

Melody Maker

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ROTTEN, GABRIEL GO PUBLIC FOR XMAS

JOHNNY ROTTEN is set to play his first live concerts since the break-up of the Sex Pistols when his new band, Public Image Ltd., play two special shows at London's Rainbow Theatre on Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

The capacity of the Rainbow is to be specially increased for the gigs by taking out all 1,800 stall seats. Permission was expected to be granted this week by the G.L.C.'s Public Services Committee, meaning that 1,800 people will be able to stand downstairs and nearly 1,200 to sit upstairs for the two shows.

The concerts, an ironic reminder of the Sex Pistols' last tour of Britain when they played on Christmas Day last year, were described by the Rainbow as "family shows", and will feature top comedians including, it is said, Norman Wisdom. Crash barriers are to be put up and 60 stewards will control the audience.

Public Image Ltd's first single, "Public Image", is due out on October 13 and they have also been working on an album, but it seems unlikely that this will be released before the New Year.

PETER GABRIEL plays four Christmas shows at London's Hammersmith Odeon following two American tours and an excursion into Europe.

The shows, following Gabriel's success at Knebworth 2 and the Stranglers' Battersea Park concert, are on December 20, 21, 22 and 23, and will feature Gabriel with his band — Sid McInnis (guitar), Larry Fast (synthesizer), Timmy Capello (keyboards), Jerry Marotta (drums) and Tony Levin (bass).

A support band for the shows, which will be Gabriel's only British dates for the rest of 1978, will be announced in the next few weeks. Before the Christmas show Gabriel and his band spend most of their time in America on two tours separated by only four days.

He goes into the studio early next year to record the follow-up to his current album "Peter Dinklage".

Tickets for Hammersmith, priced at £3.75, £3.25 and £2.75, go on sale on October 5 by personal application at the Odeon box office or Harvey Goldsmith's box office at Chappell's, 50 New Bond Street, London W1.



JOAN ALONE
(p.31)



ELVIS COSTELLO at Brockwell Park (pic. RORY PLUMMER)

CARNIVAL 2:

'As politicians get increasingly concerned with the question of how best to stamp on people, the Anti-Nazi Carnival was a great gesture of generosity'

Reports by **SIMON FRITH**
and **CHRIS BRAZIER** (p.37)

Lenny Kaye
reviews
this week's
singles (p.17)



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Forthcoming attractions: Alfassi, Knowledge, City Boy, N. Young, Erita, D. Ross, Sham 68, Jan. B.J.M., J. Anwaradinn, Black Sabbath, Pat Travers, Eno, Jean-Michel Jarre, 899, Rush, Status Quo, Hawkwind, Beeleey Span, J. Covington, Racing Cars, Al Stewart, Chicago, Blue Oyster Cult, G. Giltrap, Peter Tooh, Richard Wright, Jan Gorum, Dr. Hook, D. Summer, Cliff Richard, Siobhan and Sarahs, Beatles 1962-68 (Red Vinyl), 1967-70 (Blue Vinyl), Fabulous Poodles, Fleetwood Mac, XTC, Penetration, George Thorogood.

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COSTELLO IN BACKSTAGE CLAMOR

A JOURNALIST claims to have been assaulted in a backstage incident at an Elvis Costello concert in Liverpool last Saturday night — the night before Costello appeared at the Anti-Nazi League Carnival in London.

Costello, who is working on material for his next album, "Emotional Fascism," was playing at the New Brighton Grand Hotel in Birkenhead, his home town. Birkenhead journalist Mike Simpson, who planned to cover the concert for national music papers as well as his own paper, went backstage to talk to Costello after the show.

The journalist was pushed down a staircase and knocked unconscious. When he came round he needed treatment for a broken right wrist and a head wound requiring five stitches.

"I am seeking legal advice, and may take

out a civil claim," said Simpson, who claimed he was only asking Costello a few questions and that he was struck in the face after Costello's manager, Jake Kilviera, had said that he didn't have time for journalists.

A spokesman for Costello and Riviera said they were unavailable for comment, but added: "If he says someone has hit him, he should go to the police and press charges."

Costello and the Attractions released a new single on October 20, "Radio Radio," their third on Radar Records and follow-up to "Pump It Up." This follows reports that the band are planning a British tour in December.

"Radio Radio" is previously unreleased in Britain although it was featured on the American version of "This Year's Model," which omitted "Night Rally" and "Chisles." The B-side is "Tiny Steps," a new song recorded during the sessions for "Emotional Fascism." The single will not be on the album.

The band are now completing a BBC 2 documentary for the Arena series with director Alisa Yeatoh who was responsible for the David Bowie Cracked Actor programme.

Elton's 'Single'

ELTON JOHN's new album, his first for two years, is released on October 20, called "A Single Man," preceded by a single, "I Cry At Night," next Friday. The follow-up to "Blue Moves" is the album is the first he has ever released without any songs written with Bernie Taupin, although John has denied that there is any permanent split.

His new songwriting partner, Gary Osborne, co-wrote nine of the 11 songs, the other two being solo compositions by John.

Devo are coming

DEVO WILL be touring Britain in late November and December, their first British appearance since they played at the first Knowlton festival earlier this year with Genesis. Concerts are being set up at the country's main venues, but the full tour dates are not likely to be announced for a while.

The Cars are planning to play a series of dates in Britain probably the first week of November, although no venues have yet been confirmed.

Battle for 'disco' Sparks

SEVERAL British record companies are currently involved in a fight to sign Sparks, the American brothers who had a big hit in 1974 with "This Town Ain't Big Enough For Both Of Us" on the Island label.

The renewed interest in the group is caused by the fact that the newest tracks have been supervised by Giorgio Moroder. Donna Summer's producer. The results are said to be sensational disco music and, ironically, at least one of their former record companies (which also include Bearsville and CBS) is among the bidders.

NEW VOICES

SIMON Frith, who writes about the ANL R&B Carnival 2 and reviews the new Buzzcocks album in this week's issue, is an excellent choice for a series of lectures at Warwick University. The co-compiler, with Charlie Gillett, of the Rock File paperback series, he also contributes to New Village in London, the Village Voice in New York and Cream in Detroit. His book, The Sociology Of Rock, has just been published and will be reviewed in these pages shortly.

HACKETT SOLO TOUR DATES

STEVE HACKETT, the guitarist who left Genesis last year, starts his first tour on October 23 at Cardiff University, ending with one night at London's Hammersmith Odeon on October 30.

Hackett is backed by a band put together for the tour that includes his brother, John Hackett, on flute and guitar, Peter Hicks on lead vocals, Dick Cadbury on bass, John Shearer on drums and Nick Magnus on keyboards.

John Hackett, who played Chester Apollo (24), Glasgow Apollo (26), Aylesbury Friars (28), Birmingham Odeon (29), London Hammersmith Odeon (30).

Hackett is backed by a band put together for the tour that includes his brother, John Hackett, on flute and guitar, Peter Hicks on lead vocals, Dick Cadbury on bass, John Shearer on drums and Nick Magnus on keyboards.

The tour dates are: Cardiff University (October 23), Manchester Apollo (24), Glasgow Apollo (26), Aylesbury Friars (28), Birmingham Odeon (29), London Hammersmith Odeon (30).

Pop for prisoners

THE POP Group are set to play a series of concerts to raise money for Amnesty International, which is holding a Prisoners of Conscience week from October 15 to 22. The week is intended to highlight the position of the majority of the 500,000 prisoners throughout the world who receive no press coverage.

The band, who will give out literature on Amnesty international and prisoners of conscience at each gig, play Bristol University Anson Rooms (October 2), Swansea Cricilly (4), Manchester Factory (6), and London Electric Ballroom (12).

Jackson returning

MILLIE JACKSON returns to Britain for the first time at the beginning of November that ends with two nights at London's Hammersmith Odeon.

Problems played Saturday's Reggae Festival at London's Alexandra Palace. Out of all the bill, only one band actually performed: MATUMBI, pictured above. (Pic: PETER MURPHY/CLAIRE HERSHMAN)

RORY GALLAGHER (Pic: COSTELLO/L.F.I.)

Gallagher opens new rock venue

A MAJOR new venue in the Midlands, capable of taking 25,000 people, opens on December 9 with a concert by Rory Gallagher. The National Exhibition Centre, just outside Birmingham, is to have £500,000 spent on lighting, seats and acoustic improvements and looks set to become the major Midlands rock venue.

No other gigs have yet been confirmed at the centre, but Rod Stewart is widely expected to play at least one date there on his December tour.

Although the centre could hold 25,000 people, audiences are probably going to be limited to between five and 12,000 initially.

Another new small venue opens in Birmingham on Monday, October 2, called The Gig. The venue will stage two shows a week at first, rock on Mondays and new wave on Thursdays, although the organisers hope to present live gigs five or six nights a week eventually.

The Gig opens with Crawler, followed by the Doomed on October 5 and Supercharge on October 9. Other bands booked include Wayne County and the Electric Chairs (19), Marshall (23), Radio Stars (November 2), Racing Cars (6), and Adam and the Ants (9). It has a capacity of 1,400 and is licensed from 8p.m. until 2a.m.

The Leeds Fan Club, which closed a month ago after pressure from local residents on the licensing authority following complaints about noise, reopens next week in a new venue. Promoter John Keenan has moved the club to the cellar bar of Brannigans, a club at Lower Bridge, Leeds 1, and opens at the new site on Monday with Ultravox.

More Manlow

BARRY MANLOW has added four more dates at the London Palladium after his two original shows sold out within 24 hours. The extra concerts, which have meant a rescheduling of Manlow's European tour, run from October 11 to 14. He now plays six consecutive dates, from October 9 to 14, and tickets are on sale now for the Palladium and agents.

Pere Ubu returning

PERE UBU return to Britain in November for a tour that runs for a month, ending at Edinburgh University on December 8. The probable first of the tour will be at Newcastle University on November 18. A second album, completed last summer, is due to be released in tie in with the tour.

Sweet backing

RACHEL SWEET, the Akron teenager who forms part of the Be Still tour, is to be backed by the band, the Birchs' band the Records.

The band are also to play their own set on the tour, which has had six extra dates added at Plymouth Polytechnic (October 14), Penrith Cheaters (28), Belfast Queens University (29), Dublin Stardust (30), Newcastle University (November 5), and Bournemouth Village Bowl (15). Mickey Jupp is unable to play his warm-up date at the Sweet at London's Nashville on September 28 as his hand will still be in Germany. A surprise guest is planned.

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DYLAN PRODUCER WILSON DIES

TOM WILSON, the record producer who helped Bob Dylan to make his first "electric" records, has died of heart disease in Los Angeles at the age of 47.

Wilson took over the supervision of Dylan's recording career from John Hammond in 1964 and assisted in the making of the massively influential "Bringing It All Back Home" and "Highway 61 Revisited" albums.

Prior to joining CBS as a staff producer, Wilson had operated his own label, Transition Records, in Boston, producing important records by jazz musicians like Sun Ra, John Coltrane and Cecil Taylor. In the mid-1960s he was active in folk-rock, adding the electric backing to Simon and Garfunkel's "The Sound Of Silence" — and thus giving the duo their first hit.

release of their single and a British tour. Manager Alan Edwards said: "The coalition of old and new wave was not a lasting mix. The whole idea of the new wave was to appeal to a punk element and an older element. It never really worked."

BUDGIE have once more become a threesome after the departure of Tony Burrows. The trio, consisting of Budgie, Budgie and Budgie, have replaced Burrows, and the band are set to start an autumn tour on October 12. Dates are: Liverpool Empire (12), Plymouth Coliseum (13), Crofton Greyhound (15), Southampton Gaumont (17), Plymouth Metro (18), Lancaster University (2), Glasgow Strathclyde University Civic Hall (23), Cardiff University (25), Swansea University (26), Hull University (28), Birmingham Odeon (29), Manchester Apollo (30), Birmingham Odeon (31), Brighton Tropicana (November 1), St. Albans Civic Hall (3), Derby Assembly Room (6), London Hammersmith Odeon (7), Maidstone College (10), West Ruxton Pavilion (12), Sheffield Top Rank (12).

THE DOOMED, who were three-quarters of the original Damned, have formed into a full-time outfit after their debut at London's Electric Ballroom recently, and Tenz Der Youth, the group founded by the 'Damned' guitarist Brian James, has split up. Dave Vanian, Rat Scabies and Captain Sensible have teamed up with bassist Henry Badowski, who played with Sensible in King, to form the Doomed as a fairly permanent venture, and the Doomed tour through October with concerts planned later in the year for Europe. The band are: Plymouth Metro (Friday), Newport Showways (October 4), Birmingham Gyp (5), Bedford Portershouse (6), Leeds, venue to be confirmed (10), Canterbury, venue to be confirmed (12), Manchester Mayflower (13), Oxford University (14), Garden (14), London Royal College of Art (18), Brighton University (20), Manchester Poly (21), Peterborough Focus Club (21). The Doomed are currently said to be negotiating a new record deal.

SUPERCHARGE return from Australia to head out on a tour this week. Dates are: Swansea Nitz Club (Thursday), Birmingham Poly (Friday), Bradford University (Saturday), London Marquee (October 3), Manchester De La Salle Club (6), Kingston Poly (7), Birmingham Gyp (8), London North East Poly (13), Dudley JB's (14), Nottingham Grey Topper (15), London Central Poly (20), and London Music Machine (27).

TANZ DER YOUTH broke up on the eve of the

..C.news

THE satire of Led Zeppelin's "Stairway to Heaven" by local favourites Little Roger and the Goosebumps, "Gilligan's Island (Stairway)," has apparently hit the target. Not only did radio stations across the country jump on the band's homegrown single, but the record rapidly sold through every pressing the impoverished Goosebumps could afford.

But the bull's eye was scored when the band received a letter from lawyers representing Led Zeppelin, threatening a suit. Apparently Zeppelin found nothing funny about the Goosebumps coupling the music from Zepp's venerable number with the lyrics from the theme song to Gilligan's Island, the tacky TV sitcom of several seasons ago.

"Stairway to Heaven" is a serious musical composition," read the letter from law firm Phillips, Nizer, Benjamin, Kruttschnitt and Ballou, "widely regarded as one of the most significant contributions to contemporary music. It has received international acclaim for artistic achievement. As demonstrated by the magnitude of album sales and frequency of airplay, it is among the most valuable properties owned by our client. Certainly you and anyone ever peripherally involved in the popular music must be aware of the foregoing."

We believe that the release of "Gilligan's Island (Stairway)" is a deliberate attempt to expropriate our client's property and that it will substantially diminish the value of our client's composition and at the same time mock the artists who originally wrote and recorded "Stairway to Heaven."

The song, which has been a part of the Goosebumps stage show for the last three years, was recorded in London and San Francisco by Berkeley Records producers Matthew Kaufman, Kenny Laguna and Glen Krolchin, using members of Earth Quake on the instrumental tracks. The Goosebumps version shortened the eight-minute Zeppelin opus to a tidy three-minute and 17-second. The band issued the record in northern California on their own label, Splash Records.

CITING rising costs, the changing concert scene and neighbourhood pressure, producer Bill Graham announced the closing of Winterland at the end of this year in a letter last week to a number of Bay Area

ZEP SORE OVER SPOOF HIT

headline performers. In the same letter, he invited the groups to appear at concerts in Winterland throughout the month of December, with both Graham and the bands donating £1000 each to the Haight-Ashbury Free Medical Clinic from every concert. He hopes to mount at least 12 shows during December, which, with the additional £1000 contribution Graham offered, would raise £25,000 for the clinic.

AFTER a whirlwind European tour that included a performance at the Reading Festival, the Greg Kihn Band headed out for a six-week trek across the U.S. last as his third album, "Next Of Kihn," was released in this country. Kihn is developing quite a following in the Bay Area, where more than 900 people packed into his most recent engagement at Keystone Berkeley, where the capacity is normally 500.

HERBIE Hancock backed Joni Mitchell for a couple numbers during Labour Day weekend's second annual Bread And Roses Festival at UC-Berkeley's Greek Theatre. Where more than 9,000 fans crowded into each of the three days. Also appearing at the all-acoustic music festival, intended to benefit a programme of free concerts for hospitals and prisons, was Mimi Fariña (festival organizer), Kenny Rankin, David

San Francisco: Joel Selvin



LED ZEPPELIN'S JIMMY PAGE (Pic: ROBERT ELLIS)

Bromberg Band, Dirt Band, Mickey Newbury, Steve Goodman, Hoyt Axton, "Rambles" Jack Elliott, Tom Paxton, Tim Hardin, Bob Gibson, Hamilton Camp, Steve Stills, Al Stewart and Melanie.

for an overflow crowd at UC-Berkeley's Sproul Plaza, the site of many Sixties political protests.

SONGWRITER Ron Nagle ("Don't Touch Me There," "Don't Believe It," "Not Tonight," etc.) was awarded the prestigious Adeline Kent Award, presented annually since 1959 to "a talented, promising and deserving California artist." An exhibition of Nagle's ceramic sculptures, for which he won the award, will be held throughout October at the San Francisco Art Institute.

TALKING Heads sold out all four Boarding House shows last weekend two weeks in advance and delivered a sure-footed, heavy-duty performance based on the band's novel and distinctive sound. The band also performed a free concert the following Monday



DAVID JOHANSEN (Pic: BOB GRUEN)

New York: Stanley Mieses

THE David Johansen Group played their last weekend in the New York metropolitan area before preparing for their first European tour, which includes Britain on the schedule for November. Fellow ex-Doll Sylvain Sylvain is now fully integrated into the group, and his presence gives the vocal harmonies a lift.

David and Syl have already worked out new material which they will preview in Europe and then record upon

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Johansen's dry run for Europe tour

their return. The group's weekend stint at My Father's Place, a popular Long Island club, was attended by Paul Simonon and Mick Jones of the Clash (who are also in town finalising the mix on their new album) and everyone else who chose to pass up the All fight or the Yankees' baseball game.

Those who couldn't make it out to the suburbs that night satisfied their Dollsmania at Max's Kansas City, where the lines wrapped around the block at 2am for the Hearbreakers.

THE Electric Light Orchestra brought their gigantic spaceship and other accoutrements to a packed Madison Square Garden. Their sound is still easy to listen to, though perhaps the formula has become a little too pat for them; I found my mind wandering a bit at times. The group has made the big jump into the merchandising and marketing arena, but I for one hope that in future ELO won't play so much to their T-shirted adherents.

ONE of the most talked-about (even if it's just us) albums of the fall season is the new Staples record, "Unlock Your Mind." The production by Jerry Wester and Barry Beckett is first-rate, and so is the song selection. Mavis Staples, who looked even better than she did in The Last Waltz, never sounded better than she does on this album. It's receiving strong airplay here on both rock and R&B stations.

WARNER BROTHERS are planning a big push for Van Morrison prior to his November 2 date at the Palladium. From the sound of his new single, "Wavelength," it's well-deserved. This week Van's new manager, Bill Graham, and WB held a "listening" party for press and radio people, and the general consensus was that Van is past his "period of transition" and back into a highly contagious groove.

ONE of the more curious developments in the area of new wave music has been the affection several wealthy patrons have shown for it. In fact, more than a few groups are managing to stay alive by accepting private gigs in lofts owned by various successful artists who like to throw punk parties. What this punk creative-elite coalition might produce is hard to tell at this point, and where it's at politically is something else to ponder, but since CBGB's has been run into the ground and Max's is packed out featuring bigger name groups, the plight of the punk rocker has been taken up by the well-heeled hip.

Deep in all of us, there's a little piece of Purple

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Their EP "New, Live & Rare," a magnificent showcase for the virtuosity of soloists Jon Lord and Ritchie Blackmore is exactly what it claims to be. The Rare is an obscure studio cut of "Coronarias Redig. The Live is an explosive version of "Mr. Treasured." And the new is the best edit yet of their classic, "Bum'.

"New, Live & Rare Vol 2." An historic EP from Deep Purple.

Without them, we wouldn't be where we are today.



VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

DEEP PURPLE 'NEW LIVE & RARE VOL 2'



Burri-Coronarias Redig-
Mistreated
E.P. FRONT.

PUR137

EMI

LIMITED EDITION IN
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The charts

US Charts courtesy Cashbox

Top Thirty Singles

- 1 (16) **SUMMER NIGHTS**
John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John, RSO
- 2 (2) **DREADLOCK HOLIDAY**
10cc, Mercury
- 3 (15) **LOVE DON'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE** ... Rose Royce, Whitfield
- 4 (11) **GREASE** ... Frankie Valli, RSO
- 5 (6) **KISS YOU ALL OVER**
Exile, RAK
- 6 (1) **THREE TIMES A LADY**
Commodores, Motown
- 7 (4) **OH WHAT A CIRCUS**
David Essex, Mercury
- 8 (3) **JILTED JOHN** Jilted John, EMI
- 9 (14) **SUMMER NIGHT CITY**
Abba, Epic
- 10 (5) **HONG KONG GARDEN**
Siouxsie and the Banshees, Polydor
- 11 (9) **PICTURE THIS**
Blondie, Chrysalis
- 12 (18) **YOU MAKE ME FEEL (MIGHTY REAL)** ... Sylvester, Fantasy
- 13 (7) **BROWN GIRL IN A RING/RIVERS OF BABYLON** Boney M., Atlantic
- 14 (—) **I CAN'T STOP LOVIN' YOU**
Leo Sayer, Chrysalis
- 15 (12) **AGAIN AND AGAIN**
Status Quo, Vertigo
- 16 (—) **LUCKY STARS**
Dean Friedman, Life Song
- 17 (10) **IT'S RAINING** ... Darts, Magnet
- 18 (27) **NOW THAT WE FOUND LOVE**
Third World, Island
- 19 (8) **BRITISH HUSTLE**
Hi-Tension, Island
- 20 (22) **FORGET ABOUT YOU**
Motors, Virgin
- 21 (—) **BLAME IT ON THE BOOGIE**
Jacksons, Epic
- 22 (19) **AN EVERLASTING LOVE**
Andy Gibb, RSO
- 23 (29) **WINKER'S SONG**
Ivor Biggun, Beggars Banquet
- 24 (17) **I THOUGHT IT WAS YOU**
Herbie Hancock, CBS
- 25 (14) **YOU'RE THE ONE THAT I WANT**
John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John, RSO
- 26 (13) **SUPERNATURE**
Cerrone, Atlantic
- 27 (—) **HAVE YOU EVER FALLEN IN LOVE** Buzzcocks, United Artists
- 28 (20) **GALAXY OF LOVE**
Crown Heights Affair, Mercury
- 29 (—) **TALKING IN YOUR SLEEP**
Crystal Gayle, United Artists
- 30 (—) **BAMA BOOGIE WOOGIE**
Cleveland Eton, Gull

U.S. Singles

- 1 (1) **BOOGIE OOGIE OOGIE**
A Taste Of Honey, Capitol
- 2 (2) **KISS YOU ALL OVER** Exile, Curb
- 3 (5) **SUMMER NIGHTS**
John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John, RSO
- 4 (3) **HOPELESSLY DEVOTED TO YOU**
Olivia Newton-John, RSO
- 5 (9) **REMINISCING**
Little River Band, Harvest
- 6 (10) **HOT CHILD IN THE CITY**
Nick Gilder, Chrysalis
- 7 (8) **DON'T LOOK BACK** Boston, Epic
- 8 (4) **THREE TIMES A LADY**
Commodores, Motown
- 9 (6) **HOT BLOOD** Foreigner, Atlantic
- 10 (13) **YOU NEEDED ME**
Anne Murray, Capitol
- 11 (12) **WHENEVER I CALL YOU 'FRIEND'** Kenny Loggins, Columbia
- 12 (7) **AN EVERLASTING LOVE**
Andy Gibb, RSO
- 13 (18) **RIGHT DOWN THE LINE**
Gerry Rafferty, United Artists
- 14 (17) **HOLLYWOOD NIGHTS**
Bob Seger, Capitol
- 15 (16) **YOU AND I** Rick James, Gordy
- 16 (21) **LOVE IS IN THE AIR**
John Paul Young, Scotti Bros.
- 17 (21) **WHO ARE YOU** ... Who, MCA
- 18 (11) **GREASE** ... Frankie Valli, RSO



MICK JAGGER

- 19 (22) **BACK IN THE USA**
Linda Ronstadt, Asylum
- 20 (15) **SHAME**
Evelyn "Champagne" King, RCA
- 21 (24) **COME TOGETHER**
Aerosmith, Columbia
- 22 (14) **GOT TO GET YOU INTO MY LIFE**
Earth, Wind and Fire, Columbia
- 23 (29) **YOU NEVER DONE IT LIKE THAT**
Captain and Tennille, A&M
- 24 (25) **OH DARLING** Robin Gibb, RSO
- 25 (28) **GET OFF** ... Foxy, Dash
- 26 (30) **SHE'S ALWAYS A WOMAN**
Billy Joel, Columbia
- 27 (—) **BEAST OF BURDEN**
Rolling Stones, Rolling Stones
- 28 (—) **TALKING IN YOUR SLEEP**
Crystal Gayle, United Artists
- 29 (—) **JOSIE** ... Steely Dan, ABC
- 30 (—) **HOW MUCH I FEEL**
Ambrosia, Warner Bros.

U.S. Albums

- 1 (1) **GREASE** ... Various Artists, RSO
- 2 (2) **DON'T LOOK BACK** Boston, Epic
- 3 (5) **WHO ARE YOU** ... Who, MCA
- 4 (4) **DOUBLE VISION**
Foreigner, Atlantic
- 5 (3) **SOME GIRLS**
Rolling Stones, Rolling Stones
- 6 (8) **NIGHTWATCH**
Kenny Loggins, Columbia
- 7 (6) **SGT. PEPPER'S LONELY HEARTS CLUB BAND**
Various Artists, RSO



DAN FOGELBERG

- 8 (7) **NATURAL HIGH**
Commodores, Motown
- 9 (9) **BLAM** Brothers Johnson, A&M
- 10 (10) **WORLDS AWAY**
Pablo Cruise, A&M
- 11 (11) **A TASTE OF HONEY** Capitol
- 12 (12) **STRANGER IN TOWN**
Bob Seger and the Silver Bullet Band, Capitol
- 13 (14) **THE STRANGER**
Billy Joel, Columbia
- 14 (15) **SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER**
Bee Gees and Various Artists, RSO
- 15 (—) **TWIN SONS OF DIFFERENT MOTHERS** ... Dan Fogelberg and Tim Weisberg, Epic
- 16 (13) **SHADOW DANCING**
Andy Gibb, RSO
- 17 (10) **CITY TO CITY**
Gerry Rafferty, United Artists
- 18 (19) **COME GET IT** Rick James, Gordy
- 19 (28) **MIXED EMOTIONS**
Exile, Warner Bros.
- 20 (24) **SLEEPER CATCHER**
Little River Band, Harvest
- 21 (22) **BAT OUT OF HELL**
Meat Loaf, Cleve Int.
- 22 (17) **LIFE IS A SONG WORTH SINGING** Teddy Pendergrass, Philly Int.
- 23 (25) **GET OFF** ... Foxy, Dash
- 24 (20) **TOGETHER** ... L.T.D., A&M
- 25 (16) **UNDER WRAPS**
Shaun Cassidy, Curb
- 26 (—) **LIVE AND MORE**
Donna Summer, Casablanca
- 27 (23) **DARKNESS ON THE EDGE OF TOWN**
Bruce Springsteen, Columbia
- 28 (21) **BUT SERIOUSLY, FOLKS**
Joe Walsh, Asylum
- 29 (—) **AJA** ... Steely Dan, ABC
- 30 (—) **ROSE ROYCE, STRIKES AGAIN**
Rose Royce, Warner Bros.

Top Thirty Albums

- 1 (1) **NIGHTFLIGHT TO VENUS**
Boney M., Atlantic
- 2 (6) **GREASE** ... Soundtrack, RSO
- 3 (8) **IMAGES** ... Don Williams, K-Tel
- 4 (4) **CLASSIC ROCK**
London Symphony Orchestra, K-Tel
- 5 (2) **WAR OF THE WORLDS**
Various Artists, CBS
- 6 (5) **SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER**
Bee Gees and Various Artists, RSO
- 7 (3) **WHO ARE YOU** ... Who, Polydor
- 8 (7) **NATURAL HIGH**
Commodores, Motown
- 9 (12) **PARALLEL LINES**
Blondie, Chrysalis
- 10 (14) **DON'T LOOK BACK** Boston, Epic
- 11 (15) **Q: ARE WE NOT MEN? A: WE ARE DEVO!** ... Devo, Virgin
- 12 (—) **BLOODY TOURISTS**
10cc, Mercury
- 13 (11) **STREET-LEGAL** Bob Dylan, CBS
- 14 (10) **SONGS FOR ANNIE**
James Galway, RCA
- 15 (17) **LIVE AND DANGEROUS**
Thin Lizzy, Vertigo
- 16 (18) **NEW BOOTS AND PANTIES**
Ian Dury, Stiff
- 17 (28) **SOLID SENDERS** ... Virgin
- 18 (9) **STAR PARTY**
Various Artists, K-Tel
- 19 (—) **THE BRIDE STRIPPED BARE**
Bryan Ferry, Polydor
- 20 (16) **20 GIANT HITS**
Nolan Sisters, Target
- 21 (13) **CAN'T STAND THE REZILLOS**
Rezillos, Sire
- 22 (29) **OUT OF THE BLUE**
Electric Light Orchestra, Jet
- 23 (25) **BAT OUT OF HELL**
Meat Loaf, Epic
- 24 (26) **SUNLIGHT** Herbie Hancock, CBS
- 25 (—) **PRIVATE PRACTICE**
Dr. Feelgood, United Artists
- 26 (—) **ROSE ROYCE STRIKES AGAIN**
Rose Royce, Whitfield
- 27 (21) **20 GOLDEN GREATS**
Hollies, EMI
- 28 (30) **AND THEN THERE WERE THREE**
Genesis, Chansma
- 29 (23) **HANDSWORTH REVOLUTION**
Steel Pulse, Island
- 30 (—) **LENA MARTELL COLLECTION**
Lena Martell, Ronco

Two titles tied for 23rd and 27th positions.

U.K. Reggae

- 1 (1) **BREEZING** ... Tradition, RCA
- 2 (2) **WAITING IN THE PARK**
Chantels, Phase One
- 3 (3) **WITH YOU BOY**
Revelation, Write Sound
- 4 (3) **USE TA BE MY GIRL**
Family Circle, Union
- 5 (10) **YOU'VE HAD YOUR CHANCE**
Joy Manick, Four Sixty
- 6 (8) **WHEN SHE NEEDS THE NATTY**
Dr. Alimantado, ISDA
- 7 (13) **MOTHER EARTH**
Cimarrons, Polydor
- 8 (6) **ROCK** ... Matumbi, Harvest
- 9 (9) **MR. DO OVER MAN SONG**
Hepzornes, Third World
- 10 (11) **MIND BLOWING DECISIONS**
Tyrone David, D-Roy
- 11 (20) **PLANET CALLED EARTH**
Diamonds, Front Line
- 12 (5) **SHE WANTS A PHENSIC**
Tapper Zukie, Front Line
- 13 (12) **I LOVE MARIJUANA**
Linal Thompson, Attack
- 14 (7) **SUZIE WONG**
Tyrone David, D-Roy
- 15 (—) **NOW THAT WE FOUND LOVE**
Third World, Island
- 16 (—) **MIDNIGHT**
Willie Lindo, Black Wax
- 17 (—) **EQUAL RIGHTS** Dennis Brown, Lightning
- 18 (—) **THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR**
Janet Kay, D-Roy
- 19 (20) **BABY I'VE BEEN MISSING YOU**
Bunny Maloney, Moodisc
- 20 (15) **WAR/KAYA**
Winston Jarra, and the Righteous Flame, Ballistic

U.K. Soul

- 1 (1) **YOU MAKE ME FEEL MIGHTY REAL**
Sylvester, Fantasy
- 2 (2) **I THOUGHT IT WAS YOU**
Harbie Hancock, CBS
- 3 (1) **THREE TIMES A LADY**
Commodores, Motown
- 4 (4) **GALAXY OF LOVE**
Crown Heights Affair, Mercury
- 5 (5) **BRITISH HUSTLE** ... Hi-Tension, Island
- 6 (8) **HOT SHOT** ... Karen Young, Atlantic
- 7 (12) **AIN'T WE FUNKING NOW**
Brothers Johnson, A & M
- 8 (7) **WHAT YOU WAITIN' FOR** Stargard, MCA
- 9 (10) **LET THE MUSIC PLAY**
Charles Earlاند, Mercury
- 10 (8) **STUFF LIKE THAT** Quincy Jones, A & M
- 11 (13) **LETS TAKE THE DANCE**
Hamilton Bohannon, Mercury
- 12 (11) **LOVE DON'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE**
Rose Royce, Whitfield
- 13 (14) **NOW THAT WE FOUND LOVE**
Third World, Island
- 14 (9) **STANDING ON THE VERGE (OF GETTING IT ON)**
Platinum Foot, Motown
- 15 (18) **BROWN GIRL IN A RING/RIVERS OF BABYLON** Boney M., Atlantic
- 16 (15) **SHAME** Evelyn "Champagne" King, RCA
- 17 (—) **BAMMA BOOGIE WOOGIE**
Cleveland Eton, Gull
- 18 (16) **HOLDING ON**
L.T.D., A & M
- 19 (17) **BOOGIE OOGIE OOGIE**
A Taste Of Honey, Capitol
- 20 (—) **POINT ZERO**
Voyage, GTO

U.S. Soul

- 1 (4) **ONE NATION UNDER THE GROOVE**
Funkadelic, Warner Bros.
- 2 (1) **GET OFF**
Foxy, Dash
- 3 (2) **HOLDING ON** ... L.T.D., A&M
- 4 (5) **I'M IN LOVE (AND I LOVE THE FEELING)**
Rose Royce, Whitfield
- 5 (3) **GOT TO GET YOU INTO MY LIFE**
Earth, Wind and Fire, Columbia
- 6 (6) **SHAKE AND DANCE WITH ME**
Con Funk Shun, Mercury
- 7 (7) **TAKE ME I'M YOURS**
Michael Henderson, Buddah
- 8 (8) **SMILE** ... Emotions, Columbia
- 9 (12) **DANCE (DISCO HEAT)**
Sylvester, Fantasy
- 10 (15) **IT SEEMS TO HANG ON**
Ashford and Simpson, Warner Bros.
- 11 (9) **YOU AND I** ... Rick James, Gordy
- 12 (11) **YOU** ... McCreary, Portrait
- 13 (16) **THERE'LL NEVER BE** ... Various Artists
- 14 (13) **BOOGIE OOGIE OOGIE**
A Taste Of Honey, Capitol
- 15 (10) **WHAT YOU WAITIN' FOR** Stargard, MCA
- 16 (20) **SOFT AND WET** ... Prince, Warner Bros.
- 17 (18) **STAND UP** ... Atlantic Star, A&M
- 18 (14) **THREE TIMES A LADY**
Commodores, Motown
- 19 (19) **YOU GOT ME RUNNING**
Lenny Williams, ABC
- 20 (—) **YOU WERE MEANT FOR ME**
Donny Hathaway, Atco

U.S. Country

- 1 (2) **HEART BREAKER** Dolly Parton, RCA
- 2 (3) **IT'S BEEN A GREAT AFTERNOON**
Merle Haggard, MCA
- 3 (4) **WHO AM I TO SAY**
Stallier Brothers, Mercury
- 4 (5) **WOMANHOOD** Tammy Wynette, Epic
- 5 (6) **TEAR TIME** Dave and Sugar, RCA
- 6 (13) **THE LONG WAY AROUND THE WORLD**
Ronnie Milsap, RCA
- 7 (9) **PENNY ARCADE**
Various Artists, L&S
- 8 (11) **I'VE ALWAYS BEEN CRAZY**
Waylon Jennings, RCA
- 9 (11) **IF THE WORLD RAN OUT OF LOVE**
Jim Ed Brown and Helen Cornelius, RCA
- 10 (16) **CRYIN' AGAIN** Oak Ridge Boys, ABC
- 11 (18) **ANYONE WHO ISN'T ME TONIGHT**
Kenny Rogers and Dottie West, United Artists
- 12 (12) **EASY FROM NOW ON**
Emmylou Harris, Warner Bros.
- 13 (8) **IF YOU'VE GOT TEN MINUTES (LET'S FALL IN LOVE)** ... Joe Stampley, RCA
- 14 (7) **HERE COMES THE HURT AGAIN**
Vince Gillie, Epic
- 15 (7) **HELLO MEXICO** Johnny Duncan, Columbia
- 16 (—) **AIN'T NO CALIFORNIA**
Mel Tillis, Warner Bros.
- 17 (9) **DO IT AGAIN** ... Larry Gatlin, Monument
- 18 (20) **NO SLEEP TONIGHT**
Randy Barlow, Republic
- 19 (—) **LITTLE THINGS MEAN A LOT**
Margo Smith, Warner Bros.
- 20 (—) **ANOTHER GOODBYE**
Donna Fargo, Warner Bros.

