

MELODY MAKER

PICKING BLUEBELLS

AU PAIRS · FUNKAPOLITAN

JERAM JETT · BONGOS

FLASH LIVE

Return of Tom Verlaine

SINGLES

1	1	HOUSE OF FUN Madness Stiff
2	5	TORCH Soft Cell Some Bizarre
3	4	THE LOOK OF LOVE ABC Neutron
4	3	GOODY TWO SHOES Adam Ant CBS
5	8	HUNGRY LIKE THE WOLF Duran Duran EMI
6	7	MAMA USED TO SAY Junior Mercury
7	6	FANTASY ISLAND Tight Fit Jive
8	2	ONLY YOU Yazoo Mute
9	23	I'VE NEVER BEEN TO ME Charlene Motown
10	9	FORGET ME NOTS Patrice Rushen Elektra
11	13	ISLAND OF LOST SOULS Blondie Chrysalis
12	12	CLUB COUNTRY Associates Associates
13	11	I WON'T LET YOU DOWN Phd WEA
14	28	I'M A WONDERFUL THING (BABY) Kid Creole and the Coconuts ZE
15	26	THE TELEPHONE ALWAYS RINGS Fun Boy Three Chrysalis
16	18	FIRE WORKS Siouxsie and the Banshees Polydor
17	15	PAPER LATE (3 x 3 EP) Genesis Charisma
18	—	I WANT CANDY Bow Wow Wow RCA
19	19	THE BACK OF LOVE Echo and the Bunnymen Korova
20	10	A LITTLE PEACE Nicole CBS
21	16	CANTONESE BOY Japan Virgin
22	20	THE MEANING OF LOVE Depeche Mode Mute
23	—	WORK THAT BODY Diana Ross Capitol
24	—	DO I DO Stevie Wonder Motown
25	17	GIRL CRAZY Hot Chocolate RAK
26	14	I LOVE ROCK 'N' ROLL Joan Jett and the Blackhearts Epic
27	21	THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST Iron Maiden EMI
28	24	TEMPTATION New Order Factory
29	30	BRAVE NEW WORLD Toyah Safari
30	25	INSTINCTION Spandau Ballet Reformation

INDIE SINGLES

- 1 FAITHLESS, Scritti Politti, Rough Trade
- 2 TEMPTATION, New Order, Factory
- 3 XOYO, The Passions, Cherry Red
- 4 ONLY YOU, Yazoo, Mute
- 5 PAPA'S GOT A BRAND NEW PIG BAG, Pigbag, V
- 6 TEARING UP THE PLAINS, 23 Skidoo, Fetish
- 7 NUCOSSA MINGAKA, Ivory Coast,ers
- 8 RECREATIONAL
- 9 VIEW FROM HER ROOM, Weekend, Rough Trade
- 10 STORM, Carmel, Capitol
- 11 LOVE IS ALL IS ALL RIGHT, UB40, DEP International

Chart supplied by OUR PRICE RECORDS, 87 Bute Centre, Reading, Berks.

HEAVY METAL

- 1 BELIEVE IN YOU, Y & T, from "Earthshaker", A & M
- 2 ON THE REBOUND, Uriah Heep, from "Abominable", Bronze
- 3 BACK IN BLACK, AC/DC Live 12 inch 45, Atlantic
- 4 I LOVE ROCK 'N' ROLL, Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, Epic
- 5 DON'T STOP (BELIEVING), Journey, CBS
- 6 RESCUE ME, Y & T, from "Earthshaker", A & M
- 7 ARMED AND READY, Michael Schenker Group, Chrysalis
- 8 GETTING HIGHER, The Rods, from "Full Throttle" EP, Arista
- 9 LIGHT MY FIRE, The Doors, Elektra
- 10 RUN TO THE HILLS, Iron Maiden, EMI

Compiled by ALAN GIFF ROADSIDE, 91-404 4368.

SOUL

- 1 (1) FORGET ME NOTS, Patrice Rushen, Elektra
- (2) I'VE USED TO SAY, Junior, Mercury
- (3) GRACE, The Band AKIA, Epic
- (4) CIRCLES, Atlantic Starr, Epic
- (5) I'M A WONDERFUL THING (BABY), Kid Creole and the Coconuts, ZE
- (6) I STAND ON TOP, Temptations, Motown
- (7) EASE YOUR MIND, Touchdown, Excalibre
- (8) I WALK ON BY, D Train, Epic
- (9) SPECIALISE IN LOVE, Sharon Brown, Virgin
- (10) I-DO I DO, Stevie Wonder, Motown

CLUB

- 1 THE LOOK OF LOVE, ABC, Neutron
- (2) I WANT CANDY, Bow Wow Wow, RCA
- (3) TORCH, Soft Cell, Some Bizarre
- (4) I'M A WONDERFUL THING (BABY), Kid Creole and the Coconuts, ZE
- (5) THE BACK OF LOVE, Echo and the Bunnymen, Korova
- (6) BABY IT'S TRUE, Maf Wilson, Compact
- (7) TEMPTATION, New Order, Factory
- (8) I KO, Belle Stars, Stiff
- (9) HOMOSAPIEN, Pete Shelley, Genetic
- (10) CAKE, 532s, Island

Chart supplied by: Phil Howell, The Blue Note, Derby.

U.S. SINGLES*

- (1) EBONY AND IVORY, Paul McCartney and Stevie Wonder, Columbia
- (2) THE OTHER WOMAN, Ray Parker Jr., Arista
- (3) I DON'T WANT YOU, Human League, Virgin
- (4) I'VE NEVER BEEN TO ME, Charlene, Motown
- (5) ROSARNA, Toto, Columbia
- (6) HEAT OF THE MOMENT, Asia, Geffen
- (7) ALWAYS ON MY MIND, Willie Nelson, Columbia
- (8) CRIMSON AND CLOVER, Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, Boardwalk
- (9) DON'T TALK TO STRANGERS, Rick Springfield, RCA
- (10) LOVE'S BEEN A LITTLE BIT HARD ON ME, Julie Newton, Capitol
- (11) 887-5389 JENNY, Tommy Tutone, Columbia
- (12) CHARIOTS OF FIRE, Vangelis, Polydor
- (13) EMPTY GARDEN, Etan John, Geffen
- (14) MAN ON YOUR MIND, Little River Band, Capitol
- (15) MAKING LOVE, Roberta Flack, Atlantic
- (16) BODY LANGUAGE, Queen, EMI
- (17) HURTS SO GOOD, John Cougar, Riva
- (18) I'VE GOTTA TAKE A MIRACLE, Deniece Williams, ARC
- (19) TAINTED LOVE, Soft Cell, Sire
- (20) I CAUGHT UP IN YOU, 38 Special, A & M

Courtesy of "CASH BOX"

SYNTHESIZER

- GRAND CANYON, Isao Tomita, RCA
- THE CONCERTS IN CHINA, Jean Michel Jarre, Polydor
- SOLO 74-78, Edgar Froese, Virgin
- THE ELECTRIC ORCHESTRA, Mychael Danna, RHM
- TECHNOLOGIC, Yellow Magic Orchestra, Alfa
- XOYO, The Passions, Cherry Red
- OPERA ELECTRONICA, Data, Illuminated
- IN PERSON (LIVE), Kitaro, Canyon
- SHR CAMEL, Terry Riley, CBS
- MINI-BODY-SPIRIT, Friends Monkman, Tape

Chart supplied by: Dave Townsend, Electronic Synthesizer Sound Projects, The Sound House, PO Box 378 East Molesey, Surrey.

