Orme follows the trail of Ben Sidran

rage from only a few yards away across the studio, Sidran tried first to fight the onslaught with stabbing, atonal jazz chordings, then vamped along with the cowboys. Drummer Bill Meaker looked across at Allman's artisans, still playing with the throttle flat on the floor. Suddenly Sidran gave up, and as he turned from the keyboard, muttered with a mixture of amazement and appreciation, "Man, that's jungle music. That beat, it is straight out of the jungle."

BEN SIDRAN is not your rock star. He doesn't need the Ph.D. he earned at Sussex University in 1970 to advertise its depth and potency, and a musical history that includes close personal and professional involvement with Steve Miller and Boz Scaggs in its sweep speaks for itself. At the time of the Scaggs/Miller partnership Sidran's jazz leanings were coming to the surface and Miller allowed him the freedom to develop an increasingly individual style. After appearing on "Children Of The Future", Miller's first Capitol album, he co-wrote "Space Cowboy" and other tracks with Miller before quitting to work solo as a producer and session man, playing with such people as the Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton and Peter Frampton, having become a close and admiring friend of producer Glyn Johns. During this time he was studying at Sussex and his thesis became the basis for Black Talk, his acclaimed book that was published in 1971.

Black in America he carried on writing, recording and producing, and also found time to keep up his academic interests by teaching at the University of Wisconsin, his home state, and also host a television show in his hometown of Madison and do some writing and research work on music—his stories for Rolling Stone magazine.

It was, then, a musician of some considerable insight and knowledge who played on Whistle Test last week and wowed an audience of devotees at London's Dingwalls the night before. It's amazing that some people flew all the way over from Australia to see that Dingwalls show, and afterwards they said they thought it was worth every bit of the airfare. It is a strange thing.

My records have only been available in places like Europe on import, and yet I know from the ASCAP airplay reports that a lot of people like me, and a lot of money comes from Europe. I think people have an acquired taste for me — my music is like a gourmet item on the rock and roll menu. There is no way you can hype me in my music, but I think there is a curiosity thing about me as a person.

"I think the reason is that music is a very personal thing for me, and people respond to that aspect in my music and lyrics. Having seen the success of his two buddies, Scaggs and Miller, Sidran is casting a wary eye to the future. "What interests me is what will happen if, or rather when, I start selling a lot of records. Since Boz and Steve have got so big, they are the same people to me, but everything has changed around them so much. "Certainly in Boz's case that is exactly what he wanted. He wanted that success, and he wanted it badly. Before it happened he was very depressed in case it did not happen. He was 31 or 32, and he had this aspiration, a big desire for what he wanted to do."

Sidran retains a close friendship with both Miller and Scaggs, and while he still finds that Miller has kept a personal hold on his career and surroundings, Scaggs is losing much of his musical identity as success overcomes him. "To me, Boz is a singer, songwriter and guitarist. That is how I know him as a musician. Little of that comes over now. 'Silk Degrees' was a pleasantly put-together album, but nothing more I have heard his new single, and hated it. Absolutely hated it, and I would tell him so. I have lost a lot of the Boz I know in the new album. With Steve it is different. He has maintained complete control over himself, whereas Boz has not. "Boz is very sensitive, while Steve is hard-bitten. I mean, he has gone through his entire career without a manager, so don't let anyone tell you that a manager is a must. It is strange considering their characters that now Boz has been created as a public figure whom I find difficult to recognise, while I can still go for a drive with Steve and know that we can talk like we used to."

It is not very bizarre that all this, the success of Boz and Steve, has come out of one like city in Wisconsin, so many dollars have changed hands over it. And then I think it is just a wrinkle in the fabric of time and space."

concentrate on music from his new Arista album. "The Doctor is in", and its predecessor, "Feel The Groove", but as soon as ardent followers called out for old tracks, Sidran and his band launched into full-blooded and rousing versions as if the songs were a planned part of the set. Even smoother was the electric piano he was using for the evening.

"I did not feel at home with that piano — I would have preferred an acoustic. The trouble with electric keyboards is that there is no touch to them, no feel or resistance. I found at Dingwalls I was playing too fast because of that — it is like driving on slick roads. "I have been playing a lot more acoustic piano, and it is getting better. My piano playing is getting stronger all the time. When you play an acoustic the physical demands are great — you need strength in the wrists and fingers, and callouses on the fingers. Without that, it is difficult to make one's fingers necessary and keep up with the band."