Linda is alive and well



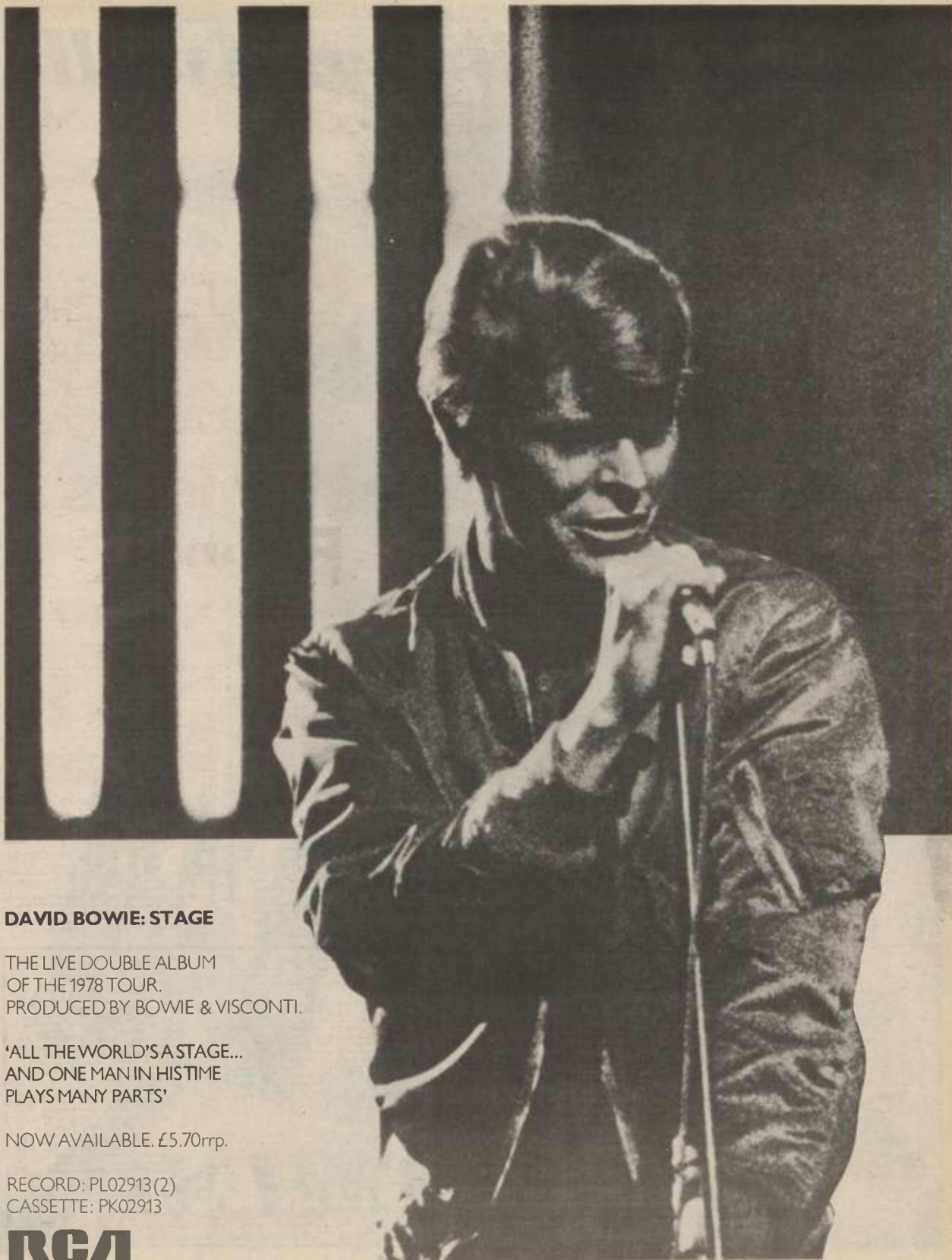
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RCA

I LOVE New York mouth, and Bette Midler gives it better than most. She was at the Palladium last week, making her much-anticipated London debut and firing from the lip with all the fierce velocity of a rabid Gatling gun. God knows, her tongue was clacking out a verbal flamenco at a pace so furious it must have left her with blisters on her tonsils and friction burns on her gums.

She'd been on stage just ten minutes when she collapsed on her back with her legs in the air.

"Daaaahhh," she drooled coarsely, "I just luuuuuurve this position. It brings back so many memories."

She had, moments earlier, introduced a routine called "The Hubba-Hubba." The audience looked suitably bemused. "Aha," she grinned. "You're all thinking, 'Qu'est-ce que c'est le Hubba-Hubba?'" She savoured her mischievous lapse into French. "Qu'est-ce que c'est... I love a little foreign tongue, don't you?"

The audience loved her. So did the critics, most of whom responded to her violent excess and showbiz vanity with hysterical enthusiasm. She was unanimously pronounced, after the official opening of her Palladium season last Thursday, the most unique and original versatile American entertainer of the decade (an opinion shared by Mr. John Blake of the London Evening News and Mr. Derek Jewell of the Sunday Times).

I thought her hilarious when she confined her talent to comedy (she's a brilliant stand-up comedienne, with a wit as sharp as a set of shark's dentures). Her more elaborate vocal performances I found, however, wildly indulgent: her voice is as raucous as an Irish barmaid calling time in a Kilburn pub, and her sense of pitch is as unpredictable as the weather. She was not helped by a disastrous lyre band (the drum sound resembled the dull thud of a midget wrapped in cardboard being rolled down an escalator), and her own voice was so often amplified that she sounded as if she was singing in a dubbin hidden under a sink in the bathroom.

The Thursday night audience was, inevitably, oblivious to such distinctions. Most seemed perfectly happy to relish the ostensible glamour of the opening night, and applauded every wayward note, flamboyant gesture and witheringly sarcastic one-liner with gushing—if not entirely synchrotonic—excitement.

BETTE bounded into the spotlights for the opening number, accompanied by a drum corps. A series of squeals of anticipation from the audience (the majority of which looked like the kind of middle-aged dumplings who keep apart the covers of Ritz). She was wearing a dress so brief it looked like an afterthought, with a neckline so plunging it recalled an Alpine ski slope and a top up the back that reached her shoulderblades. She troilled across the boards in a frenzy of whirling limbs, shrieking in the manner of one who has just been embraced by a wet squid.

I stand before you, nipples to the wind," she declared. She surveyed the audience. "You all look OK except for you," she shouted at one unfortunate. "You look like a shit. Who let you in, huh?"

She introduced her trio of back-up singerettes—"the staggering Harlettes, swirly golls, that's enough staggering—whaddya think of 'em? Three prime examples of non-Kosher meat. She promised a song designed specifically to incite us and sang a heartwarming rendition of the scurrilous wartime favourite which begins, "Hitler he only had one ball."

"But enough," she announced after three verses, "of the testes of megalomania." She then sang "In The Mood." There was some evidence of vocal dexterity, but the pedestrian tempo of her band dragged at the heels of the performance.

She was decidedly more lively when she turned her attention to some topical asides. She was enthralled by our national press and its capacity for trivial gossip. She was thinking of starting her own paper. She had already commissioned an article from Dorothy Squires. "It's called 'Why I'm Dead.'" She was less enamoured of our illustrious Prime Minister: "Mr Callaghan," she thought, "not only is he dull—he is the cause of duller thoughts." Next, but derivative; but the audience roared. "Jeezuss," she yelled to her band, "this whole town is shot to bits. These people are starved for entertainment."

She told us that she was thrilled to be making her debut at the Palladium.

"The great and the dead have played here... But lemme tell you, we've played some toots in our time. This ain't a toilet. This is a bidet."

Her mouth, it seemed, would never stop working. "God, I'm having a nice time. I thought I was gonna hate you. I'm glad you've heard of me. I've never heard of you. Why do they always put the chumps in the front row?"

SOMEHOW the verbal tirade was stemmed for long enough to allow her to indulge her dangerous penchant for histrionic vocal fireworks displays. She sang "Superstar," and successfully contrived a performance more beligerently ebullient than ever Streisand could have managed. It would

have been unbearable but for the suspicion that she was amused by her own excess; but I preferred it when she quickly returned to her more lewd and vulgar rags. "I gotta hair in my mouth, uhhhhnn... whose is that, I wonder? Disgusting. I'm sorry. We've sunk awfully low. I keep thinking we're in Seattle."

She must have been told that jokes about the Royal Family usually go down reasonably well. So she told a few. "The Royal Family are the greatest white people I've seen in my life. They make us look like members of the Third World. I love Prince Charles. I hoped he was gonna marry Caroline of Monaco until I found out what a tramp she was."

She gave her lungs another belting with a version of "Stay With Me, Baby." Her version resembled less a tour de force than it did the Tour de France, so epic was the blustering arrangement.

The undeniable highlight of the first half of her show (which lasted an exhausting 90 minutes) was her Revue Tropicale, an absurd parody of a fading nightclub trouper, "Dolores Delgado, the toast of Chicago," the Harlettes appeared as limbo extras from an amateur production of South Pacific, while Midler as Dolores screamed on stage in a motorised wheelchair, decorated with flashing trim, seagulls, coconuts and fishing nets. Bette was no less gloriously attired in a mermaid's tail and a flimsy garland atop the size of a small curtain, which barely concealed her heaving charlies. It was quite a sight, boys.

"It was festa and I had the clap," she sang. Then she invited the audience to join her. They did, with glee. "A buncha horny bastards," she captioned. She sang the first line of the chorus. The audience repeated it. "My God, what powers of retention you have!"

THE interval at last afforded us a chance to get our breath back. But only just; it seemed only minutes before Bette was bounding back on to the boards to the strains of "Lullaby Of Broadway" and

... in the, er, person of Bette "Mouth" Midler, whose X-rated verbals could crack a grin on Lord Longford. ALLAN JONES, who was Snow White until he drifted, joins the slaverling hordes at London's Hordium

"Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" This time out Bette was wearing a lurex top and black satin pants so tight that they must have been sprayed on to her legs during the break.

"I'll nevuvh forget it," she then declaimed, by way of introduction to a string of hilariously vulgar jokes about her boyfriend Ernie.

I was in the woods last night with muh boyfriend Ernie. He said, 'These woods are so dark. I wish I had a flashlight.' I said to muh boyfriend Ernie, 'Ernie, so do I. You've been munching a clump of grass for the last half hour.'

"This is what I'm gonna have written on muh boyfriend Ernie's headstone: 'Here lies Ernie—Stiff As Last'."

I was in bed the other night with muh boyfriend Ernie. He said, 'God, you've gotta tight box an' no tits.' I said to muh boyfriend Ernie, 'Ernie—get off muh back.'

The audience disintegrates with laughter. "God,

what a slimey mib," she reproaches.

"I said to my boyfriend Ernie—'Ya gotta kiss me where it aunts.' So he drove me to Wapping."

Could have listened to this kind of Mar West meets a foul-mouthed Betty Boop routine until opening time, at least, without cursing. Bette decided at this point to hit out for a more legitimate course. In search of artistic credibility she reduced the final part of the show to an embarrassing, often coy and sentimental confection. The humour of the first half was largely abandoned as we were confronted with little mime routines that staggered between the weight of their own artificial pathos; renditions of weary stage-tunes that were intended to strike an ironic balance between sadness and weary determination... you get the jive. The whole schtick reached a joying apoplexia with a curious exclamation which ended with the observation, "There are dreams that are stronger than death." "As a punch-line it seemed a little morbid; but she appeared not to notice and launched straight into a reading of 'I Shall Be Released' that sounded less like an emotional lament than a declaration of war.

The climax of this epic was of such an exaggerated ferocity that her tonsils surely deserved a holiday. So did my ears.

"We love you," shouted a fan.

"Why not?" she retorted.

There were more shouts from the stalls, from those more ardent admirers clearly beside themselves with excitement.

"Shutupp, asshole... I got the mike," she rasped, and then told us how overcoo she was to have been such a success. She gushed and gushed and tears welled in her eyes as her voice became husky with emotion.

It wasn't a bad act; but I've seen Richard Attenborough pull more convincing emotional strokes.

She did, however, leave us with a touching thought. "Just remember," she said, "when you're walking through the night... wherever you go—there you are."

Island and all the off-licenses were CLOSED. And no one had laid in the beer! "The Co-op'll be open," hoped Brilleaux. It wasn't. The group ran through a brace of songs. Lee looked lost in concentration. At the end of the first number he suddenly shouted "TESCO'S!" The roadies exchanged puzzled looks. Did the Co-op close? The Feeldogs' set was an unconcept album about supermarkets. "What?" they asked. "TESCO'S!" Lee repeated. "TESCO'S is open on Wednesday. Gernus a crate of Guinness, lil'! A close one, you'll have to agree."

Kenny Everett presented 10cc with a gold album for "Bloody Tourists" on stage at the Wembley Arena on Sunday night. Only one mistake. Kenny called the album "Dreadful." He said, "It's nice to know that the world of broadcasting is in such well-informed hands."

The Crusaders, who (so their PR tell us) are in such demand as session players that they can command 2,000 dollars a day. Hallelujah. Really. Elvis Costello plays a demon version of the Brinsley Schwarz classic ("What's So Funny 'Bout") Peever, Lowe And Unstranded" at the Anti-Nazi Rally on Saturday. Nick Lowe, who penned the opus was in the audience and was so into the music he said, "Nice to know an old cynic can still shed a tear or two."

It was just gone midnight in Sydney, Australia, and a rather pleasant Monday afternoon in Meymoor Street, when Graham Parker failed to tell us how well he and the Rumour are going down on their first tour of the Antipodan outback. His enthusiasm must seem to be fully justified. "The Parkerials," is bounding up the Higher regions of the Austral chart, and the band have almost completely won a tour, which was a mediated GP over the wire. "It's a real palace," Parker, it seems, has become something of a media personality in the former colony. "I've saturated the TV. I'm on all the bloody time. It's ridiculous. I keep gettin' recognized by Italians in wine bars. It's well over the top."

The Australian audiences he describes as being initially "aby" but the buzz is growing all the time. The last couple of concerts do seem like a piece of land. "Except there's more girls in the audience. There's even been people screaming" that "The Rumour" is "the best band wide open though They're not used to new bands comin' out. It's mostly like

groups that are in their death throes comin' out to make a few quid before they pack it in. They ain't got much in the way of the music press. But I just read about me, so I don't care."

Australians, he suggests, have a curious idea of the British new wave. "We've had some punks at the gigs, you know, like the Crocodiles. They're like a ripper shirt on Lou Reed badges. They're not like me, Elvis and Johnny Rotten, though They can't wait for Elvis to come out. They know about Ian Dury, too. An' Nick Lowe's a legend here like everywhere else."

I've just set fire to me body. The wire was silenced for a moment. "Ferk now I've split me jock up!" He and the dog this morning. Rapped this guy's dog up an' then slapped the guy in the chest. The dog got up with half his side ripped off. It was bloody hilarious really."

What else was happening in Australia, he asked.

"Well, the big news here is that an eight foot kangaroo attacked a man an' the dog this morning. Rapped this guy's dog up an' then slapped the guy in the chest. The dog got up with half his side ripped off. It was bloody hilarious really."

Thanks and goodnight. Geep. "G'night. Gimme love to the Feeldogs an' Elvis an' Basher and everyone." We promised we would.

YTC celebrated the release of their 2nd album, "Go 2" (rotten title, lada), in low-key fashion with an unspectacular playback at Virgin's new Townhouse Studios last Tuesday. The mournful John Peel was back in circulation after a short holiday. Peel, it seems, has been preoccupied with the reaction he provoked at this year's Reading Festival, when he became the target for local ire and beer cans. "I've just realized that they really do hate me," he moaned. "Last year it was all very vulgar, but this time they really did mean it. I don't think I should do the festival next year."

AAAaahh! Dave Edmunds jammed with Rodney Crowell and the Hot Band during the second of the New Country jamborees at Hammerhead Ocean last Tuesday. The maverick took lead vocals on a rousing version of "Johnny B Goode." Congratulations incidentally to promoter Curd and Agent Paul Fenn for finally bringing over Guy Clark for the shows.

The Feeldogs were rehearsing for their current British tour on Canvey Island last week in especially harrowing conditions: it was half-day closing on the



and West meets Betty Boop

... in the, er, person of Bette "Mouth" Midler, whose X-rated verbals could crack a grin on Lord Longford. ALLAN JONES, who was Snow White until he drifted, joins the slaverling hordes at London's Hordium

what a slimey mib," she reproaches. "I said to my boyfriend Ernie—'Ya gotta kiss me where it aunts.' So he drove me to Wapping." Could have listened to this kind of Mar West meets a foul-mouthed Betty Boop routine until opening time, at least, without cursing. Bette decided at this point to hit out for a more legitimate course. In search of artistic credibility she reduced the final part of the show to an embarrassing, often coy and sentimental confection. The humour of the first half was largely abandoned as we were confronted with little mime routines that staggered between the weight of their own artificial pathos; renditions of weary stage-tunes that were intended to strike an ironic balance between sadness and weary determination... you get the jive. The whole schtick reached a joying apoplexia with a curious exclamation which ended with the observation, "There are dreams that are stronger than death." "As a punch-line it seemed a little morbid; but she appeared not to notice and launched straight into a reading of 'I Shall Be Released' that sounded less like an emotional lament than a declaration of war.

The climax of this epic was of such an exaggerated ferocity that her tonsils surely deserved a holiday. So did my ears. "We love you," shouted a fan. "Why not?" she retorted. There were more shouts from the stalls, from those more ardent admirers clearly beside themselves with excitement. "Shutupp, asshole... I got the mike," she rasped, and then told us how overcoo she was to have been such a success. She gushed and gushed and tears welled in her eyes as her voice became husky with emotion. It wasn't a bad act; but I've seen Richard Attenborough pull more convincing emotional strokes. She did, however, leave us with a touching thought. "Just remember," she said, "when you're walking through the night... wherever you go—there you are."

'FORGET THE PAST'

THE NEW ALBUM FROM

STRETCH



WITH the enthusiasm of record buyers for coloured vinyl showing no signs of abating, some British record companies are planning the release of a more elaborate, more attractive and more expensive gimmick: the picture disc. Amongst the first will be a seven-inch single by American band The Cars on Elektra in early October. Then in November comes a special limited edition of The Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper" with an enlargement from the original cover on side one and the Lonely Hearts Club Band logo on side two. The package, with a see-through cover to the record in its plastic bag, will retail at £5.99.

Motivation for the release of these and other picture discs in Britain follows the success of around 20 promotional records put out in America over the last year. The two most popular, featuring Meat Loaf and Elvis Costello, have been changing hands for upwards of \$150. In the last month three albums have been issued commercially in the States: "Magazine" by Heart, "The Rocky Horror Show" and The Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper," and all have sold fast. Production of The Beatles album cannot keep pace with demand and some stores are shamelessly selling their copies at nearly twice the \$15.93 list price.

The idea of picture discs isn't new. There were 78's with pictures on the playing surface in the Thirties and there always seem to have been cheaply produced children's picture records. The first modern picture disc seems to have been the Curved Air "Airconditioning" release on Warner Brothers in 1970. The concept and design were by Mark Hanau who was then manager of the band. He'd been playing around with various ideas including a liquid disc. While in Germany he'd discovered a travel agent who used a cheaply produced picture disc as an advertisement. He tracked down the manufacturer and arranged for the production of 20,000 records. Several British companies shied away from the concept but Warner Brothers bought it and the record received a lot of publicity and Hanau won several awards. His designs were considerably more imaginative than the records now available in the USA which are no more than reproductions of album covers. The Curved Air record produced interesting visual effects when played. Copies of the record now fetch as much as £100.

Hanau went on to produce a combined picture/3D record in 1973, with a band called Saturnalia, on his own

Pix to click

The latest manifestation of rock 'n' roll collection mania is the picture disc. What it means, as RICHARD WOOTTON explains, is that lots of people are paying heavy prices for records they'll never play. . .

Matrix label 20,000 copies of the record, with a picture on the playing surface and a 3D centre, where the label should go, were produced and sold.

MOST American picture discs produced over the last 12 months have been in limited editions of 5,000. They include Bruce Springsteen's "Darkness On The Edge Of Town," Willie Nelson's "Stardust" featuring the back cover shot, Kansas's "Point Of Know Return," a collection of Elvis Presley tributes called, "To Elvis: Love Still Burning" where the positioning of the hole with the picture gives the impression that Elvis has just been shot between the eyes. "Crawler," Johnny Mabin and Deniece Williams' "That's What Friends Are For," Bob Welch's "French Kiss,"

Liar's "Set The World On Fire," Starcastle's "Child," a 12-inch single of Warren Zevon's "Werewolves Of London" with a picture of a werewolf, Peter Frampton's "I'm In You," Joe Cocker's "Luxury You Can Afford" (one of the few discs with a different picture front and back), Meat Loaf's "Bat Out Of Hell" and a remarkable Elvis Costello item with one side from "My Aim Is True," and one from "This Year's Model," with different pictures.

These records are sandwiches of vinyl paper and plastic, the layers laminated together. In the middle is a core of conventional vinyl, then above and beneath are two pictures on specially impregnated paper (to avoid air bubbles) then a film of clear plastic. The pictures cover the playing area and the grooves are embossed onto the surface after lamination. The plastic on top is similar to that used to make the flimsy records often given away in magazines and the sound quality of many American picture discs is as poor as the quality of the give-aways. In America the "Sgt. Pepper" album has the warning "Sound quality may not be comparable to conventional edition" and stores will not exchange copies that are "faulty."

Robin Allen at the EMI laboratory in Ladbroke has been experimenting with American picture discs and, in addition to discovering that the sound quality is generally inferior to standard product, has found that the record can come to pieces. If they are flexed violently the surface film comes off.

BOTH EMI and Elektra are at pains to point out that the records they will be releasing will be of higher quality than the American variety. For the "Sgt. Pepper" disc EMI are using the German firm Metro-nome, one of whose subsidiaries produced the Curved Air album in 1970. Peter Buckley at EMI explained that there is no firm in England capable of making the number of "Sgt. Pepper" picture discs that were required, nor that was capable of such a good sound quality. In America the Beatles' "limited edition" will be of 150,000. Buckley was unwilling to tell me the number of the British release, but EMI must be hoping for large sales of the record in the pre-Christmas period — coming, as it does, at the same time as the release of the new "Sgt. Pepper" film and the re-promotion of other Beatles records on different coloured vinyl.

Elektra are shrouding the production of their seven-inch Cars picture disc in secrecy. The record is being made by a "new process" in England and is the result of several months research.

Talk about sound quality assumes that people who buy picture discs are actually going to want to play them. In America this does not seem to be the case. At Peaches, Atlanta's largest store, Tony Paris, has heard several people asking if the "Rocky Horror Show" album is any good, as an afterthought to buying the record, and most purchasers of "Sgt. Pepper" already own a black vinyl copy.



Pete Shelley is a sensitive artist...



...and Buzzcocks have no guilt.

A LISTLESS grey shroud hangs gloomily over Manchester as I arrive on this lazy Friday afternoon. From Piccadilly Station, it's a 15-minute walk through the city centre to my destination. The new Manchester, an ugly modern-day architectural mass, looms threateningly on the left and sitting grandly on the right is the old city. Watching the people rush facelessly by, you can't help feeling that their lives and personalities have been affected by the stark contrast.

This is the modern world and this is where Buzzcocks call "home." "It's the old adage that Northern people are friendlier," manager Richard Boon — "the fifth Buzzcock" — considers as we head for a rendezvous with the band, who, he hopes, will be well entrenched in rehearsals by now.

The band themselves are none too clear on why they retain Manchester as base. Pete Shelley, mentor, writer and singer, even admits that it has nothing to do with devotion, Manchester, he says, acts more like "a safety valve," but despite their provincial awareness of the evil of London, the North doesn't seem to present an active alternative. From what I could gauge, Buzzcocks' extra-musical activities involve drinking, going to the occasional gig, playing snooker, watching television and, Shelley adds with a smirk, "I spend a lot of time thinking."

They reject the opinion that London is the nerve centre. "That's a myth. As far back as Dick Whittington, it's been established that the streets aren't paved with gold in London. There's more people than enough who've gone down to London with bright ideas and ended up in the gutter and I don't want to be one of those so I'll play it safe."

The typical shortsighted, narrow-minded provincial answer. What compensation did Manchester offer in lieu?

"There is no compensation. All it is is the realisation that we're happy living here."

Walk on. There is a definite air of apprehension and uneasiness between manager and journalist and that in turn

is passed between band and journalist. I should explain that I am not a fan, although open to persuasion. I have always felt that Buzzcocks' first album, "Another Music In A Different Kitchen," was overrated and offered little concrete evidence to substantiate the wild claims that surrounded its release. The ensuing success — for the album, singles, and tours — intrigued me.

In the meantime, a second album, "Love Bites," has been released and, I now find myself acquiring a taste for the music. Technically, the band have improved immensely and they display an unusually alert flair for dynamics. As with "Another Music," it's the second side of the album that strikes with two devastating instrumentals, "Walking Distance" and "Late For The Train," along with "Nothing Left" and "ESP" boasting a remarkable improvement from the debut.

The opening side, however, still arouses reservations. As with most of the first album, the band seems to rush carelessly through the songs without much thought for development. The point I wanted to put to them, and did, was that they were too often caught up in the new wave cliché: short songs / fast playing.

Boon and I eventually stumble across the band's hiding place, a wasteland of disused warehouses, set on the fringe of the city centre, a particularly bleak area that compounds the feeling of Manchester depression. These warehouses, Boon tells me, were once used for storing cotton but, when the trade died, so did their usefulness. Local "entrepreneur" Tony Davidson nipped in to take over one block and, without making any radical changes to a building that at best can be called a slum, renamed it "recording and practice studios." Aah, the subtle difference between warehouse and studio, and here it is defined.

At any one time, Davidson will zealously inform you, 12 bands could rehearse on his premises — but, without sound-proofing, practices are often carried out amid a maelstrom of other sounds. On my visit, three other bands — V2, the Owls and Slaughter and the Dogs — were going through the motions in other rooms. At £25 for a week, I don't suppose they can complain.

Buzzcocks announce themselves happy with their rehearsals, which is just as well as their tour is mere days away. They have managed to squeeze 18 songs into 61 minutes (according to Pete Shelley's watch) and have perfected an ending designed to send fans home with the riff from "ESP" permanently embedded in their brains.

Every successful new wave band experiences a backlash, and Buzzcocks are no exception. HARRY DOHERTY sympathises. Pix: KEVIN CUMMINS.

A package tour of Manchester follows as we make our way — now minus manager — to a suitable interview location, a city centre pub (on the suggestion of Shelley). Drummer John Maier's well-preserved 1100 is our transport. Shelley is strapped in beside him from front. Stuffed tightly in the back with me are guitarist Steve Diggle and bassist Steve "Paddy" Garvey. Garvey acts as courier for the short journey.

"On our right is the famous Hulme estate. It has the highest suicide rate in Britain isn't that something to be proud of?"

Another piece of useless information as we enter the Boardroom. This is where we held the first band meetings. Two hours and some Carlsberg Specials later Pete Shelley produced a very unusual outburst: when exploring his song-writing motivation. After exercising strict control, he suddenly became totally frank. The last two years, he said, have been spent pouring into his songs frustrations that have been pent-up for four years. His colleagues are as taken aback by the revelations as me and, like naive schoolchildren, start poking jokes about Shelley's admissions. Shelley turns on them.

"I actually do feel unguarded and you see it as a joke. It isn't me who should feel sorry for you that when I actually open myself up and say 'Look, this is me,' you just fall about the place."

Without dropping the tension in his voice, Shelley returns to the subject. "I'm not good at things like fashioning. I know that. I've yet to find something to wear that as soon as I walk into a room, people will say 'Wow, isn't he fashion-

able?' I've just got no idea when it comes to that. As far as things like falling in love and romance go, I've tried the normal ways and I've just not been content. The thing is that ever since I've started writing about the way I feel and hoped for new things, I've found out that there are a lot of people who actually agree with me."

"With someone like me, who the Press and the media put up so that they can make money out of, then I'm put in the position of a god, because in a way I am a martyr. I saw things in my songs which I feel or which I can imagine people feeling and so people are encouraged that there is actually someone else who feels the same as they do. I hope in some ways that it gives them courage."

"I see myself as a shaman as the song 'I Don't Mind' goes. 'Really's a dream, a game in which I seem to never know just what I am, an actor or a hunk, a shaman or a sham. It's someone who experiences for everyone else and I think that's what I've done because I get letters from people. Something that I'm used as a representative. I'm held up as an example.'"

Earlier in the conversation, though, he wasn't so willing to divulge such information. An enquiry as to Buzzcocks' ideals and how they've altered over the past year draws little more than a murmur and a shrug from the band's leader. Steve Diggle at last attempts an answer.

"I think one ideal is not to become a religion. We all get letters and Peter got one from some guy who was thinking of joining the army and he wanted to know what Pete thought about it. He wanted a decision made for him. We can't do that."

By this time, Shelley has conducted his own investigation. "All Buzzcocks are, are these four individuals you see in front of you and we all have our own place. All the Buzzcock myth that surrounds us is what other people make up because we always come out front and say what's happening and therefore we have produced and sold strategy because that's how it is. We admit to the fact that we are in a busi-

ness. The ideal is to do what we want to do when we want to do it and the way in which we want to do it. We've got it so that it's not down to the Great Music Business what happens to us. It's down to us."

Shelley rejects the suggestion that Buzzcocks have any sort of stance that could be linked with new wave, and surprisingly feels that "all the new wave did was act as a catalyst for the media to have another attack on youth." The rules for new wave, he said, were set by the media and the original bands that sparked the change of resentment that Diggle interrupts to pertinently point out that many of the second wave bands had read what punk rock was about and based themselves on that.

Like the Boomtown Rats," Shelley continues. "They used to be a cabaret band. I'm not saying their music is bad but I am saying that they shouldn't be included amongst the bands who were there at the start. Just because they adopted a new wave image doesn't mean they're new wave."

New wave did not give Buzzcocks an identity, he says. It gave them a label and labels can be peeled off and replaced. The identity is the four people in the band. Time had not changed their aspirations. The aspiration, Shelley offers simply, was and is to write songs.

"It's like leaving our mark. It's like carving 'I was here' in the Tower of London, graffiti saying we were about it's as simple as that. We are just people writing songs. All the years of making people into gods have turned the audience into thinking that the gods exist. That's one of the good things about living here. It's a stabilising factor. We're not being told constantly that we're stars."

It is, of course, a very selfish motive. The only reason we had started was because Howard (Devoto) and I had written songs and we thought it would be good if people could hear them. It wasn't the idea of fame and stardom and the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. We knew they were good songs and we were a good band and it was inevitable unless the world was really blind that we'd make it."

This is all a little disquieting for me. Having queried the press clippings before the meeting the band, I had formed a vision of an esthetic group of people. They didn't live up to the billing and I didn't know so Shelley, who really doesn't mind the proceedings, talks about the image.

continued overleaf

Buzzcocks from previous page

"That's what I mean about the Buzzcocks' myth. If I was to act in an esoteric manner, it would just keep the myth on the same level—but if you actually write down what I'm saying now, people will read it and say 'Wow, they're so human' and it'll really boost our esoteric rating because that's not what people expect."

"I'm bemused by the media reaction that has built the image. It's funny, puzzling... and also a bit sad. It's given us more credit for what we are. I think everybody could be like us. I think everybody has the potential to be like this but the reason we get credit for it is because we're the only exponents of it."

"Part of the esoteric image is that we don't throw drinks over people. If somebody asks me for an autograph, I'll give it to them. I won't be nasty. We're just four nice lads, the kind of people you could take home to your parents. We're the boys next-door-but-one."

According to Shelley, Buzzcocks feel no real association any more with the new wave movement. It was like "a summer romance," he thought. "You always say you'll write and keep in touch but you very rarely do. The feelings are still there but it's like you've left school now and started a job. Mid '76 to mid '77 was like our last year at school. After the summer, things were different. We were all big stars then."