READER'S CHART

- FIRST DRINK OF THE DAY, Holland and his Millionaires
- AND IT STONED ME, Van Halen, Warner Bros
- THE PIANO HAS BEEN DRINKING, Tom Waits
- IF DRINKING DON'T KILL ME, George Jones
- TONIGHT THE BOTTLE LET ME DOWN, Elvis Costello
- ONE FOR MY BABY (AND ONE MORE FOR THE ROAD), Marvin Gaye
- WHAT'S THE USE OF GETTING SOBER (WHEN YOU'RE GONNA GET DRUNK AGAIN)? Joe Jackson's Jumpin' Jive
- WHEN THE HANGOVER STRIKES, Squeeze
- GOT TO GIVE IT UP, Marvin Gaye
- BONE DRY, George Jones

Chart supplied by Eddie Thornley, Brookside Street, Chorley, Lancs. Send your top ten to M&M, Reader's Chart, Brookside House, 188-179 High Holborn, London WC1V 7AL.

INDIE ALBUMS

- 1 WHO DARES WINS, Theatre of Hate, Burning Rome
- 2 WE ARE THE LEAGUE, Anti-Nowhere League, WXYZ
- 3 FOURTH DRAWER DOWN, Associates, Situation 2
- 4 NOTHING CAN STOP US, Robert Wyatt, Rough Trade
- 5 HEAR NOTHING SEE NOTHING SAY NOTHING, Discharge, Clay
- 6 GREATEST HIT, Blue Orchids, Rough Trade
- 7 MR. YELLOWMAN, Yellow Man, Greenpeace
- 8 EVACUATE, Chelsea, Step Forward
- 9 TWO BAD D, Clint Eastwood and Generals Saint, Greenpeace
- 10 AFTER THE SNOW, Modern English, 4AD

Chart supplied by Pete, JAMBO RECORDS, 102 Marston Centre, Leeds.

REGGAE

- 1 KEY TO THE WORLD, Ruddy Thomas, Hawkeye
- 2 RASTA REGGAE, Black Slate, Top Ranking
- 3 BOOM HIGH UP NOW, Michael Prophet, Greenpeace
- 4 BIG SHIP, Freddy McGregor, Greenpeace
- 5 ROOTS MAN SKANKING, Freddy McGregor, Greenpeace
- 6 GHETTO MAN, Papa Mchigan and General Smiler, Greenpeace
- 7 CRUISING, One Force, Love and Unity
- 8 MISS ATTRACTIVE, Victor Romero Evans, Epic
- 9 GOLDEN TOUCH, Valerie Harrison, S & B
- 10 SPEND SOME TIME TOGETHER, Panchita Latouché

Chart supplied by SRI YANK, 49 Gathorne Street, Leeds

NORTHERN SOUL

- 1 MY LITTLE GIRL, Bob and Earl Band, Stateside
- 2 WALK ON BY, D Train, Epic
- 3 BREAKING DOWN THE WALLS, Johnny Johnson, Epic
- 4 GHOST IN MY HOUSE, R Dean Taylor, Motown
- 5 GRACE, The Band AKIA, Epic
- 6 I CAN'T KNOW, Lee Laury's Band, WMOT
- 7 SEVEN DAYS TOO LONG, Chuck Wood, Pye
- 8 YOU GOT THE FLOOR, Arthur Adams, RCA
- 9 THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT ME, Johnny Gregg, Ebbeljay
- 10 I'M IN LOVE, Evelyn King, RCA

Chart supplied by Graham Parker, Winter Gardens, Cleethorpes.

5 YEARS AGO

- 1 I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT/FIRST CUT IS THE LAST, Rod Stewart, Riva
- 2 A STAR IS BORN (EVERGREEN), Barbara Streisand, CBS
- 3 AIN'T GONNA BUMP NO MORE, Joe Tex, Epic
- 4 LUCKY, Kenny Rogers, United Artists
- 5 GOD SAVE THE QUEEN, Sex Pistols, Virgin
- 6 GOT TO GIVE IT UP, Marvin Gaye, Motown
- 7 HALFWAY DOWN THE STAIRS, Muppets, Pye
- 8 GOOD MORNING JUDGE, 10cc, Mercury
- 9 THE SHUFFLE, Van McCoy, N & L
- 10 OK, Rod Folies, Polydor

U.S. ALBUMS

- (1) TUG OF WAR, Paul McCartney, Columbia
- (2) ASIA, Asia, Geffen
- (3) STEVIE WONDER'S ORIGINAL MUSIQUARIUM 1, Stevie Wonder, Tamla Motown
- (4) DYER DOWN, Van Halen, Warner Bros
- (5) ALWAYS ON MY MIND, Willie Nelson, Columbia
- (6) SUCCESS HASN'T SPOILED ME YET, Rick Springfield, RCA
- (7) CHARIOTS OF FIRE, Vangelis, Polydor
- (8) HOT SPACE, Queen, Elektra
- (9) BLACKOUT, Scorpions, Mercury
- (10) FREEZE FRAME, J. Gels Band, EMI America
- (11) HOOKED ON CLASSICS, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, RCA
- (12) I LOVE ROCK 'N' ROLL, Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, Boardwalk
- (13) GET LUCKY, Loverboy, Columbia
- (14) THE OTHER WOMAN, Ray Parker Jr., Arista
- (15) BEAUTY AND THE BEAT, Go-Go's, IRS
- (16) I V, Telo, Columbia
- (17) ALDO NOVA, Aldo Nova, Portrait
- (18) THE CONCERT IN CENTRAL PARK, Simon and Garfunkel, Warner Bros
- (19) SPECIAL FORCES, 38 Special, A & M
- (20) I STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART, Patrice Rushen, Elektra

Chart courtesy of "CASH BOX"

U.S. SOUL

- (2) LET IT WHIP, Dazz Band, Motown
- (1) I'VE GOTTA TAKE A MIRACLE, Deniece Williams, ARC
- (3) FORGET ME NOTS, Patrice Rushen, Elektra
- (4) EARLY IN THE MORNING, Gap Band, Total Experience
- (5) WE GO A LONG WAY BACK, Bloodstone, T-Nec
- (6) STANDING ON THE TOP, Temptations featuring Rick James, Gordy
- (7) MURPHY'S LAW, Cher, Venture
- (8) THE OTHER WOMAN, Ray Parker Jr., Arista
- (9) DANCE WITH ME, Rick James, Gordy
- (10) STREET CORNER, Ashford and Simpson, Capitol