"Take Herbie Hancock — when he went on the V.I.P. tour, he had business as usual to playing electric that his fingers were breaking up. He spent three weeks in a woodshed to get his hands right for playing proper piano again. Despite having to put up with indifferent electric piano, Sidran is the first to admit his pleasure at playing for an audience. "I am not a rock and roll person — just enjoy the business of playing and getting the feedback from the audience. That is a direct, legitimate thing."

SIDRAN is currently finishing a handful of European dates before returning to Britain for his London Victoria Palace show on Sunday, but is preparing a hectic work schedule he has his new album mapped out in his head.

"I can hear the whole thing. It is gonna be more avant-garde, but it will have touches that make it more accessible and commercial. It will basically be a piano player's album, with piano solos and the occasional sax break and guitar over-dub. I like to work fast in the studio — the current album only took three days in the studio — and I like to keep moving along."

"People tell me I am ahead of my time, but that is something I cannot accept. It would be foolhardy for me to stay in one musical place simply because I have had a minor success with it. The way I work is to record anything I hear in my head and then discard everything that isn't right. It is like a statue: the completed work is what is left when you have chipped away every thing that isn't the statue."

Sidran reckons his studio style is directly influenced by Glyn Johns, and he is content with his technique, although he would like to work with producers like Art Mardim and Tommy LiPuma. But maybe not Boz Scaggs.

"I'll tell you another thing about Boz. The way he makes his records now, he walks into the studio, listens to the tracks and the musicians have laid down, says 'I like that one', or 'Do that one again', and then works out which one he will add vocals to. Then he walks out again, and leaves them to get on with it. That is not a way of recording. I particularly like."

INS 301

by Ian Birch

READY for the heavies? For comedy to be great, it has to be dangerous. Buster Keaton and Groucho Marx understood that only too well. While not yet in the same league, Mr. John Dowie, late of Birmingham, is fully aware of the principles. He really is an extraordinary man.

A few weeks ago Virgin released his first-ever foray into the single market, "Another Close Shave." Or, rather, an E.P. which included six tracks, the total running time clocking in at under ten minutes.

First, savour the titles: "British Tourist", "Naked Noodles In The Moonlight", "I Don't Want To Be Your Amputee", "New Wave", "Jim Callaghan" and "Time Warp". They scarcely conjure up teen-dream fantasies by the Danseke or sweaty gyrations down the deo.

Each one marked a truly bizarre brain. As I said when the E.P. first appeared, they ooze with the morbid and lewd absurdity of a battered sensibility. You don't know whether to laugh or cry, feel offended or intimidated.

"British Tourist", for instance, took the notorious UK dislike for all things across the Channel to wildly excessive extremes.

"I'm a British tourist and I'm very, very rude/I hate the foreigners, hate their stinking food/I don't like French and Germans or care for Belgians much/But worst of all I hate the Dutch." Thereafter the land of windmills and (Dick Van) Dykes is hysterically caricatured. Bull Fawley gone berserk? There could only be one response.

Who is this guy and why is he doing this to us?

Mr. D. has in fact been a regular on the fringe theatre circuit since the early Seventies. But the story goes further back than that. He left school at 15 with a less-than-complimentary report from a puzzled headmaster. Then came a series of what you might call diverse jobs, including British Relay TV (as a part-time cleaner), working in "Ladies Dresses" and W. H. Smith. However, over to John.

"Actually the jobs I did were usually pretty staid and ordinary. W. H. Smith was my first one but I just treated it as a theatre 'cos I worked in the book department. You had all this scenery behind you — rows and rows of bookshelves — and an audience coming in and you'd just play to them."

I always got into a lot of trouble. People would ask for a walking map of the Penine district and I'd go through all the maps we had — which was millions — but I couldn't find one. I wanted. Can't help you, madam, but here's an A to Z of Birmingham. Then they'd get all angry and talk to the manager and he'd have a go at me.

"I just drifted around. I was pretty far — up as a teenager. Pretty isolated. When I was at school I had no conception of a job. I did at all took me a long time to find out other human beings who were not I. I could talk to. So I wrote . . . so much stuff — most of it was garbage — as a discipline. I'd write about five or six things a day."

Then in '72 he managed to pull off his first one-man show, A Midnight of Madness, at that time's cultural headwaters the Edinburgh Festival. It consisted mainly of character sketches.