"Now we go out and earn our bread in the world. We're part of the ocean. In a way, it's a bread and butter occupation... and I like bread and butter. We enjoy what we do. It doesn't matter if nobody ever hears it but we have found that people do like it. I don't know if it's supply and demand or demand and supply. I'd like to think that we supply and then they demand."

The point had been put to me by early supporters of Buzzcocks that the band these days is a much straighter proposition than had originally been conceived. Before I can finish the question, Shelley is on the ball.

"I had somebody come up to me the other week and say 'Don't write any more songs about love.' I asked why not and he said 'Cos I don't like them.' I asked him if he fell in love, and when he said 'Yes,' I told him the songs were for him. People have been saying things like 'Punk songs aren't meant to be about love.' I didn't say that, so why should I abide by it?"

"I know what you mean but I can't agree with it. I still enjoy Buzzcocks as an evolving process. It would be easy for us to play the same songs. We could play 'Boredom' every night. Some people would be quite happy if we played every-



thing up to 'What Do I Get' solidly all night for the rest of our lives. If you want, I could write a song like that before this pub closes. But there are records and those people can always listen to them. That's the purpose of recording, because it shows that there isn't a system. We aren't catering for a market. In that way, it is supply and demand."

The criticisms about experimentation, or, more precisely, the lack of it, were directly related to Buzzcocks' acclaimed debut EP, "Spiral Scratch," on their own New Hormones label, made when Howard Devoto was a member of the band.

"Well, it's a classic," Shelley modestly considers and embarks on a nostalgic trip into the old days. "It was never intended to be a classic. When we got the first thousand copies, or the only thousand copies we thought we'd

get, we went out and bought two bottles of cheap Spanish wine. We figured that if we sold 700 we'd be doing well. The thousand went within four days. I think that one of our stronger points is that we've always underestimated ourselves so that if anything else comes above that, then we're happy."

He would disagree vehemently with any criticism that the band has become less experimental of late and claims that, if anything, they're more experimental.

"Some people see that the only good thing that has happened to music was 1976 and that anything else that happened after that was a sell-out. It's inverted snobbery to say that as far as I'm concerned. The only things that have sold out for us have been records and tours. We haven't sold out because we're still the same people and we're still doing

the music because we think it ought to be heard."

He did admit, then, to feeling a backlash of sorts.

"Yes, in a way, but it's because we're always trying to be honest to ourselves. All we know is that if all the razzamatazz was taken away, then we'd still be four people enjoying music. That's a point in our favour. Of course as soon as success comes then people are going to say 'They've sold out.' All of us have done a bit of soul searching about it. Our attitudes are still the same. Stardom was never the goal that we were striving for."

The goal, he explains behind a mischievous smile, is "self-realisation and happiness." If he could realise his own limitations and work within them, then happiness would follow. "For instance, I couldn't run the four minute mile but as

long as I realise I can't then I'm okay. If I set my sights into areas that I can do things in, then I can have happiness because I don't feel inferior. If I were 5ft. 8in., I'd be gorgeous but I've stopped growing and I can't be so why worry about it?"

Howard Devoto has been reaping acclaim and credibility with Magazine recently. One reason advanced for that was that he had carried the spirit of experimentation with him when he left Buzzcocks. How did Shelley react to that?

"It's another part of self-realisation that if somebody else gets credit for what they do, it shouldn't detract from the immense satisfaction I get from what I do. In passing, it was strange—you mustn't write this, of course—but it was a strange thing that a lot of people who reviewed 'Real Life' (as Magazine's collection was called) said that it had two good tracks on it, 'Shot By Both Sides' and 'The Light Pours Out Of Me,' which I had a part in writing."

But Devoto does carry a flag for experimentation, I suggest, or maybe it was thrust into his hand. Shelley cutely brings the subject to an end. "Let's just say the flag was lying around and he picked it up."

Shelley is categorical in his opinion that Buzzcocks have progressed technically over the past year, to the point where he is desperate to re-record 'Orgasm Addict.' That song is embarrassing. It's the only one I listen to and shudder. It was not all-important, he also emphasised, that they be seen to improve as musicians.

"I have this definition of a musician as somebody who brings sheet music, puts it in front of them and plays it. That's a musician and I don't think musicians are artists. We are artists. All the songs you heard today, there is no record whatsoever of the music being written down. All the stuff that gets published is transcribed by someone else."

As artists, I precariously enquire, did Shelley still feel it was valid to restrict songs to three minutes and not only that but to play them at the same frenetic pace?

It doesn't really matter how short a song is. The importance of a three minute song is its immediacy. It means you can play it 20 times in an hour. That way you get more enjoyment out of it. You get a Tangerine Dream album with half an hour on each side and you can only play it twice an hour but you can get those feelings 20 times an hour with us."

It's all there for effect. Every time I write a song, I don't want it to be in the same style. I enjoy playing mathematical games with the song, doing things that aren't expected in the actual structure of a song. That's as important as the notes or words."

Wide-eyed at his gall, I ask if he really thinks he achieves that. Wide-eyed at my gall, he replies: "Of course. There would be no point in continuing if I didn't."

Mink DeVoe

with their new single

Soul Twist

CL 6005
C/W

Rolene

This year
JOAN ARMATRADING
takes her music
TO THE LIMIT
listen.....and you can't help but follow.



TO THE LIMIT—THE NEW ALBUM



PURCHASE ORDER



•BUZZCOCKS• new album

album UAG 30197



casette TCK 30197

Beating

OCTOBER

- 1 ORO NEW THEATRE
- 2 LEICESTER DE MOUNT HILL
- 3 NORWICH ST ANDREWS HALL
- 4 CHELSEA FORD OCEAN
- 5 MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE HALL
- 6 LIVERPOOL EMPIRE
- 7 BRIMMINGHAM OCEAN
- 8 SWANSEA TOWN HALL SUITE
- 9 CARDIFF TOWN HALL SUITE
- 10 TAUNTON OCEAN
- 11 PLYMOUTH TOWN HALL SUITE
- 12 TONKIN TOWN HALL
- 13 SHEFFIELD TOWN HALL SUITE
- 14 HANLEY VICTORIA HALL
- 15 MALVERN WHITE GARDENS

- 20 BLACKPOOL TIFANNYS
- 21 GLASGOW APOLLO
- 22 ABERDEEN CAPTICE
- 23 DONDESPICH OCEAN
- 24 NEWCASTLE CITY HALL
- 25 BRADFORD ST GEORGE'S HALL
- 26 MANCHESTER APOLLO
- 27 DERRY KING'S HALL
- 28 COVENTRY THEATRE
- 29 BRIGHTON COLSTON HALL
- 30 PONTMOUTH GUILD HALL

NOVEMBER

- 1 CANTEBURY OCEAN
- 2 HANMER-SMITH OCEAN
- 3 HANMER-SMITH OCEAN
- 4 HANMER-SMITH OCEAN
- 5 BRIGHTON TOWN HALL SUITE
- 6 GUILDFORD OCEAN
- 7 MANCHESTER APOLLO

Hearts

on tour with "Subway Sect"

"I THOUGHT I was God. Then I realised I was just the drummer in a rock 'n' roll band." Graeme Edge and Caligula had the same problem. In Caligula's case it took an assassin's knife to make him realise he was mortal. But Graeme took on Caligula's old enemy, King Neptune, and sailed across the Atlantic. It was this therapeutic course that saved the founder member of the Moody Blues from impending madness, and as a direct result led to a Swiss ex-carpet salesman and trainee chef playing keyboards with the band instead of a man dedicated to handrearing finches in Colorado.

A complicated tale, but if you will follow me to West Hampstead tube station, turn sharp left and continue down to the old Deca studios, all will become clear. For it is here that the Moody Blues have been beavering away these past weeks in a state of terror and excitement, preparing for their return to the world's stage for the first time in five years.

It was with a strong sense of déjà vu that I arrived at the red brick building on the Railway Hotel, it was at the latter pub where much fine music of the Sixties was performed. Cream, George Fame, Zoot Money, Amen Corner, Fleetwood Mac. The last time I'd been to the studios was to interview a Welsh pop singer, one Tom Jones. And the last time I'd been to a Moody Blues rehearsal was also in a recording studio. But that was in 1965 when they were still playing "I'll Go Crazy" and Denny Laine was their lead singer. Another old friend was now in the band, Mr. Patrick Moraz, late of Beelzebub (the short-lived heir to the Nice musical fortunes), and yes, where he served a stint as Rick Wakeman's replacement, Patrick seems to have become a rock band's troubleshooter, a role he quite enjoys, although it can play havoc with his nerves.

Patrick is a gentleman, raised with Continental good manners that have not been eroded despite years of mixing with vulgar British rock musicians. He has a wonderful way of miming the English tongue that causes considerable amusement to cads. For example, as I arrived, Patrick was engrossed in his latest electronic instruments, and exclaimed: "I can't wait to see you, my toys." Inexplicably this caused a sustained guffaw from his roadside.

But Patrick Moraz, at least heard of in the Brazilian



You could be excused for thinking the above picture was lent to us by the National Association of Hairdressers, but to put the record straight, these five well-coiffured gents are the MOODY BLUES. And apart from sporting all that's going in hairstyles, they're also sporting a new member — PATRICK MORAZ (standing right)

YES TO THE MOODIES

by Chris Welch

jungle practising voodoo rites last night, what was he doing for a few steps down the Bakerloo line? And whither Mike Pinder, the man who gave us "Nights in White Satin," the pianist who had guided the band from the tough days back in Brum down the road to world fame and (at a rough count) 42 platinum albums?

As Patrick showed me his toys, a half-million dollars' worth of synthesizers and electronic pianos, the rest of the Moodies began to assemble. It was a moving sight for a seasoned rock observer. Here came the men who dominated the album charts and concert halls of the early years of this momentous decade, the men who unleashed "Days Of Future Passed," "In Search Of The Lost Chord," "On The Threshold Of A Dream," "To Our Children's Children's Children," "A Question Of Balance," "Every Good Boy Deserves Favour," "Seventh Sojourn," and now the successful "Octave."

Justin Hayward and John Lodge, once Bluejays and now

Moodies once more. Ray Thomas, flute player and original Moody with a couple of solo albums to his credit. And Graeme Edge, with his sense of humour intact despite past problems with his head that were eventually sorted out by taking to the high seas.

ONE familiar face was missing — Mike Pinder. But although the band were somewhat silent about his absence it was revealed that, when they decided to tour again, Mike felt that his touring days were over and he was much happier rearing birds in America. If I'd sold 42 platinum albums I think I'd join him.

In the midst of this historic gathering was Patrick, and the last time I'd seen him was on stage with Yes in Philadelphia in 1976. It was no secret that his departure from Yes to make way for Rick Wakeman's return was a source of disappointment and, suspect, some mental anguish.

Patrick is classically trained and can hammer the hell out of a grand piano, with the best of them. His technique is ideally suited to the demands of a symphonic rock band like the Moodies, and indeed he has been co-opted as the Moodies' oneman orchestra for their forthcoming German and American tour.

In all, his appointment as Mike Pinder's replacement makes a lot of sense. But how did Patrick feel about his new role, and where has he been hiding these past two years? We decided to talk in the control room, built by the Moodies at great expense where they took over the Deca studio for themselves from a Mk. I Trident, and Patrick revealed all. "I've been living in Brazil for two years. I love the place — I've learned the language. But now I'm a busy again for a while." What attracted Patrick to South America?

"I love the place, especially the music. After the break I decided to go there and learn a new musical vocabulary. But I have come back to Europe and played a few solo concerts there. The earlier this year, including the Montreux festival. I just wanted to prove to myself that I could do it. I was very scared at first, but it proved very successful, and I felt happy again." Saw Jon Anderson again recently and the rest of Yes who were all very friendly. I went down to Rak studio to hear them mixing their new album and I saw Jimi's

music room at his new house which is fantastic — beautiful."

Was Patrick depressed when he quit Yes? "I never really understood what happened, I got caught up in a psychological trap that I had made for myself. I was responsible for it and in a musician's life there are decisions that have to be made. I just like to feel happy and with Yes I just didn't feel that way. I don't know why. I feel good now! I suppose I came a few steps down the ladder and it was all part of my experience."

Patrick's second solo album, "Out In The Sun," served as a kind of morale booster for him, and now that he's joined the Moodies his career is certainly taking off again. Another solo album is in the works, and he says: "My intention is to avoid too many overblows. I've been working with 16 Brazilian percussionists but they don't play on all the tracks."

HOW did he become involved with the Moodies? "I sort of unofficially let it be known to people that I was mentally and physically ready to go on the road once again, and I got a phone call asking if I would be interested. I knew the Moody Blues' material and how influential they had been — especially in rock symphonic work."

"In a way they had influenced bands like Yes and King Crimson and they were into the same kind of trip. After the Beatles' Sgt. Pepper" it was really the Moodies' "Days Of Future Passed" that saw the breakthrough of symphonic rock. That first album was very influential."

"I was interested, but undecided. I went to Rio and they sent me a Telex. In the end I had to go back to Europe for a solo concert and I suggested we meet and play together. I really couldn't join a band without playing with them first. This was last July. I went to Montreux and then came to Deca in London and as the band and I played and played, I had prepared a few themes in advance. I just wanted to see if there were no problems and there was a great feeling between us."

PATRICK explained that he had been playing with John McLaughlin and Chick Corea in Rio, and said: "You

continued p. 60

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ON HARVEST RECORDS
& TAPES

Top 50

REVIEWED BY LENNY KAYE

● **BONEY M: "Rasputin"** (Atlantic K 11192). It's not my fault that Boney M — who certainly don't need pick-hit status — have the most buoyant single of the week, but then maybe they have the Magic Touch after all. I thought "Rivers Of Babylon" was a pale shadow of its former-Melodians self, but this jolly tribute to "Rasputin, Lover of the Russian Queen" is full of dancing balalaikas, mesmerizing rhythms and all sorts of odd-ball touches (a great historical talkover), mixed with the kind of infectious heartiness that attracts even as you know you're being suckered in. But why tell you this? You're gonna hear it until you're sick of it, and by then, Boney M will have another platter at the ready. For further information, check Colin Wilson's biography of the Mad Monk; love means never having to say you're Czary.

● **THE AUTOGRAPHS: "While I'm Still Young"** (Rak 281). Another entrant in the teenage anthem sweepstakes with all the strength of the "Ballroom Blitz." Sweet and full, vibrant sound that powers it solidly home. The newly-formed Autographs (since May 1978) should take a right proper bow. There is no let-up from start to finish, build upon build, guitars upon guitars, punch after punch. Right and left, this should be a smash.

● **JOHNNY THUNDERS: "You Can't Put Your Arms Round A Memory"** (Real ARE 3). Johnny doesn't certainly know, but he sure knows how to sing (and let's face it) the New York Dolls, it's good to hear his vocal and distinctive guitar in a surprisingly powerful record that bodes well for the forthcoming album. The song itself is a balladic framework that leans heavily on an acoustic guitar (come on, guys), but Mr. T. bends into the local with passion. A true rock 'n' roller and long may he resist.

● **JOHN TRAVOLTA: "Sandy"** (Polydor POSF 8). The man may know how to eat pizza (see Saturday Night Fever), and even come on like a young Frankie Lyndrite (see "You're the One That I Want"), but this nine millionth single from Grease is a moan-inducer except for the saxophone. Try a flamenco record instead.

● **BOB DYLAN: "Is Your Love In Vain"** (CBS 6718)ERIC CLAPTON: "Wonderful Tonight" (RSO 6718). It's getting as off-the-wall as Lou Reed with the overbuds these days, but these recordings only sound like a bit of the excellent "Street Legal" album. As a single, "Is Your Love In Vain" works much better than expected, and ecstatic-provoking in the mode of "Just One Woman." "Wonderful Tonight" would take such chances. "Promises" could have been made by any abstract bunch of Nashville session musicians and probably was.

● **ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA: "Sweet Talkin' Woman"** (Jet 121). The masters of the kitchen-sink approach, this has none of the hooks that made "Telephone Line," "Can't Get It Out Of My Head" or "Livin' On A Prayer" radio-playables. Move on?

● **THE B-52s: "Rock Lobster"** (B-52s DB-52). Out of Atlanta and a recent CBGB smash, the B-52s are making their way through a bizarre mutation of the Talking Heads meeting innocence incarnate. More warm than Devo, less sinister than Suicide, and less calculated than the Cramps. Other comparisons at your own risk.

● **ALAN PRICE: "I Love You Too"** (Jet 124). Maybe if Bryan Ferry had tackled this song, it might have had the bitter-sweet irony necessary to make it more than an empty exercise of evening dress incarnate. Why? "O Lucky Man!"

● **THE ABDEL HASSAN ORCHESTRA: "Arabian Affair"** (Mercury 6013 514). Kill the infidel.

● **EDDIE MONEY: "You've Really Got Me On My Mind"** (CBS 6701)ALAN LOVE: "Wine Won't Turn To Water" (Mountain Top 41). Two from the school of male shouters, Eddie Money has been banging around the San Francisco bay area for several years — he's been up for us a couple of years back at Berkeley's Longbranch Saloon — and he always struck me as a guy who believed passionately in his performing abilities and gave of himself one hundred per cent. It's thus much to see him getting the recognition deserved (his debut album recently went gold in the States). This is not the best choice for a single since



AH, to be behind a typewriter again — the legendary power to build 'em up and tear 'em down, and while we're at it, a big hello to nouveau editor Richard Williams, with whom I've not only spent many happy hours swapping Phil Spector stories, but who once, on an archaic day back in '74, took me to a small Shepherd's Bush reggae shop where I was introduced to the wonders of Tapper Zukie's "Man Ah Warrior." For which, eternal thanks.

A prologue in most "singles" circles, the name of the game is HIT (even the manager of the Pop Group, an avant-rock ensemble not normally considered "commercial" — though I found them quite committed and enjoyable — mentioned the word in connection with the group's forthcoming release). So to prepare for the upcoming task, I listened to a run-down of the American Top 40 in Berlin over AFN on a rainy Sunday, caught Top Of The Pops in Manchester (Siouxie and the Banshees stole the show), and even saw a count-down of W. German schlager one

bleary morning ("If You Can't Give Me Love" translates very gutten into Deutsch). For my tastes, very little of what I heard was even mildly interesting, thought-provoking, or even sexy. Luckily, the growth of minority music in the past couple of years (ex: punk-rock) has nonetheless seen that my tastes have been well-served and kept quite happy.

"Still, the gap between what is rock and roll and what is pop is growing greater these night-Eighties days, and a further growth of hybrid musics filling in even more gaps in the pop charts (reggae, disco) means a lot less of what you particularly like is going to be represented on the mass surveys. But to me, a great record remains a great record by transcending its definable boundaries, and the Top 30 (or 20, or 100) does retain a robber-baron democracy of sorts. Maybe lots of records that deserve a heart in the charts never get there — and that's what makes record hunting so much fun — but a lot of others do, irrespective of celebrity name, promotional hype, or even reasonable

hope. It's that ability of a hit single to get through from the oddest corners — to open ears unexpectedly — that provides the dynamic cross-fertilization of our musical input. I may spend three-quarters of my life licking the radio down the hall for what it doesn't play, but when a song like "Wuthering Heights" or "You're The One That I Want" or even "Because The Night" — hell, it gets to me too — suddenly appears in your life several times a day, you can't beat the soundtrack.

Meaning internally, singles run under a whole different order of artistic priority. Material bares itself to the bones, the better to reduce wind friction in the race to the top; shadings of production that might be passed over lightly in an album assume crushing proportions. Whole empires have risen and fallen over a particular hook placement or instrument choice. The otherwise cliché-ridden and banal moves into the realm of classic archetype, and more unfortunately often, vice versa. What was once plastic is turned to gold. Modern alchemy.

And so, to the front . . .

LINDA RONSTADT: "Ooh Baby Baby" (Asylum K 13139). The silken voice, the paced production, and an unexpected dip into the lower glacial registers. Intoxicous.

Space Oddities

MARQUIS DE SADE: "Air Tight Cell" (Marquis De Sade 383)WAYNE SAULLO: "White Honky Music" (Storn SR 826)JEVUSHTA: "Flight Your Way Out" (Zei-la JHSPPS 228)THE TWEEDS: "Underwear Gips" (Autobahn TDS-A31)THE TRANSMITTERS: "Nowhere Train" (Ebony EYE 12). French band Marquis De Sade, with their relentless four beat on the bass-drum and modal vocals reminding me of the 13th Floor Elevators, with a squalling saxophone taking the place of the infamous wobble-board. Wayne Saullo's aching disco-reggae with his "White Honky Music," and though the joke is a little laboured (he's an unsuccessful songwriter who keeps being told to write in a more ethnic vein — ha ha), the song itself is a kind of cute, with call-and-response horns and a wry synthesizer. (From Storn Records, 133 Park Rd., Blackpool, FY1 4ET)

Jevusha have also put out their own disc, hoping to sell it at gigs as such, and the mix of rock and semi-reggae rhythms actually works. They won't set the world on fire yet, but everyone needs a match sometime or another. (Available at 90p from 68 Blagruves Lane, Derby). The Tweeds' is another weirdly aching song, which feel (the chorus tickles at my memory somewhere) and the group pulls it off with a kind of well-timed Transmitters, in an eerie, dronal tone, call up the ghosts of Serpent Power. A neat bit of science, just following tracks . . .

I'm Zion, Dub Me

I MUST admit, living in New York several oceans away from the reggae centres of London and Kingston, that I'm usually hard-pressed to follow the welter of new names and releases that an aficionado can keep up with here. However, I know what I like . . .

DENNIS BROWN: "How Can I Leave" (Lightning LP 116/ATD). A delectable song, a soulful (in both shades of meaning) performance, and great synthesizer squiggles. Recommended by the guys at Rough Trade as one of the best new deejays to come up recently, which proves that you can believe some things you hear.

ROCKERS ALLSTARS: "Pablo Meets Mr. Bamba" (Rough Trade RT 882). Speaking of RT, their very first reggae release (not counting their fine work distributing Tappet 2, to a waiting England) is a crown jewel, securing Mr. Melodica in a bottom-wealthy setting, solid and satisfying.

LYOUD MILLER: "Who Dun It? (Muhammad Ali)" (Trojan TRO 9045 A). Why the past tense? Ali is still champ.

MAX EDWARDS: "Black Cinderella" (New Star NEW 5). Ex-Soul Syndicate dancer, Max Edwards has a full reading of a perennial reggae fave-theme. Give this man a silver slipper before he turns into nasty pumpkin.

FABULOUS FIVE INC.: "Shaving Cream" (Trojan 9047-A). Which only goes to show that you can't teach an old dog new tricks. This song is three decades past its prime, and the only type of music not to have its turn has been punk-rock. Sid Vicious, are you listening?

THE HEPTONE: "Mr Do Over Man" (Third World TW 90). The Heptones have a point. You can't tell the players without the record, and I'd hate to have to plunge into the jungle that may be the source of their rights. Still, the same doesn't hold true for the Heptones; they've always proved themselves creative and dedicated musicians and this single is a fine example of their talents.

JUNIOR DELGADO and FIELD MARSHAL BUCKORS: "Armed Robbery" (Tonight and Tune Inc.) DEB 011/THE GAYLADS: "Stop Making Love" ("If You Don't Mind" DEB 869). A pair of 12-inches from DEB, who appear to be a British reggae company on the rise. Produced by a young city on flame with crime, suitably risen by a soaring string synthesizer, Field Marshal Buckors provides the delectable and though he can't quite live up to the brilliance of his name, the song is set with perceptive pronouncements. "Tonight and Tune Inc." is more romantic, as befits an all-in-side. The Gaylads swing lithely, but the songs never rise much above the pretty. The style is to be appreciated, however, and it probably prove to be the mode in which reggae finally crosses over into mass appeal. Be that as it may, as it was, so shall it be, world without end.

his version inevitably comes up short before the Miracles' original, but if I assume the excellent "Baby Hold On" and "Two Tickets To Paradise" have already been tried here and flopped (and if they haven't, let's get to it), I hope he makes it this time around. I don't know anything about Allan Love, but he sings a damned good song with a husky believability that slices through his apparent anonymity. Cross fingers that it gets a listen in the proper places, like on your local turntable.

● **THE RUBETTES: "Movin'"** (Polydor 2659 558). This group's smash of "Tonight" a few years back remains one of my favourite records, a bitch of a production and a great slice of single. "Movin'" is easy-listening fodder that bears no resemblance, more's the pity.

● **THE YACHTS: "Look Back In Love (Not In Anger)"** (Radar ADA 23). The eerie Question Mark organ gives this a Sixties feel, and the "Hey!" that precedes the chorus similarly brings out the "Nuggets" feel. And speaking of Volume II . . .

Rock-A-William

HOTFOOT GALS: "Washin' Machine Boogie" (Charly CS 1044) CARL MANN: "Till I Wait Again With You"

(Charly CS 1038)THE CRICKETS: "Rock Around With Ollie Vee" (Roller Coaster RCR 2601). Thank the UK for keeping rockabilly alive, but unless you're gonna shake it like you make it, what's the point? Luckily, Hotfoot Gals, with a total energetic outing on "Washin' Machine Boogie" come in like gangbusters and it don't matter if you've heard it all before. These guys smoke, give 'em the gun and let 'em run. Ex-Sunster Carl Mann seems to have forgotten how to dance in his country-fair-voured outing. Maybe it'd sound fine on the proverbial big rig cruisin' down the highway, but my tape deck wants to wall through those 14 gears. The Crickets are in even worse shape to judge by this nostalgic outing. Buddy Holly may live, but 20 years on, these songs should've grown and they ain't. The picture sleeve with Jerry Allison standing by his '57 (Ford?) is priceless, though. Dig them crazy fender skirts!

The Spirit of '77

THE RUDE KIDS: "Reggae Is A Bunch Of Motherfucker" (Polydor 2653 286)THE TIGHTS: "Howard Urban Kids" (Star Forward BY RAPED) "Cheap Night Out" (Parole PURL 1). Punk-rock, now duly re-

cognised as a genre, lives on, and it's groups like the Rude Kids that make it worthwhile. This Swedish band, in a deadly castigation of local tuffing Raggare, deliver an angry, tense and roaring record that takes its two-chord tension to the limits of excitement. A roar of a record, and when it double-times toward a sizzling climax, you know these guys aren't fooling one thin decibel.

The Tights are a Worcester band with a crisp, predictable A-side, and a B-side — "China's Eternal" — that shows what they might do given a chance to grow. Haunting, mysterious in the vein of Roxys' "In Every Dream Home A Heartache." It displays an imagination, lyrical wit, and everything else you might hope from the expanding boundaries of the New Wave. Chances show little of such growth. "Right To Work" was and remains a great slice of socially-conscious vinyl, but this sounds too much in its mould and the sloganeering never escapes the realm of the mundane, urban kids or no. As for Raped, everybody's pet least-likely-to-succeed, they are not as much bad as totally ordinary, which probably makes the pretension of their pose that much harder to take. Shouldn't big in Los Angeles.

THE EDGE: "Macho Man" (Aibion 10N). Not to be confused with the American disco hit, two ex-Damned turn up fast and furious.



Albums



ABOVE: JOAN ARMATRADING at Blackbushe (Pic: BARRY PLUMMER).

JOAN ARMATRADING: "To The Limit" (A&M AMLH 64732).

SONGS of innocence and experience for the modern age; and Joan Armatrading is still sumptuously naive, still wryly acute. Her lyrics can suggest a thousand other writers, yet her phrasing invariably makes them unique. No one could accuse her of putting out mere chopped-up prose, that fashionable apology for poetry.

So the pressure was/is on to be a Gil Scott-Heron, maybe even a Labelle, since black female singer-songwriters are noticeably thin on the ground. Armatrading remains open-ended to the last, preoccupied with fleeting states of mind rather than anything so objective as black consciousness or feminism. Even "Barefoot And Pregnant", this album's sequel to, say, "Tall In The Saddle", is addressed to an individual, not a sex, while "Taking My Baby Up Town" could be about gay liberation or racial liberation or neither simply a convenient metaphor for illustrating a certain kind of group paranoia.

It's the voice, of course, that convinces. The hazier the subject (and Armatrading has certainly laid down some slight ones in her time) the more licence is granted to her vocal moods, as if she is subconsciously looking for a lyrical equivalent of scat, that unashamed vocal extravaganza. In this respect, she has not changed; apart from "Barefoot", the marvellously-titled "You Rope You Tie Me" and "Taking My Baby Up Town", there is little variation in the treat-

ment of personal relationships. Where she is subtly changing is in her music, a slow but steady evolution.

Glyn Johns once again produces and Henry Spinetti is still in the drum seat, but, true to her oft-stated intentions, all the other musicians — who include Red Young on jazz-inflected piano, Dick Simms on organ and accordion and Quilman Dennis on sax, flute and Lyricon — are on record with her for the first time. Armatrading has used instruments like the saxophone and mandolin before, and also experimented with musics like reggae, but exotic influences are here much more overtly paraded. "Bottom To The Top", archetypal single material, is exultant out-and-out reggae, the perfect foil for Joan's guttural vibrato. "Wishing" begins and ends with an extraordinary slow-winding blues sequence (not unlike Johnny Winter tuning up). "Taking My Baby Up Town" is an unashamed Fifties bop not a million miles from Carl Perkins, and "Let It Last", wherein Armatrading reveals herself to be one hell of a gospel singer, is quite staggering.

For all that, an air of constraint still clings to much of the album. Vocal histrionics occasionally sound contrived in the context of weak tracks like "Am I Blue For You"; conversely "Taking My Baby" suffers a little from lack of vocal direction. Armatrading's luxurious drawl clearly needs a little more careful (self-) steering in the future if it is to live up to her ambitions. At the moment, however, surrounded by her beloved comics on the cover sleeve shot ("That's my Intellect, I read comics," she told *Spare Rib* magazine nearly two years ago), post-blackbushe et al, she seems more relaxed and confident than ever. — MAUREEN PATON.

MICHAEL HENDERSON:
In *The Night-Time*
(Buddah BDLP 4055).

MICHAEL HENDERSON: is one musician to whom you can apply the word "talented" with a clear conscience. A native of Mississippi, he became a session bassist in Detroit at an improbably tender age, gaining such a glittering reputation through his work with Motown's artists that Stevie Wonder, Aretha Franklin and Miles Davis all came to make extensive use of his services. Davis, for example, called him in for "Jack Johnson" and kept the habit for his next eleven albums. In 1974 Norman Connors joined the

long list of Henderson employers and it was after singing and writing some of the drummer's early hits that Henderson decided to run his own show.

"In The Night-Time" is his third album and follows the well-received "Solid" and "Goin' Places". Like those two a self-production, it features five Henderson songs among its eight tracks and sees him handling both bass and rhythm. Henderson is now of course found fame as leader of Raydio. The album's emphasis rests on deftly constructed ballads taken at mid-tempo and below, and performed by Henderson in a pleasant tenor and falsetto. If it's comparisons you're

after, then the idea of a harder-edged Marvin Gaye fits the bill. Henderson the instrumentalist comes to the fore on the faster funk tracks, bolstering the keyboard grooves in a lithe looping style far more evocative of the upright basses than of Louis Johnson, Bootsy Collins and soul's other four-string heroes.

There are some people who regard Michael Henderson as a potential black music giant. I personally wouldn't go as far as that, but despite the tendency of most tracks here to outstay their welcome, "In The Night-Time" afforded me a measure of enjoyment and stimulation surpassed only by a few other soul albums issued over the past nine months. — BOB GALLAGHER.



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| 3 MANCHESTER Free Trade | 21 BIRMINGHAM Odeon |
| 4 GLASGOW Apollo | 22 BRISTOL Colston Hall |
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| 6 DUNDEE Caird Hall | 25 SWANSEA Top Rank |
| 7 EDINBURGH Odeon | 26 OXFORD New Theatre |
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BUZZCOCKS (pic KEVIN CLIMMINS)

BUZZCOCKS: LOVE HURTS (SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?)

BUZZCOCKS: "Love Bites" (United Artists UAG 30197).

UMMMMM, on the cover of their new album the Buzzcocks look yummy enough to wrap up and take home. "Love Bites", it's called, but no gnashing, you understand, just those tender little nibbles between good friends.

It's odd to think now that when punk groups started they seemed to be making music for a generation that had been born knowing, that had rejected romance at infant school. Even at the subtler, arty end of the music, where the Buzzcocks were in their Devo days, the theme was self-sufficiency, no commitment.

And now the Buzzcocks have made an album just like the Hollies used to! Just as good, too. On "Love Bites" the Buzzcocks go a considerable way towards achieving the impossible — the reception of their own innocence, "Sixteen Again", in their terms. The Hollies sounded sincere even when they were singing the instant hits of Graham Gouldman, etc. because they were so obviously dumb enough to believe everything they read in front of them. The Buzzcock's problem is the opposite one: how to show they believe that love makes the world go round when they're so obviously clever.

Peter Shelley's solution is to be too clever. He still uses the knowing punk voice but he now sounds like the precocious fourth former the rest of us could see through. "I'm in love with somebody," he sings in "Real World", "I wish that somebody was in love with me. You may wonder how this conceals my joy — well perhaps the somebody is you!"

The clumsy lyrical technique, as scansion and rhyme keep going astray, is a neat way of undercutting what at first seems like the old cynical control. "Ever fallen in love with someone you shouldn't have fallen in love with?" asks another song. It's the Jonathan Richman technique (the awkward metaphors of "Operators Manual") — the most calculated gestures come across as spontaneous. "Just Lust", my favourite track here, sounds like a second division Mercedes group, as the Buzzcocks chant "Just Lust!" over a nippy Bo Diddley beat and the track isn't about lust at all. Steve Diggle uses the same device in his time we get to "Nothing Left", a merry love song ("I've lost a love and I'm certain I'll get another so why am I hurting?"). I'm completely convinced. These boys listen to the Simon Bates show like the rest of us. Shelley can let away with his doublelike love songs because of the sharp power of the Buzzcocks' rhythmic section — punk's obsessive beat always was its innocent part

— and the group's music is refreshing for the absence of the current rock obsession with electronic repetition. The album isn't all right — the melodies aren't corny enough and the guitar solos come out of a different kitchen altogether — but given that everyone has to grow up and sell out and live with the fact that few people ever made a better record than their first, then this is a curi-ous and admirable step backwards. — SIMON FRITH

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28—DERBY Lonsdale College
29—NEWBRIDGE Memorial Hall
30—SWANSEA Circle



LINDA RONSTADT (Pic: CHRIS WALTER)

Linda skates right off the rink

LINDA RONSTADT: "Living In The U.S.A."
(Asylum K53085).