Courtesy of "CASH BOX"

ARTIST'S CHART

- 1 LOST 'A SUPERMARKET, The Clash
- 2 DO... AT THE CASBAH, The Clash
- 3 25 TEARS, O and the Jynxians
- 4 TAKE IT AS IT COMES, The Doors
- 5 TIME IS ON MY SIDE, Rolling Stones
- 6 NEW STAR, Tapper Zukie
- 7 WALK ON BY, The Stranglers
- 8 WORLD WAR 3, The Anti-Nowhere League
- 9 METAL GURU, T. Rex
- 10 HEDDA GABLER, John Cale

Chart supplied by Gene October of Chelsea

ALBUMS

1	1	RIO Duran Duran EMI
2	3	COMPLETE MADNESS Madness Stiff
3	18	AVALON Roxy Music Polydor
4	5	NIGHT BIRDS Shakatak Polydor
5	4	TUG OF WAR Paul McCartney Parlophone
6	2	COMBAT ROCK The Clash CBS
7	12	STEVIE WONDER'S ORIGINAL MUSIQUARIUM 1 Stevie Wonder, Motown
8	6	SULK Associates Associates
9	9	HOT SPACE Queen EMI
10	30	THE HUNTER Blondie Chrysalis
11	23	TROPICAL GANGSTERS Kid Creole and the Coconuts ZE
12	7	PINKY BLUE Altered Images Epic
13	13	PORNOGRAPHY The Cure Fiction
14	11	LIVE IN BRITAIN Barry Manilow Arista
15	10	THE CONCERTS IN CHINA Jean Michel Jarre Polydor
16	8	THE EAGLE HAS LANDED Saxon Carrere
17	17	PELICAN WEST Hainaut One Hundred Arista
18	—	THREE SIDES LIVE Genesis Charisma
19	15	SELECT Kim Wilde RAK
20	—	STILL LIFE Rolling Stones Rolling Stones
21	21	STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART Patrice Rushen Elektra
22	16	CHARIOTS OF FIRE Vangelis Polydor
23	20	THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST Iron Maiden EMI
24	28	THE SLIDE AREA Ry Cooder Warner Bros
25	14	CHARTBUSTERS Various Artists Ronco
26	—	EYE IN THE SKY Alan Parsons Project Arista
27	22	WE ARE... THE LEAGUE Anti-Nowhere League WXYZ
28	—	HE WHO DARES WINS Theatre of Hate Burning Rome
29	—	TIN DRUM Japan Virgin
30	—	SONGS OF THE FREE Gang of Four EMI

Fast FORWARD



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CATHODE CALL FOR COCONUTS

KID Creole & The Coconuts are the stars of an hour-long television spectacular, to be fully networked by Granada on Saturday (June 12).

The show comes as the climax to the band's British tour which has included three sell-out London concerts — with the last, at the Lyceum, selling out within four hours of the box office opening. The Granada show, which will be screened in all ITV regions from 11.15pm, features ten songs — "In The Jungle", "Latin Music", "Me No Pop I", "Dario", "I'm A Wonderful Thing", "Mr Softie", "Stool Pigeon", "Off The Coast Of Me", "Gina Gina" and "There But For The Grace Of God Go I".

Granada has built a lavish set for the show and choreographed many of the songs with guest appearances by, among others, the World Latin American Dance Champions (who are probably called Sid And Doris Blodgett and come from Penge). — BRIAN HARRIGAN



Two new Pigs in the Bag

PIGBAG have added two new members before embarking on a series of dates which includes shows in the UK, Europe, Japan and States — plus a slot at the Bracknell Jazz Festival on July 2.

The new members are Brian Nevill (sax, drums and percussion) and Oscar Verden (trombone and keyboards). Nevill and Verden have been rehearsing with Pigbag for some time as well as co-writing some new numbers. The band should have completed recording their next single by now and it's scheduled for release at the end of June.

Dates in the UK are Bristol Romeo & Juliet's (June 13) and University of East Angles (15). The band then play Holland, Germany, Switzerland and Italy, two weeks in Japan, the Bracknell Festival, a London date to be confirmed (with Clint Eastwood & General Saint), and finally the Peppermint Lounge in New York. No doubt the health farm comes later. — BRIAN HARRIGAN

CLASH CITY ROTTERS

AN organised gang, described as "neo-Nazis", made a determined attempt to halt the Clash's second show on their American tour.

Outside Atlanta, Georgia's Fox Theatre where the band was playing to a sold-out house, an organised gang of people, claimed by a CBS spokesperson and in local press reports to be "neo-Nazis", started a rowdy protest during the show. Police arrested 14 people during the demonstration.

Then, as fans filed out after the

show, members of the right wing group started "acting up", hassling concert goers and threatening violence. Police broke up the fracas with no reported injuries or further arrests, although the Atlanta media had a field day with "punk rock riot" stories the next morning. The Clash themselves were not involved in the incident and at press time could not be reached for comment.

The trouble at the Atlanta show followed a scare for the band at their opening date in Springfield country — Ashbury Park, New Jersey. A couple of fireworks were thrown at the stage during the Clash's show and the second, chucked at the end of the first encore, exploded just as it hit Joe Strummer on the knee. The

show was immediately stopped and Strummer was taken to a local hospital where he was treated for a minor burn and released.

Terry Chimes, who's temporarily replaced Topper Headon as drummer, was absent from the press photographs that the band posed for after the show at a reception hosted by CBS.

Meanwhile, rumours are circulating that Topper Headon is to return as drummer in the Clash. While no official comment could be obtained by MM by press time, a prospective candidate for Headon's job said this week he'd been told that Topper was going back to the band. Clarification is awaited. — DAVID FRICKE/BRIAN HARRIGAN

POLICE IN THE NORTH-EAST

THE Police have just announced details of their only British concert appearance of 1982. The band are playing on Saturday, July 31, at the open-air Gateshead Athletic Stadium, near Newcastle-Upon-Tyne (Sting's home town).

The Police will be appearing with four support acts, details of whom will be announced when they have been confirmed. The venue, which hosted last year's "Rock On The Tyne" festival, has a crowd capacity of 25,000, and is near Gateshead British Rail Station.

Tickets are by postal application only, and are priced at £8.30, including booking fee. Payment is by cheque and postal order only. Applicants are limited to four tickets per person, and should enclose an s.a.e. Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to "Aimcarve Ltd" and should be sent to Aimcarve Ltd, PO Box 123, Walsall, West Midlands, WS5 4QQ. Some tickets should be made available on the day, priced at £10. — PATRICK HUMPHRIES

21 WAYS TO LEAVE YOUR TV

TV21 have split up — only days after supporting the Rolling Stones in front of thousands on their Scottish dates. A spokesman for Decca, the band's record company, said TV21 had been suffering from strain and felt it was time to call it a day and quit while they were ahead.