"I look back I realise how good it was. I can't get back into that now. I've lost a lot of time, a lot of ability to perform that way. I used to do two or three songs on the piano but I can't play the piano so it wasn't really playing. It was banging away at chords and singing daft songs."

The sketches weren't satirical in terms of politics or other artists. I wasn't doing parodies of the O'Jays or something like that. I was enjoying everyday life.

But then, in 1973, I was a punter, a greengrocer, a heroics like a punter and a heroics like a punter.

There followed a tour of Holland (the Dutch phobia



JOHN DOWIE pictured by Barry Plummer

crazy world of John Dowie

becomes clearer?) and frequent assaults on the club circuit. He was responsible for three somewhat different magazines: The Weekly Gringer, How To Give Up Goats and Michael Caine Is Boring.

He was ejected from a regular spot on BBC Radio Birmingham after interpreting the activities of Winston Churchill, Neville Chamberlain and the Pope in a, ahem, fearfully modern way. Come '75 he formed a band — Mr. John Dowie and the Big Girl's Blouse. What was all that about, Johnny?

"Just to present more comedy ideas in a rock setting and to use a rock band as a medium for the ideas and make them more accessible. It didn't come off. It might have if we had worked at it for another three years but because of the difference between the band's idea of it all and my idea of it all — and I was the writer — it just became impossible. I let it fall apart."

The Blouse was finally shed in October of last year. One show, The Naked Obsession, that Dowie unveiled at London's Bush Theatre, contained a number which subsequently became a stage fave. The name is "Brian" which, if Virgin take up the 12-inch option, will appear on the projected album.

John: "In terms of what I do, it's a monster thing. It's about a lost Birmingham boy mourning his mate who's left

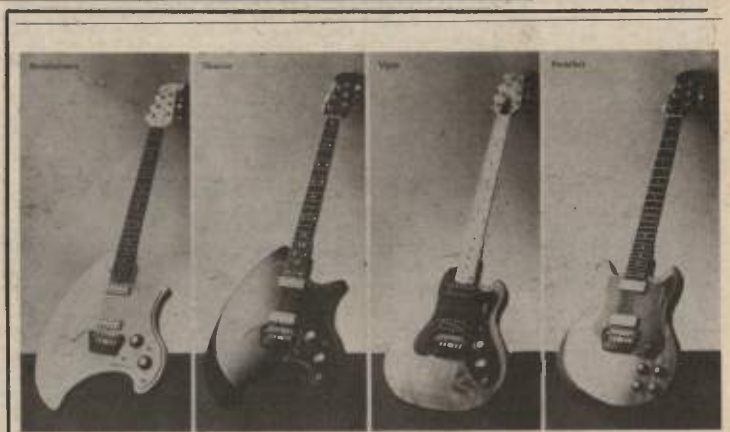
him. He's very into the lifestyle of being drunk all the time and going to seedy nightclubs and Indian restaurants."

"When you go to Indian restaurants and you're that kind of person, you start talking about dead dogs (there he broke into a lopsided smile) and looking out all the time for Pakistanis and queers to beat up without realising that — first you've met a Jewish group and — second — you're a latent homosexual."

"The biggest thing in your life is your mates and it's only a hair's-breadth away from being sexually compatible. Being in such a situation, if your mates are taken away from you, you don't exist anymore."

"Brian doesn't actually say the word skinhead in the song, but the image comes over as the old skinhead. It's about average Birmingham blokes who are either butchers or they work at Lucas's factory or Leylands, and they always have tailcoats and wear cheesecloth shirts rolled up to the elbow and very wide trousers and big brown boots, and drink a lot of beer and never have women, and they are very obnoxious. It's like that. But being funny, not heavy or political. A damn good song."

See what I mean about not quite knowing how to react? Does an outburst like this deserve a knee in the groin or a hearty belly laugh? Like



How Ovation took a hint from the 50's

You remember the Bands of the 50's. The sounds they made were exciting, raunchy and alive. But those sounds were heavy with hum and very rough and ready indeed.

Guitars in those early rock days were usually badly made even though they produced an amazing sound. Ovation have taken a hint from the 50's, added their own expertise and produced an amazing guitar. Great 50's sounds but without hum or background noise. It's called the Viper. Single pole pick-ups, 25 1/2 inch scale length, Schaller Machine Heads, light, contoured body, superb sustain. Really raunchy rock or a clean country sound.