OVER her past few albums and, curiously, ever since she won a wall full of awards, something has been happening to Linda Ronstadt's "interpretative" powers.

Most singers who don't write their own material choose songs either to reflect their attitudes and emotions or because they feel they can add something nobody else has done. Having once adhered to those doctrines, lately Ronstadt and her producer/mentor Peter Asher have simply become obsessed by The Voice, which now takes precedence over all else. The songs become merely a vehicle for Ronstadt's technique, which consequently veers dangerously close to self-parody.

Ronstadt is intent on demanding attention — achieved here through the expensive triumph of the Aphex Aural Exciter mixing system. That this device should receive a large credit is almost too good to miss on an album sleeve that more than ever reflects the manufactured quality of Ronstadt's "image." Once the sleeve projected her as a rather ingenuous Sex object. Now, presumably in an attempt to be accepted not just as a female singer but a female rock 'n' roller, she has changed into a cropped-haired, bomber-jacketed roller skater. Helen Reddy meets Gidget, through the pages of Cosmopolitan.

Ronstadt has always intimated a penchant for vocal overkill. Now that Asher has dispensed with coy, lush arrangements, the sparseness (highlighted by Russ Kunkel's remorseless drumming), leaves her to drag out phrases, holding on to notes beyond recall. With the songs subverted to such pyrotechnics, the result is not innovative or moving, simply a slick commercial proposition.

The numbers which emerge, least harmed by this approach are, inevitably, those from rock's early, lyrically naive, hour: "Just One Look," Smokey Robinson's "Ooh Baby Baby," so too the misogynist Elvis Costello's "Ain't No" (an odd choice) and Berry's "Back In The USA," which can just about stand a dogmatic musical interpretation. For the rest it seems that either on an album as unuseful as this, vocal interpretation is totally at odds with the lyrics. It happened on the last album with Warren Zevon's "Carmelita." Now J. D. Souther's "While Rhythm And Blues" (admittedly not one of his better numbers) suffers: "Close your eyes," she yells, "I sleep away your blues."

But by far the most irritating examples of this technique crop up on two of the best contemporary numbers: Little Feat's "All That You Dream" and Eric Kaz's "Blowing Away." It seems unlikely, on an album as unuseful as this, that there might be room for some kind of homage to Ronstadt's sister singers, so on the former song she merely ends up impersonating Maria Muldaur, and on the latter the verse and attempt to capture Bonnie Raitt's powerful blues-based approach on the chorus. On the Kaz song (the definitive version is safe on Raitt's "Home Plate") Ronstadt insists on a literal interpretation, emphasising the word "away" and throwing the song off balance, losing — as she does so many times in this album — the emotional contact of the original. — PENNY VALENTINE.

RICHARD DIGANCE & FRIENDS: "Live At The QEH" (Chrysalis CHR 1187)

RECORDED during Digance's milestone London Queen Elizabeth Hall concert earlier in the year, the sleeve carries the names of all those in attendance, a shrewd gambit, presumably ensuring sales of at least 900. That apart, it was the first occasion Digance had ever worked with a band (Barrie Barlow on drums, Rick Kemp on bass, Mike Lewis on keyboards, Doug Morier and John O'Connor on guitars). While it came off well enough on this euphoric occasion, the record actually reflects the inevitable raggedness and nervousness that wasn't so apparent at the time.

We must also bear in mind that Digance's last album, though admittedly made a long time ago and for a different record company, was also live; and much of the guy's irresistible appeal in front of an audience is invalidated with other musicians around. His boldness in broadening his style and incorporating a band is to be admired and encouraged, but I do feel the money may have been better spent in producing a classy studio album with the same musicians. In this way he might have come up with an album to match "How The West Was Lost," still streets ahead of all his other records.

There's one out-and-out rocker, "Right Back Where I Started," on which Digance audibly flounders as all hell is let loose around him since the mid-fifties. There are indications that this is purely a matter of experience: "Up On The Seventh Floor," which opens the second side, is a blaster that works well though it is formidable song anyway.

about the undesirability of high-rise living.

For quality of song, it's matched only by "Taken My Lifetime Away," which betrays the destruction of a local pub in a particularly skilful and sensitive way, winning the very best out of the musical understanding Digance has with Doug Morier.

This combination also comes into play on "Journey Of The Salmon," though it's a song I'm not totally struck on. The impact of making an emotional drama out of a day in the life of a salmon eludes me, despite the success of Digance's previous sympathetic views of animal life, notably "Beaver Believer."

"Journey Of The Salmon" concludes a first side that features quieter material like "Dear Diana," "Down Petticoat Lane," another Easy End anthem "Summertime Day In Stratford," and an exceptionally authentic music-hall reconstruction "Drinking With Rosie." How can you resist a line like "Since I was a nipper I had this 'ere wish. To marry a girl who could drink like a fish?" — COLIN IRWIN.

FRANKIE VALLI: "Frankie Valli Is The Word" (Warner Bros K56549)

THE Bee Gees were quite right to get Frankie Valli to sing "Grease," the promo single for Stigwood's multi-media package, though not because Valli is an old groaner who's been around since the mid-fifties. That's not the point of the single at all — "Grease" has no taint of Fifties teenagers or rock 'n' roll and I have no idea what it's got to do with music except that it's given Valli a nice summer

salary and he deserves it — it was he who pioneered the Seventies pop path that the Bee Gees subsequently trod. Frankie Valli (along with Paul Anka) put a drum machine and electric piano behind falsetto harmonies, adolescent melodrama and male self-pity and the result, eventually, was Bee Gees. Gaudio (producer/writer/fellow Four Season) were making great disco singles ("Let's Hang On," "You're Ready Now") when the Bee Gees were still warbling ballads in the bath.

Mind you, Frankie Valli doesn't do disco nearly as well as the Bee Gees. He hasn't got as good songs: the Bee Gees are the masters of the disco hook and "Grease" is the only instant tune on Valli's album. He hasn't got as good ideas: the Bee Gees set off their nasal whine against a military two-step to give their gloom a satisfying strut. Valli's self-pity, in contrast, is never not taken seriously, he is as sincere as you'd expect from an ageing Italian. He's preferable to the others like him — less pretentious than Neil Diamond or Billy Joel, less soppy than Barry Manilow, less camp than Neil Sedaka. But Valli's music, this album, is Las Vegas disco all the same.

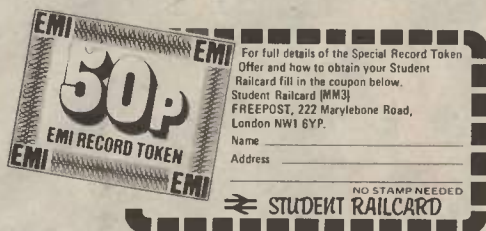
The Four Seasons began their career by adapting r&b group sounds for the white pop market and the results were lively and funny. Valli is still borrowing from black music, but anonymously now. He makes music for expensive dining: modern, of course, but nothing lively enough to spill the wine or curdle the *creme brulee*. I don't blame him at all. In ten years' time Frankie Valli will be making whatever is then the right music for us to dance to and if this limp album is what we're getting now it may be what we want. — SIMON FRITH.

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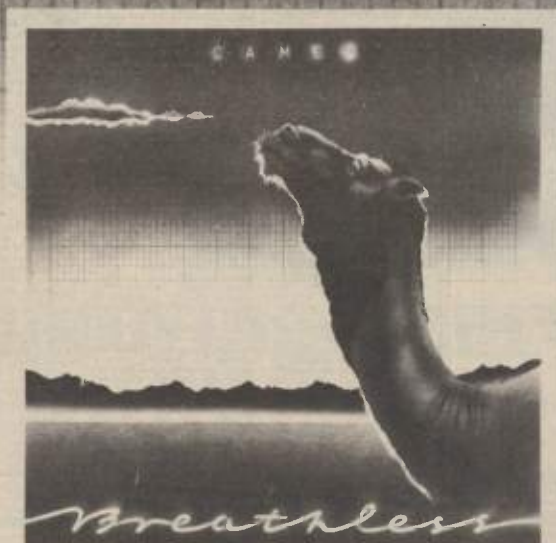


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EMI ANOTHER FANTASY TURNS TO FACT

Folk albums

by Colin Irwin

NIC JONES: "From The Devil To A Stranger" (Transatlantic LTRA 507).

THIS, by several fat leagues, is the Enigmatic One's finest hour. The man has more detractors than most — I, shamefully, used to be one — and his — er — un-acrobatic stage manner does seem to alienate as many as it invigorates, but this should be the way of universal conversion. It almost goes without saying that Jones sings and plays consummately throughout, such is his class, and the strength of the record goes way beyond that.

It lies in the album's completeness, its flow, its natural feel, its warmth. There is clear evidence of overall planning (though this is not, I hasten to add, a concept album) without for one second sacrificing Nic's essential character or his usual style. The end of one track blends neatly into the start of another. Instrumentals drift atmospherically in and out, and the opening theme "The Singer's Request" recurs, and there's sparing yet devastating embellishment in the form of occasional double-tracking and fiddle and piano additions (from Jones himself and Helen Watson respectively).

In a field where singers either tend to stick to the bare minimum of their stage act, or go berserk and drown themselves in overkill when let loose in a studio, this is a gem of taste, sensitivity and disciplined flair. Praise (once more) must be heaped on Bill Leader, credited as producer, for ensuring its smooth execution, though it is Jones' imaginatively frequently adventurous arrangements that are at the crux of the appeal.

His guitar accompaniment to the tragic "Billy Don't You Weep," for example, is a revelation, all the more effective for following his boisterous instrumental "Some Day The Devil's Dead" (a re-working of "Love Will Marry Me" on the last De Dannan album), this in turn following "The Singer's Request," the perfect album introduction.

The tune crops up again (on piano) as Jones completes "The Blind Harper," and then segues into the beautiful Irish tune "The Little Heathy Hill." It masterfully balances the gruesome flavour of the ballads that seem to occupy Jones (much in the vein of "William Glen," the ship's captain who's flung overboard when the crew discover he's a murderer, or the drowning and destruction in "The Lakes Of Shillu"). This boy has an unhealthy interest in death and water, themes that permeate the album, often combined. It should go down a bomb with trainee psychiatrists.

ASHLEY HUTCHINGS: "Kickin' Up The Sawdust" (Harvest SHSP 4073)

THIS is interesting mainly for the way it integrates traditional musicians Bob Cann (melodion) and Jimmy Cooper (hammered dulcimer) into the context of a modern, electric revival band. It's rarely been done before, and becomes all the more significant through the recent sad death of Cooper. This is his last recording.

The music of Cann and Cooper fits naturally into it, though the record sets itself very limited guidelines and



NIC JONES (Pic: BILL LEADER)

THE DEVIL AND OLD NIC

keeps well within them. It is, pure and simple, a dance album, in the most literal sense. The sets and steps are annotated on the sleeve much in the way of Stefan Grossman's guitar tablatures on the Melling Mule releases, and the music seems solely aimed at those embarking on do-it-yourself ceilidhs.

Nothing wrong with that, but it does limit its appeal as straightforward entertainment, even though the musicianship can't be faulted. Apart from Cann and Cooper, Hutchings uses John Rodd (concertina), Terry Potter (mouth-organ) and Michael Hebbert (concertina, synthesizer) and fellow Albion Band members John Tams, Pete Bullock, Graeme Taylor, and Michael Gregory. It's certainly of substantially less general interest than Hutchings' previous trilogy of projects, "Morris On," "The Compleat Dancing Master," and, best of all, "Rattlebone And Plough-jack."

The record has also been the subject of more delays than the General Election: the upsurge in English country music was originally conceived as now since levelled out and the music has become more widely familiar (mainly through the New Victory Band and the Old Swan Band). It should have a role in schools and suchlike and nevertheless makes a welcome radical alternative to the dance instructional put out by the EFDSS.

SHIRLEY & DOLLY COLLINS: "For As Many As Will" (Topic 12TS380)

A MODEST, unassuming, sporadically engaging little effort that unfortunately drifts too easily into the background to be considered of any great consequence.

The epic ghost of "Anthem in Eden" still hovers over these two, and on their reunion album (after various separate adventures) one looked for something a little more momentous. Shirley sings, as ever, with warmth and compassion, while Dolly's flute organ is an attractive decoration, but it all tends to be a bit too genteel and homely. Tighter production and more startling arrangements are needed to grab the attention. With other artists such honesty and unpretentiousness would be a welcome virtue, but Shirley's character is so evidently enhanced by adventurous surroundings that this has a weary air.

There is, however, a delightful version of a Richard Thompson song, "Never Again", while winning arrangements of "Lord Allenwater", "The Mistress' Health" (one of the more ambitious tracks), and "The Moon Shines Bright" (sung supremely), almost sway me to a more enthusiastic assessment.

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Jazz albums

West Coast ghosts

WEST COAST jazz of the Fifties is now fashionable so we must be careful not to underdate it. The following fine and, up to a point, representative album, recorded in 1956, long neglected, and now issued for the first time, shows several of the key figures near to top form. The themes are all by Rogers and are scored in a way that is strictly functional yet mixes the instruments in a resourceful variety of ways. Several of these melodies originally were written for other recording sessions. "Mick's Peak" for Dave Pell, "Clicking the Dice" for Pettie Jolly, etc.—so it is interesting to have Rogers' own versions.

Remembering how such jazz was 20 years ago almost unanimously dismissed for its supposed coldness and pretentiousness, it is amusing to find how straight-ahead it now sounds. Manne's swinging and propulsive beat

SHORTY ROGERS: "Clicking With Clax". (a) Toyland, I Dig Ed, Adam In New York, Clicking With Clax; (b) Put The Goodies On, Our Song. Pete's Meat, Mike's Peak (Atlantic K50481)

Shorty Rogers (fl h), Herb Geller (alt), Bud Shank (alt, bar), Bill Holman (ten), Jimmy Giuffrè (clt, ten, bar), Lou Levy (p), Ralph Peña (bs), Shelly Manne (d), Hollywood; March 1956.

informs every bar, and is mirrored in the power and force of the ensembles. The numerous solos inevitably vary in quality, yet all are cogently inventive, all keep to the point, and, like Roger's arrangements, all are shorn of merely decorative flourishes.

Playing with greater lyrical fire, especially on "Toyland" and "Admission," Geller overshadows the excellent Shank, whose best work is elsewhere (on certain long-deleted Vogue Contemporary albums in fact). The other outstanding performer is Levy, who accompanies perceptively throughout and takes splendid solos, particularly in "Clicking" and "Goodies." Giuffrè ("Bill") Giuffrè to the Sunday Times) is another one who is heard to better advantage elsewhere, although he still

manages to make some characteristic statements, for example with his clarinet on "I Dig Ed". Rogers, with his flugelhorn, is, as usual, light, deft, always inventive, as "Goodies" will show. MAX HARRISON

in brief

CRIBB: HUBBARD: "Super Blue" (Y.S. 82866). How comforting to know that, in the wake of the popular "fusion" shenanigans, Hubbard renounced "fusion" shenanigans. "Super Blue" is, however, an overhaul rather than a rebirth. The presence of Joe Henderson (sax), George Benson (guitar), Ron Carter (bass) and Jack DeJohnette (drums) assures us of some of the best jazz playing in the world. Hubbard Laws and guitarist George Benson inflict unhappy memories of the recent past on the listener. In the final stage he was at with his CI albums like "Red Clay" and "Straight Ahead," Hubbard Laws was at his best. If he continues on his present course, he will be back to the genuine spirit of his Blue Note recordings. Hubbard Laws is, yet there is a residual flabbiness and concern for surface gloss which will prevent him from making the same contributions to "Emphyrean Isles" and "The Blues And The Abstract Truth".



SHORTY ROGERS, in contemplative mood, at the Hollywood Bowl (pic: LEONARD FEATHER)

GARY BURTON

GARY BURTON "Times Square". Semblance
Coral Careful, Peau Douce, Midnight Radio.
True Or False, Como En Vietnam. (ECM 1111).
Tiger Okoshi (tp), Gary Burton (vib), Steve
Swallow (ba g), Roy Haynes (d). Generation
Sound Studio, NYC — January, 1978

THE first two of these themes were written by Keith Jarrett, the third by Jim Hall, and the rest by Steve Swallow. The interpretations these finely-crafted cameos get are always well-mannered, often elegant, but only deeply absorbing when the spotlight is on Swallow or Haynes, be it in tandem or separately.

Whilst the agility and polish of Burton's work are as impressive as ever, his dynamics are curiously uniform. Perhaps it is because of this that his solo playing, which predominates in this album, has no durable impact. Listening to his improvisations, I found myself drawn more and more to the ingenious accompaniment by Swallow and Haynes.

The drummer works with the aplomb that only 30 years at the top of a man's profession can confer, displaying his superbly lithe control with an infinite variety of precise and rhythmic effects, yet never jars the refined atmosphere which seems to be the group's prime concern. Connoisseurs of his work will especially value "True Or False," a fine study in percussion with cross-references to the intricate theme. Swallow, as resourceful on bass guitar as on the larger instrument, duets beautifully with the drummer in "Peau Douce" and "Radio," with Burton providing tasteful background chords.

Okoshi is not present in "Radio" and "Midnight", and frankly I should not have regretted his absence in the rest of the programme. Although his trumpet lends extra instrumental colour to the ensembles, his tone is cloying in the extreme and in his solo work he succeeds only in trivialising the achievements of Lee Morgan, Freddie Hubbard and their various stylistic offshoots. — **MICHAEL JAMES.**

LOUIS ARMSTRONG

LOUIS ARMSTRONG: "And the All Stars." Penna Blue Skies Whispering C Jam Blues Boogie Woogie On St Louis Blues Don't Fence Me In Love Pale Moon A Song Was Born Mahogany Hall Stomp (Swing House SWH-2) Louis Armstrong (tp, vc), Barney Bigard (cl) Jack Teagarden (tb, vc), Earl Hines (pno), Arvell Shaw (ba), Sid Catlett (d), Velma Middleton (vc) Los Angeles - March 1949

ALMOST the first All Stars, this little lot, and so far as individual talent goes, the best. The group had Dick Cary on piano who, in August, 1947, and he was there for the group's first recordings in October of that year, and again for the Symphony Hall concert cuts of November 30 — and the music it made was well played and full of gusto. For Louie, the small-band format was "going home."

Then, in January of '48, the flamboyant Art Hines took over from Cary and the only Seattle All Stars band came into being and, to the almost incredulous delight of those Brits able to go South at the time, appeared at the Nice International Jazz Festival from February 22 to 28.

The jazz on this Swing House album — a follow-up to the label's first release, "Louis Jordan Prime Cuts" (recently reviewed here) — is precisely the kind of contemporary-traditional small-band music that we heard from the group at Nice. It features plenty of

"showboating" from Armstrong and the soloists, a lot of clear, fierce trumpeting, and many passages of authoritative ensemble playing ("Panama," "Blue Skies," "Mahogany Hall," for examples).

Some have said this was mere entertainment music, not serious jazz; that it was too "soloistic" and exhibitionistic. Maybe so. Louis had been playing to the gallery for decades and managing to blow marvellous horn at the same time.

He outsang and outswung all vocal contenders, too, while being funny into the bargain. Oddly, not much of his singing occurs here: just one often-amusing duet with the leather-throated Velma Middleton, "Don't Fence Me In," and an unexceptional vocal and instrumental feature with Teagarden, "A Song Was Born."

What the album does emphasize is Hines' kicking piano, spotlighted on "Pale Moon" and then his deathless "Boogie Woogie On St Louis" (first recorded in 1940 and still sounding pretty exciting in this Nice outing), rearing out of such performances as "Mahogany Hall" in dominating solos, and playing so much stuff behind the rest of the instrumentalists that they had little chance of flagging in their efforts.

lugging in the "Jazz Machine," a 1957 Chevrolet with more steam than I recall encountering at that first Nice festival. "Whispering," though a showpiece for Shaw's bass, includes some fine fat trumpet and band passages; and Jackson T blows his "Lover" feature with an edge of enthusiasm, as well as terrific flexibility, over the Earl's racing keyboard work. Yes, this is better than another typical All Stars album; it's a rare chance to hear the best of these groups with the great Sid Catlett on drums. — MAX JONES

EVAN PARKER

IVAN PARKER: "Monoceros" Monoceros 14
(Incus 27)
Parker (sop) Monmouth — April 30 1978

FOLLOWING on the justifiably well-received series of solo improvisations titled "Aerobatics", released last year, Evan Parker gives us a further progress report on his assiduous inquiries into the mechanics and acoustical properties of the soprano saxophone.

Parker's performances are much more than simple research, of course: having mastered a novel technique he integrates it into a firmly musical conception which, because it compresses so much material into so short a time-scale, is bound to intimidate many of those listeners who have not closely followed his progress.

"Monoceros I" is, at a shade over 20 minutes, a startling performance even by Parker's standards. Using circular breathing he creates an undulating line out of high harmonics, interspersing simultaneous comments in the instrument's "natural" register. Eventually these take on the character of interruptions, violating and ultimately supplant-

The remaining pieces, each between four and nine minutes long, explore other preoccupations: "2" is built of a sidelong glance, "3" contains those curious and characteristic figurations which appear to revolve on the spot rather than make forward progress, and "4" is a thesaurus of impossibly rapid gestures which displays Parker's occasional preference for total discontinuity.

It should be noted that this record was produced by the direct-cut process, eliminating the use of tape and its byproducts (distortion, hiss, and so on). "Menoceros" therefore presents a sound akin to the immediacy of live performance, which in Parker's case is a very tangible benefit all the vivid qualities of his playing are perfectly transferred — RICHARD WILLIAMS.



Barbara Thompson's
Paraphernalia

A new album by Barbara Thompson on MCA Records. MCF 2852. Featuring Barbara Thompson on Tenor/Alto/Soprano saxes and flute. Early this year she gained critical acclaim for her performance in Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Variations," which reached number 2 in the chart. She was also chosen to represent the jazz sax at the Adolphe sax centenary.

What the papers say

'Miss Thompson is an extremely skilled musician who must surely become one of this country's most important jazz figures...Her playing has seemingly limitless range and feeling.'

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Jazz albums

Ornette: two-bass hit in Rome

ORNETTE COLEMAN "The Unprecedented Music Of Ornette Coleman". Lemmy (MCA), Minkaur La Prince (Fingert), (Chadler), Buddah Blues Jaker UPU Z461 (K), Japanese imports) Ornette Coleman (all 101 mutes), Charlie Haden, David Izenzon (bs), Ed Blackwell (d) Rome — 1967

THIS is the group, until now unrepresented on vinyl, which misleadingly appeared on the cover of the English issue of "Ornette On Tenor" several years ago. It is hardly surprising that it should turn out to be one of the most absorbing outfits Coleman has led.

The concert recording perfectly preserves the balance between the two bassists and the drummer, allowing us to hear the details of the fascinating relationship between Izenzon and Haden. Briefly, the latter provides the ground-bass structure and the underlying rhythmic flow, while the former uses his bow to fill the middle area between Haden and Coleman.

On the two tracks which comprise the first side, Coleman plays alto with a sprightliness which prefigures his astonishing work on 1970's "Friends And Neighbours", and from which he lately seems to

have retreated. "Lonely Woman" extends the dark passions of its original 1959 version into electrifying contrasts of turmoil and serenity, while "Le Prince" is taken at his favourite "walking" medium tempo and is notable for Blackwell's propulsive beat in tandem with Haden's flexible variations on the pulse (this is a fine example of how, emboldened by Blackwell's security, Haden could take out ragged rhythmic liberties, while retaining the prescribed momentum).

Coleman plays trumpet on "Children" in a manner recalling his recent performance on Haden's "The Golden Number," which is to say that he capitalises on his limited technique in extrapolate the implications of Don Cherry's early "ballad" work. One misses the timbral interaction of the saxophone with Izenzon's arco sound, but the use of the trumpet lends a distance which allows us to examine Coleman's lyricism afresh.

"Buddah" features the mallets, and is very alight by comparison. The anonymity of Blackwell's playing (seems to be providing a "backing" rather than engaging interaction) is a reassurance of the failure of this particular effect — RICHARD WILLIAMS.

● Japanese imports are available from Flyover Records, 15 Queen Caroline Street, London W6, and from Mole Jazz, 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1.)

DIYANI/TCHICAI/PUKWANA

JOHNNY DIYANI with JOHN TCHICAI and DUDU PUKWANA "Witchdoctor's Son". Heart With Mind's Face. Niyilo. Nyilo. Radebe. Mbia. Eyozi. Magwaza. (SteepChase SC5-1008). John Tchicai (alt. sax), Dudu Pukwana (alt. ten), Alredo Op. Nascimento (p), Dyan (b), Luiz Colson (d), Carlos Os. Sequera (d), Mohamed Al-Jabry (cong. perc). Probably Copenhagen — March 15 1978.

THE titles suggest, the thrust behind this music is essentially African. "Niyilo" and "Magwaza" are traditional themes and have vocals by Diyani. He also provided the rest of the material except for "Radebe", which is Pukwana's. The personnel, however, is international in character, with two Brazilians and a Dane allying themselves with the Africans. The technique

common to these musicians are American in origin: the musical dialect is the type of group improvisation developed in the United States during the Sixties. Although emphasis is placed on the ensemble, with contrasting timbres, vocalised colouring and rhythmic impetus given precedence over melodic and harmonic subtlety, soloists emerge from time to time. Do Nascimento, for instance, has a decorative sequence in "Niyilo". Diyani shows his solo power in "Eyozi", and the two saxophonists are heard separately and at some length in "Magwaza". Tchicai's solo here, laconic and incisive, contrasts effectively with the celebratory ambience of the album as a whole. A more frequent injection of such value would have helped defend this music against the charge of self-indulgence to which its loose and open-ended format stands exposed — MICHAEL JAMES.

CLIFFORD JORDAN

CLIFFORD JORDAN and THE MAGIC TRIANGLE "On Stage Vol 2". Midnight West. Bluecher Street. Thine I Should Care. Stella By Starlight. (SteepChase SC5-1002).

Jordan (ten), Cedar Walton (p), Sam Jones (bs), Billy Higgins (d), B.I.M. House, Amsterdam — March 22, 1978. A generation of tenor saxophonists dominated by Coltrane and Rollins, Jordan, like the late Booker Ervin, has carved out a truly distinctive style. This album finds his inspiration running high, and its sheer musical quality atones for the recurring, falling slightly short of the standards normally associated with SteepChase. Throughout three extended items — the short "Bluecher Street Theme" was obviously a set-piece — Jordan and his sidemen maintain remarkably high inventive standards. The leader's economy of line, its impact heightened by cleverly varied dynamics, finds a

piquant contrast in the intricate detail of Walton's structures. Both steer resolutely clear of cliché and bombast alike.

Integration at an advanced level was one of this band's chief assets. The skills of Jones and Higgins were crucial in this respect. Listen closely to their work in "I Should Care", where Higgins especially is a paragon of resourcefulness. Their contributions are as fascinating as they are decisive.

In his excellent sleeve-note Chris Sheridan refers to the impact which bebop had on the band's two principals. "We wanted to revive these feelings and demonstrate them to the people who came to listen," he quotes Walton as saying.

This record, though, is no mere memento of the past, but a contemporary account of the parent style — one shot through with its characteristic blend of passion and flashing logic — MICHAEL JAMES.

BARBARA THOMPSON

BARBARA THOMPSON "Paraphernalia". Geophony. Mr. Sam Sudd, To Be Quiet. Ly. Tompkins. D. Am. Spanish Memories. Susan Serr. Next Spring. Temple Song. Starwars. (GMC 260).

Barbara Thompson (ten. alto. sop. fl.), Colin Dodman (keyboards), Roy Babbington (bs. g.), Harold Fisher (d. perc.) London — 1978. It scarcely seems possible — we recall a girl playing energetic alto in the New Jazz Orchestra. Now she has blossomed as one of Britain's most respected jazz musicians and this album showcases both her strength as a leader and her instrumental fire power.

The music has a strength and beauty that is sustained throughout an attractive intelligent range of material. The quality of the writing on pieces like "La Tranquillite" and "Spanish Memories" immediately sets a stamp of matu-

rity on the whole album. The band is remarkably tight, with Harold Fisher's brisk, expert and sensitive drumming following every tack in the musical course.

Roy Babbington, everyone's favourite bass player, is both supple and firm as he hugs the melody line of tunes like "Next Spring", picking notes with a deft accuracy. Colin Dodman, on electric or acoustic piano, is a forceful soloist with a fine technique, while his unexpected use of the sitar on "Temple Song" paves a mystical path for while his airy but solemn flute. Barbara is especially fluent on soprano and she executes passages on "Temple Song" that would astound the natives of the Casbah and cause snakes to rear from their baskets and break into spontaneous applause.

"Jazz Rock" can sometimes be neurotic, ugly and overblown. No such complaints can be laid at Paraphernalia's door. — CHRIS WELCH.

ORNETTE COLEMAN at the 1978 Brocknell Jazz Festival (pic DENNIS AUSTIN).

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- 4 HIGH WYCOMBE, Town Hall
- 5 NOTTINGHAM, Sandpiper
- 6 MIDDLESBOROUGH, Rock Garden
- 7 HUDDERSFIELD, Polytechnic
- 9 PLYMOUTH, Woods
- 10 PENZANCE, Garden
- 11 EXETER, Routes
- 12 BARNSTABLE, Chequers
- 13 BATH, University
- 14 WEST RUNTON, The Pavilion
- 15 CHELMSFORD, Chancellor Hall

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- 18 READING, Bones
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- 31 LEEDS, Fan Club

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FRAGILE SURFACES AND FAST GEARS

IN HER kitchen Joan Armatrading washes up the plates from a vegetarian meal we have just eaten. "You wouldn't think," she had said earlier with a self-effacing smile, standing in her dungarees, stars-and-stripes braces pulled off to give her more manoeuvrability, "that I was a good cook, would you?" She was chopping broccoli, carrots and chives fresh from her garden; occasionally staring in bemusement at four saucepans of hot water as though she couldn't quite recall what she was going to put in them. Loping to the cupboard, she threw open the door and stood with her head on one side: "Can't find the servers," she mumbled, then: "Umm . . . would you mind . . . I mean I don't think I've got any." An appealing smile.

We eat out of bowls with chopsticks, round the kitchen table. In one corner a Thirties radio, bought for her in America by her band, plays The Ramones' "Needles And Pins" (she likes Nicky Home's programme but normally listens to Radio Four) and she stops chewing to listen, and pass favourable judgement.

It is a scene almost worthy of a word I would have normally associated with Joan: cosy. Outside the kitchen a large house rambles: old paint stripped back to natural wood, soft pine furniture, windows thrown open onto a walled garden. A magnolia tree bursts into late bloom outside the front door. In the garage sits an antique yellow and black Triumph sports car. Joan has lived here for a year, doing the place up herself. It is the first home she has ever owned. That ownership, by a woman who has always led you to think that freedom and fast getaways are the things she might value most, is a surprise.

Ah, but — she will argue — this is freedom: "I don't think of it like committing myself. Perhaps — if I was in a marriage situation . . . but I'm not about to start a family and settle down, settle down." She almost sings the phrase. "No, it's just somewhere I like, I can fix up the way I like, that's my own."

WHETHER it is meeting her in her own environment for the first time that makes the difference, or that Armatrading has dropped the defensive mechanism she has worn over five years of interviews, is hard to judge. But this is like meeting the woman you always felt, but were never sure, hid beneath the eggshell surface she presented.

There have always been contradictory images presented of Joan: the ones she presented herself, the ones you were left to construct because she left so few clues. Her manager has struggled with a woman he saw as having an inferiority complex, whose intense shyness made

Off the road and out of the studio, Joan Armatrading constructs her own security. PENNY VALENTINE peers behind the ambiguities. Pix: ANNIE LEIBOVITZ.

it hard for him to build up a confidence in herself. In the early days; at the same time her producer, Glyn Johns, was floored when she first walked into the studio. He had never, he said, known any musician who knew exactly what they wanted, the way Joan did.

She now admits to this combination of "closed off" introversion and a determination to be in control. Topped off with a vaguely puritanical attitude to her own body — she doesn't smoke or drink — it has somehow made her seem all the more quietly formidable.

Now relaxed, one leg tucked up under, on the couch, laughing and frank by turns, it seems an almost unguarded, voluntarily defenceless Joan Armatrading. In the room the television is tuned to Coronation Street, with the sound turned down. Her record collection (depleted a year ago by thieves) is fronted by the benign face of Tony Hancock. On the bookshelves, Star Trek paperback jostle with Rita Mae Brown's Rubyfruit Jungle.

SHE has spent far too little time here recently. This past year, up until Blackbushe, she toured abroad: Australia and New Zealand for the first time, then Canada and Europe. She is still eager to relate her success and her response to it; when Armatrading says something was "really great", it's the closest you'll get to outright euphoria.

In fact she and the band went in with one date per city and had to re-shuffle the schedule to fit in an extra three concerts at each venue. By the time she left for Canada, two albums — "Show Some Emotion" and "Joan Armatrading" — had gone gold in Europe. "I could tell jokes and they — well they probably didn't even know what they were laughing at — but they did laugh. They loved it."

From that tour she went into Blackbushe with Dylan ("A very nice bloke. Very sort of quiet. He seemed the kind of bloke I'd like") enjoying playing in the open before such massive crowds, something that three years ago would have struck the then more introverted stage performer as a nightmare.

In fact the only minor blot on the year seems to have been watching her Hammermith concert repeat on Sight And Sound "Awful, awful. I sang out of tune — well, I never said I was a singer! But the band sounded incredibly weak

which they certainly weren't. I'm sorry people who might not have seen me before watched that. The only good thing was that I could play guitar well, that was very obvious.

"I got bored with it, to tell you the truth, I wanted to turn it off but I thought 'Well, I'll just watch and I might even learn something.'"

And did she? "Yeah, — a giggle — 'I learnt I should have turned it off.'"

Now she is tired of concerts. She will not be touring round the new album, "To The Limit". "Although I don't think anyone gets in the position of not doing anything when they've got a new album coming out. But I just fancied a rest after this past year. I don't really want to fall down on stage."