Apparently, vocalist Norman Rodgers is continuing as a solo artist, guitarist Ali Palmer intends to leave the music business entirely, bassist Neil Baldwin is still pondering his future, and drummer Ali Patterson and trumpeter/keyboards Dave Hampton are planning to form a new group, possibly specialising in swing.

Meanwhile, the semi-legendary Gonads are said to have come to the parting of the ways. — CAROL CLERK

DOG-EARED METAL

AS predicted in MM, "Motorhead and Saxon have come together to appear at the "Heavy Metal Goes To The Dogs" Festival at Hackney Speedway Stadium for an all-day festival on July 25.

The show runs from 10am to 10pm and includes, aside from the two main artists, Spider, Angelwitch, the Lightning Raiders, T.34 and Sleak.

Motorhead's new guitarist, Brian Robertson,

will be making his British debut with the band. He has successfully replaced Eddie Clarke on the band's current US tour, though he continues to be a temporary replacement and a decision on a permanent guitarist will be made after the Hackney gig.

Tickets for the show are

£9 from Downtown Records, High Road, Ilford, The Fair Deal in Brixton or by post from UKA Promotions, PO Box 143, London E17. Postal applications should include a postal order or cheque payable to UKA Promotions and accompanied by an s.a.e. ● A three-day community

festival takes place in Stirling, Scotland, on June 11, 12 and 13. Held in the Mayfield Centre, the festival features the Scars (replacing the now disbanded TV21), the RBs and Epsilon on June 11, Orange Juice, 22 Bees, H2O and Pop Wallpaper (12) and Radio 1 night with Paul Burnett and Curious Regin live (13). Tickets, at "minimal prices", will be on sale at the door. — BRIAN HARRIGAN/CAROL CLERK

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★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Linx shoot the moon in June ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LINX leap into 1982 with their first single of the year, "Plaything" is released by Chrysalis on June 25, it was co-produced by Linx's David Grant and Pete Walsh, who were responsible for the recent Top 10 Bonds hit "Promised You A Miracle". The single will be available in both 7inch and 12inch formats, with a remixed version of "I Won't Play The Game" taken from the latest Linx album. PHD's follow-up to "I Won't Let You Down" released by WEA on June 19, "Little Susie & The Up" is taken from PHD's debut album. The duo are currently recording a new album for release later in the year.

In their own right, **Bananarama** release a new single, "Shy Boy", on the London label on June 18. "Shy Boy" is written and produced by Tony Jolley and Steve Swain, who have been responsible for all of **Imagination's** hits. **Bananarama's** debut album is due for September release.

King Crimson's new album, "Beat", released by EG on June 18, is inspired by the writings of **Friedrich Schlegel** and **Jack Kerouac**.

and his mentor **Neal Cassady**.

A new Gary **USA Bonds** single, "Soul Deep", is issued by EMI on June 21. It's a version of the 1969 **Box Tops** hit, and is taken from Bonds' forthcoming **Box Springs** album.

produced "On The Line" **Brum**.

The **Flux** have a new single, "Red Skies", due for release by MCA on June 11. It's taken from their debut album, "Shuttered Room", and will be available on red vinyl, in a special picture bag - **ATRICK**.

THE MPMH

... PLUS ...

Babies' talk

BANNED from the pubs, reeling from excesses of cider, wreaking havoc with their every move, Peter and the Test Tube Babies are also creating mayhem in punk circles with their high-powered, humorous and highly irreverent stories of everyday life - drinking and women and drinking and drinking... that sort of thing. Unwisely, perhaps, the MM invited the Brighton brigade to a once-orderly office. Full, scandalous report next week.

ALL IN MM



PUNK SHOCK — WELLS GO FAR

YOU'D think Tunbridge Wells, the town that gave you the Anti-Nowhere League, had done enough for culture. But no, now comes the National Somewhere Party. Based in T. Wells, the Party feature Inhale Heckx (guitar), Clive Bogie (bass), Whatees Dis (drums) and Crash Course (vocals). Can they be worse than the League?

Our man on the West Coast has been down where the buffalo roam. Trying to track down new Geffen singing Neil Young, MM's Big Ears learnt that the whining Canuck is down in Hawaii, recording with his old buddy Nils Lofgren. Neil and Nils have been writing songs for Young's debut Geffen album, which should be available before the end of the year. There are also plans for Young to play some UK dates in the autumn.

Our man on the spot also heard a tape of the Joni Mitchell album, as yet untitled, which he described as "jazzy and melodic, with shorter songs" (but not Wayne Shorter. Jazz type joke!).

... Still on the League, the last gig of their "So What?" tour at the Lyceum on Sunday ended in predictable mayhem. Tour colleagues Dukie and Buck of the Defects and Nik Austin of Chelsea,



as well as visitors like Rat Scabies and Alvin Gibbs of the Subs, joined then for a spirited version of "Fuck Around The Clock". Looking on were the rest of the Subs, Beki Bondage, Brian James, three quarters of the Business and Eddie Tudorpole...

Elvis Costello casts an acerbic eye over the new releases on Radio 1's "Round Table" on Friday June 18. The real record news of the week is that Phonogram rush release an album of Pope JP II's greatest hits recorded on his recent UK tour, serial number "Pope II". Despite disappointing crowds, JP II runs through "The Seven Sacraments" and then takes the Popemobile down that long highway home...



FROM BAGS TO RICHES

ALTHOUGH the rigours of the rock 'n' roll lifestyle, Fleetwood Mac's Christine McVie picked up somebody else's Gucci luggage after flying in on

Concorde. It turned out to belong to Mr Gucci himself, who was, of course very rich and offered Christine an open invitation to shop at Gucci. Makes ya sick.

Bad news in the Shakatak camp — Jackie Row, who sings lead on their new single "Streetwalking", has left to join Sheena Easton's band... Jane Hill, the Cartier Bresson of Canvey Island, is holding an exhibition of her photos of Southend musicians. Pix of Yazoo's Vince Clarke and Alf, the Feelgoods' Lee Brilleaux, Wilko Johnson and Lew Lewis can be seen at the Mostly Photographic Gallery, Market Place, Alexandra Street, Southend from July 10 — August 6... An abstract painting of the Beatles by John Lennon is due up for auction at Bonham's soon. The picture bears a plate inscribed "For my First Effort: Love; John, 1966". Contact Nicholas Fenn-Wiggin on 01-584 9161... BBC2 are repeating the "Whistle Test" Ry Cooder special on June 17, and two members of Cooder's band, Jim Keltner and Chris Ethridge, had the good sense to see the Blasters and Nick Lowe in between sell-out shows... Suicide's Alan Vega has an exhibition of his sculpture showing in New York currently. A gallery spokesman described Vega's sculpted cross as "very spiritual. If you put one up alone in a room, it would definitely turn it into a chapel".