The Breadwinner on the other hand, is built to give you tomorrow's sounds. It's the first solid body to have a built-in FET pre amp. This means that the low impedance double pole Ovation pick-ups can be used with a high impedance amp. Which produces less hum and more sound, a recording engineer's dream. There's an electronic notch switch which controls the phasing between pick-ups, producing some surprising mid range tone variations. It has an unusual shape that makes it really comfortable to play. The scale length is 24 1/2."

The Ovation Deacon is the beautiful deluxe version of the Breadwinner. And is also available as a twelve string.

Both the Breadwinner and the Deacon come in a selection of colours - White, Black, Tan, Red. The Deacon is also available in a sunburst finish.

If the Viper creates the sounds of the 50's. And the Breadwinner is the sound of tomorrow. Then the Ovation Preacher is definitely the guitar of the next century.

The sounds you can produce with it bring any sort of music to life. From jazz to the heaviest rock, sweet and bright sounds or as dirty as you like.

The new double pole pick-ups produce more sustain and virtually eliminate "noise" leaving only what the player intends. The Preacher can be played in stereo or mono and a split lead is provided. It has a double cut away for easy access to the top register and the fingerboard is semi-flat to give easy note pulling and bending. The scale length is 24 1/2."

All the Ovation solid bodies have Ovation Schaller Machine Heads. These are smooth and positive which means they don't slip or lose accuracy. They all have bronze bridges which improve sustain. They all have fully adjustable detachable necks. And plush lined cases are available to protect your investment.

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DENNIS RACKET AND THE NOISE BOYS: promising new wavers

Stafford: Andy Collier

THE superstar bands have come and gone from Stafford. Over the past few weeks, booking staff at the town's massive New Bingley Hall have been kept busy answering streams of letters and telephone calls from ardent rock fans. But now it's over.

Rainbow, in Stafford last Friday, have packed away their computerised stage set and high power p.a. and moved back into the wide world beyond. Yes, came, conquered and went very quickly. And even the rumoured ELP tour, which may have come to Stafford, seems to be off.

It's unlikely that the gigs coming up in the town in the next few weeks are going to attract crowds from far and wide. No-one of any real size has been booked into any venue in the area, and, as a result, heavy music freaks in the West Midlands would probably do far better to stick to Birmingham, Wolverhampton or Stoke for their evenings out.

The only up-and-coming gigs which, to my knowledge, would be of interest to the worldwide rock fraternity are appearances by the incredible Tom Robinson Band at the town's Top Of The World ballroom and by John Otway it — wait for it: the Stafford College of Further Education Christmas dance.

But the fact that Stafford doesn't always feature good bands doesn't mean that it doesn't produce them. And one group who are easily good enough to merit a record company sending a representative up to the town are a new wave outfit by the title of Dennis Racket and the Noise Boys.

The name may not ring a bell with punk freaks in the Stafford area. Because until only days ago the band were playing gigs under the name of Trash. The change came because of the success of another band called Trash with Polydor Records.

Okay, so Dennis and Co. ain't the 1977 answer to the Beatles or the Pistols. But there's no denying that they're easily good enough to break into the recording world. One helluva lot of worse bands now have contracts.

In the Stafford area, at least, the four lads who make up the group get a good response. And they're at last getting one of the breaks they need by obtaining bookings in places further away from home, including Coventry, Birmingham and Liverpool (they even hired a coach to take along supporters to that gig).

Onstage, Dennis Racket and the Noise Boys are as right a band as you'll hear on the new wave scene. Guitarist Steve Corfield is an exceptionally gifted player with a bright future; drummer Malcolm Asling batters his kit like there's no tomorrow. It's hard to believe they're not yet a pro outfit.

The band's attitude towards live gigs is, to say the least, interesting. "Live concerts are s--- compared to our practices," quoth bassist Iain Henderson. "At gigs we get p--- and here our sense of timing."

So why get smashed? The spontaneous answer from Hendy seems to sum up the attitude of the new wave scene in general. "Because it's fun."

However, I still maintain that some of the record company A&R men should move out of their little London dens and come up to Stafford to have a look at this band. If nothing else, they may see that we're not ALL uninvolved in this part of the world.

Bristol: Simon Kinnersley

VIOLENCE, catalysed by the obligatory rounds of shock / horror stories, has, over the past couple of months, been rapidly putting paid to the few remaining venues prepared to open their doors to punk bands and their spikyhead followers.