"To The Limit" reflects the new outgoing attitude, from the cover shots to the music. In the past Joan has clung fiercely to cover images in silhouette or half-darkness, packaging that lent itself to furthering the mystique of Armatrading's evasive personality. Annie Leibovitz's four-day shoot has resulted in a set of pictures that capture not just the essence of Joan but also — more remarkable — the two distinct sides of her personality. The front picture is solemn and slightly defiant; the back a shy giggle, one hand over her face. On the inside sleeve are two shots from the final reel of the beautiful black woman at work: one moment head bowed in apparent tiredness over her desk, the other a final release, her arms thrown back, her body stretching vital. (In fact, she says, one was taken when she wanted to finish the pictures; the other when Annie finally told her she was through.)

As usual, her question is: do you like the cover? For the first time I can answer without reservation. A not-so-usual statement follows: "You'd better like this album. I think it's the best I've ever done. Oh — a moment of doubt — I suppose that means nobody else will think so."

ARMATRADING'S music has never given the listener an instantly accessible ride, and, despite its rock emphasis, the musical structures of the new album are even more subtly demanding (including her own translation of two major black influences: spirituals and reggae). Oddly, the lyrics are probably the most straightforward she's ever written. Each song is about relationships. On the surface it looks like another breakthrough. For the first time Joan may be talking about herself quite clearly without ducking into verbal shadows. In fact, the complete reverse is true.

"Even less so than usual. On the other albums there has always been the odd personal song, but here — definitely not. They're all — um — from what other people have said to me, or what I've seen."

I ask her to be more specific. "Well, take 'Your Letter'. A woman musician I know, I was at her house and the day before she had found a letter in her bed — from another woman to her bloke. Something like that, a very strong. I wanted to write about it. On the other

continued overleaf

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Joan Armatrading from previous page

hand I didn't want to write it too obviously like her thing because, well, she was so really upset.

"Barfount And Pregnant" was just a year to keep a woman like that so she doesn't leave, a lot of blokes are like that. To give her maybe lots of things but not company. I was talking to my agent about — I think it was men/women relationships, and he said that I'd never heard that phrase before."

But it's very famous, I tell her, well known in the women's movement. "Yeah," she nods quickly. "But I'd never heard it, really. And it sounded so nice. I mean what it stands for isn't particularly nice at all, but it together... those words together."

And isn't "Taking My Baby Outown" a song about guys? "No," firmly. "It's just about a bloke and his girlfriend."

Yet the lyrics talk about a sense of moral outrage by other people when the couple show affection on the street for each other — surely not a heterosexual problem? It hadn't even entered my mind it wasn't a gay song.

Well, she says, it could be a gay song, and it probably applies to gay people more than heterosexuals. But it was written because of her observations, older people's reaction to public displays of closeness. And because of a more general attitude she's noticed, something that's almost a form of jealousy. "When you see someone really happy with someone else you want them to be with you, and maybe get a little of that happiness."

IT'S these kind of observations on other people's lives and attitudes that have gone some way to giving Joan the reputation of being merely an observer, yet it is the same technique novelists use for their work. It has also, certainly, confused people as to where Joan herself stands in relation to her songs. Why does she so rarely write about her own experiences?

"I used to at one point, but I was never comfortable doing it. I'm not that sort of person — if you went and asked my mum she'd tell you I've always been closed up. My family don't know the first thing about me. I've

never been a person who tells what's happening. I don't particularly like to do that."

"And when I did write about myself it all came out a mess because it was easy to write it, but it was hard to see it written. So I'd change things and that made it very confusing to people listening."

She stopped writing, she says, directly she'd finished recording "Show Some Emotion." She felt she wanted to do something different with this new album, musically and lyrically. One thing was to get the energy of a live recording with the quality of studio sound, with hardly any over-dubs. The spontaneity of the idea worked well for the first week — five songs were completed. Then it started to get a bit better and took forever to get the next lot of songs down. I think we were really excited to start with, you know. Then I began to get very tired, the whole tearing thing caught up with me. That's why I don't play my electric guitar on the album.

"TO THE LIMIT" displays not just Joan's concise execution of her musical ideas, but her apparent need to keep her hand limber in constant flux. Keeping Red Young (keyboards) and Quinlan Dennis (bass) from her last touring band, she added drummer Henry Spinetti from the first band she ever worked with — when she did a season at Ronnie Scott's four years ago. Philip Palmer, the guitarist from the David Essex band, joined her resident studio bass player Dave Markee and Clapton's organist Dick Simms.

She feels these changes help keep her music more vital. "Sometimes you have a band that get so used to doing a song one way that it's hard for them to go into a studio and change it. That's not a put-down on the musicians, because I've always been very lucky with the people I worked with, it's just a fact."

Her routine is to go into the studios with songs completely worked out in her own mind: "I try, she smiles, "to be as together as I can."

She admits it sometimes makes her appear difficult to work with — but after all,

she points out, they are eventually her albums. She doesn't want ever to feel that she's just got a name put on the music which is only a result of other people's proverbs. At the same time she is happy to rely on the musicians' ability to improvise round her original structure, in fact it's almost a necessity to her work.

"I used to say what to play all the time. Then I was

in control, very much so. But I decided I should get out of that way of working because it seemed sometimes it made things go stiff, made the musicians feel stale. So now we work alike — well, how I play obviously suggests how the songs should be, will sound. Then the musicians play what they think will fit in, so it's slightly improvised. Then if I don't like it we try something else. It is involved

because the structures are complicated, but the musicians like to work that way. It's different for them, I think."

She laughs when she recalls how she tried to explain a reggae sound she'd hear — in its original form a far cry from Marley, Tosh, or Steel Pulse. "My little brother had got hold of some really authentic raw records, very basic reggae. I've never heard anything like them before. It seemed to me that's the way it should playing all Joan Armatrading near to it as I could. We actually did the track "Bottom To The Top," in one take and Henry's really excellent on it, he's all over the shop. I mean he didn't know what was happening. He didn't know where the song began or ended, literally. Apart from me, nobody knew what was happening."

she now sees how her place as a woman musician helps the movement as a whole: "Because, after all, I'm a woman who has succeeded."

And on her own terms, I remind her, that's the important thing. She's the one female musician who hasn't been manipulated — or appears not to have been. Yes, she nods, I can say that; not manipulated at all. That's why she has always been glad she wasn't successful with her first album. "Because I couldn't have coped with it. She frowns slightly: "Well, I don't know if it would have been me who couldn't or the people not being able to deal with me and my unwillingness to change for it."

"Obviously you go through a certain amount of change. If you have the time to adjust, as I have, it works for the good. But if it had happened quickly, and I'd been under pressure, I wouldn't have necessarily been able to control it."

"I think that would have led me to feeling resentful about doing things I didn't want to, you know. When you get success, they say: 'Well you got here because of this and if you do this, have got your step that status you've achieved.' And, who knows, I just might have gone along with certain things. It's doubtful, but you can't tell."

This way, she says, she has been able to assimilate Joan Armatrading the record artist into Joan Armatrading the girl from near Birmingham who always wanted to be like her mother, quiet and strong, and not go around complaining. So sometimes the thought persists that things really haven't changed that much for her. That she would have been much the same person with or without a recording contract. I think that's true I don't mean to sound coy, but I'm slightly blinkered. I tend to see something and go after it and I don't think that's changed. Nor much else."

SHE is still a self-contained woman, more concerned to gain approval for her work than for herself. She agrees that she rarely seeks the approval of others on a personal level: "I don't go out of my way to be friendly. And if I like someone, they don't necessarily have to like me." She feels she's always had this sense of inner security. At school she was quite happy with one best mate. Today there is still only one person who is her real friend. That's all she needs to know — that if she was in trouble there would be someone who would care and help.

This singular life stretches to her domestic world. When I first met her she lived in a house in West Hampstead with friends, needing always the sense of isolation they allowed her. "So I had my own room and spent a lot of time there writing and they understood that. I need to be on my own."

Coming back to London on the last tour, it was noticeable how she immediately went to the front of the coach and curled up away from the band. It was not an unfriendly gesture: "Being on your own is great."

She gives me a lift back to my flat. On the way we stop at a garage and Joan gets petrol and goes to the cash desk to pay. Sauntering across the courtyard in dungarees that stop just short of her ankles, baseball boots, a Michael Jackson twined cap, her hands thrust into her pockets, she is, just for a moment, a defiant young kid from the block.

ROSE ROYCE on the road



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THE late afternoon sun has faded, plunging the room into almost total darkness. The only light is that flickering from the television screen onto Joan's face, but she makes no move to switch on the overhead lamp.

When she first started playing all Joan Armatrading wanted to do was "play guitar in a band and write songs." She never had visions of being out in the frontline, and when that happened it was apparent on stage that she was very nervous and needed some form of support. She got it mainly from the feminists, who saw in this young black woman a musician who seemed for once totally herself and not a "product" of the recording industry.

After a while the adulation from this quarter seemed to worry her. She worried that it could put her on a pedestal, where she didn't belong, a token feminist musician. She once told she had never seen herself as anything special, no revolutionary, "just plain old Joan."

Today her appeal seems, surprisingly, considering her music, veering closer to MOR audience. Whether in itself this concerns her or not, she does feel her on-stage relationship with an audience is healthier, more friendly and relaxed. I know I can tell a joke and be a bit bumbly, because that's how I am.

Conversely, her attitude in the women's movement seems to have gained perspective. Although she doesn't agree with the more radical elements within the movement, ("too obsessive, they didn't want equality — they want to be in charge")

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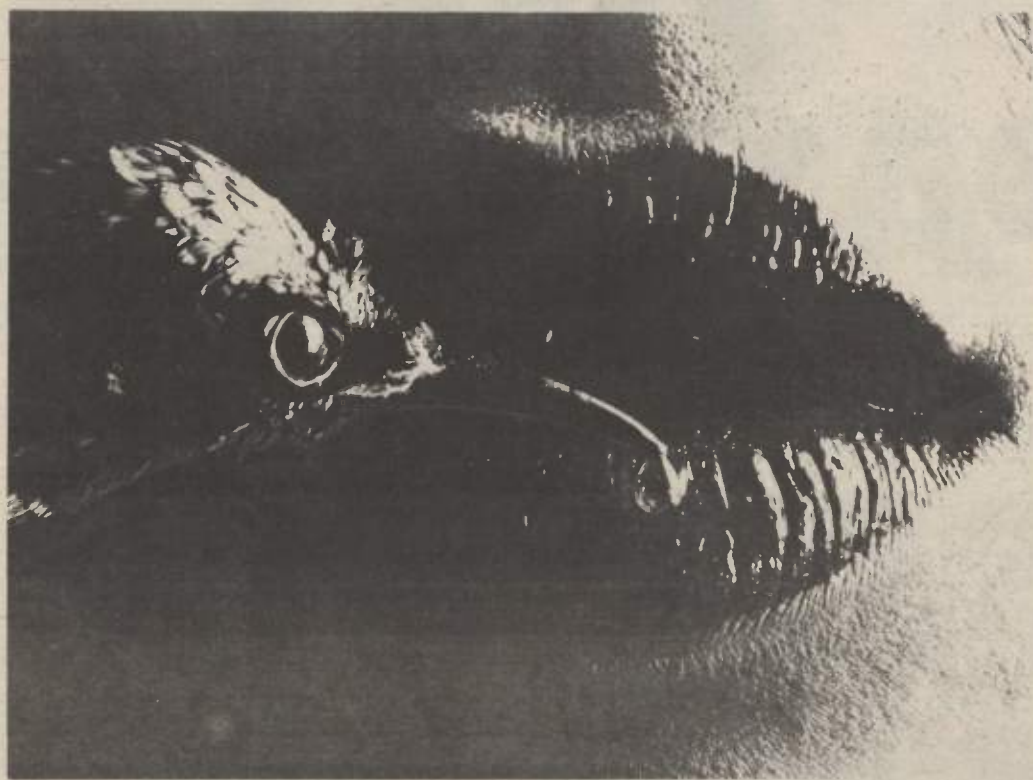


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The Lurkers' drummer is a closet jazz fan...

...but the rest of the guys don't EVER wanna learn that fourth chord. CHRIS BRAZIER watches the band take new wave boogie to the people in Warrington.

WHEN some droning scholar eventually sits down to write the history of humankind the town of Warrington is unlikely to make a very prominent appearance, unless perhaps said scribe happens to have been weaned on Vladivar vodka or Eddie Waring's "up 'n' unders" and "early baths".

As you step off the train there, you're greeted by a monster factory, looming enormously and bewilderingly above you, a vast mechanical dragon that belches out its smoke and its soap powder fumes, and renders the single visible human as insignificant as the virtue of mercy in the psychological make-up of Allan Jones. Whether this bulk has sufficient siblings nearby to make it representative of the Lancashire town or not I don't know, but it seemed a suitably down-to-earth icon with which to frame an evening with the Lurkers, the heroes of this saga.

The Lurkers are the most earthy and unpretentious of rock bands. You could say that they took punk at its original word and became the ultimate antidote to "progressive" meanderings by playing dance-music in three-minute slices at an utterly relentless pace, by being young and indisputably "working-class" in origin and attitude, by

being concerned with getting their kids high rather than with creating "art", and by being happy to cast their lot with a small independent label.

The Lurkers are generally ridiculed or ignored by the music press simply because they are so ordinary, because there's very little you can say about their music (says Howard Wall: "How many papers said about 'Ain't Gotta Clue' Here come the Lurkers, 1-2-3 just like the Ramones?") — this paper, for instance, relegated their debut album, "Fulham Fall-out", to the ignominious rail-trot of the Short Tales category, and has carried no more than my innocuous live appraisal a year ago, aside from the odd dismissive mention on the singles page. After all, when you'd been deadened by a hundred young (and pseudo-young) bands recycling the same old sub-Ramones sheet-metal dronalsongs, the Lurkers' three-chord formula was unlikely to win many accolades.

And while the critical pendulum swung towards the bizarre, the arty, the supposedly intellectual and the esoteric, the Lurkers kept on plugging away with their blizzarding pop blueprint. With remarkable results — at a time when even the crudest of punk bandwaggoners (hi there, Depression!) have been desperately trying to pretty up themselves and their music, and have usually fallen even flatter on their faces, the Lurkers have twice bludgeoned their way into the Top 40, the first single, "Ain't Gotta Clue," being a Kid Jensen record of the week, and the second, "I Don't Need To Tell Her",



LURKERS' lead vocalist HOWARD WALL (pic: BARRY PLUMMER)

winning their appearances on both Ploptops and Revolver.

Which makes them something of an interesting phenomenon, and is why I found myself creeping into Warrington. The band is eternally on tour, blessing with commendable conscientiousness every imaginable backwater, and the unlikely locale of Warrington seemed infinitely more appropriate than tandler watering-holes such as Eric's or Barbarella's.

The Carlton Club in Warrington is no less a contrast and an antidote to scenedom — its small, almost unnoticed doorway is sandwiched between Woolworth's and Eam's, and opens on to a sallowly-lit stair-fights that lead up to a club so tiny that its stage will only accommodate half of the Lurkers' p.a., and even that has to be lugged up a fire escape by leaving roadies calling down vile retributory plagues on the town and on the record company that made the band play there.

Still, if the extent of their equipment in this context suddenly makes the Lurkers seem like Led Zepplin (and they were all mightily disgruntled that they wouldn't be exhibiting their full range of hardware), their tour posters fully lived up to my expectations. "Lark off with the Lurkers at..." reads one. Funny, huh? But not quite as morose as "The Lurkers say Bollocks to John Travolta & Co at..." You will gather from that, if you haven't already done so, that an evening with the Lurkers isn't likely to present the spectator with a feast of subtlety and sophistication.

Not that my fellow witnesses insisted on any such qualities — a normal (albeit young) hard rock audience decidedly unpunk in dress, the best clue to their general musical affinity was the incessant stream of Buzzcocks records paired out by the deejay, something which must have owed as much to their new-wave-but-so-vice image as to the proximity of Manchester. The atmosphere is warm and friendly, though, as it usually is at new wave gigs in small provincial towns, something that is all too easy to forget in London.

It's partly by design to come to places like this and promoting there the original punk immediacy and intimate performer-audience relationship that the Lurkers have built up their back catalogue. After all, they're probably no more of an "interesting" phenomenon than Status Quo (with whom the Lurkers freely admit an affinity) or any of the other hard-rock bands who hammered away in the provinces year after year, neglecting no rock-deprived backwater and thus built up a powerful following more ferociously devoted and loyal than is that of any press-pushed band taking their five-minute quota of stardom.

The Lurkers really are titers of the quasi-divine variety in a lot of kids, as is shown by a glance at the fan-letter excerpts on their album-sleeve or at the queue at the end to have four copies of "I Don't Need To Tell Her" individually autographed (the single had four different covers, one picture of each member).

Which brings me, I suppose, to the music. The performance is characteristically short and to the point, 14 attempts at the

world land speed record via a dense wall of noise within which, not least for the dancers at the front, any attempts at melody are fairly irrelevant.

Quite simply, it's not worth sagging off the Lurkers. As with Quo (whom they will resemble even more now that their new songs are beginning to have basic riffs instead of omnipotent bar chords) their audience knows exactly what to expect, the band does exactly what it can do best and no more, having not the slightest degree of pretension, and if you go along to one of their gigs with your brain hurting so badly that you want to

beginning to have basic riffs instead of omnipotent bar chords) their audience knows exactly what to expect, the band does exactly what it can do best and no more, having not the slightest degree of pretension, and if you go along to one of their gigs with your brain hurting so badly that you want to

headbang yourself into temporary oblivion, the Lurkers will serve your purpose better than most.

They sounded exactly the same as they had done in Putney a year before, something the group were afterwards at pains to attribute to the abysmal sound — their depression after what they

all called their worst performance for months struck me as faintly ridiculous, since it hardly matters how badly you play or how awful is your sound when your aims and achievements are as simple as this band's. The fans who came up to tell them how wonderful they'd been certainly hadn't noticed anything.

The Lurkers' music is no more than a reflection of their personalities. They really couldn't be more earthy and ordinary, and their interests and aspirations are as narrow and limited as their songs, so much so that they occasionally seem like parodies of themselves. The humor, as with ridiculous lyric-lines such as "I don't need to tell her I'm a super fella", is entirely unintentional — the inspired absurdity of stage-names like Manic Exo and Arturo Basicak (their ex-bassist) suggests a Ramone-like sense of send-up, that really doesn't exist. For better or worse, the Lurkers mean it, man. And this is being kind — someone who heard my tape said that they must be "in the running for the most inarticulate bunch of boozers that have ever been interviewed." They're also pretty hilarious.

Lead singer Howard Wall's life history is fairly typical: "We come from Uxbridge, I left school when I was 15 and just worked in kitchens and things. I just knew this lot from down the pub. Then we got the idea and formed the band." Hardly David Copperfield, is it? Howard and Pete Stride (guitarist, main composer, and most into rock 'n' roll

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WHSMITH



AY POWE '78

(What's So
Funny 'Bout)
Peace, Love And
Understanding?
By SIMON FRITH.

A COUPLE of weeks ago, the Sun had a heavy series on Violent Britain; it was part of the Conservatives' election campaign — the rest of the Tory press is at it too. The Sun trotted out the usual shocks and statistics, interviewed the usual anxious policemen and worried citizens, concluded with the usual tough man-in-the-street rhetoric.

What the paper didn't do was mention that the people in Britain who experience daily violence aren't the old ladies who don't open their doors for fear of being mugged by the milkman, but the Bengalis of East London, the Asian community in Leeds, West Indians in Wolverhampton, 'strangers' in every English city. To be black in Britain is to face the permanent possibility of physical attack and verbal assault and the worst violence is on people's dignity and sense of worth — I can't imagine what it is like to be unable to relax in public, to have to accept, for sensible survival, the constant gestures of passing white contempt.

In black communities parents can't bring up their children to be free from fear, children have to learn to live with their parents' store of hostility. Hackney Trades Council has documented what violence in Britain really means — the systematic harassment of an Asian community — but its figures of course did not become part of the Sun's statistics.

As long as both these things are true — racial violence and its implicit social acceptance as 'natural' — then the Anti-Nazi League is necessary. The quality press prepared for the Carnival last week by discovering the ANL Socialist Workers Party connection and by reworking the liberal cliché of 'extremists on both sides'. The National Front's right or not to free speech suddenly became a more important political issue than Brick Lane's Bengalis' right or not to free lives. The arguments were pretty crummy. No one has yet shown me a capitalist's wife and children who are subject to personal socialist abuse the moment they step off their door-step, and the real issue for discussion is not whether reason conquers prejudice (it does) but how best to reason publicly — by marching every Sunday in the East End or by writing Bernard Levin's column in the Times. Sure there are problems with the Anti-Nazi League — I don't like the ludicrous chauvinistic use of the term 'Nazi' either. I agree that the campaign to stop the NF's broadcast is a political mistake (though ethically correct).

But what the country's sweet moralisers don't realise is as they chop political logic at their typewriters, is that the ANL and Rock Against Racism and all their sponsors and supporters share a basic moral maxim — that tolerance is better than intolerance. To sneer at Sunday's Carnival, at the punks and the dilettantes, the rock fans and the cause crashers, the trendies and the idlers (and these sneers come from left as well as right) is to misunderstand why Sunday mattered — not as a political event but as a simple celebration of decency. The country's getting mean — you can tell from the constant calls for more punishment, from the Sun's slick shift from the law and order problem to the law and order solution. As politicians get increasingly concerned with the question of how best to stomp on people, the ANL Carnival was a great act of generosity.

I GOT to Hyde Park too late to hear any speeches. Our British Rail Midlands Carnival Special (full of hunky punks, Sunday Times-reading politicians and bearded ordinary passengers on the wrong train) was slow and we arrived at the fringe of the crowd where only occasional watters blew in the wind. Nobody else heard the speech either, far as I could tell, and I doubt if any of them mattered — most people knew why they were there already and certainly the worst feature of the day was the platform lecturing at Brockwell Park, we were both hector and patronised by an obnoxious man in a stencilled boiler-suit.

At Euston we were greeted like a football special. Rows of policemen who started nudging each other and pointing at the punks, laughing, bellies shaking, rocking on their heels like in the Heineken ad. The police obviously regarded the marchers as weird just for wanting to walk six miles for a good cause, but they were very quiet about it. The heavies kept out of sight; our escorts were pleasant young men in white shirt sleeves and no frunchies who fraternised despite themselves. Instincts die hard. A woman next to us found a necklace on the road and handed it instantly to our accompanying copper, who explained, to our surprise, that he couldn't do anything about it. Like her, like the Sun, I still will expect the police to solve any problems. Last week's gas shot of the last episode of Z Cars had a steel shutter come slowly down between Bert Lynch and his community. In London the shutter came down long ago and in Clapham, as a separate ANL contingent converged on the main march, a coach load of policemen drove over a traffic island and got stuck on a bollard. They all got out to push and no one helped.

continued overleaf



'One love,
one aim,
one destiny'.
By
CHRIS BRAZIER.

AS WE walked wearily through Brixton we were greeted by a banner draped across the street which proclaimed 'Brixton Gays Welcome Anti-Fascists.' Which is great but we probably wouldn't have given the sign a second glance, having seen through the day so many diverse groups expressing their opposition to racism and the National Front. But spilling out of every floor of a house underneath the banner were male gays cheering uninhibitedly, drawing attention to their wildly extravagant appearance, their riotously colourful clothes and make-up.

On the first-floor balcony were a couple pretending, not very regally, to be the Queen and a ludicrously camp Prince Philip, bringing back memories of the black guy at the Notting Hill Carnival who dressed up as the Britannia who adorns some of our coins, effectively challenging in the same kind of way the tyranny of the stereotypes within which society seeks to constrict us (like the obvious white heterosexual worker with housewife tagging along, perniciously subscribed to by the Labour Party in their recent 'family' campaign). And the gays' message was perfect: 'This Queen Says Smash The National Front.'

You could say that the positive side of the second major Anti-Nazi Carnival was encapsulated in that tableau: the movement needs to encompass not only the fight against something, but also the fight for the liberation of all races, gays and women. The day began at around ten, as coaches started to arrive from all over the country and people assembled in Hyde Park near Speakers' Corner. They were greeted by a vast range of badges, and banners, perhaps the best badge being 'Pigs on a Nazi' and the best banner 'We are black, we are white, we are dynamic' (adapting a football chant with explosive omitted to great effect, the work of the fast-growing SKAN, Schnickids Against The Nazis). There was an abundance of radical literature, from Women's Voice to the excellent Loweller (containing articles on the music business, and, more importantly, on sexual / macho conditioning in rock) to the well-produced Carnival programme, which bewilderingly endorses plays like Jesus Christ Superstar and since A Cabbie, along with all the Leftist messages and organisations.

AT 11 the speeches started on a disquieting note. Paul Holborow is the Secretary of the Anti-Nazi League. He is also a member of the SWP and seemingly unable to restrain himself from the kind of low-level sloganeering which is associated with that party by its detractors. His speech was a horrible piece of rabble-raising which seemed to take for granted the mindlessness of the entire audience, essentially using the same tactics as the Front by demanding the cruelest of emotional responses. The effect was thoroughly embarrassing — the currently life accusation that the ANL is no more than a front for the SWP is grossly unfair, though even the SWP would probably agree that it's healthy that their extensive involvement (invaluable in organisational terms) has been brought out into the open. As long as that is, as the revelation doesn't prompt everyone to regard the League as Communist, contrary to what appears the Young Conservatives and the Jewish Board of Deputies do now.

It's easy to see why moderates are alienated — even the chairman of this meeting, Ernie Roberts of the Engineering Union, took every possible opportunity to say things of the 'one step on the right, two steps on the left' variety. Tony Benn and Bill Keys were a little, and Arthur Scargill a lot better. The Daily Mail will doubtless have gone into the ploys of reactionary rage on seeing its two greatest bogymen, Benn and Scargill, on the same stage.

'I'm sick and tired,' said Scargill, 'of the moralising of the Whitehouses of this world. There is more decency and morality in this gathering than in all their outpourings over the last ten years — they should be here on this platform associating with you.' We are involved in a campaign against racism, which has been seen since CND. We should see that it becomes the largest movement ever against racism and fascism.

But by far the best and most powerful speech came from Tom Robinson, who eschewed conventional dogma to emphasise that most NF members are not monsters but ordinary people being coned by a sick Nazi leadership.

The most important work is to be done not here at the Carnival but at home — at school, at work, in the pubs by talking to people. Don't come on like Joan of Arc and bore them silly, but talk to them, keep up a dialogue, because racism thrives on ignorance. Tom Robinson's words were the most sensible spoken from a stage all day — the real enemies are the racist attitudes which work

continued overleaf



Miners' leader ARTHUR SCARGILL (left) and Energy Minister TONY BENN spoke to the early crowd in Hyde Park.

Simon Frith from previous page

SHAM 69's reason for pulling out of the concert was dumb. They didn't want to be accused of causing a riot. Sounds like management talking (Elvis Costello's people had been equally discouraging). It's the ambition of any rock band worth anything (and Sham 69 are worth a lot) to cause a riot and Sham's pull-out definitely damped the Carnival's power. Our part of the march arrived too late to hear Sham's replacement (maybe that's why they pulled out) but Costello and the reggae banda got respectful rather than passionate response and I missed the punk tension. Jim Pursey himself did appear to pledge his support despite his absence but by then it was just so much more bullshit rhetoric.

ing their evil side (skinheads were the first paki-bashers). There's nothing in most RAR gigs to contradict the insidious notion that West Indians and whites can be cool together but those tucking pakis are stupid aren't they? I don't know what would happen if a Bengal drumming group came on between Mlay and Sham 69 one night but it's important to find out. RAR's national tendency has been to use music as a means of getting the crowd — the bigger the name the better — rather than to develop music as a form of community in itself. Still, the Asians who came to Coventry RAR's gigs were Led Zeppelin fans—now there's an interesting group to get for the next carnival.

vent any hanky panky. "Well, done you skinheads," beamed one of the idiots on this stage, though it was unclear what they'd done except not cause a riot. The left groups are still in hot pursuit of the youth market: they are as energetic as record companies and operate with as simple a sense of youthful taste. The newest paper is Revolution, which I bought in the IMG tent. It's written in the same post-punk style as the SWP's various mags and reads as falsely. Whether or not these papers are written by fifteen-year-olds ("We skinheads hate authority") they all flow from pens dipped in old conventions of Trotskyist populism. I'm still cynical about the effects of these recruiting drives but, on the other hand, there is now a generation (crossing class) which has had a lot of fun and inspiration from subversive politics. CND fed into student politics and counter-culture. ANL and RAR are going to feed into something.

THE MARCH began with left displays of self-consciousness and certainly — endless pamphlets, the division of anti-fascist forces between the Carnival and Brick Lane was excellently and efficiently organized and as we marched the day became touchingly communal. The people gazing at us in central London all seemed like tourists. But south of the river, in Vauxhall and Brixton, the march gained spirit from the residents welcoming it go by. The Brixton guys welcomed the ANL with a pink silk banner strung across the street: a drag queen whistled from her balcony, her courtiers bowed and whistled. The crowd contained such a variety of people (few over 35, though) that it was a display of tolerance in itself. The Vegetarians Against the Nazis banner had a carrot where the arrow usually is, a woman carried a banner of the Dykes Against the Nazis. Near us on the grass women lay in women's and men in men's, ordinary summer lovers in the park, who without the crowd's huge presence would have been seen as "disgusting." Three immaculately dressed skinheads walked by, in crumpled coats like I hadn't seen for five years. A girl stood up with rainbow hair, a boy with white man's corn rows. More blacked up Asians than at the last carnival, and the Hippies Against the Nazis sold IT, The Rock Against Racism lollipop said "All Power to the Imagination" and Elvis Costello and the Attractions, in their most inspired moment, did Brinsley Schwarz's "What's So Funny 'Bout" Peace, Love and Understanding." Nothing, maybe, but it's a lot of fun.

THERE'S still something disturbingly passive about cuning in the end of a march just to sit down and be entertained. It was better than last time. More tents and stalls and games and argument apart from the music, but the rock session picnic itself was still just a prelude, not an activity in itself, and none of the bands transcended their stage status. Reggae loses its intensity in such a big space and Elvis Costello isn't really a folk performer (like Tom Robinson), though he did a sharp rockin' set. On the other hand, these carnivals are so much more fun than rock festivals — they bring together moments of people having fun and purpose, lack the desperate drinking and doping pursuit of the mythical Good Time. But the rock at these RAR events remains a gesture, without much moral meaning in itself. This is still important: the anti-racist struggle involves gesture, involves changing people's habitual racist reflexes, their easy jokes, assumptions, sneers. But to change the currently fashionable gesture (laughing at blacks is out, man) is not enough as you can tell from the way in which ANL supporters (in the music press, for instance) continue to be uncomfortably sexist, making demeaning and degrading jokes, shoving oppressive assumptions about women.

BY THE END, though, we all knew we'd had a good time from the descending feeling of smugness. The question became not why was I here, but where was everyone else. Not those people who couldn't come — who had work to recover from or parents to look after, little money to spend but those people who could've come and decided not to. What need?



ASWAD's Brinsley Forde led the final chant.

The other face of the youth: crypto-fascists in the East End on Sunday.



MISTY opened in Brockwell Park.



ELVIS COSTELLO and a cast of thousands

Chris Brazier from page 37

their way into everyday thinking, because it's those on which the National Front feed. Will there be mass carnivals aiming at enlightened thinking when the cancer is more abstract?

THE four or five mile walk to Brixton's Brockwell Park began at about mid-day, a long tail that straggled past Victoria and over Vauxhall Bridge, characterised mainly by its youth (the average age was probably early twenties, and grey hair was predictably a very rare sight) and its white colour. The vast majority of the black and brown people I saw were those who stood by their houses watching us pass by with a usually bemused and always uninvolved expression.

The atmosphere on the march itself was pretty subdued — bands like Crisis, Charge and Eclipse provided music from floats (when they could be heard above the piercing whistles that were as annoying as the merchandise rather than excited or celebratory. The chants which were part of any socialist march for instance, never really caught on — there were a few indefatigable shouters, but "solidarity" chanting seemed fairly pointless, since we'd proved where we stood by rallying anyway, and certainly all seemed to be learning it by rote that "the National Front is a Nazi Front" and thus it should be smashed. The only chants which won any real response around me were humorous ones: "1, 2, 3 and 4... The Nazis are a load of shit" and "If you've half a mind to join the Front, we'll show you that's all you need." Still, I don't think even the most blasé, sun-wilted participants could have avoided the feeling that they were doing something worthwhile, walking into a better future if you like, and things like a local cinema sign saying "Rise Against the Nazis — Back to the Front" helped along that impression — as one tubby middle-aged wheeled around to tell me, "things are really looking up".

Brockwell Park was already quite well-populated when arrived, and Misty had taken the stage. They play quite acceptable reggae, dominated usually by watery keyboard runs — though that may only have been because of the mix, which left the rhythm-section (especially the bass) much too weak. The balance definitely diminished their impact, and from what I sat near the back of the crowd it was almost impossible to respond to their euberrant bouncing up and down or to focus properly on them, with the result that the odd lyrical snatch sounded like unconvincing Rastatutudinizing, and that their long set (perhaps inevitably at such a festival) became mere background music. Certainly applause for them was less than rapturous until someone announced "Without Misty RAR wouldn't be in as many places as it is — they've done more gigs for us than just about anybody," until we were applauding what they stood for rather than their music.

AS Misty left Jimmy Pursey came on to deliver a ferociously passionate speech when he's clearly been tormenting himself with what it's right for him to do. "All this week you've probably read a lot in the papers about Jimmy Pursey and Sham 69," he shouted, "well lemme tell you this, you've also read a lot that's untrue. We've been dictated to by everyone around us. I decided in bed last night that I wasn't gonna come today, but this morning I met this kid who said 'Why ain't you doing it? You ain't doing it 'cos all your fans are National Front.' And I thought, 'That's just what everyone'll think if I don't turn up.' WELL I'M HERE! I'm here because I believe in that the points upward to the Rock Against Racism sign" and no one's gonna tell me what I should and shouldn't do. His confused anger was enormous, and he won a great reception. Whether Sham were right or wrong to withdraw I find it difficult to see how

anybody could doubt Pursey's commitment; certainly a lot of his fans belong to the Front, or to the British Movement, but that's not because of anything he's said, and he works harder and more pertinently at talking to those kids showing them that racism is wrong at the same time as he cares deeply for them, than just about anyone else who took part in the Carnival. As Tom Robinson has said: "The great thing about Jimmy is that he's actually communicating with people the Left find hardest to reach — The Other Side. It forces him into constant compromises, contradictions and a stance that is often ambiguous, but then he's trading an incredibly difficult path. The British Movement has no doubt at all about which side he's on and it's very important that people on OUR side should give him all the support we can."