Junior turned up at the new Camden Palace over the weekend to preview his new single, "Too Late", and dance the night away. A strong possibility that Junior will be touring the UK in early autumn...

Prior to their appearance at Radio 1's "Fun Weekend" in Newcastle, Dexy's Midnight Runners played an impromptu set at a local working men's club, stressing working class solidarity etc...

Sight of the week must have been at Queen's lig at the Embassy Club. Imagine former Samson drummer, known to his chums as Thunderstick, just hanging around. The man with no face was modeling his latest "modern" mask when Diana Ross swanned in. She looked lonely, so Mr Stick walked up and asked her if she wanted to dance. "There were only five or six people dancing, so I thought what the hell. I don't know if she said anything, because the music was deafening, but I knew what she must have been thinking!" Diana Ross' last reported liaison was with Gene Simmons of Kiss, and nobody ever saw his face. Is this significant?



WARHOLIER THAN THOU

TAKING the audience-artist confrontation even further than Johnny Rotten, Diana Ross has a new album set for early September release, with a specially commissioned Andy Warhol cover... All proceeds from Squeeze's Brixton gig on Sunday went to the Task Force dependants. Was that why they played "Land Of Hope And Glory" over the PA before they came on stage? The last refuge of the scoundrel?

Morrissey-Mullen had less luck. Halfway through their set at Dartford Flick's last week, the place burned down! Over 500 punters were evacuated as the building was engulfed in flame, causing Dick Morrissey to comment: "Sod it, I was just getting into that."... Has-beens and also rans: Hitler lookalike Ron Mael of Sparks is auditioning for the role of the hapless airline captain in "Airplane II". And for pure drek, Tony Orlando of Dawn is the star of a new video called "300 Miles For Stephanie". The nausea rating rises when the plot is revealed: "Stephanie has a terminal illness. Her doctors tell her parents she will probably die before her fifth birthday"...

Marshall Law is on his hols



THE NOT THE NEW JAM SINGLE

THE new Jam single is not the new Jam single. Following reports that "Just Who Is The 5 O'Clock Hero", from their latest album "The Gift", is to be available on import, the Jam's record company Polydor have been deluged with requests about its availability.

The point is the B-side features two previously unavailable songs, a cover of Edwin Starr's "War" and a new Weller song, "The Great Depression".

The single is not being released in the UK, and is only available in Germany, Scandinavia, Holland, Canada and Australia, although Polydor accept that "it will infiltrate into the UK and be available through all import channels."

Things get more complicated with the news that the three track single will be available as both a 7 inch and

12 inch, although some countries are not equipped to cope with 12 inch pressings, so the 7 inch versions could well be the 12 inch version too! There are no current plans for a proper, bona fide new Jam single, but the last time a similar thing happened, when "That's Entertainment" was issued as an import single, it tore up the charts.

Finally, Stephen Cassidy is compiling a book on the Jam, which will be made up from fans contributions. He wants you to send in gig revues, memories, photos of any Jam gig over the past five years, with proceeds from the finished book being split between CND and Animal Aid.

Send stuff to Stephen Cassidy, 43, the Horseshoe, Leverstock Green, Hemel Hempstead, Herts.

WHITE SKY



the new album from Peter Green

Features New Single 'The Clown'

Album: HED 1

Also available on cassette: HEDC 1

Headline Manufactured and marketed by Creole Records Ltd. Available through CBS record.

"HOLY shit! Holy shit! ... I think I'm going to cry ...

An intimate moment from the Papal visit? Well maybe, but here we have another story, the touching tale of Joan Jett's first silver single. Moments before diving into a CBS studio to record the backing track for a new 45, America's answer to Gary Glitter has a slim brown package forced into her tiny, bitten hands.

She fumbles with the paper; a gleaming disc slides out as manager and mentor Kenny Laguna radiates beams of smug satisfaction like a human sun lamp.

"I don't believe it, I just don't believe it," Joan drools, then rushes off to stem a black tide of eye make-up, slowly slipping down her angular cheek bones.

She returns looking, as usual, the female equivalent to Keith Richards with a fresh blood change and whips through her duties with The Blackhearts in a business-wise style evolved through 352 shows spaced across a punishing 18 months on the road.

The Joan Jett saga would make a great rock 'n' roll B-movie. Teenage girl delinquents form trash pop group, The Runaways, masterminded by notorious underground hustler Kim Fowley. The press refuse to take them seriously and brand their pitch jailbait rock, finally helping to push them towards bankruptcy and the ultimate American anathema — failure.

Broken and destitute, Joan drags herself from the ruins of her dreams, puts together another group and makes an album which not a single company will touch. Undaunted, she slogs round the dives, East Coast to West, selling her record from the back of a Buick until at last Neil Bogart, chairman of Boardwalk Records, makes an offer she can't refuse.

The "I Love Rock 'n' Roll" single goes platinum and after another exhausting tour Joan is set to return to LA for a triumphant presentation party and a long-awaited reunion with the only man who had the bottle to back her.

When suddenly tragedy strikes again! Neil dies of cancer on the very eve of the celebrations.

"We were gonna get all the

JOAN JETT was ready to die for rock 'n' roll, now she's living for tomorrow. Ian Pye traces her rise from the bars to the stars. Sultry poses: Tony Mottram



obscure Dutch single so I suppose you could say it's something of a collector's item.

RETURNING to LA, she was "just hangin' around and wonderin' what to do" when Darby Crash, The Germ's singer who later died of a drug overdose, asked her to produce their album.

She gave them the early Clash treatment, following through a love for terrace harmonies, and slowly started to regain her confidence.

The next project was a rock 'n' roll film (that phrase again!) called "We're All Crazy Now". This never saw the light of day, but it gave her an introduction to the once king of American bubblegum, Kenny Laguna: He it was who brought you such gossamer delights as Tommy James And The Shondells, Ohio Express and The 1910 Fruitgum Company. He was working on the abortive soundtrack when Joan struck up "the best working partnership I've ever had in my life".

With Kenny and The Blackhearts behind her, the "Bad Reputation" album was recorded and ruthlessly promoted over two gruelling American tours.

"Those days were real rough," she recalls, almost cringing "Like one hotel room for all of us. Squeezed into a car for 13 hours at a time, like sardines, man!"

"People say don't you think 'I Love Rock 'n' Roll' is corny? But I do love it! I love being on stage and I've almost died for it."

So was it fate or sheer hard work that put her at the top of the American charts for two months?

"I guess you could say I was a fatalist. I mean why me? Why me? Why me? Why was I chosen? On the other hand you could say I've been working my butt off since I was 15 years old."

"I mean, all the odds were stacked against us. I don't understand it, I can't grasp it, y'know?"