The Colston Hall, Tiffany's the Granary, Hippodrome and the University have, of course, had their shutters up for some time, but they are now joined by the Polytechnic, Redland College, the B.Q. Club and the Barton Hill Youth Club.

The closure of the B.Q. and Barton has proved the most serious blow, for although neither was big enough to accommodate any national bands, they provided regular work for all local acts, as well as offering the opportunity for any combo with sufficient pluck to chance their arm, however under-rehearsed or inexperienced. Lamentably, there is simply nowhere left for them to play.

Whilst this may not affect either the Cortinas, now incidentally, signed to CBS, or the Pop Group, where do Socialist Security, the Media, and the Android Pups go? The Primates obviously feel they've found the solution, as they've recently moved up to London; tragically, this seems to be the choice confronting them all.

It was while attempting some kind of personal reenactment of the Lost Weekend, that I stumbled across the ominously named Dockland Settlement Centre, in the city's red light district.

The musical events that are apparently held there from time to time take place in an ill-appointed gymnasium at the back of the place, filled largely with washed up renegades from the Sixties — all faded loons and tank hair. It exuded all the jovial bonhomie of a refugee camp awaiting deportation.

Anyway, on stage were a

band by the name of Uncle Po, whose most recent claim to fame was the second place they took in a talent contest sponsored by a deodorant firm.

I was reliably informed prior to the gig that they had changed greatly since I had previously seen them and had had their hair cut.

It must be conceded straightaway that they sounded considerably better than they looked — ghastly Alice Cooper eye make-up circa "School's Out" — but whilst the inclusion of violin and keyboards, provided by a particularly accomplished lady, offers all manner of possibilities and permutations, one can't help being more than a little suspicious of a band neither was big enough to accommodate any national bands, they provided regular work for all local acts, as well as offering the opportunity for any combo with sufficient pluck to chance their arm, however under-rehearsed or inexperienced. Lamentably, there is simply nowhere left for them to play.

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intercity

MM correspondents report from Britain's

provincial music centres

Birmingham: Mike Davies

BIRMINGHAM's song of the week must be Garbo's new single on Big Bear, "Only Death Is Fatal." Garbo is a six piece band fronted by Chris Garbo — no, I'm not even going to suggest a link between him and what's-her-name — and they succeeded in splashing a wall of hyperbole across my lips when I caught them live a few weeks ago.

Garbo, the man, started out as a soloist very much in the romantic balladeer tradition before he succumbed to this wasn't exactly the best of directions.

Now as the front man to a rock band he's very much on the way up.

The set I saw featured some magically comendable quality rockers, particularly, "Beauty And The Beast" and the forthcoming single, but they added that extra touch of variety with "Sandy," a beautifully emotive ballad and the country-rock based "Too Blind To See," which Rod Stewart is considering recording. If he does, he could well repeat the "Maggie May" story.

Offstage, Chris played me an impromptu acoustic set and confirmed my suspicions that this was grade A talent.

When you hear songs like "Baby Cadillac," "Show Us A Leg Sister" or the moving "Still Believing," you'll see what I mean.

One of my prize possessions is a record called "I Was Her Cowboy" by folk rock duo Evenstrong from umpteen years ago. Mick Lawson was half of the combination, and I was at the reception to launch him as a solo act after he split from the (not very) amazing Dark Horse.

Naturally, I was particularly delighted to hear the number again, but more excited by his newer material, particularly an emotional melterwerk called "Graban In The Storm." He's not got the most distinctive voice around but it does have a compulsive edge to it, not unlike Cat Stevens at times.

Judging from enquiries I've had of late, it seems that there's still a loyal following out there for Raymond Froggatt, but I'm sorry to have to say that the "Memphis Moon" album I wrote about last time doesn't after all, appear to be coming out.

However, Froggy's just finished up an

RAYMOND FROGGATT: recorded a Nashville album

album in Nashville with Kenny Rogers' back-up band, and he's lined up to tour both Europe (including Wembley) and the States with Carl Perkins.

Hooker consistently play great gigs, and their set at Barbarella's last week only served to emphasise the fact that they're tighter than ever.

How numbers like "Scream," "Hail Mary," "Man In The Front" and "Motorbikes" (AKA "She Can Share In Your Disgrace") can be denied access to your turntables is beyond me.