Another of the most heartening things about the Carnival was that there were a considerable number of skinheads around wearing RAR and ANL badges. The worrying thing about the skinhead revival has been its close association with the NF, which is why the newly-formed Skins Against the Nazis is one of the ANL's most important sub-sections. Jimmy Pursey's appearance was followed by two announcements which thoroughly cheered the day and cast further doubt on the League's attitude. The first came from the Brick Lane Defence Committee. As you will doubtless have heard, the Front planned an inflammatory march to Brick Lane to coincide with the Carnival, and the SWP were desperate to defend the street's Asian community. The debate on the Left about the validity of physical confrontation is an important one — I think the policy does more harm than good, and that positive demonstrations like the Carnival are more worthwhile, even if despotic media coverage makes me doubt that sometimes (despite the fact that the ANL Carnival was arranged first and drew an estimated 30,000 people, BBC News gave more coverage to the Front's 2,400 supporters and represented the Carnival as merely "a counter-demonstration").

But however you may stand on the issue, the approach of some SWP members to the possibility of confrontation is very depressing. When I marched with them in Manchester some were reminiscing about what a great fight Lewisham had been, what exactly so-and-so had done to the bastards, and the attitude of the speaker from Brick Lane, who was pleading for more recruits wasn't much better: "Those of you who want to stay and listen to the music, have fun; but the troops — over there." Troops? They really do resemble kids "playing soldiers" at times.

THE second announcement was a further jolt to the occasion: "That's it, we've just heard," they said, "there are 100,000 people in the park." — and Peter Hain later jumped the figure up to 120,000. The claims were both absurd and senselessly duplicitous. The BBC's estimate of 30,000 may still have been too high, since there never appeared to be more than an average-sized football crowd in the park (which means, of course, that the turn-out was smaller than for the previous Carnival (habitually estimated at 80,000)).

That may or may not have had something to do with the musical line-up, the obvious appeal of Elvis Costello hardly matching the big-name depth of TRB, The Clash, Steel Pulse and X-Ray Spex. Certainly, and right-

ly, the music seemed less important than the event (I'm sure very few came solely for the concert). One major reason for that was that the music blended less well with the cause than did the fiercely political work of TRB and The Clash before.

Elvis Costello has two anti-fascist songs, and he played them both, opening with "Night Rally" in what was for him an unusually predictable move. His, however, was the right policy. He's always keen to move on, to debut new material, but it would have been wrong to do that at the Carnival, with everyone bent on celebration rather than concentration. As it was, all the material was familiar except "Oliver's Army," which was couched in characteristically convincing style (was it about National Service?) and followed the first of his very few words to the crowd — "Hi and welcome to the Black and White Minstrel Show," which felt completely flat.

He played most of his best material (the most notable omissions being "Alison" and "I'm Not Angry") and tried very hard, but was struggling throughout against the same problem as Misty: the bass was inaudible and the guitar little better, and the sound was a whole faded and loomed like a distant radio station. The only consistently powerful instruments were that full-coloured Sixties swirl organ and Elvis' voice, so upfront that it seemed almost eerily disembodied from any musical foundation.

The sound didn't improve, but in the end the Attractions won through because of the sheer inescapable quality of the songs, driving through "Lip Service," "Chelsea" and "This Year's Girl" — and the incomparable "Watching The Detectives," perhaps the finest song, and not even robbed of its impact here by a melodramatic talkover section in the last verse that didn't work at all.

He went out on a high with the excellent "Radio Radio," long-familiar and at last to be released as the next single, and encored with what was a positively inspired choice in the circumstances — Brinsley Schwarz's "What's So Funny 'Bout" Peace, Love And Understanding."

IT had been clear for a while that ASwad's departure would mean a mass exodus, and by the time ASwad appeared the crowd was drastically reduced and there was room to move to the front where the sound had much more body. The moon was putting out a tentative red toe to touch the horizon as they played, and they fitted the fading light perfectly.

I've been told so many times by people who know and love reggae far better than me that ASwad are Britain's best reggae group that I may be succumbing to brainwashing, but I thought their performance very fine. What seemed to set them apart, in the new song "Children Of The Rainbow," for instance, was the subtle way in which the fluid keyboard and guitar interjections gave the basic form a delicate, changeable colouring that seems unusual in reggae, at least to an outsider. Having said that though, they were most effective when they moved into the robust, rooty feel of "Natural Progression," featuring a great vocal from Brinsley Forde.

"Why are we here today?" he shouted near the end, "One love, one aim, one destiny." And as everyone in the crowd joined hands and raised them in the air, chanting their responses back at the stage, you could be forgiven for forgetting all the negative aspects of the day and believing him.



PETER HAIN (left) and TOM ROBINSON at Speakers' Corner.

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THOSE RISING PRICES

IN the past year, music has moved in a positive direction, with new ideas such as Devo, the progression of punk in Buzzcocks, Wire, Magazine, etc. the re-emergence of the Sixties (Blondie, Elvis Costello), and the favourites getting better (the Clash, the Jam). It has become deeply intertwined with politics, bringing further meaning to the songs, and, with the influx of reggae, things are generally pretty exciting.

However, I become more and more depressed as I see bands leave the clubs for venues such as Hammersmith Odeon. The tickets are pricey, though I would pay £2.50 to see the Buzzcocks or Blondie at the Lyceum Ballroom, but not Hammersmith Odeon. I know the bigger halls are to cater for the growing number of fans, but three nights at the Lyceum are better than one at the Odeon.

As the price of an album nears the £5.00 mark and singles are nearly a pound, I have a certain feeling that we are letting the price rise up without realising it. — DAVID N. CAINES, Church Road, Bearded, Kent.

Why Grease slips up

I WAS ONE of the few thousand who saw the 1973 theatre production of Grease at the London Raurouhouse which Tony Rayns mentioned in his review of the film version (MM Sept. 16). I enjoyed the theatre version, and to be fair its subsequent failure was partly due to the power cuts at the time. After all, the Broadway production holds the record for the longest run, I believe.

The film however, from the clips I've seen, and the publicity I've read appears to be another question. Like many film adaptations (Sgt Pepper's another example) it detracts from the original. In the case of Grease the inexplicable inclusion of Sixties pop-rock ("You're The One That I Want") and disco (tune track written by Barry Gibb) outlines the commercial considerations of the film production, i.e. cash in on present trends. Neither were featured in the original.

This, added to the orchestrations (not always a minus point, but in this case so) and Travolta's dancing, an extension of Saturday Night Fever, not Fifties style to my knowledge — all point to a distortion of the original Grease.

How much influence the original writer had on the screenplay I don't know, but if I were them I'd sue either for defamation of character or for copyright infringement. — GIAN WILFIELD, Norton Road, Reading.

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Ferry: music or image?

THE well-timed interview with Bryan Ferry revealed perfectly Ferry's ambiguous position, as he laboriously defended himself from the slings and arrows of outrageous critics, "confessing" to be both socialite and artist, man of the people and intellectual. The tendency of the in-depth interview is generally to give the subject enough rope to hang himself and Ferry duly put his head in the noose.

He came over worst in his blistering attack on Chris Brazier, who has done more than most to expose the manipulative hypocrisies of the music business, and who at least manages to hold reasonably consistent opinions from one issue of the paper to the next.

Nonetheless, Brazier's moral indignation at Ferry's lifestyle appeared hypocritical and self-righteous. When a critic writes disparagingly of an artist's "relevance", he is often pandering to either a mass or a cult notion of hipness, and merely substituting one form of elitism for another, under the guise of social criticism.

The cult of personality is the main preoccupation of the mass audience Ferry has recently courted. The quality of the music, be it good or bad, has nothing to do with the kind of success he seems to expect. He has made the mistake of thinking he was the star who created the following, instead of the other way round. He is simply a small cog in a vast industry that has destroyed so many of its most gifted employees at no cost to itself: everyone is expendable and easily replaced.

Fortunately, Ferry's arrogance is backed up by real talent — the ability to genuinely move his listeners. I felt Penny Valentine's review damned his thoughtfulness and thoroughly professional album with faint praise. She was perhaps aware of what current critical opinion expected of her and came up with a ludicrous piece of equivocating waffle.

Ferry may well have to resign himself to a low place in the popularity polls, if he wishes to be taken seriously as a musician. It is simply a question of ceasing to see music as a means to an end, "fame, money, and beautiful women," and instead treating it as an end in itself. It will not be an audience of snobbish connoisseurs that appreciates the music, but simply unprejudiced people who want to hear what the singer's got to say and feel his commitment to it, without wishing to look, act, or otherwise fool the artist, and who are unlikely to have more than a passing interest in the private lives and outs of the artists lifestyle. — ALISTAIR DOUGLAS, Hilfield Road, London.

● LP WINNER

WHO CARES ABOUT U.S. TOP 40?

WHEN it was announced that Radio One's Alan Freeman Saturday show was ending, it was said that the replacement show would be in the same tradition. I must confess to being disappointed by the current replacement show.

As much as I respect Paul Gambaccini as a competent presenter, I really cannot understand why it was felt necessary to base the show upon best-selling American records.

Although it had its faults, the Alan Freeman show was one of the very few shows that did not depend upon the Top 40 format.

The BBC had a chance to introduce a show which was a genuine reflection of current music trends. Instead, we have a show where we can hear anything from Barbra Streisand to Andy Gibb. Does anybody really care what the American top 40 singles are? — MICK JONES, Westfield Close, Grove Wantage, Oxon.

Devoted to Eno?

I CAN'T allow the letter from Bill Cook (Mailbag 23-9-78) to go by without pointing out his childish comments therein. If Brian Eno took four songs and replaced "Devoishness" (?) with "Enoism" (?) whatever either of these two categories mean, then does Bill Cook suppose that the apparent metamorphosis was outside of Devo's awareness?

I can't believe that Eno did the "Metal Wagon" into Conny's studio in Cologne and stated his intentions of the "Final Solution" to five morons who took no interest at all. Maybe they wanted to do different versions, who really knows? — DEREK BARBER, Portland Terrace, South Heighton, East Sussex.

Jazz for everyone

HAVING read Brian Priestley's letter (MM 16.9.78) with regard to A. McCalden's plea for more new records and ideas on radio jazz programmes, I would like to say briefly that some of us out here are doing our bit. On my Wednesday evening Jazz Scene programmes 55 minutes of records, interviews, news, etc. — on Radio Oxford, I try to include all styles of jazz from James P. Johnson to Keith Jarrett, the theory being that to present a kind of pot-pourri of the music means that (hopefully) it will reach a wider audience, and perhaps help a few listeners to broaden their appreciation of the diversity of jazz styles. — PAT CRUMLEY, Jazz Scene, BBC Radio Oxford.

ROCK AGAINST NUCLEAR POWER

AS a Scandinavian I was pleased to read about Ireland's first Anti-Nuclear Power Show in Melody Maker (August 12 and 19). This show (like the Rock Against Racism campaign) points out how it is possible to use music for something worthwhile, instead of either just playing for money all the time or condemning the "boring old hippies" and their search for something new in every song you play.

The reason I write this, however, is to assure the Irish musicians (and any English musicians doing the same thing) that you're not working alone against a nuclear future. All over the world, not least in countries like Spain, Germany, Austria and Scandinavia, the fight is hard, and sometimes successful.

In MM (August 19) Christy Moore says: "... we would be the first country to have an anti-nuclear movement before we had a nuclear station . . .". I would like to correct this: In both Denmark and Norway we are still nuclear-free, mainly

because of anti-nuclear movements. In 1974 plans for nuclear power stations were getting some publicity in both countries. This led to the formation of movements working against atomic energy and for alternative ways of solving the energy questions (like saving energy, developing other energy sources like sun and wind).

The movement grew quickly in both countries. In Norway the plans were (temporarily) put back into the electricity boards offices after a while. In Denmark the fight is extremely hard right now. One week after the Irish Show they had big marches and meetings in Copenhagen and Aarhus. The Danish campaign is really growing into the grass-roots and is supported by a lot of the best known of the country's folk and rock artists. Probably they have stopped the plans (at least for some time) in Denmark too.

So you see, it helps starting movement! Therefore, Irishmen and women, go on playing and working and I'm sure you will succeed! — JANI BORRING, Oslo, Norway.

Guy Clark: gunfight band for a moonshot age

GUY CLARK walks into the room carrying with him something of the weight of legend.

He moves casually, with the kind of laconic assurance you might quickly associate with Coburn, say, or Lee Marvin (I flash immediately on the latter as the gunfighter Liberty Valance in the John Ford movie). He has an almost lazy, loose-limbed stride and his height is exaggerated by his leanness; the wry manner rather belies the strength of his physical presence.

One is not severely pressed to imagine him sitting in the dark corner of some dusty cantina, with two fingers of whiskey and a Colt on the table before him, conspiring, possibly, with some degenerate renegade like L.Q. Jones or Strother Martin in one of those fashionable modern Westerns that seek to undermine the romantic mythologies of the old West (and which are most successfully directed by Peckinpah). His voice is an absurdly cavernous growl—deeper and more resonant than Kristofferson's macho bark—which identifies his West Texas origins (he spent his childhood in the remote desert town of Monahans, where he lived with his grandmother in an old, ramshackle hotel; a location he has evoked in several of his most memorable songs). He strikes you as the kind of man who might be quick to find his temper, and who, once provoked, would be dangerous in a brawl; not only would he probably be more decisive with a punch, he would probably fight dirty.

He has something of a reputation for living hard (probably fostered by some of the anecdotes recounted by his old friend Townes Van Zandt, especially those which appeared recently in the fanzine *Omaha Rainbow*) in the style of most contemporary country artists. He smiles indulgently at the mention of his reputation, but he certainly looks the part with his beard flecked with grey—which gives him a swashbuckling air—his gaunt, almost haggard features, and his nicotine-stained eyeballs.

And, as you join us, we are enjoying some of his recollections of drinking sprees with Van Zandt and his other close friend, Jerry Jeff Walker, both of whom he first met 15 years ago in Houston.

"TOWNES 'n' me 'n' Jerry Jeff, we go way back," he draws in his arid monotone. "We've had some real crazy times together. Man—on, there were some pretty wildin' nights. You know, Townes is pretty crazyed sometimes... an' we had some pretty wild drinkin' sessions. There was some pretty serious drinkin' went down an'

I mean serious drinkin' I jes' had to quit. It was injun', you know."

I mention that I had seen Townes in the movie *New Country* (which also features Clark, Rod Crowell, David Allen Gue and Steve Young).

"Townes," he grins, "he was the best thing in that movie. If you think about it, Townes is the only guy in that whole movie who didn't try to play it like the camera wasn't there. The minute that camera started rollin', he jes' turned to face it straight on," he said. "Hi. — I'm Townes Van Zandt!" He's jes' the most extraordinary character. The best as far as I'm concerned. Can't think of anyone who comes close.

Sure, he can be self-destructive. An' he knows it. He was jes' in a pretty bad accident. He was ridin' in a truck with another guy an' they ran into a tree... He shrugs his shoulders as if he accepts the incident as an inevitable conclusion, given Van Zandt's capacity for accident and misfortune. "He broke his arm and a couple of ribs. Had 30 stitches in his face..."

But, hell—he lives out the life-style he chooses to live. It's his own choice. He's smart, though, as smart as anyone I know. But it's his life. He makes his own choices. He lives his life the way he wants to.

by **ALLAN JONES**

Pix: BARRY PLUMMER

"I guess that's as much as anyone can do."

GUY CLARK finally made it to England last week for two concerts at the Hammersmith Odeon, where he supported Emmylou Harris and snatched the glory with consummate ease from beneath that lady's dancing feet. His debut here had been delayed for more than two years by the witless procrastination of RCA, who failed dismally to exploit the enthusiasm Clark had provoked with the release first of the remarkable "Old No. 1"—available here as early as May, 1976—

and its similarly impressive successor, "Texas Creakin'."

He has since secured his release from RCA, and is now signed to WEA, who will release his third album—"Guy Clark"—in October. He is abstruse about his relationship with his former company.

"We had all kinds of problems with them," he complains. "Problems with the budgets for the albums; havin' the amount of money it takes to do it right, you know. They didn't know what to do with them. They didn't know how to market the records. They knew they were good, but they didn't know what to do with them. And they couldn't understand why I couldn't just go into the studio with six Nashville session guys and just do it... you know, a nice, comfortable country album. But I held out for people who would be involved, who'd commit themselves musically to these albums."

"RCA were jes' too busy sellin' Elvis Presley records and makin' a star outta John Denver, I guess."

So Clark set about buying himself out of his contract. It's taken him more than 18 months, during which time he was unable to tour or record. He was, simultaneously, forced through financial pressure to split up his old backing

group, the Whole World (whose lead guitarist, Danny Rowland, is now working with Van Zandt).

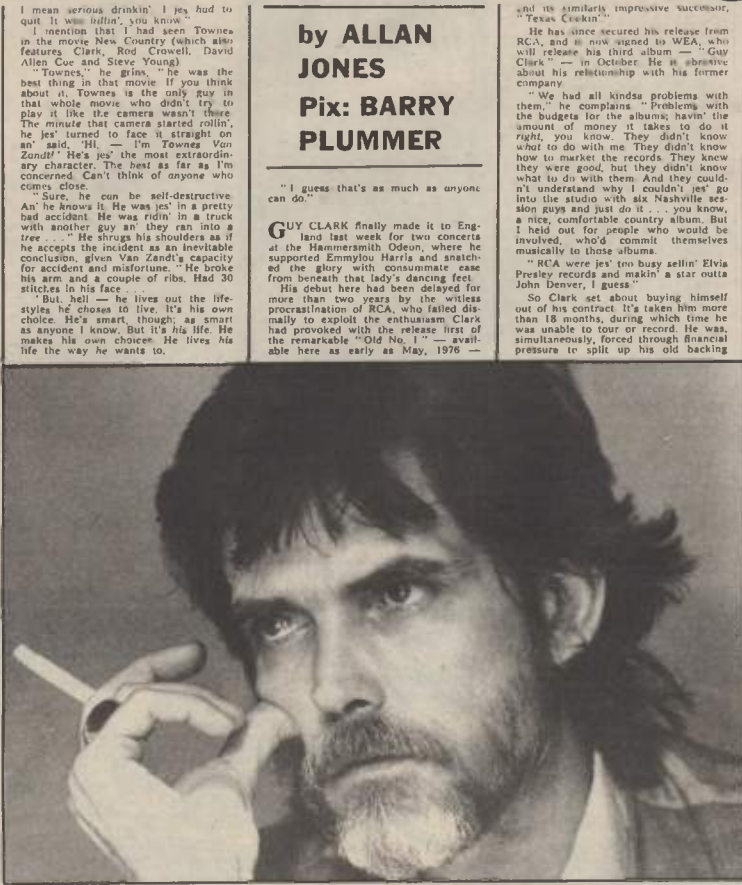
The group with whom he appeared at Hammersmith was formed specifically for those concerts—"but I sure intend working with them a bunch more." The line-up of musicians was not, however, unfamiliar to the discerning reader of country album. Les Jane Bernal, a Nashville session player, appeared on keyboards, and vocals on both of his RCA albums. Freddie Joe Fletcher, the drummer, is the nephew of Willie Nelson (he's the son of Bobbie Nelson, who plays keyboards in Willie's band), and Bea Spears, his bass player, was for nearly 10 years also in Willie's band—"he's jes' left Willie for me, which is a kinda compliment." Larry Willoughby, his rhythm guitarist, is Rodney Crowell's cousin (pretts incestuous team, aren't they) he sings on Crowell's new album and also appears on the forthcoming Clark longplayer. Dave Perkins, his lead guitarist, has played with Vassar Clements and Jerry Jeff Walker and now leads his own band in Nashville.

Clark had been pleased with the first of his performances at Hammersmith. I thought him even better on the second night when we were spared the more excessive outbursts on bass of Bea Spears. "Thoroughly enjoyed the experience," he says, lighting another Pall Mall and drawing another lungful of nicotine. "Halls that size are as big as I like to play. We played some real big places once when we went out with Waylon. We did rodeo arenas an' football fields. There'd be like 10-15,000 people an' it got outta hand. It's jes' not comfortable as far as bein' able to communicate is concerned. I like to think people can actually hear what I'm playin'. I'd rather play a club, you know, than try to take on a rowdy honky tonk where the audience would jes' sooner dance and drink beer... So, when it comes to one of those real big joints, I'd say, gimme a saloon, any day."

I WAS introduced to Guy Clark's work by Rodney Crowell, when he was touring here with the Hot Band in February, 1976. Crowell had brought with him a cassette of a rough mix of "Old No. 1," which the Hot Band invariably played as a preface to their own set. Crowell continually insisted that Clark was probably the most talented and accomplished country song writer since Gram Parsons; the potential equal of Willie Nelson.

"Old No. 1" proved conclusively that Crowell had not overestimated Clark's talent. He was revealed as a writer of assured perception and considerable insight. The songs were mostly populated by carefully conceived portraits of losers, drifters and loners (preoccupations which continue to dominate his work), drawn from the Texas landscape, and ranging from the emotionally enthralling "That Old Time Feeling" ("that old time feelin' runs and spins and cries / like an old liver

continued overleaf



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rememberin' the girl with the clear blue eyes"), to the more raucous barroom holler of "Rita Ballin" and the wryly tender "She Ain't Goin' Nuthers." L.A. Freeway found him, like Peckinpah's Junior Bonner, waving "adieu to all this concrete" and setting out into another desert sunset.

Clark, like Gram Parsons, enjoyed a romantic sensibility but successfully eschewed the overt sentimentality of mainstream Nashville. Simultaneously, he introduced to his writing a bold narrative sweep that Parsons had only achieved on, say, "The Return Of The Grievous Angel" and the epic, "In My Hour Of Darkness." This style was most forcefully evident on "Texas — 1947" — based specifically on an incident from his childhood in Monahans — the classic "Desperados Waiting For The Train," and the painfully elegiac "Let Him Roll," about the death and funeral of an old cowboy forced into alcoholism and despair by the passing of time and his unrequited love for a Dallas whore.

THIS later song, especially, with its discreetly contrived atmosphere and attention to detail, recalled the romantic cinema of John Ford; indeed, this trio of songs contained a breadth of incident and detail that was positively cinematic in range and construction. His second album, released in the winter of '76, abandoned to a considerable extent this individual style. He was still clearly infatuated with the lives and forsaken aspirations of individuals about whom Western mythologies are created, but the overall mood of "Texas Cookin'" was more introverted. The love songs on "Old No. 1" had been marked by his detachment; on the second album the emotions expressed were more intimately personal examinations of conflicting feelings and motives ("Anyhow, I Love You," for instance, which has the great opening lines "I wish I had a dime for every bad time / But the bad times always seem to keep the change").

He returned to the ballad style of "Texas — 1947" and "Desperados" on only one song, the momentous "The Last Gunfighter Ballad," a moving and sombre account of the death of an old gunfighter who's outlived the era, which he links back upon with bitter nostalgia for his former glories — "I did it all for the money and fame / Noble was nothing but feeling no shame / And nothing was sacred save stayin' alive / And all that I learned from a Colt 45" — and memories of murders that haunt him — "There are ghosts in the street seeking revenge / Calling him out to the lunate fringe." The song is a touching reflection of the theme explored by Don Siegel's movie *The Shootist*, for which it would have made the perfect theme.

Guy Clark from previous page

"It's a hell of a song," said Guy Clark last week when I mentioned it. "A hell of a song."

CLARK first became seriously involved in music in the early Sixties when he moved to Houston and began playing guitar in the clubs and bars of that city.

Townes Van Zandt and Jerry Jeff Walker were both already established on that circuit, and Clark soon joined them as a favourite of the audiences in the coffee-houses and saloons. "There was a whole lot goin' on," he remembers. "There was like everything from copies of Peter, Paul and Mary and the Kingston Trio to more traditional approaches to music. All the way from bluegrass to Pete Seeger. Townes was the only one writing his own material at the time. I was playin' a whole buncha songs. A lot of traditional things, some songs by more contemporary writers. . . . Public domain songs, really."

"We played bars, mostly, I recall. It weren't too bad. The folk music places weren't too rough. But some of the bars could be extremely rough. Those country music honky tonks, hell, they could get outta hand. I played a lotta them. Had good and bad experiences. Like most everybody else. Played a whole buncha those places. Those people, they sure knew how to show you they don't like you. They wouldn't always get angry. Mostly they jes' wouldn't listen. My kinda music has never been dance music. It's more to listen to. So we were pretty careful when we played. It would've been silly for us to go out an' play a real Texas honkytonk dance-hall when we jes' didn't play dance music. You don't wanna upset those people."

He wondered whether he actually had much choice in the early days.

"Sure I did," he replied, as if I was stupid for even suggesting that he might ever have failed to get his own way. "It was always up to me. If you're gonna do something, there's only one way to do it. You do it right."

VAN ZANDT had encouraged Clark to start writing his own songs in Houston, and eventually he moved, with his wife Susanna, to Los Angeles in search of a publishing deal. He worked for eight months in a Tiboro factory to support himself while he was simultaneously compiling a repertoire of songs and hassling publishing companies for a contract. He describes the five years leading up to his move to Los Angeles as a period of apprenticeship, during

which time he discovered the rudiments of his craft, and refined his technique and learned how to construct a song with economy and precision.

"I knew what I wanted to say," he elaborates. "I was jes' findin' out how best to say it. The first song I kept was 'Old Time Feeling.' When I finished that, I knew instinctively that I was gettin' pretty good."

He was eventually taken on by Sunbury Music — a branch of RCA, who would subsequently sign him as a recording artist — who were impressed by his work.

"I didn't know how long I might have to hold out for a deal, but I was patient. I was prepared to wait. I was real determined. At some point in your life you gotta make a decision about what you're gonna do. I didn't wanna wake up 40 years old saying, 'Wee-ah, I wish I'd done that.' I was determined to do it. So I got on with it. He was able to move to Nashville on the strength of his advance."

"It's a better place to do business," he explains. "The whole music business is concentrated in one area, jes' about. It's really no problem to do business. You jes' walk across the street. It's not like Los Angeles where to get into a building to see someone you have to get through two secretaries and four armed guards. In Nashville, if you wanna see Chet Atkins, you jes' go see him."

CLARK arrived in Nashville at a time when the popular image of country music was being wrested from the bland embrace of the commercial and conservative establishment. Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings, from within the establishment, and Gram Parsons, from without, had revitalized country forms, and re-introduced to the music an integrity that had been lost for too long. At the same time they were making country more accessible and attractive to the rock audience.

The Nashville aristocracy must have been gritting their dentures at the emergence of this new breed of young country songwriters. Clark, certainly, was aware of the tentative appreciation which they extended to his own songs.

"I wouldn't go so far as to say they were suspicious, or actively tried to resist the changes that were takin' place. They jes' didn't understand a lot of the new things that were happenin'. I mean, they didn't understand my songs. They were a little more complex lyrically than most of the things they'd heard. Consequently, most of the producers, who were jes' lookin' for hit songs, didn't wanna know at first. You gotta accept that, though. This is a business. We're all tryin' to make a little money, you know. This ain't a charity. So if you wanna write ten-minute songs, fine. Great. But that's not what they want. So don't bitch."

He was lucky enough, though, to have some of his songs recorded by Jerry Jeff Walker, Johnny Cash, Rita Cosgrove, the Everly Brothers and David Allen Coe; and he was soon regarded by the more discerning members of the establishment as perhaps the most valuable songwriting property since Kristofferson.

"And I'm beginning to realise that

you can write more effectively within the discipline of a two- or three-minute song. Slowly, I'm becoming more concise. I don't think it's a compromise. My songs are jes' naturally becoming less complex, which I like. I think I've gone through a period of writing complex, involved songs like 'The Last Gunfighter Ballad.' That's a great, beautiful song, and I'm very proud to have written it. But you can't write like that forever. If only because it would turn into a formula."

He's aware still of some lingering antipathy towards the new writers. "There's more tolerance, but still you get people sayin' that some of the things that I do and that Townes does isn't country music. But it's a lot closer to country music than a lot of the things that are being made into hit records by country stations. I don't mean to put any of that down. It has a place, you know. But Ronnie Milsap is not a country singer. He's a rhythm and blues piano player who learned how to do that when he realised there was a market for a blind piano-playing country singer. Fine. I'm sure he loves the music and the success. But Townes is a lot closer to country music than that."

I ASKED whether he agreed with the generally held view that Willie and Waylon were principally responsible for the changing attitudes in Nashville.

"I think they're part of a long line of people who've helped change Nashville over the years. Every time that question comes up, I think back a bit and think, 'Jesus — what must those people in Nashville have thought of Hank Williams?' Because he was totally different from what was going down in Nashville at a time when it was even more conservative."

"I don't think Willie and Waylon stood up so much against the Nashville system. They jes' stood up against bein' ripped off. Nashville, you know it's like anything else. . . . It's like the insurance business. There's good guys, and there's goddam assholes."

"An' all you gotta do is learn how to 'knock 'em off. Willie an' Waylon have been knockin' 'em off a little longer than some of us."

"I suggested that maybe Willie and Waylon had recently taken their image as country music outlaws just a little too seriously; that they were veering dangerously close to self-parody. He leaps to their defence. "I think that was a label that people gave them. People realised that they weren't playing commercial country music soap opera stuff and they decided to call it outlaw music. I don't think it's a label Waylon put on it or Willie put on it."

continued p. 54

Don't Look Back

from the album of the same name

6653

Rec'd

It's official: jazz is now the music of the masses. And MAX JONES knows because Dick Sudhalter, on a visit to London, told him so.

ONE of the more colourful and certainly most forcefully articulate of the jazz players who jammed in and around London during the Sixties is Richard Merrill Sudhalter, the Bix-fixated American cornettist and writer who arrived in Europe some 18 years ago and worked as a news correspondent for United Press International between the years 1964 and '72.

Much of that time was spent in this country, where Dick and a fellow American, Henry Francis (a pianist who was in London working on a doctorate in Physics at Imperial College), helped in the formation of a semi-professional band called, somewhat ambitiously, the Anglo-American All-Stars.

Not surprisingly, the AAA—as it came to be known—favoured the music of the Twenties and early Thirties, music with a Bixian flavour sometimes but which reflected the tastes of all its players.

It was a group of jazz collectors and enthusiasts who were also good musicians. None of the principals depended on playing for a living, and the band worked primarily for its own enjoyment.

"Idealism flourishes under these circumstances, and this band is no exception," Sudhalter once explained. "The AAA's worst enemy will always be its non-professional status."

The band broke up when Dick Sudhalter was posted to Belgrade by UPI. Later he returned, started his own group, Commodore, led the New Paul Whiteman Orchestra, finished work on a Bix Beerdrum biography (published in 1974) and tried his hand at band-leading again with an outfit whose name, Jazz Without Walls, betrays his personal feelings about the music.

Among other activities he backed Bobby Hackett in Britain in September of '74, played several concerts and festival dates with the NPWO, wrote reviews and articles, and made a few records.

THEN, in the wake of the Bix book's success, he went to New York for a Bix concert at Carnegie Hall in the spring of '75, saw chances of working professionally there, came back here and moved to the U.S. that Autumn.

After an absence of more than two-and-a-half years I was surprised one day to hear the familiar New England tones and precise choice of words coming over the



Sudhalter: fastest lip in town still blows with style

"phone from what seemed unquestionably a short distance away.

Sudhalter it was, bright and full of beans and temporarily in London. He was wrapping up some business, he said, and intended sitting in with fellow cornettist Digby Fairweather the following night. A report of that stylish brass encounter appeared in the MM of August 12.

Before he packed his cornet and headed for home, and then back to his regular band-leading job and wife Vivian in New York in the morning — go-slows permitting — I asked if he would tell me how working in the States compared with his 15 years of barnstorming around Europe.

One thing he could say for sure, glossing over several aspects of the question, was that he could work, and come in contact with, a much more consistently high calibre of musician in New York than he had been able to do here.

"That's obvious, because greats are there. But on the other hand there is, surprisingly enough, not as much opportunity to realise individual projects over there."

"If a person has an idea for a special sort of concert, for example, or a special kind of band or whatever, there is nowhere near as much chance

of finding somebody willing to take the risk of financing it, recording it, or putting it on somewhere."

"This is because we are dealing over there with a different market, a different audience, and different budgets."

"If YOU were to look for example, at the New York Times on a Sunday you would see what looks like a proliferation of rooms where jazz bands are featured."

"But if you look a little closer you'll find, first, that a lot of them feature duos, trios, quartets at the maximum; and those rooms which do employ larger bands pay them very poorly."

"A project such as the New Whiteman Orchestra, which I handled in Europe, would never have been realised so successfully there as it was here. And I think that would also be true of Keith Nichols' Midnite Follies Orchestra."

The New Whiteman Orchestra, conceived by Sudhalter during the time he was re-

Jazzscene

when the grants ran out there was no longer the opportunity to keep the Repertory Company afloat on a regular basis.

"CHUCK ISRAEL'S National Jazz Ensemble has had a terrible time because they haven't got the money to keep a season going on anything like a consistent footing."

So what of the burgeoning jazz scene about which we have read a great deal recently? Are the Americans witnessing or participating in a jazz revival? Sudhalter looked doubtful and said he wouldn't like to speak of a revival.

"What I think you are getting now, and fascinating at that, is the beginnings of a mass audience for jazz in the widest sense of the word. Forget the old partisanship, forget the old stylistic walls, and so on."

"I was up at Saratoga the last couple of days of Newport and was astonished and inspired to see an audience of what must have been close to 30,000 people — median age 22, 23 or thereabouts — cheering as though at a rock concert for Chick Corea, and for duets by Chick Corea and Gary Burton and by Corea and Herbie Hancock."

"Also, on the other hand, they cheered what for the kids

must have been considered old-timers: Dexter Gordon, Sonny Rollins, Diz and the rest, you know."

"You remember there was a transitional period during the Sixties when some of us were appalled to find there was a whole generation of kids coming up who had never heard of Jimmy or Tommy Dorsey."

But now those same kids, having had to cut their teeth on rock and the amplification and all, are growing up musically. They don't need the amplification so much any more.

"Their tastes have developed beyond the baby stuff, the initial stages of music appreciation or whatever you wish to call it, and they want something more challenging, more exciting. So I'd say there was a flourishing scene but not a revival."