"I know. All of people will say Joan Jett's full of it but I love rock 'n' roll and so do a lot of other kids, and that's the bottom line."

THROUGHOUT the interview, Kenny has been hovering in the background, promoting Joan and giving his own version

CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE RUNAWAY

awards we'd notched up with Boardwalk and then out of the blue the president of the whole thing dies of cancer! So there was no party, no presentations — everybody was in a sorta mournin' mood, y'know?"

"So you see that's why I never got a silver disc before, even though we've gone gold and platinum back home. I still can't believe this whole thing!"

"After The Runaways broke up and we made 'Bad Reputation', 23 labels said 'No way! Not Joan Jett of The Runaways — she has the biggest mouth of all of them!' They said I couldn't sing, that I wasn't classy enough for their labels, all things like this."

"I must have been the Runaways' bad girl. They were completely opposed to signing me."

"Then Neil fell in love with the album and signed us outta

nowhere. See, that's why he was particularly my friend. He helped me when nobody wanted to know and though he'd been sick for a year he never let on. He was a very brave and courageous man."

JOAN Jett joined The Runaways when she was 15. She toured the world and came to understand the bathos of rock 'n' roll life. She revelled in its incestuous glorification and when it was over she was "very, very scared".

"For a start I was flat, flat broke. Almost poverty level. I mean, before I had all this stuff happening to me, it was such a whirlwind thing to be in, a real fast way to grow up. Then

wham! I'm right back at the bottom again."

"I do think, though, The Runaways taught me everything I needed to know about life — they taught me how to survive. School taught me nothing."

Did she think The Runaways were a little ahead of their time?

"Well before us there were groups like Fanny but it always seemed to me that they were just tryin' to compete with guys, y'know. Sayin' 'Hey look I can play guitar as good as you.' Instead of a rock band having fun, which was kinda my idea."

"Our problem was that we got stuck with this sexual image which was never the intention. We just wanted to say, 'Hey man come and see some girls play some rock 'n' roll for a change'. But all of a

sudden it was jailbait rock sex. We just couldn't get out of it!"

But didn't Kim Fowley help promote the bad-girls-on-the-wrong-side-of-the-street image and then see it turn round on him?

"Well, I don't think he was tryin' to give The Runaways a bad image — he was just tryin' to get press. I mean he's very different, he's a wild and crazy guy, he really is."

"I met the man when I was 15 years old and I just thought he was great. I suppose he did get us a bit of a dirty name but his heart was in the right place."

"People always see him as a Malcolm McLaren figure but he never tried to do anything real bad. Kim never forced us to dress in corsets or do anything we didn't want to. So many people called us real horrible

names but basically I'm a real nice person!"

According to Joan the split was inevitable and painless.

"Eventually we turned 19 and people began to realise we weren't jailbait anymore. We knew things were fallin' apart, so I told the other girls it would be best if I left the band. I think they wanted to go real heavy metal and I wanted to stay more mainstream. It was a very friendly break-up."

She left the States and came over here with an idea of recording with Paul Cook and Steve Jones. Old friends from her days on the road with The Runaways, they managed to stay sober long enough to record three songs, one of which was "I Love Rock 'n' Roll".

That particular version only surfaced on the B side of an

of this black leather fairy tale. Finally he signals my time is up with the announcement that a scribe from The Guardian has arrived and awaits her appearance.

Refusing to be pushed, Joan insists on making one last point "because it's probably the most important of all."

"When I was in The Runaways the audience was 99 per cent male. The girls came with their boyfriends and they hated our guts. But now 50 per cent of our audience are girls. They're out there, 13 year olds and singing all the words."

"And you know that girl is gonna go home and bug her parents for an electric guitar and that they don't need to go with their boyfriends anymore. And that makes me very happy, y'know? It's a nice feeling. I know they love rock 'n' roll and so do I."

YES, we were impressed. This year's Rock Writer Contest brought another weighty avalanche of entries that buried us for weeks beneath suffocating slabs of typescript.

Reading through your pieces was a daunting enterprise, but invariably entertaining. Your opinions, ideas, reflections and inventions were often provocative, sometimes amusing; they've made us fume with disagreement and nod sagely when your assessments coincided with our own views.

We were rarely disappointed by your response; mostly we were encouraged by the energy and conviction, the genuine concern you often displayed. Even when some of you were a little wide of the mark, there was a shortage of striking articles, sharp observations and resourceful arguments.

Looking back on the

shifting land-mass of entries we grappled with, only one question seemed to defeat you. "What," we asked, heading off Section Two, "was the role of music in the summer riots?"

Most of the replies decided that music played only the most peripheral role in the riots, but somehow they all felt obliged to prove otherwise. This was both perverse and unconvincing. The old punk vanguard was evoked — the Clash and the Sex Pistols were right after all; "White Riot" and "Anarchy In The UK" were Specials' "Ghost Town" was merely "timely".

More convincingly entertaining were your attempts at creating imaginary days in the life of... Unfortunately, your imaginations often bordered on the libellous and the fantastic. What a lot of you thought Steve Strange gets up to during the course of an average day must therefore remain unpublished. The

editorial committee, meanwhile, was unanimously astonished by the accuracy of your descriptions of A Day In The Life of Allan Jones, though several entries seriously underestimated his capacity for enthusiastic carousing, and several more were wrong in their belief that he's married to the Chief.

Your recreations of 24 hours in the life of New Order were frankly bizarre and best left undisclosed. Jocelyn Rose won this particular section with her portrait of a disillusioned, lonely Bruce Springsteen while P. M. Quilty's diverting, neatly perceptive profile of Elvis Costello brooding quizzically through an average day emerged from this category to win the £150 third prize in the overall competition.

With the imminent appearance of breakfast television and Channel Four, we were interested in your ideas about how the rock show you'd like to see on the

new stations and asked you to devise a workable format for a new music programme. Predictably, most entries bemoaned the current efforts of both the BBC and the commercial network. Curiously, however, your own suggestions were uncomfortably close to the styles of the existing models.

This category did, however, attract the attention of Malcolm Gerrie who this September begins production of a new Friday evening rock show on Channel Four. He wants to know more. Unpublished entries in this group have already been returned, but if you can afford the price of a postage stamp and think your idea might brighten our viewing this autumn, please return them to us and we'll pass them on to him.

Probably the most engaging category in the contest was the invitation to compile an imaginary Greatest Hits LP. We almost collapsed beneath the diversity and volume of your entries. Gina Morris from

San Francisco presented an irresistible Dave Edmunds' compilation and there were reasonable attempts at definitive Elvis Costello anthologies: the shrewd and breadth and quality of Costello's repertoire defied success in this quarter, though, and David Grigg's adroit selection of Fall tracks won the section.

Incorporating a lucid assessment of the character and development of Magazine, Phil Masters' hypothetical collection, "Songs From Under The Floorboards", put into acute perspective the career of one of the most potent and enigmatic groups of the late Seventies. Phil walked off with the second prize of £250.