James Langston must have one of the most distinctive set of vocal cords in the business — and still zero. Myself, they self-promoted single due to be recorded this weekend will change their fortunes.

Before this episode turns into a rival to War And Peace, I'll just say watch out for the Killloys, they'll eat the new wave alive; mekenen a band called Cody (actually they're from Newcastle, but if they have to send tapes to Radio Birmingham to get attention, be it) who could split your senses apart and leave you with what must be the best name to emerge this year: Saturday night at the Barrel Organ in Digby with Brent Ford and the Nylons. All right, pop pickers?

Edinburgh: Robin Macwhirter

THERE was a time, not so many years ago, when, in a back room at the Crown Bar in Lothian Street, Edinburgh, you could catch Robin Williamson and Clive Palmer playing traditional Scottish jigs and bango raps as Robin and Clive.

Mike Heron would probably be in the audience and would soon join forces with the other two to bring about the Incredible String Band.

On the same folk night, a gaunt young Glaswegian, Bert Janach, would bend incoherently over his "box" and stutter out "Runnin' Runnin' From Home" and "Needle Of Death."

Then you might be treated to one of the most captivating voices in British folk: Anne Briggs.

Does it sound like exaggeration to say that Dave Graham could follow, injecting the North African or jazz or blues influences into the atmosphere which made him one of the most important eminences grises of the folk and rock explosion of the Sixties?

With the appearance of Anne Briggs and Bert Janach at the last Edinburgh Festival, with Mike Heron back living in Scotland and playing Tiffany's recently and Robin's Merry Band glimpsed on the horizon, it could be said that some kind of circle is completing itself and, hopefully, starting a new revolution.

Since the heyday of the Edinburgh folk scene things have slumped a bit, and I don't put it down entirely to the appearance one summer of Joe Boyd of Elektra Records flourishing contracts and whisking local talent off across the big water.

No, I blame it on those town councillors and University principals (I'm thinking of the late Sir Michael Swenson, who master-minded the new University campus) who have so efficiently destroyed and redeveloped old Edinburgh.

Talking to Billy Connolly's manager, Frank Lynch, of Unicorn Enterprises in Glasgow, about the mysterious second release of ZOOM records (a triple 'A' side called "Pain" / "Put You In The Picture" / "Deranged, Demented And Free") by a group called PVC2, I found this was in fact SLIK, a Unicorn-managed band, which Bruce



SLIK: recorded a single as PVC2

Findlay wanted to record as a follow-up to the Valves' single.

Frank shattered another record biz myth (the one about how you need expensive studios to get it all together) when he pointed across the room at a domestic Bevox and confirmed this as the machine which immortalised PVC2 and one particular piece of Scottish culture.

Overheard at Mike Heron's Tiffany's gig (during one of the codas when Malcolm's Maistre was releasing coloured streamers on stage with the spontaneous joy of an undertaker at a Slates Bippy be-in), two members of that legendary but enigmatic local group East-West:

Stuart Smith, bass player, to drummer Dave Swanson: "Do you hear about Blag?"

Dave Swanson: "Yeah, a shame. But have you heard the good news?"

Stuart: "No."

Dave: "Glenn Miller just landed in France."

If you think that joke out of date, you must remember the lads got their newspapers at secondhand from the dustbins. If you think it unfunny, you should have heard Malcolm's Maistre.

Liverpool: Dave Boardman

THE Liverpool scene is still very much alive and kicking — or should I say it's alive and kicking again.

Not since the days of the Cavern has Liverpool been so alive. But now the Cavern is gone — making way for the other underground, the railway — Litherland Town Hall now longer features on the concert venue list, the days when all was beat music have been superseded by the days when all music is heard.

In the past week there have been rock, jazz, r&b, folk, classical and even medieval music concerts in Liverpool, and you can't get more varied than that.

The atmosphere rivals that of the early Sixties even Merseyside County Council are hoping to keep open the Royal Court or the Empire — the city's two big venues, both threatened with permanent closure.

The biggest club for local or touring bands is Eric's, a descendant of the Cavern, just across Mathew Street, the second club in the country to accept punk rockers, and one of the first to see the end of the road for punk.

The man in charge, Roger Eagle, says: "Punk has been gone for six months. Eric's is a music club — we have the Buzzcocks on mood — but we take the best on the music scene. We have r&b on Sundays and on Thursdays we are going to have an audition night for our own label."

One locally recorded band, Manseilles, got a lot of airplay with their single "Do It The French Way" on Radio City, the local rival to the BBC.