WHAT sort of a living is there today in the States for a jazz musician?

If the thought of a stirring jazz renaissance is still dream rather than actuality, what in Dick's estimation, are the realities of the situation? Are jazz players, as a general rule, still having a tough time?

"Yes, I think they are in a sense. Unless they want to move around, I mean. If they want to stay put for any rea-

sons, there is not much of a living to be made. It's a pretty meagre thing, even in New York."

People who make a decent living as jazz players nowadays pretty much have to accept the realities of travel and touring: two weeks here, two weeks there, tours, festivals abroad and what have you.

Despite the jazz parties and bits of ego-kicks that come along it's still not a very rewarding existence really. The golden years are through from that point of view. As Kenny Davern told me when I first got back to the States: "Don't kid yourself, there are no golden horns any more." He was talking about the death of idealism, you know."

Whatever else, I feel sure that idealism and dedication will never die in R. M. Sudhalter. He — once referred to in this paper as the "fastest talker in town" — had good news to impart to pianist Keith Ingham, also late of London Town. Keith has been working as a single in a restaurant on the East Side and taking an increasing number of other offers as they come in.

"People are finding out about him," said Dick, and he's moving very quickly into the front rank of all-round pianists in New York. I'd go so far as to say that within a couple of years he will be in the Dave McKenna-Hank Jones league."

As for Sudhalter himself, how did he react to his brief London trip? "You may be sure it was in many respects a homecoming. Who knows but that, after I've done my proving and scrambling in the hot, wormy 'ol Apple, we might both not come back to stay?"

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Echoes



JOHNNY 'GUITAR' WATSON/CHAMPION JACK DUPREE

IT'S good news time for those of you who've eyed the ever-broadening range of re-packaged and newly compiled rockabilly, R&B and soul albums. Since the early Seventies, "independent" American record labels like Sun, Chess, Specialty and the rest have been systematically revealed to the world, and lately the major labels have joined in the fun. But apart from bootlegs and cheap U.S. rack reissues, you'd be right in wondering why on earth nothing comprehensive has been happening with the King group of labels here: King was one of the leading, most prolific "indie" labels of the post-war era, after

all. The news is that at last Charly Records have made a licensing deal to breach what had become the last frontier in the world of Echoes: approved, reissue compilations. Soon you will not have to go without those jumping, honking, sexy boppers from Roy Brown, Bill Doggett, Hank Ballard and the rest, or the rockabilly of Charlie Feathers, Bill Beach and Mac Curtis, nor even the rocking legacy of Ronnie Mollen, Boyd Bennett and a score of others. It's been a struggle, though. The King catalogue goes back to 1944 and is equally strong and voluminous in R&B, country, rock 'n' roll, gospel, jazz, soul, bluesgrass and rockabilly. It takes in not only King, but Queen, DeLuxe, Federal, Glory, 4 Star, Bethlehem and Audio Lab. That's not counting minnows like Bluesgrass Special and several others. Together, it's a monster catalogue and there's been an equally daunting price tag on it since Polydor gave up their

licence a few years ago. To make matters worse, Charly did licence just one track, "Jungle Rock" by Hank Mizzell, and that promptly hit the top three, raised the financial expectations of the current U.S. owners, Gusto Records of Nashville, and made the licence deal even more difficult to achieve. So far, the deal is only for 12-track albums (but Charly are working on this aspect), at a mid-price. Charly have arranged a January release date for what promises to be a tremendous series of releases. There are already 15 volumes of "Kings Of Rhythm And Blues" in preparation and these include albums by Wynonie Harris, Hank Ballard and the Midnighters, Earl Bostic, Johnny "Guitar" Watson and Little Willie John. The notable exception is that majority of the King catalogue of the early Sixties, James Brown, who is excluded from the deal. On the "white" side, I am working already on a "King Rockabillys" series and on an album of Mac Curtis's best rockers. Curtis is the vintage Texan rockabilly and country singer who has re-

KING OF THE INDIES

by MARTIN HAWKINS

cently toured Britain twice and displayed that he has retained all the flair and enthusiasm that went into his King recordings. Other rock 'n' roll albums will follow and perhaps the huge hillbilly catalogue will be tapped once Charly get into the swing of things.

KING Records was the vision of one hustling businessman, Sydney Nathan, who saw in the Cincinnati of the early Forties what Sam Phillips saw in Memphis, Leonard Chess in Chicago, Ahmet Ertegun in New York, and to a lesser extent what some record men saw in practically every large city in the USA: the makings of rich pickings for an independent record label if the ethnic local sounds could be properly captured and marketed.

Nathan, who enjoyed country music and jazz, took the "folk and hillbilly" performers of radio WLW's popular Midwestern Hayride show and the black artists and bands of the mid-west and created a record company out of nothing, utilising whatever material, expertise and luck he could come by. Commencing his recordings in rented studios in Dayton and Cincinnati, he released hill-

billy, blues and jazz records throughout 1945 on the King and Queen labels.

By mid-1946 he had evolved two distinct series of issues, country and R&B, although he called them "folk" and "sepias" in the language of the time. By 1947 he had employed one of the first black record executives, Henry Glover, who became his chief A&R man and stayed with King for 20 years. The next year, Nathan bought out the Apollo and DeLuxe labels, and with the latter came one of his first stars, Roy Brown. By 1950 he had his own offices and studios on Brewster Avenue in Cincinnati and had begun to develop his own distribution system, soon to be the envy of all independent labels. Paradoxically, the fact that King got by without being tied to a major label was to lead to its small number of national popular hits and its eventual stagnation and downfall in the mid-Sixties.

BUT forties, King was getting hot and beginning to expand. The full range of the country market was being covered, from traditional string music through western-swing, contemporary ballads, country-boogie and bluegrass. Over a ten-year period, names like Cowboy Copas, Hank Penny, Moon Mullican, Clyde Moody, Hawkshaw Hawkins and the Stanley Brothers had as large a percentage of hits as Ballard, Brown, Doggett, Otis Williams and the Charnas, and Jack Dupree did on the R&B chart. Through his publishing company, Lion Music, and because he could push the songs to his extensive rosters of both black and white artists, Nathan became a pioneer in the cross-fertilisation of country and blues material. Not a year after Hank Penny scored in 1950 with a western-swing song, "Blind Love Eyes", the song re-appeared

MAC CURTIS

with blues shouter Wynonie Harris, just as "Good Morning Judge" had been taken over by Harris the year before from country writer and King executive Louis Innis. In the early Fifties, Henry Glover assumed increasing responsibility for recording sessions and he established a consistent house-band system with Hank Penny's Radio Cowboys for country and Lucky Millinder and later Bull Moose Jackson for R&B. But King recorded wherever their artists were: New York, Chicago, Nashville, the West Coast.

Glover was less involved with the "popular" series of issues established by Nathan between 1950 and 1956. This development led to successful careers for Bonnie Lou, Steve Lawrence and Ruby Wright, but despite it King was able for the most part to rely for its basic prosperity on its solid country and R&B distribution system and, to be honest, its typically dubious indie-label accounting system for those types of ethnic sales.

In the blues field the range of recordings was as staggering as in country. From the country blues of Robert Henry or Ralph Willis and the city styles of Willie Littlefield, Jack Dupree and others emerged the tough guitar blues of Albert and Freddie King and Johnny "Guitar" Watson. From gospel music and from the vocal group sound of the Platters were developed the various group styles of the Dominoes, Otis Williams and the Charnas, the Midlanders and the Five Royales. Perhaps an even greater legacy to be found, though, in the jump blues recordings of Roy Brown ("Good Rockin' Tonight"), Wynonie Harris ("Lovin' Machine"), Bull Moose Jackson ("I Love You Crazy"), and the "Perman To Pardon".

Tiny Bradshaw ("The Train Kept A-Rollin'") and many others. And that's without going into the instrumental recordings of Todd Rhodes, Lucky Millinder, Earl Bostic, Sonny Thompson et al.

DURING 1956, the popular and hillbilly series were phased out as King struggled to come to terms with the new sound, rock 'n' roll. They had been recording rocking roots in the forms of jump blues and country-boogie for years, but now the emphasis was more and more on beat and personality. Bill Doggett ("Honky Tonk"), and Hank Ballard ("Work With Me Annie") provided the beat, while Jack Dupree ("Walkin' The Blues") and Boyd Bennett ("Seventeen") came up with mid-Fifties hits, and many country performers were encouraged to record novelty rock songs. For instance, the veteran Texan Moon Mullican, "King of the Hillbilly Piano Players," turned his hands to "Seven Nights To Rock" and "Rock 'n' Roll Me Bullfrog" with the help of Boyd Bennett's Rockets.

King never did come up with the "personality" of the "new Pearly," that everyone was searching for. They tried, though, and many fine rockabilly recordings by Charlie Feathers ("One Hand Loose"), Mac Curtis ("You Ain't Treatin' Me Right") and a score of other hopeful, hip-curling country boys resulted. These will be collected on Charly's forthcoming Rockabilly and Rock 'n' Roll albums. You can look forward to raw rocking energy from country rockers Bill Beach, Joe Penny, and rock 'n' rollers Earl Michaels, Bob And Lucille.

continued p.60

TALKING HEADS

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BLUE SUEDE NEWS. BLUE SUEDE NEWS. . . BLUE SUEDE NEWS. . .

NEW Little Richard single, "Send Me Some Lovin'", recorded in London this summer under heavy secrecy. Ronny Weiser's "Rollin' Rock" output improves all the time. His new "California Rockabilly" album introduces fiery girl vocalist Sarah Harris. Midlands Rock 'n' Roll outfit Coast To Coast creating strong feedback reports. Yet another "private" Presley album, but this one's the real meat. Six tracks were cut live in a hotel cabaret room by Bonnie Hex circa 1965 and included is a pre-RCA version of "I Got A Woman", compelling stuff. . . Delmark records putting together an album of early material from Regal & DeLuxe masters. Artists to include Dave Bartholomew, Chubby Newsum, Bobby "Blue" Bland, Locks, Earline Harris and The Johnson Bros. Surprise US visitor to Buddy Holly film premier was Larry Coryell, ex-owner of Station KLLL in Lubbock where some of the Holly hits were recorded. KKKK Phillips (son of Sam) has turned Southern Rockstar label current single is by Billy Lee Riley. Rock 'n' Roll commission held this summer. Summer featured Warren Smith, Marcus Van Story and Barbara Pittman.

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U.A. planning major Eddie Cochran collection to tie in with singer's birth-date, years ago this October.



Patti's Babe: vivid, vulnerable

CHRIS BRAZIER reviews Patti Smith's latest book

WHEN this book of poetry appeared in the States, the New York Times carried an amazing and unintentionally amusing review by Jonathan Cott in which ridiculous name-dropping destroyed the effect of his largely sympathetic view of the poetry.

Patti Smith's ideas certainly bear much resemblance to Blake and the English Romantics, she has clearly been irreparably influenced by Rimbaud and Burroughs, any writer of 'prose poetry' must somewhere be connected with Baudelaire's "Spleen Paris", and "her esoteric program" may even be "one that owes an incalculable debt to Antonin Artaud." But gratuitously to mention names like Mina Loy, Else von Freytag-Loringhoven (I), Parker Tyler, Baron von Hugel (II) et al. and even "the 16th-century Venetian courtesan poet Gaspara Stampa", is to place Patti Smith in an esoteric context which doesn't fit her.

Patti Smith has, after all, chosen to throw herself wholeheartedly into popular culture and the mass media, to take her art into rock 'n' roll, "the highest and most universal form of expression since the lost tongue." "In another decade rock 'n' roll will be art," she cries at one point in this volume — that it is not so now may be why she still feels it necessary to communicate through poetry, a medium which Richard Hell (a similar figure in many ways) abandoned for rock 'n' roll because it is "dead." Though in fact the most likely explanation is that music and its most punishing partner, touring, cannot provide a sufficient outlet for a creative energy which even her detractors would admit to be almost awesomely unquenchable.

That energy streams through the pages of Babel, whether it is properly directed is another matter. Patti Smith's artistic vitality has always seemed to owe much to her unshakably romantic faith (and faith is itself a cornerstone of her creative personality) in inspiration and spontaneity. I may well have exaggerated her spontaneity in the past — certainly passages that I took to be improvised in concert or on record crisp up now and again in Babel (the appalling spoken passage in the middle of "Poppies" to take one example, I now find was lifted from the poem "Babel" itself).

NEVERTHELESS, however she may adapt her poetry to rock, the bulk of this work must surely have been composed on the spur of the moment, letting the words tumble over each other in erratic profusion. All too often, to quote from "corps de plane", "desire for the word obliterates the image." It's as if Smith sees herself (or her unconscious) as a medium for messages from "the infinite" and would feel it a profanity to alter a single word to edit the original outpourings at all. Part of me cannot help but accord with the sense of ecstatic devotion, but most of Babel is impossible to live with.

However sympathetically you approach the book, the stolidity of the writing must overwhelm and repel — the brilliant lines and images (and they do exist) are obscured and far outnumbered by the banal, the pointless, the esoteric, the derivative or the plain poeticizing, so that you cry out for some judicious editing, some attempt at structure, some sharpening of the point of poetry, that is irritating and frustratingly

diffuse.

In the light of that observation, maybe poetry is the medium least suited to Patti Smith's gifts simply because of the total freedom it allows her — when disciplined by music (as on "Horses") or by conversation (rather than declamation) she can be magnificent, incomparably powerful, whereas here she does not even have to cope with grammatical restrictions.

IT'S extremely important, however, not to lose sight (as many will in considering Babel) of Patti Smith's genuine ability — blanket condemnation is all too easy, especially of a woman who takes herself out on to the very end of the limb. My reference to the Romantics was no idle one — however erratic is her expression of it, she has their naked, defiantly unconventional religiousness ("do you believe in god?/he is my trainer"), their surging faith in individuality and its link with the infinite ("I love and love the infinite split and amoral heart from 'egypt', their delight in and identification with the outcast ("the artist, the mutant, the rock 'n' roll mulatto"), and their relish for Prometheus aspiration in the face of impossible odds ("all honor goes to the runner who would seek glory in the heart of failure").

There are, furthermore, some fine moments here: her fantasies can have a strange and occasionally disturbing (especially sexual) power; she can have a sure narrative force (in "doctor love" a comment on the exploitation of women through conventional love by the rationally ordering but vampiric male); and the sequence of poems dedicated to a lover called Judith in the "aster midphine" section is compelling. The Judith poems, along with the part of "jenny" which speaks of her feelings about the child she had as a teenager but has not seen since, ring truer than the rest because it is here that Patti Smith the human comes through — feebly, tormentingly emotional.

HER forays at almost every other point into the infinite fade and shatter completely the moment you feel a hint of the real person behind what a friend bemusedly (but not derogatorily) called the "cosmic vomit." Which is what makes "grant" by far the most moving and successful poem in the book.

It pictures "god," the primal Pandora, sleeping and having his dreams invaded on the sabbath, and angrily causing his creations to be disconnected from him and from each other (thus also creating "monsters and artists") "man was condemned to wander the earth like burden of leper telephones" (one of her most striking images). This may seem like mere space-flying, but it is brought to life by the real Patti Smith (the vulnerable human to whom we can relate) talking about her father in a clear, simple, sensitive and honest way.

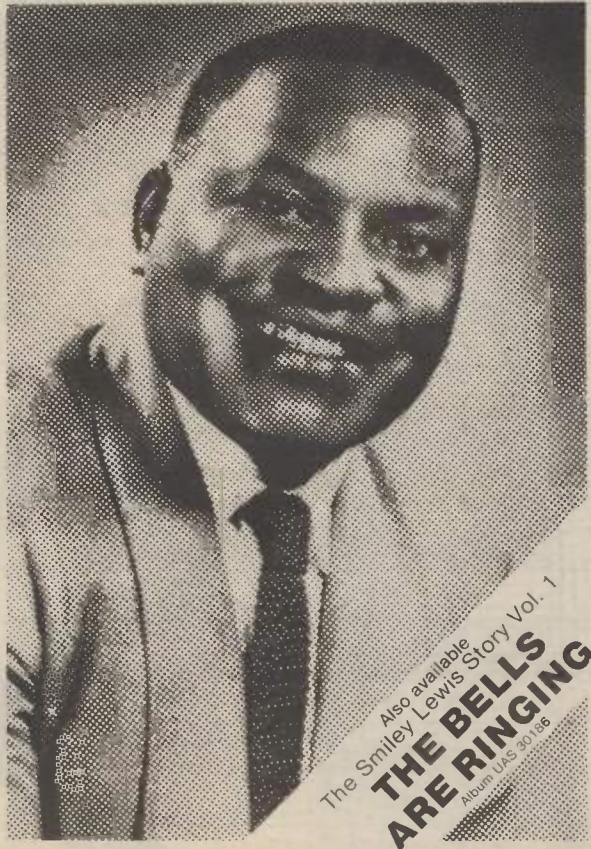
"today I've spent some time with my father. I have watched and listened and opened w him, have shared his longing — his desire for perfect union, his disappointment in a destiny of wandering, his heaven, his resignation. . . I recognize him as the true outcast. . . I recognize him with dark flames of midium heat in a brown shirt on a geriatric runner, a picture of the husband of my mother. I recognize a man whose dreams have also been invaded and truly believe there is no closer to god than my father."

"grant" is a beautiful piece, and as I look at it again it seems both to cut out and to show up all the words of much less worth that surround it.

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UK in USA

WHAT are UK doing at the moment and are there any more albums on the way? — P. M. Cheetham, Liverpool.

■ UK are at present in the States for a month as an immediate follow-up to their recent visit of two months. When they return around October 7 they go to Europe for two weeks and then start recording their second album, which they hope to complete immediately before Christmas and have on sale by late February 1979.

Merry gear

WHAT equipment is used by Robin Williamson and his Merry Band? — George Laney, Dartmouth.

■ Robin Williamson: Taylor guitar, Gibson 1912 mandocello, acoustic fiddle, penny whistle, swanee whistle, alto flute, hunting horn, jews harp, mandolin, Glenlivet bottle, vocals. Sylvia Woods: Witcher nylon-strung Celtic harp, glockenspiel, harpsichord, kazoo, back-up vocals. Jerry McMillan: Fiddle, viola, piano, animal noises. Chris Caswell: Flute, "box wood," penny whistle, accordion, concertina. His own make of metal-strung harp, Bodhran (Irish drum), bagpipes. Most of these are heard on their first album for Criminal Records, "American Stonehenge," a date derived from the recent deciphering of ancient Celtic writings carved on pre-historic stone structures in America.

Giant steps

HOW does Gary Green, of Gentle Giant, set up his acoustic guitar to that he can use an effects pedal with it? (Rita R. Warder, London, W16.) What are the band's future plans? (A. Metcalf, Hull.)

■ Gary's effects are not done from the stage when using his acoustic guitar. They are done through the p.a. and mixed at the desk, using an Eventide Instant Flanger and an Eventide Harmoniser. Gentle Giant released a new album, "Giant For A Day," on September 15 and may do a short UK tour, their first in three years, in November.

'City' sound

WHAT is the drum sound used on the opening sequence of the Marshall Main single, "Dancing In The City"? — C. C. Jones, Cardiff.

■ The actual sound was hit upon by accident. It was achieved by linking the drums to a Simmons SD 111 drum synthesizer and fiddling with the knobs!

Sweet beat

HAVE Sweet any plans for a British tour and any more records? What equipment did they use on the album "Level Headed"? — Richard Stratford, Batley.

■ A British tour is under discussion but nothing is finalised. They are recording a new album hopefully for release before the end of the year. A single will most cer-

Questions?

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SIMON KIRKE of BAD COMPANY

BAD COMPANY THE BEAT

tainly be taken from it. They say the equipment used on "Level Headed" is too extensive to list and half of it cannot be remembered.

Tape secret

WHEN Yes appeared last October at Wembley, Rick Wakeman played a Birtotron. What is this, and where can I get one? — Christopher Monk, Downend, Bristol.

■ At present the Birtotron is on the secret list and can only be described as a tape-source keyboard machine made by Birtotronics, of High Wycombe. Provisional patents have been granted and full patents are expected soon, when it will go into production. No price has yet been decided.

Head tale

WHAT keyboards did "Instincts" and "Charisma" use on the credits in any way connected to Gunther Brunschen's recording technique used on Edgar Froese's "Aqua"? — Bill Cook, New Southgate, London N11.

■ The set-up I used on "Instincts" was a Series III Moog with a full complement of sequencers. Linked up to the Moog I also had a bank of RSE envelope shapers and filters. This extra equipment more than doubles the voltages of the Moog. As to the artificial head, "Bunny," the head was made from paper-mache and painted in glorious colours by my producer, John Edwards, at a cost of 50p. This did get the same result as the artificial head system produced by Gunther Brunschen. As a matter of interest, artificial head systems have been around and used for about 70 years. However, the head that I used seemed to be very effective, especially for "Waterbrook" (Track 2, Side 1). Half way through recording the horn turned over and I fell in — notice the drowning effect in the middle! I used a clavinet put through

the Moog on "There's Another Summer Coming" (Track 1, Side 2) to produce what sounds like an acoustic guitar. — ADRIAN WAGNER.

Good vibes

I WOULD like to know how I, Pierre Moerlen amplifies an acoustic vibraphone for concert performances. What kind of reasonably priced mikes are best for picking up such a large area of sound production without feeding back, or are there some other systems such as transducers which the more effective? (Henry Shaffor, Haslington, Kelfo, Scotland). Are there any tutor books on the subject? — (Dilke Corrigan, Canberra, Australia).

■ It has taken me a long time to find the best way to amplify a vibraphone on stage, in other words to get the instrument as loud as the drum kit or bass and guitar. My group, using a Musser acoustic vibres with electronic pick-ups. The signal coming from the pick-ups is going to a Roland Jazz Chorus amplifier, which gives a wide range of tones and effects. The only problem with pick-ups is that there is not enough top frequency coming through them and we have to use microphones to compensate. I do not know about prices — all I can tell you is that they are not cheap! They come with the p.a. system we are hiring. If you want to know more about suitable mikes you can get in touch with H.H.B., on 01-931 3285 and ask for Zan Tin Westwood. The only other existing system that I know of is the Dagan electronic vibraphone, which has smaller notes and more electric sound. It is also a bit cheaper than the acoustic Musser with pick-ups. In the studio there are no separation problems, obviously. I mostly use the mikes, the pick-up being used as an effect only. If you are playing acoustic vibes in a loud band the cheapest way to be heard is to play with Premier hard mallets. Concerning tuition books, I would recommend Gary Burton's two-mallet technique book, but in any case, use Your Own Way. — PIERRE MOERLEN.



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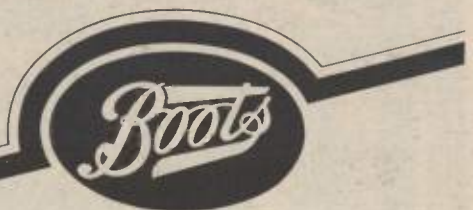


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The Record Breaking Record Company

Wein talks

IMPRESARIO George Wein, of festival fame, arrived in Britain with his wife Joyce on Wednesday last week for a combination holiday-business stay of a week or so. He spoke to Brian Theobald of Ronnie Scott's, festival organiser Andy Hudson and other friends and associates, one of the subjects under discussion being plans for next year's Newport Jazz Festival in Britain.

Denying that any hard and fast arrangements had been set, George told the MM last weekend that he wanted to bring the festival back to England but would like to produce it himself.

"I feel we should do something unique in England," he said, "and I would prefer to produce my own. You can say that I'm examining the situation, and that's all for now."

Pressed to comment on rumours of an ambitious, long-running event to be staged next year in the London area, and not in Middleburgh as it was last July, Wein conceded that wherever he did do it, in 1979 or not, it would be something bigger than had been seen over here before.

"England deserves to have something of comparable magnitude to the Newport Festival in New York. I can't tell you about future plans for Middleburgh—that wasn't my festival, it was put on by Cleveland Council."

Humph charity

HUMPHREY LYTTELTON'S Band, George Melly with John Chilton's Feetwarmers, Alexis Korner and pianist Neville Dickie are to be featured in a charity jazz concert run by the University College Jazz Society at the Collegiate Theatre in Gordon Street, W.C.1 on Friday, October 20.

The concert is in aid of the South African Scholarship Appeal to enable a student from South Africa to study at University College.

Jazznews

GIBBS/JUBIABA
AUTUMN
TOUR

MIKE GIBBS

The concert is scheduled to begin at 8pm and last for at least three-and-a-half hours. Tickets are priced at £5 and £5. and are available from October 2 from the Collegiate Theatre Box Office, 15 Gordon Street, W.C.1 (Tel: 387 9629). The UCJS is also presenting a concert at the same theatre on December 1 with Ronnie Scott's Quintet.

© Humphrey Lyttelton, composer-in-chief and one of the solo stars of the Salute to Satchmo package since its inception, is to quit the show next year in order to concen-

trate on his own new band and its Basin Street To Harlem concert presentations. This means that whilst Bruce Turner, a member of Humph's band, will be leaving too, both players are fulfilling all the Satchmo dates they are already contracted for, and these include two in March, 1979 and one on April 1.

Meanwhile, Ronnie Scott Directions are booking fresh engagements with a new-look Salute To Satchmo concert show co-starring trumpeter Colin Smith (in Lyttelton's place), trombonist George

Chisholm and Alex Welsh and his Band, "Chix". Alex and Colin will share the compering between them. The first Salute with this line-up is at London's Fairfield Hall, Croydon, on November 21.

Roy retires

CLARINETTIST Roy Pellett, whose band has worked exclusively on the Continent for the past six years, returns to Britain in the near future to settle in Plymouth. From Munich, he tells the MM he is retiring from professional music-making at the end of September.

Pellett, now 43 years old, began his professional jazz career in 1960 with the Anglo-German Leathetown Jazzmen. He played with the Clyde Valley Stompers, Charlie Gilbreath, Mick Collier, Bob Wallis and Red Mason's band. Eight Stan Tracey's Quartet and the Merry-We-Mullen Band. Pianist Mick Payne is now a member of the Scott Quintet, although still playing a few dates with Humphrey Lyttelton's Band.

MIKE GIBBS, leading an international orchestra, and **Barbara Thompson's** nine-piece Jublaba band are the jazz representatives in the Arts Council's Autumn 1978 music season arranged by the Contemporary Music Network.

In the New Year, CMN tours will follow by Landscapes and Joy, sharing the bill, and later by Derek Bailey's Company.

The Gibbs tour was previewed in this column on September 18 when we printed the band's dates, starting at the Phoenix Theatre, Leicester, on October 23 and ending at Hurlfield Campus on November 4. It is announced that the personnel will be Derek Watkins, Kenny Wheeler (trumpets, flugel horns), Chris Fyne, Geoff Perkins (trombones), Terry Johns (French horn), Charlie Mariano, Stan Sulzmann (reeds), Bill Ffrillett (guitar), Gordon Beck (keyboards), Eberhard Weber (bass), Stephen Wick (tuba), John Marshall (drums), and Frank Ricotti (percussion).

Barbara Thompson and Jublaba begin their tour at the Stables, Wavendon, on November 18 and continue at the Black Boy Inn, Nottingham (20), York Arts Centre (21), Hurlfield Campus, Sheffield (22), Band On The Wall, Manchester (23), Leeds Playhouse (24), Bishop Grosseteste College, Lincoln (25), Grand Hotel, Birmingham (26), Phoenix Theatre, Leicester (27), Sweeney's, Basildon (28), University of East Anglia (29), and Bull's Head, Coventry (30). The jazz-rock programme by Joy and Landscapes will trek round the country from January 31 to February 10, while Derek Bailey, Han Bennink, Steve Lacy, Evan Parker and Company kick off with two performances for Jazz Centre Society on March 3 and 4 and tour until March 7.

He formed the Roy Pellett Jazzband and two years afterwards moved his base of operations to Zurich. Since leaving London, he has made his British home in Plymouth.

Whitney saved

THE WHITNEY Jazz Club, which meets on alternate Tuesdays at the Whitney Town Football and Social Club, Welch Way, has been saved from closure after three years' existence by the intervention of local BBC station, Radio Oxford, who have decided to support the club from this week opening this week. The winter season started on Tuesday (26) with a visit from reed man Johnny Barnes and trombonist Roy Williams.

Future bookings include Sweden's jazz combo, Scania, on October 10 followed by Terry Lightfoot's jazzmen (24), U.S. saxist Benny Waters and the Hunt Trio (November 7), Zenith Hot Stompers (21) and clarinetist Peasroo Hucko with the Ron Russell Band (December 5). Radio Oxford's Ted Gorton said: "We shall be hoping to

record some of the seasons' later broadcasting, but the main thing is we have been able to assure the future of this excellent club for the coming year."

Details of the club and its programmes are obtainable from Peter Timms, 46 High Street, Witney.

Westy award

FOLLOWING their two-week presentation of the jazz cabaret, *Mama Chicago*, at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe the Mike Westbrook Brass Band received the 1978 Radio Forth Award for the most outstanding musical performance. It was given to Mike by Festival director John Drummond. The band is now performing the cabaret in Sweden (September 28 to October 6), and then takes it to Holland until October 14. On returning to London, the Brass Band will be presenting "Bright As Fire," a musical setting of Blake's poetry, at the ICA, the Mall, S.W.1, every lunchtime from 1.15pm from October 17 to 21.

Shires here

TENNESSEE-born country blues singer and guitarist Johnny Shines comes over to London on Sunday, November 12—in the middle of a German tour to play one night at the 100 Club in Oxford Street. This will be his only British appearance. He first visited this country in early 1970 for a National Blues Federation tour. Promoter John Stedman says he hopes to present the bluesman in one solo set and another with accompaniment.

IN MEMORY
OF LENNIE

TOMORROW (Friday) at the Fenwick Hotel, on St. Anne's promenade, near Blackpool, the "Oye! Oye!" Club presents Britain's Queen of the Blues, Beryl Brydon, along with Alex Welsh and his Jazz Band, the Find Hunt Trio, and the Preston-based Ribbles Valley Jo-Jo-Jo Promenade of this event will be donated to the dependants of former Welsh drummer, Lennie Hastings, whose wascy "I Inspired the name of the club."

Tonight (Thursday), Beryl guests with Alex Welsh's Band at the Birch Hall Hotel in Lee, near Oldham.



FEMINIST IMPROVISING GROUP in the Chappelle des Lombards, Paris, where they played for four nights. L to R: Irene Schweizer (piano), Lindsay Cooper (soprano), a French saxist who was playing the date, George Born (bass), Maggie Nicholls (vocals), Angèle Veltmeyer (tenor), another French friend sitting-in, and Corine Lissol (trumpet). Pic: JACQUES LAURENS.

Feminist Improvisers
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AN ENSEMBLE of women playing free improvisation and known as the Feminist Improvising Group, have three gigs in six days, two this week and one next Tuesday. The band will consist of George Born (cello, bass guitar), Lindsay Cooper (bassoon, alto, flute, soprano sax), Maggie Nicholls (voice, piano), Sally Potter (voice), Marie Ruelife (trombone, violin), Angèle Veltmeyer (sax, flute) and, for the second and third gigs, Corine Lissol (trumpet).

Tonight (Thursday) the Feminist Improvisers play at Premises, Norwich Arts Centre, St. Benedict's Street, from 8pm. Tomorrow (28) the group visits the London Musicians Collective at 42 Gloucester Avenue, NW1 from 8pm. And on October 3 they perform in the Basement, Brighton Polytechnic, Grand Parade, Brighton, from 8.30pm.

Another forthcoming concert of modern music in Brighton, this time of solo improvisations by Derek Bailey (electric and acoustic guitar), takes place on Monday, October 2, at the House Bookings, 21 Little Preston Street, Brighton, from 8.30pm. Admission is such of the Brighton events costs 40p.

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Guy Clark from page 44

I think it was a journalist label, simply because there was nothing else to describe it.

"Maybe Waylon and Willie did respond to that image. But only because finally they were getting some recognition for something they'd been bustin' ass to get across for years. And then it got overdone, and now they're real wary of it. . . . But they don't like bein' labelled or put in boxes they can't get out of. They didn't get where they are by bein' put in boxes. They got where they are by standin' up for what they wanted. Which is about the only way to get anywhere."

I DID think, though, that the whole outlaw ethos was being caricatured by someone like David Allen Coe and his occasionally excessive posturing as the Fabulous Rhinestone Cowboy (and this despite the excellence of some of his music, and the admittedly entertaining anecdotes with which he frequently cajoles his audiences; especially those referring to his prison experiences, as gruesome as they might have been).

"A lot of people misunderstand David," Clark says. "I know David well and consider him a friend. You have to remember that David has a very high sense of theatre. I mean, a reeeeeeeally high sense of theatre. He

can become a character from his heels to the top of his head."

"When I first met him he was in a motorcycle gang. An' he had the leather jacket an' the chains an' the boots an' the colours. Those were the people he wanted to be with, so he became one of them. Then he went through that Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy trip. . . . An' right now, he thinks he's a pirate. God, right now he is a pirate. He lives down in Key West and he has this whole pirate image. Sallor hat an' like a Captain Ahah heard. Reminds me of a crusty-looking. If you didn't know him you'd think he was a real old salt. Because he's so far into that role, he's a great actor."

I remember one time he went through this whole Mormon trip. He went about dressed like a preacher an' he had three wives. Jes' decided he wanted to be a Mormon. Far out, man, an' good luck to him."

"Were we, then, to believe his accounts of prison, where he is said to have killed a guy with an iron bucket after a homosexual attack in the showers?"

"Weee-e-eell," Clark grins. "A lot of it is true. Lot of it's theatre, too. . . . He's had a pretty hard time. He has been in prison. Let's say that he's seen it all an' probably done most of it, but he's in showbusiness now."

TOWARD the end of our conversation Clark relaxes (maybe he was just beginning to recover from what, by all accounts, had been a hard night) and begins to recount more fully the specific inspiration for "Texas — 1947." "Desperados" and "Let Him Roll."

"They're all more or less autobiographical," he begins. "Like, 'Texas — 1947' is exactly the way I remember it. It's like a little vignette that I remembered all my life. Somewhere in the back of my head I remembered bein' taken down to the train station to see the first steamline express. I was down there, thinkin' 'what the hell's goin' on here?' I was surrounded by all these people. It seemed like the whole town was out there. . . . an' then this steamline train came through, jes' like I described it in the song. . . . 'screamin' straight through Texas like a mad dog cyclone.' Didn't stop. Jes' went whoosh. Right through. . . . 'Desperados' was written about this old fellow who was like my grandfather. See, during World War Two, my father was overseas and we lived in West Texas with my grandmother in this old hotel. . . . an' this old fellow, he was like my grandmother's boyfriend. . . . He was an old oilman. He'd drilled oilwells all over the world. He drilled the first wells in Venezuela, you know. . . . He'd been a wildcatter an' a drifter. . . . He was an old bachelor."