One more category remains: the assessment of 1981.

The majority of entries read like calendars of doom. How did we ever survive such a year? Generally, respondents of 1981, your assessments agreed that it was a gloomy 12 months.

Write!

Marley died of cancer. Reagan shrugged off an assassin's bullets; Sadat proved less durable. Britton and Toxteth burned; was rage and the casualties multiplied. Passion went out of fashion and flocks of pretty young things mixed cocktails and styles. Keith Gunn reflected all this in his powerful account of 1981 and its complications.

Sharply written, effectively articulate in its sour rage, Keith's essay evoked the confusions, the disenchantment, the emptiness many of you thought characterised that year. His acerbic polemic

sets the shallow poses of the new pop party poopers against a sombre background of international strife, simultaneously exposes the shabby rituals of rock and its disintegrating momentum during the glum months of last year.

Unanimously elected winner of this year's contest, Keith grabs the top cash prize of £1,000. Congratulations to him and thanks to everyone who made the effort to tell us what you think, who you like, what makes you move and where you think it's all heading. Keep in touch.

1981: THE COCKTAIL CLASH

JUST another kaleidoscope consumption year. Another white boy meets girl pop relationship skank, dode drums beat insistent new rhythms, and tears were never enough.

Pop is a personal mystery of smell, sex, feelings and long weekends; its history lies only in the vinyl, all the trappings are mere commercial tactics to sell a product. 1981 saw too many trappings, all traps for the young at Art; too much concept, too much consumption. Conning us all the time, partings were sweet, sartorial and on the left.

The children of the disco decade swallowed musical valium, discussed Armageddon over cocktails, and soundtrack their lives to one plastic teenbeat or another.

In a society devoid of a spiritual, social or even national core, its youth clung wildly to a myriad multi-coloured group identities, tailored to fit every imagination, every body floating in the post industrial malaise blues. There were dreams for everyone. Schemes to make money, pretty green to plot seams, and enough new noise, fed and fashion to set souls afire.

Bob Marley died. The European market left his throne vacant; it was the image of Marley himself that had been sold, not the music. Reggae now seems to exist in a desolate commercial vacuum.

Phil Oakey dared, and won. When the British create a sub cult, they do it in style, do it best and 1981 had the lot, from Heavy Metal jerk off guitar heroics to New Pop and the Futurist synthesized excuse. It was all the dressing up, Saturday night's all right, any day of the week again; true punks, futurists, new romantics, critics and Mark E. Smith all playing escapism, drunk and reeling up the charts in one hectic rush for the speed five minute star trip.

Everybody and anybody could be a star in 1981; singles and singers, blondes and mohicans, it didn't matter which; there's a pop market for almost anything, and if there wasn't, it could be created. The tastemakers reigned supreme.

Sons of Kraftwerk, Faust and Neu crawled out of the electronic garage and clustered round the chart art totem. The daughter of Marty Wilde went back to her roots and dyed them. Lennon had died an ordinary citizen, making bland records of overt sentimentality; more lead flew at Reagan and The Pope, but Sadat forgot to duck.

The heat goes on. The beat goes on, making money, making life bearable, making dance floors sway and keeping back the threat of mushroom final day. We danced while they stockpiled.

Music was never enough. Fashion

asked the questions of a youth need to escape into a Polaroid, a sanitised glitter world without confusion and daylight, away from the streets. The sound of angry greed breaking glass was a distant, muffled echo, mingling with the wounds of breaking hearts, vodka stains on taffeta, and music like a boat knife through the temples.

In the white girl/boy clubs the European pastiche muzak aimed every record at some holy mythical dance floor. Bucolic shamblers, sham movements. Show some emotion, show some style. Strangers in motion, armed with new concepts of pop and the validity of Sun Ra as a fashion leader. Dance, trance and Darnell still couldn't get a hit. "ever been had in Clubland?"

Here below ground, Lennon was just a myth created by another generation, while the Sloane Rangers met Tonto's Expanding Head Band in a dim lit rim shot recess, over in the corner Kraftwerk's children sniggered with sound, waiting to pop chrysalis like and fresh-faced into chardland. Any image would do. Anything could be chic; military or Val Doonican, fringe or spike, Dall or Dolly Parton. The culture condors took every rhythm and transferred it into white pop. Heaven was a place where nothing ever happened; a new order of portentous intention, side order of do it or else fashion, all the way from Kensington Market to Brighton Pier.

The body, the persona became work of art. Living through your own image became lifestyle. "I'm a sort of futurist, like, you know?" Tribes and trivia. Trash and an aesthetic of self as museum exhibit or showroom dummy; personal fashion images raided past decades looking for clues, ways out of the real world into a limbo where new romantics made love with new semantics, a land with patience, pastiche and perfection. Take away fashion was a la mode on the beat route, depeche vous mes enfants.

Dean Moriarty wasn't in sight. Take it, leave it, use it up, the little rich kids in satin, taffeta and lace, loved themselves and each other to a sublime Bowie/Roxy/Germanic/Black disc mix. Here was the new scam, same as the old glam. An aesthetic for living, living as the total aesthetic. Cocktails, tails of cock, and a thousand Burundi electronic kisses, between neon strip and neuter strippers.

"Out in the real world, in real time... In time there is only the vinyl reckoning, no matter how well dressed a record, the visual image fades with the years leaving only the noise, the electricity and the glimpses of humanity. When we have all forgotten the scams and the record can take its place in the imaginary history of pop. The pop must live and develop to



survive in any worthwhile form, each new release threatening to whisper in a new generation cycle; the modern dance must change its steps, kick up its heels, and rejecting the accepted clichés, sing loud and free into the storm.

new twang for careerists who feed each new burst of sound.

There was so much to choose from... New Pop, Electro Pop, Old Pop, Funk, Fake Funk, Salsa, Ze, Repping, white hopes on funk, listening to James Brown or was it White? Taking a chance with jerky bass lines and Gerry Marsden guitar fetishes.

New Progressives, the Jim Morrison/Jan Curtis soundlike axis spun through too many grooves, too many groups with one note singers and an up front tomtom bombast production. Martin Hannatt, Daniel Miller, Conny Plank and Rushent used new noises for the new poses. A new studio posse, the hardware providing the ability to turn mediocrity into something more. Tears were not enough, but tears

came easily in 1981; tears in El Salvador, Afghanistan, Britton, Toxteth. Pop never hears tears, even though it may claim a righteous conscience. The beat goes on. Pull the blinds and plug in. Hedonism and cheap thrills. Heads on fire, get up and use the groove tang and the Rousseau sham, Brothers and Sisters having fun, work was suspended, play was being invented. The Leisure Principle. The Epping Revolution was late, and would be videoed.