Spiffires, Yachts and a lot more are ready.

Another band hoping to record soon are Thunderbolts, managed by a man called Jimmy Weir.

They have a Thursday residency at the Star and Garter, just around the corner from the Sportsman, where Supercharge started out.

Every pub in Liverpool has a band, and they range from

the Triton, Paradise Street, where the Spinners can be seen on Mondays, to the Coffee House, Wavertree, with the excellent Blue Magnolia Jazz Band and the Masonic, where the Front Line appear on Fridays.

From Live are an eight piece jazz-rock group of music students who are the best band I have ever seen in the lounge of a pub.

There are jazz nights all through the week at Kirklands and Chaucer's, Hardman Street, New Court Bar, Sir Thomas Street, and others, and folk clubs everywhere. Gregson's Well is the oldest, having been there before the Spinners took it over years ago.

In the suburbs are an abundance of clubs run by men like Alan Ward, whose ambition is to rival the Hope and Anchor in his native London. He started a successful acoustic music club in the Royal Oak, Prescot, and is hoping to build his new pub, The Taylors in Litherland, into something really big.

His favourite local band is Gradis, a blues-oriented jug band who play all over North Wales and the North-West, but have not quite made the break yet.

Another man on the local music scene is Steve McLean, sole member of Dingbat Management Inc, who wants to open the old Gaumont cinema as a rock venue, but has had no luck from owners EMI.

For touring bands there are places like Mr. Digby's, the Swinging Apple, Wood Street, which still features punk, no matter what Mr. Eagle says, and Kirklands, Kirklands is a wine bar, recently visited by George Melly for a gig and Joan Armatrading for a drink.

The Empire is still going, and last week saw Graham Parker, Tim Lizzy and Elkie Brooks, whose "Pearl's A Singer" sums up a lot of Liverpool musicians. There are so many, they have to end up like Pearl, but, unlike Pearl, some will make it. I predict that jazz will be next out of

Liverpool.

The Pistols played the Florde in November '76, but it was an agency deal, unadvertised and generally misunderstood, by punters and bar staff alike.

The Strangers played there in November '76 — referred to as "shock rock" — in the days when Hugh Corfield wore make-up. Entry cost 30p, and that was only if you could find someone to pay.

Throughout this summer, the Polytechnic promoted new wave nights, an ambitious gamble which paid off.

Even for peripheral bands, maximum attendances were guaranteed, people came for the magic of the event — the name of the band was more or less irrelevant.

Then the students came back. Their needs had to be catered for, security came to be tougher, academic barricades separated the street kids from the young intelligentsia. And the people who didn't want to understand the new music beat it back to the games rooms.

It was left to the Leeds F Club to pick up the pieces and provide the city's rock 'n' roll future. It projects like a strip/caharet joint, but it's a bizarre, eccentric venue rather than a bad one, and it has already demonstrated that it has the qualifications to flourish, not just to survive.

When that promise is secure, the Leeds and district bands — SOS, Cynsile, Strangeways — can capitalise on NOT having made a 12 inch single, on having been at the end of the queue and unnoticed in those precious A&R days of last winter and Spring.

They can make the inevitable punk disconnection credible while many of the country's transiently successful 1977 bands will remain committed to the shallow ties of their back pages.



STRANGLERS' HUGH CORNWELL in ake-up, Leeds 1976

Leeds: Nigel Kime

LEEDS' contribution to the chronology of new wave/punk rock is probably best symbolised by its being the first city the Pistols played on their Anarchy In The U.K. tour.

After that, the Heartbreakers' police trouble — note the clues and the credits on the "I.A.M.F." cover — comes a close second.

Neither event is exactly likely to immortalise Leeds' role in 1977, but they nevertheless seem to enhance the reputation of a city best remembered for an old Who album and the ludicrous deceitful count.

The town's homegrown music contributors have found the going tough in this year of phenomena, and as yet, none of the local bands have made much of a splash in the new wave stakes.

Essentially, Leeds' problem as a "rock centre" isn't that it can't make a contribution, but rather that it's not expected to.

Until recently, Leeds Polytechnic was the only venue to read the 1977 scene anywhere near accurately. The Poly's accidentally-in-touch predecessor was the Florde Green Hotel, the venue that a band on the make is more or less obliged to play first, if a shot at the Poly or University is ever going to be on the cards.

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