"An' the song is about him waitin' round to die. . . . separated from his past, you know. . . . 'Let Him Roll' was based on another character, but there's a little more fabrication than, say, 'Texas — 1947.' . . . I met this fellow Townes an' I met in Houston. An old wino. . . . Townes used him in one of his songs, too. We called him Slim. He was an old sailor. . . . 'The Last Gunfighter Ballad' was a song I'd wanted to write for a long time. . . . This hotel my grandmother had, it was like a hotel for old, retired men. . . . They were all crusty old oil field workers and old cowboys. . . . This one old guy taught me to play dominoes. . . . An' he'd been in the U.S. Cavalry. . . . he was about 80, I musta been about eight or ten. He'd seen the whole gun-fighter era, you know. That whole era only lasted for 10-15 years from 1880-1890. An' if he lived to be 80 that puts him in 1940."

"It was jes' survival. . . . If you were

"I'm really fascinated, I guess, by history passin' and what people see in their lifetime. I have this idea for a song I've wanted to write for a long time. . . . My grandmother — my mother's mother — she came from Kentucky in a covered wagon to the Indian Territory when she was a girl jes' 12 years old. That's a hell of a long way to come in a covered wagon. Especially into the Indian Territory, which is now Oklahoma. . . . and, she, you know, lived through the Indian wars and died eventually in an old people's home. But before she died, one of the last things she saw was a live broadcast of the moon landin'. . . . She lived to see men walkin' on the moon when, like, 80 years of comin' into the Indian Territory in a covered wagon. That to me is extraordinary. To see that in one lifetime, those extremes of history."

"An' I wanna write a song about that. I must've started it like 20 times. More. It's a hell of a thing to get right in a song. It was like that with 'Desperados' — that song and that old man meant so much to me, I wanted to get it right. An' I spent like ten days working ten hours a day on that song an' it near drove me nuts. But I did it. An' I guess one day I'll write that other song."

Lurkers from page 35

culture) did the cliched thing by forming a band after seeing the Pistols and the Clash at the 100 Club. "Back then it was a good laugh," says Howard. "It's an even better laugh now, but now it's a serious laugh. I didn't take it seriously before."

"I take the band seriously but I can still have a good laugh while I'm doing it. I get bored at home. Sitting around. All you can do is go out drinking. I don't get bored touring but I get bored staying in places like this."

At this point Esso wanders in. The most interesting character in the band, seeing his massive frame lay into the drums is a truly awesome sight. Amazingly enough, in the middle of such a group he's not very keen on rock 'n' roll, and has bought Melody Maker for years just to read about jazz, preferring superclub entertainers such as

Dudley Moore (†) and Oscar Peterson to any rock musicians, though he is fond of John Rotten, and much because he reminds him of Tommy Steele and slings like Michael Crawford (which will doubtless please Mr. Lydon immensely) as because, says Esso, he achieved a real white man's blues vocal on "Bodies."

I ask them if they don't ever get tired of touring, if they really like everything that goes with rock 'n' roll — on — on — the — road — lifestyle. "There's not a lot that goes with it," replies Esso. "What do we do? The same as everyone else. We don't do nothing. Go for a drink, go for a take-away. That's it. We go to bed. We get up and play Birmingham tomorrow. The same as everyone else? A more epicly bleak (yet perfectly happy) description of an empty life would be difficult to imagine. You

will gather that Esso isn't exactly tormented by the burden of consciousness, doesn't lie awake at night pondering the meaning of life. On the contrary, he says "You've got to be naturally lazy. I mean that. I'm bored when I'm doing something; when I'm not doing something I'm happy. I mean that. I can read, I can run up and down stairs I can be silly. I have a lot of time to be silly in. I suppose that being in a group, though, you've got to be involved. . . . I suppose we are musicians. I don't really think about it."

How do you think of the Lurkers? "I just think I've known Howard Wall for 16 years and the rest of them for 10, and I think what am I wasting my life with them for? I always wanted to be a jazz drummer, you know, from a musician's point of view. Pete: 'I hate jazz.' Esso: 'I know you hate jazz,

that's a musical thing. I'm a musician, you ain't. You're a vanity expert. You yum, when you're 30 you'll be too old."

This leads into a long complaint about how two-faced are most new wave bands. The Lurkers feel that they're at least honest, only singing about how bored they are, and hate the groups that pretend to care but are only in it for the money. Esso: "Nigel Moore explains. The first chance that comes when they can make some money, it's grabbed. If they admit it, fair enough, go out and get it. . . . get as much as they can. But what I hate is when people say one thing and mean another, and have the amount of people that get fooled by the unbelievable. It's not my ambition to be rich but I'll put it up if I get any money. Esso: 'This group isn't about not making money anyway, is it? We don't sing like the Clash do,

like an arsehole group." Why are the Clash arseholes for singing serious lyrics? Esso: "They're serious for the poor sods who go out and buy it in Warrington. They believe in it. When all the Clash are doing is arsing around in Los Angeles, these kids would know where to go in Los Angeles." Pete: "It doesn't matter. Esso: 'It does matter because they're lying.' Pete: "It doesn't matter, because you just buy a record." Esso: "The Lurkers is just a song but with the Clash you're talking about serious lyrics, polly about this crap." Pete: "Someone's got to do it, and I think they're good at it." Esso: "Well, I think they're middle-class, using the middle-class as they always have."

At that point we veer off into talking about their music, and I ask if they've been determined to stick to the Ramones formula. "We're

not a bit like the Ramones," they answer. "We're probably more like Status Quo or Thin Lizzy or something than the Ramones. The Ramones are brilliant, the best thing out of the new wave, but I wouldn't say we were anything like them. You could say we were like the new Quo but not like them."

Pardon? "The new one. You could say we're following in the footsteps of Quo but no one is a great fan of Quo. There's no one we're gonna change simply because it's not trendy to like the Lurkers. Why should we? We got so far without anybody saying the Lurkers are great. All they've said is that we're a mediocre band, punning it on the Ramones style, blah, blah, blah. We just carry on. We don't care. All the same, they do want to make it, especially Pete Stride, which is why they didn't mind playing the

Lyceum the other week, even if Esso doesn't feel too good about it —, all those security passes."

Nigel: "We wouldn't kick stardom in the head if it came along. anybody in this business who said they were a liar." Esso: "In your opinion, you're a liar. You get these blokes that experiment with music, and then you get a crowd that says that, they're pretty genuine. But these other guys that get a set worked out and play it all around the country and get Jews behind them to sell it, you gringing around, yeah. But you are happy as you are now? Howard: "We're a hard-working group. We want rock 'n' roll's meant to be about innit? Travel up and down the W1, eating shit food, doin' gigs, you know, that's all I ever thought it'd be."

SUPERSTAR AUSTRALIAN SUNDAY MORNING MAILOR.



Australian superstar, Gregg Hansford, has decided to postpone his return Down Under to compete in the John Player Race of the Year at Mallory this Sunday — his one and only UK appearance since the Grand Prix.

In the World Formula 750 meeting at Brands, Hansford deservedly won the hearts of both the crowd and the experts when he crashed his Kawasaki 750, 3 of Drucks.

position. MCN called him "the most exciting thing to hit the road racing scene this season" and he has been labelled "the new Mike Halliwell."

Gregg boy, you've a lot to live up to

It'll also be the last appearance of the season this side of the Atlantic of the new 500cc World Champion, Kenny Roberts, who'll be out to display his world beating form against Barry Sheene, Wil Hartog and the rest of the top class field. Without a doubt, he intends to add his name to that very select list of winners of this famous and long established international event.

Apart from the John Player Race of the Year meeting also includes penultimate rounds of the major UK Championships — the Motor Cycle Racing/Vladivostok 250, the Shell/SPORT 500, the Motor Cycle News/Butt 33 Superbike, the Honda 125 and the Motor Cycle Life International Sidecar.

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Midem. The winner's date.

Caught in the Act

TOM ROBINSON'S successful decision to extend his role from rock singer into the realism of social and political commentary, however well intended, ironically now seems likely to confront him with the greatest dilemma of his career.

For the ever changing face of society and the continual shift in the focus of its problems determines that what may well have been both topical and pertinent last year is now quite irrelevant. Last year's revolution becomes this year's institution.

So whereas the passion and virility of songs like "Up Against The Wall" and "Power In The Darkness" seemed, at their inception, highly sensitive and hard hitting, on the second night of TRB's latest tour on Friday at Bristol's Colston Hall they appeared hollow and inconsequential.

It's perhaps a little unfair to begin drawing comparisons with their magnificent performance at the Anti-Nazi League demo earlier in the summer. However, if they'd played with just a shred of the power and commitment which marked that gig, instead of the pedestrian and lacklustre way in which they ran through the bulk of the set, it might have been a very different proposition.

Nor were matters helped when it came to "Glad To Be Gay", a singalong which carried about as much conviction as an old favourite in the hands of a Val Doonican audience. "Power In The Darkness" chose to single out the utterly innocuous Bristol Council as its primary target; surely there are more dramatic and important current issues.

In spite of this, one or two genuinely impressive moments that recalled the band in full flow: both "Motor" and "Winter Of '78" were performed in particularly fine style. For the remainder, they relied greatly on some accomplished guitar work from Danny Kustow to lift the proceedings.

Apart from featuring a generous proportion of material from their first album, they displayed a couple of new songs. One had hoped that they might pursue a fresh avenue, and perhaps attempt something a little more ambitious. However, the new items remain as simplistic as many of the older songs, and certainly neither "Blue Murder" nor

TRB: last year's slogans ring hollow

"Suits Me Suits You" had anything new or vital to say. Meanwhile a veil should be hastily drawn over the ransacking of "Waiting For The Man" that finished the set.

While there can be little doubt that many of the songs, as well as the overall pattern of the show, will improve as the tour progresses, Robinson remains — for the moment — the man, for the big occasion, with Victoria Park and Reading being his most outstanding achievements to date. Maybe it's time he took a broom to some of his set. Still Little Fingers, of whom some enthusiastic things have already been written, were a most impressive opener for the evening. They're certainly one of the finest young bands I've seen in quite some time. — SIMON KINNERLEY.

OLD GREY WHISTLE TEST BBC-2 TV

"HULLO chaps and welcome to the show," beamed Annie Nightingale in a flurry of soda-pop fizz. The OGWT was back for yet another season. The advance publicity had promised radical changes. Producer Mike Appleton and director Tom Corcoran obviously realised they had to do something with the old washroom. By the end of its last series, the format had become embarrassing: not only did the show treat new wave with snotty and infantile



TOM ROBINSON (Pic: ALAN JOHNSON)

petulance, but it also developed into a virtual parody of itself. The little credibility that Whispering Bob Harris possessed in the first place fled as he heavy-breathed through some of the most inconsequential interviews ever to be committed to the TV screen.

So interest in the new series was high. What emerged, however, was the limp facelift that I imagine we all secretly expected. A few wrinkles had been ironed out and some fresh make-up applied. The most positive new direction

was the arrival of Annie Nightingale, who has effectively taken over as studio presenter while Whispering Bob has been nudged into the special projects/news department (which will probably translate into reviewing an odd Hippograss book or previewing the latest box-office youth movie).

Annie might have been overly enthusiastic at times, but her energy seems honest and made the Whisperer look even more sedated than ever. The show had a solid cast

of neon names — the type of selection that caters to most, satisfies few and keeps a sharp eye on ratings. However, the studio bands still looked as uncomfortable as ever. The Ramones were like fish out of water while Magazine sounded shabby — though, in the latter case, the band were also at fault.

The film spot was welcome, and long overdue. Paul Gambaccini did his usual scholarly treatment of Grease and Renaldo And Clara. But the high spot (if that's the right word) centred round Roger Daltrey and a clip from the forthcoming Who movie. The Kids Are Alright. It was brave of Daltrey to appear on the programme so soon after Keith Moon's death, and he handled the situation with affection, respect and realism.

As there isn't much else on TV, we really don't have any choice in the matter: Tuesday night (or the Saturday evening repeat) will doubtless become obligatory viewing. Welcome back then, to the show that never ever ends — IAN BIRCH.

THE CORTINAS

Bristol Locarno

It was a sad occasion. The disco played all the early punk anthems from the Damned, Pistols and the Adverts, while many of the original punks had crawled out of the woodwork and put on their gear for old time's sake to observe what was, reputedly, the last home-town performance by the Cortinas.

It seemed hard to believe that not so many months ago they stood with all before them. Amid a heavy air of optimism, with a hefty recording contract in one hand and a promising string of dates and support in the other, the opportunity was there for the taking. Since then little has gone right, and they now find themselves with their

debut album on the rack and only a couple of gigs between them and the history books. Ironically the album, "True Romanes," is a good deal better than one might have expected. It shows a marked shift away from the early spikehead buzzsaw stuff towards a broader rhythm and bass, and contains a generally impressive assortment of songs.

Nevertheless, it seems inevitable that the Cortinas should eventually befall the same fate as so many of their counterparts. With the pressures mounting after leaving school and the need to progress and make a living, personality clashes and differences of musical policy set in, leaving them a little too young and inexperienced to retain control.

Their final Bristol appearance managed to capture both ends of the spectrum, and in so doing underlined why it has become necessary for them to call it a day. At the same time it demonstrated the potential that first brought them to attention, and to a degree still exists.

Parts of their set were indescribably slack and slow, held together by little more than force of habit and the very tips of their fingers. Yet no more than a song later they'd suddenly pick themselves up and kick some genuine life into the proceedings.

A couple of their older songs, most notably "Television Families," were run through for sentiment's sake. But the most impressive moment came during "I Trust Valerie Singleton" — a genuine flash of the inspired — and "Radio Rats," both from the new album. These apart, they sounded like a band who had resigned themselves to the chop. Meanwhile, guitarist Mike Selwicks returns to college to take A-levels, bassist Dexter Dalwood packs records, and the rest just sit around dreaming of how it might have been. — SIMON KINNERLEY.

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Landscaping

LANDSCAPE

Dingwall's, London

A carnival atmosphere seems to permeate every Landscape gig these days, causing those who would normally never dance, unless poked with sharp sticks, into lumbering onto the dance floor. This it was last Thursday, when even the most inept hoppers were invited to sway in loosely rhythmic fashion as the band broke through half-a-dozen barriers.

That is not to say that John Walters, Andy Pask and friends were causing malicious damage to the premises. They simply cut through many a misconception about the rock band formula. They don't even have a backing singer, nor a singing roadie, and instead of a dashing young superstar as their front man they have a mustachioed trombone player with a receding hairline.

Everything about Landscape is — odd. They are even playing jazz these days, as you can't put them in that neat pigeon hole. But they are playing some stimulating instrumental music and communicating with the audience, which seems surprised to find it actually likes what's going on. They, dear guys, look weird, but man I DIG that crazy beat. That's what one Dingwall's regular gasped at me in the loo. At least I think that's what he said. He might just have been gasping. The band are currently off on a fairly important tour. Nobody is expecting Landscape to become as huge or significant as Taz Dore Youth or Public Image, but they would like people to know they are around, and the more they are discovered the greater the likelihood they'll eat this week.

At Dingwall's they sustained interest with invigorating rhythms, and cunning improvisation from Pete Thoms' electric trombone and John Walters' electric soprano and flute. Richard Burgess on drums plays complicated cross rhythms with ease, although I guess he could lay back a shade to greater effect, while Christopher Heaton's piano work was a joy. 'Workers Playtime', one of their hit arrangements, very much sums up the Landscape approach, containing elements of soul, modern funk, jazz and Caribbean music.

Andy Pask plays more interesting stuff on bass than a whole plague of heavy metal guitar heroes, and his solos were among the most outstanding. Surprisingly, in an all-instrumental group, nobody actually overdid the soloist bit, preferring to blend meaningful passages behind solid ideas. Interact with union passages featuring carefully blended horns, keyboard and bass. They have stuck to their own ideals in a difficult musical

environment, and the sound of dancers clamouring for encore is a music to their ears. — CHRIS WELCH.

ALISON MCMORLAND/
PETA WEBB

Kingston

Fighting Cocks

THE alliance, some nine months ago between Alison McMorland and Peta Webb was one of the more appealing items of recent activity. Both are remarkable (and underrated) uncompromising singers, yet so individual and contrasting are their styles that any sort of satisfactory blend, even on an occasional basis, seemed inconceivable.

McMorland is an ebullient Scots Lady who will go down in legend for the extraordinary achievement, while presenting Listen With Mother, of winning prime-time listening for traditional musicians like Sean Tester; she has a voice in the glorious tradition of Jeannie Robertson that's an orgy in richness. The diminutive Peta Webb has a quiet, subtler style that is gently mesmerising, especially potent when applied to the obvious empathy she has for Irish material. She originally came to prominence with Oak, one of the forerunners of the current revival in English country music (spanning the Old Swan Band), and is now regularly seen playing fiddle with the dance group Webb's Wonders, so any development which brings her singing to the fore is to be applauded.

The two have acquitted themselves astutely. Their performance on Friday gave each liberal scope for solo numbers, yet also provided ample evidence of the much-neglected potential power of female harmonies. Apart from Oak, Muckram Wakes, the Waterstones and June Tabors/Maddy Prior, there has been sadly little experiment with the form: their harmonies on 'Two Pretty Boys' and 'Factory Girl' were sufficiently exhilarating to bemoan this fact. Their material didn't quite naturally or comfortably, which had a jarring effect when they merely sang together rather than harmonised, but it was a point soon overlooked when they confined this to choruses and allowed one another full rein.

Alison turned in an epic version of 'Belt It Colours Three' and while I've never found Peta Webb less than entrancing, her control and poise were particularly impressive in the night. 'Lovely Banks Of Lea' and 'Roving Round The County Tyrone' (a sure-fire crowd pleaser) were masterfully executed examples of understated emotion. A snatch of Webb's fiddle or McMorland's banjo would have given the set more shade and range, but the duo still represent a

combination of distinguished and fresh talents on a scene suffering from a certain sterility among many of its established figures — COLIN IREWIN

N.W.10/GNASHER/
C GAS 5/TRIBESMAN

Little Bit Ritzy, London

IT'S the intention of the collective who run the Little Bit Ritzy, South London's only "art" cinema, that it should also become a focal rock venue, operating two or three nights a week by the New Year. Last Friday, from midnight to 6 a.m., was the twilight time chosen for what turned out to be a mixed beginning to the venture. The venue is compact, so as to remove some of the seating and get a drink licence.

NW10 were the first of four bands — and the best. Their essence is in the balance of the glorious tradition of Sean Tester's rhythm section is set against a light keyboards sound (Will Brown, an accomplished heavy guitar (Mike Findlay). Topping it all is Jeff Balmace, a smiling punk-vocalist who also has clarity and charm. He was at the most prominent on 'Somebody Will', a fragile, quirky love song. It is John O'way, with all the complexity of arrangement which typifies NW10. Although these arrangements can be intrusive (the band did start shakily), they were used to great effect on 'One Day Up, Another Day Down', a song about prostitution.

The remaining bands were uninspired. Gnasher sang unfeelingly about things like the dole and sounded like a clean-cut slaughter and the Dogs — who at least had a sense of fun. C Gas 5 were no better, in spite of getting an encore. They have the same line-up as NW10 but no sense of light and shade. Every number is pounded out in identical fashion and finishes with a sudden-death ending. They did have something visual going for them, even if it was only their vocalist affectively breaking the Gelford limit on the strobolier.

There followed an inordinate gap between sets, not helped by the fact that dawn was imminent. I needed a rude awakening, but Tribesman's ten-piece reggae outfit, weren't the people to do it. They were jazzy and strictly laid-back — and hence strictly sleep-inducing. Their female vocalist has a good middle range voice and came over well on 'African Woman', until her made a complete fool of herself by taking his cap off and shaking his patriarchal locks about.

Still, there was the memory of NW10, who should transfer well on to plastic. And once the Ritzy puts bands on at a humane hour and sorts out licensing problems, it could become a great atmospheric music place. South London needs one and Brixton, not far off-centre and conveniently on the Tube, is the best location for it. — PAUL TICKELL.

RECORDS/VALVES

London Nashville Rooms

THE ill-conceived notion that the well has run dry of "up and coming" acts was dealt a satisfyingly severe blow last Thursday night when the Records and the Valves left their audience enthusiastically debating their respective merits.

The Valves won points for the ballsy manner in which they thrashed the rather subdued patrons into paying attention. Looking as if they had just spent the previous night under the arches at Charing Cross, the Edinburgh band, quickly recovering from a powerpop hang-over, set about their task armed with a ferocious selection of hard rock tunes and riffs.

The danger, of course, is that the Valves could end up as another non-runner in the anonymous hard rock pack.

but the combination of singer Dave Roberts' manicured precision and the humorous tone of their songs — "Robot Love", "For Adole Only", "Vinda Vinda Lu" and "Stung By A Killer Bee" particularly — should ensure, proper precautions taken, that those traps are avoided.

The Records, on the other hand, already display immense maturity and have their direction well in hand. Against the Valves' tough uncompromising rock stance, they exude a healthy cleanliness. Had it not been for the excellence of the material, a beautiful blend of pop and rock, and the outstanding performance of the band in playing it, that whiter-than-white image may have been detrimental. Knitted together, it gives the Records an even stronger identity.

The band was put together by Will Birch, who has a credible pop pedigree as a former drummer and writer with the Kursal Flyers. He loved John Wicks and Phil Browne (bass) in front of him to complete his own band. Wicks and Browne, whose agility often seems a little forced, handle most of the vocals. There is a strong resemblance to the Rolling Stones, particularly in the strutting and the strutting. "Teenrama" would, I think, be a big hit for the Records. — HARRY DOWSETT.

LONDON BASS TRIO

Battersea Arts Centre

INTERESTING for connoisseurs of useless information that Bryan Ferry was scooped by the experimental group Chamberpot in the little matter of Marcel Duchamp's glass sculpture. The Bridge Stripped Bare By Torch Eclipsed, Even. Ferry's latest album, 'The Bridge Stripped Bare', Chamberpot's 1977 release, 'Sparks Of The Bridge Stripped Bare', delivered its name from Duchamp's notes to the Bridge Stripped Bare, etc., all of which one goes to show that there are seemingly no barriers where surrealism is concerned.

Chamberpot are Richard Bewick, Philipp Wachsmann and Tony Wren, the latter of whom, forming one-third of the London Bass Trio, a sadly underexposed group of some 18 months' standing, which took to the boards last Saturday night along with that enduring and endearing saxophonist, Lol Coxhill. The Trio describe themselves as playing 'improvised music while maintaining the character of a string ensemble, which last tradition would, until relatively recently, seem more likely to throw up a three-bass line-up than a jazz (Nick de Geronimo's bass work overshadowed all but the leader at the Andrew Cyrille concert last Monday, the kind of deserved prominence which has only surfaced in jazz within the last couple of decades). And the Trio proved the total range of the double bass to be far in excess of simple percussion, so much so that at times they evoked a whole battery of wind instruments.

The string ensemble principle was never abandoned: the structure was the familiar one of a trio, with exquisitely dovetailed music emerging. While this occasionally threatened to sound stilled, it also lent dramatic depth to the improvising impulse. Marcel Wattois and Tony Wren extracted sounds like the twanging of a thousand amplified rubber bands by rapidly thrumming on their strings, while Marc Meggido seemed to favour the arco method, but all three often evoked the kind of space-age noises one would normally associate with sophisticated electronic circuitry. When Coxhill joined them from his own highly elusive solo sets, where he played more minimalist on simple melody fragments than would have seemed possible and also managed to sound like a saxophone rolled into one, the music seemed to gain an extra bassist and three extra saxophones, so well did they interact. — VALERIE PATON.

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Folk

ONE quarter of the way into this year Joanna Carlin did an extraordinary thing. She killed herself. A tragic case. Came at a time when her reputation was soaring: successful concert appearances with Don McLean; a debut album that would have made her a millionaire if an acclai claim could be cashed at the bank; and the general air of excitement that accompanied an artist being widely touted for wondrous achievements.

All this and she offs herself. In a manner of speaking, of course. Woke up one day, declared Joanna Carlin and faced the world as Melanie Harrold, the identity accorded her at birth.

Now you may be justified in querying the sanity of somebody who selects such a crucial time in her career to undergo a traumatic operation of this magnitude. Artistic suicide is one of the more reasoned analyses that springs to mind. "Yes," she tells me hesitantly. "I suppose it is like starting again. Someone said I was either mad or very brave... and I still don't know which it is."

May we enquire why? Two rambling explanatory hours later we've a fair idea. And, as further illumination, she lovingly indicates a copy of her new single, a revamp of the old Stones hit "Let's Spend The Night Together," and declares with an excited giggle and a childlike gush of enthusiasm: "God, you can't imagine the thrill I get from looking at it. My own name... on a record."

It's something she's yearned to do for a long time. She suffered a mild crisis of identity every time she went on stage announced as Joanna Carlin, almost as if she was leading a dual existence. Changing the name has caused its problems, and a bit of

WHY JOANNA CARLIN

by Colin Irwin

pressure on her from some quarters not to do it, and spin-off opportunities from the McLean tour were lost because of it. Yet the emergence of success this year persuaded her it was not or never.

"I'm a great believer in being yourself. I admire Tom Robinson so much because he's himself. I always felt strange going out as someone else and getting a bit of success made me feel that I didn't do anything now I'd be stuck with it all my life."

"I got the other name years ago, when I was about 16 and I was doing this television thing. It was at the time Melanie Safka was around with 'Brand New Key' and the television people said I should change my name. I thought if I changed my name it'd make me a star."

She will be, though: she has a vocal range and power that devours you alive. She can trip through all manner of material with bewildering ease, from her own far-reaching observations of other material like the McGarrigles' "Worksong," to the ironically whimsical "Any Way My Guts Says No" (written by Gary Taylor and Hugh Murphy), the guaranteed showstopper in her stage act. And though she bares her soul in a manner that's slightly disconcerting at first, and is rather unfashionable at a time when (punks excepted) overt feelings aren't good image, her blistering personality is enchanting.

Meanwhile she's gilding endearingly around the folk scene, though in all honesty Status Quo have as much in common with folk music as

she when she begins to let rip, and it's hardly Stun City when she tells me that she now intends to extricate herself gracefully from the folk movement.

"I don't think I ever really was folk exactly," she says apologetically. "But it was a way I could sing in front of audiences. I don't want to turn my back on it, obviously. It's been very good to me and I still enjoy it and it does give me a good living still, but I don't particularly want to do the £35 gig in Kotherham type of thing. The more opportunities I have of introducing other musicians the better as far as I'm concerned and I'd like to cut down the folk gigs now to maybe one week a month."

"But though I never considered myself a folk singer it was very appealing in that you have such a close contact. That distance you get in rock gigs I don't like at all, and I'd like to maintain that contact. That honesty. You've got to be true to yourself. I don't like the way Elkie Brooks has gone. I think she's gone out for success rather than gone out for the music and it shows in the music. I wouldn't like to go that way. But it is difficult when you're in the middle of an album, there's so many things going on around you."

And she reflects thoughtfully on the pressures, subtle and otherwise, that have been exerted on her to conform to the bit of packaging which would undoubtedly expedite her route to prime time. "Wear this glamorous dress, Joanne!" and all that garbage. She seems to have their

THE NEW-LOOK MELANIE HARROLD

measure. Changing her name to Melanie Harrold, (which, let's face it, doesn't quite have the ring of Joanna Carlin) was obviously a major tactical victory in this battle.

She also seems to be gaining the upper hand in a struggle with DJM, who want to portray her on the cover of her next album with a "sinking great rose on the side of my head." It is, she says, all a matter of instinct. "I am a bit bullheaded sometimes, I suppose. I haven't the art of diplomacy. Yeah, it's plain stubbornness. But I think the record company is slowly coming round. I don't think I could do it any other way than being real, even if I wanted to. I did a gig in Swansea and I bought these very high heels for it, and I just couldn't sing because I thought I was going to fall

over."

She modelled herself on Joni Mitchell and made her name on the folk scene in Bristol when she moved there, though she originally comes from Solihull and now lives in London. At one time she was also a member of the Natural Acoustic Band. And now she's into Sergio Mendes, the Salsou Orchestra, Sarah Vaughan and Tom Robinson, and has a fear of being thought "prissy."

Last year's debut album, "Fancy That," was a revelation. It may have been slightly undisciplined, raw, and directionless but it was also staggering for the way that she attempted such a broad array of music (jazz, soul, rock 'n' roll), and more

amazingly, showing a natural feel and sympathy for all of it.

A second is being recorded (it's tentatively titled "If I'd Known You Were Coming"). When that happens she'll tour with the band she shares with Gerry Rafferty and will most probably stun and amaze a few more people — apart from "Let's Spend The Night Together" the album will include Richard Thompson's "Hard Luck Stories," Stephen Bishop's "Careless" and a re-make of her own "Living In The City."

There's also the question of adapting to the more powerful demands of the league into which she's mov-

ing. She's eagerly looking forward to the transition ahead in the next year, though there is an apprehension tied in there too.

"My biggest fear is becoming a poseur myself, because people are more impressed by the image. I don't think I could ever be a poseur, I haven't the gall. I'd do a jingle though and save the money for maybe buying a house, so my morals don't go that deep. But I couldn't pretend on stage."

"When something like 'Baker Street' makes it, it gives you faith. I believe that good music brings its own rewards, even if not outside it does inside. There's no quick way. I know that. But I don't mind waiting."

The Dubliners' Scrapbook.

The Dubliners' Scrapbook

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The Dubliners' Songbook

Many of the forty five songs in this book are traditional Irish songs from the Dubliners' repertoire.

The book is illustrated throughout and there is a guide to each member of the band. Available from the publisher.

"The Wild Rover," "The Leaving

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PS-180	£189.95	PS-180	£189.95
PS-190	£199.95	PS-190	£199.95
PS-200	£209.95	PS-200	£209.95
PS-210	£219.95	PS-210	£219.95
PS-220	£229.95	PS-220	£229.95
PS-230	£239.95	PS-230	£239.95
PS-240	£249.95	PS-240	£249.95
PS-250	£259.95	PS-250	£259.95
PS-260	£269.95	PS-260	£269.95
PS-270	£279.95	PS-270	£279.95
PS-280	£289.95	PS-280	£289.95
PS-290	£299.95	PS-290	£299.95
PS-300	£309.95	PS-300	£309.95
PS-310	£319.95	PS-310	£319.95
PS-320	£329.95	PS-320	£329.95
PS-330	£339.95	PS-330	£339.95
PS-340	£349.95	PS-340	£349.95
PS-350	£359.95	PS-350	£359.95
PS-360	£369.95	PS-360	£369.95
PS-370	£379.95	PS-370	£379.95
PS-380	£389.95	PS-380	£389.95
PS-390	£399.95	PS-390	£399.95
PS-400	£409.95	PS-400	£409.95
PS-410	£419.95	PS-410	£419.95
PS-420	£429.95	PS-420	£429.95
PS-430	£439.95	PS-430	£439.95
PS-440	£449.95	PS-440	£449.95
PS-450	£459.95	PS-450	£459.95
PS-460	£469.95	PS-460	£469.95
PS-470	£479.95	PS-470	£479.95
PS-480	£489.95	PS-480	£489.95
PS-490	£499.95	PS-490	£499.95
PS-500	£509.95	PS-500	£509.95
PS-510	£519.95	PS-510	£519.95
PS-520	£529.95	PS-520	£529.95
PS-530	£539.95	PS-530	£539.95
PS-540	£549.95	PS-540	£549.95
PS-550	£559.95	PS-550	£559.95
PS-560	£569.95	PS-560	£569.95
PS-570	£579.95	PS-570	£579.95
PS-580	£589.95	PS-580	£589.95
PS-590	£599.95	PS-590	£599.95
PS-600	£609.95	PS-600	£609.95
PS-610	£619.95	PS-610	£619.95
PS-620	£629.95	PS-620	£629.95
PS-630	£639.95	PS-630	£639.95
PS-640	£649.95	PS-640	£649.95
PS-650	£659.95	PS-650	£659.95
PS-660	£669.95	PS-660	£669.95
PS-670	£679.95	PS-670	£679.95
PS-680	£689.95	PS-680	£689.95
PS-690	£699.95	PS-690	£699.95
PS-700	£709.95	PS-700	£709.95
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PS-740	£749.95	PS-740	£749.95
PS-750	£759.95	PS-750	£759.95
PS-760	£769.95	PS-760	£769.95
PS-770	£779.95	PS-770	£779.95
PS-780	£789.95	PS-780	£789.95
PS-790	£799.95	PS-790	£799.95
PS-800	£809.95	PS-800	£809.95
PS-810	£819.95	PS-810	£819.95
PS-820	£829.95	PS-820	£829.95
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PS-840	£849.95	PS-840	£849.95
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PS-860	£869.95	PS-860	£869.95
PS-870	£879.95	PS-870	£879.95
PS-880	£889.95	PS-880	£889.95
PS-890	£899.95	PS-890	£899.95
PS-900	£909.95	PS-900	£909.95
PS-910	£919.95	PS-910	£919.95
PS-920	£929.95	PS-920	£929.95
PS-930	£939.95	PS-930	£939.95
PS-940	£949.95	PS-940	£949.95
PS-950	£959.95	PS-950	£959.95
PS-960	£969.95	PS-960	£969.95
PS-970	£979.95	PS-970	£979.95
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PS-30	£39.95	PS-30	£39.95
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PS-60	£69.95	PS-60	£69.95
PS-70	£79.95	PS-70	£79.95
PS-80	£89.95	PS-80	£89.95
PS-90	£99.95	PS-90	£99.95
PS-100	£109.95	PS-100	£109.95
PS-110	£119.95	PS-110	£119.95
PS-120	£129.95	PS-120	£129.95
PS-130	£139.95	PS-130	£139.95
PS-140	£149.95	PS-140	£149.95
PS-150	£159.95	PS-150	£159.95
PS-160	£169.95	PS-160	£169.95
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PS-190	£199.95	PS-190	£199.95
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PS-210	£219.95	PS-210	£219.95
PS-220	£229.95	PS-220	£229.95
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PS-270	£279.95	PS-270	£279.95
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