1981 only scratched the video surface, but posed one main question about these expensive adverts. How many songs were being written for the power of the lyric, how many for the effect a lyric would have when translated into pictures? Lennon applied his Art to Chuck Berry. In 1981, Bowie and Roxy Music were the main inspiration.

1981... Personal Histories. May 27 swum in the Brighton sea, waiting for Springsteen. He could still conjure up rock without crass making it sound totally crass and dirty, but he was out of fashion, out of time, a heretic with a cause or a generation. His stage show had turned into ritual, and at times high camp, but he still moved me that night in Brighton more than anything else in the rock/pop thrash market. Costello is just too damn clever.

At the time, I was stalking the pier with a camera and a monkey. Dole, soul and plimsolls, viewing fashion from the provinces. In the Belvedere below the prom, daily electric stabs of Jerry Lee and Elmore James, Monk on piano. I read "On The Road". Sexist book. Beneath the prom, below the underdog, Mingus talked sex before D.A.F. Coati Mundi and a coast life, where too many bass players were unable to move beyond the last Cure or Joy Division record.

Funk was a marabout commodity in 1981, but at best it was nothing more than a simplistic anachronism to cover anything from A Certain Ratio and Defunkt to Haircut One Hundred and Spandau Ballet. This was a funk with no sweat; cool and lightweight bump and grind, where shock and fashion consciousness reigned over passion, energy and humanity.

Gil Scott Heron was not in sight. Rick James and The Preachers and the American root, while Brit-Funk was a coffee table imitation for the most part. Nobody was as funky as Sam Rivers or McCoy Tyner, as War or Hamilton Bohannon. Nobody meant it. This was Pop. Inmate, clean pop, sparkling with its own quality. Contrived pop, that still maintained

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FIRST PRIZE: £1,000. Keith Gunn's '81 assessment

The AU PAIRS talk sense and sensuality
with Lynden Barber. Sensuous pix: Tom Sheehan



SEX WITHOUT STRESS

HOW could they have known? The caption under the BBC1 column in the Sunday Times television listings for May 30 was unmistakable. "6.10. Sense And Sensibility: Repeat of the serialisation", it announced, unremarkably.

And then: "Miss Austen would be perturbed to know that last week the title turned up on proof for this page as Sense And Sensuality, a most unladylike error, but was caught before the presses rolled. Sorry, Jane."

Lesley Woods, the "unladylike" singer, guitarist, lyricist and general frontperson for the Au Pairs, would have liked that. The Au Pairs have just completed their second album and the title is "Sense And Sensuality". Either a close friend of the APs has burrowed their way through to the heart of the Sunday Times, or both group and paper have plugged unwittingly into the same cosmic switchboard (maaan).

As a name for an Au Pairs record, "Sense And Sensuality" fits snugly, a particularly succinct pointer to the group's dominant concerns and a perfectly logical continuation from its predecessor, "Playing With A Different Sex".

Au Pairs songs have consistently prowled the arena of sexual politics, questioning the roles and rules of the games people play in their everyday personal relationships. A depressingly large number of people still sneer at the subject and others just pay casual lip service; somehow those who

throw around the word "sexist" as a term of abuse have become saddled with the image of sour, shrieking puritans, repressed, lonely and dead set against the flowering of healthy sexual goings-on — the old, exceedingly dumb "anti-sexism equals anti-sex" equation.

Anyone labouring under those illusions will get a rude, deserved awakening on listening to the Au Pairs or talking to Lesley Woods. The Au Pairs celebrate sex, want to remove the repressive mystification that surrounds it, want people to shake off their deeply ingrained hang-ups and exploit their own potential more fruitfully.

Lesley Woods slips into the topic of sexuality with the ease of a body sliding between warm sheets. "Sense And Sensuality"? It's what it says, she tells you. Think about it; the title resounds with implication.

"The personal is political, you can't split the two things up. If you're going to have any kind of social change, personal relationships in society have got to change," Woods expounds. "I think sexuality is an important part of that. If people were allowed to express their sexuality naturally, society wouldn't be the way it is. All the relationships in society, such as power and economic relationships, would change as well."

"Someone wrote this review in America that I was really pissed off about. It said something like 'The Au Pairs are better than the Gang Of Four because what they're singing about, ie relationships, probably fits better into a musical framework that singing about Marxist ideology' — which is a real kind of put down."

"It says 'You're a girl and you sing about boys and girls and that's okay because it fits into music. You couldn't sing about Marxist ideology because you're not intelligent enough'. It splits those two things up, it sees one

as serious and theoretical and politically valid, and the thing about relationships is not to be taken that seriously."

One new song, "Sex Without Stress", with its exhortation to "discover physical conversations of a different kind", is especially pointed.

"When people get in relationships with other people, instead of actually seeing the person there they have expectations of what that relationship's going to be, it's going to have certain forms and a certain structure, it'll be stable — 'we're going to be faithful to one another' — and it goes on like that," fills in Lesley.

"In the light of the post-Sixties

sexual revolution people are supposed to be emancipated in the way they organise their relationships.

There's another song called "That's When It's Worth It" which is lifted from a review that Lester Bangs did of us. He said something like, 'Perhaps the Au Pairs and the way things work in the Au Pairs could provide a model for the rest of society'. That's a song about how people are wrapped up in their own egos.

"People think they've progressed in their relationships and as they go from one to another their expectations alter — 'My last relationship was fucked up because of this, and this time I'm going to fall in love

and get it off with someone who's more...'. — do you know what I mean? But they still carry on having these expectations, expecting that person to fulfill some need and desire for them instead of seeing that person as an autonomous individual. They impose this role on that person."

THIS is all very easy to nod along with in theory, but I feel twinges of scepticism. How does she think people can get around these attitudes? Isn't there a certain amount of inevitability about them?

"I think there's a tendency for people to seek solutions in superficial lifestyle which just operate for the individual," she replies. "I think the meaning of sex has got to be re-evaluated, and people have got to — at the risk of being promiscuous — carry out a lot of different kinds of relationships with people of both sexes and all ages, be able to relate sexually to those people instead of being forced into the roles they are."

So does she manage to live up to her ideals?

"I think I'm very naive in a lot of ways, and very glib, because I always tend to think that people are as sussed out as I am," she laughs. "And I never find out until it's too late. So many people are wrapped up in themselves, it's so difficult for them to see outside of themselves."

When questioned on this burst of immodesty she backtracks slightly: "No, I was only being facetious, I don't think that, but it is really important to feel free. Especially for women, because there's this morality that operates, these notions of 'bad women' if they don't conform and stay in their role. I think it's important for women to have the relationships they want to have; it's very difficult for women working in the public eyes as well."

Does she want her lyrics to provoke people into re-examining their own lives?

"Yeah, all I do in writing lyrics is

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THE FUNK CONSPIRACY

Ian Pye investigates crime at the Country Club with the aid of FUNKAPOLITAN. Mug shots: Keith Bernstein

YOUNG men drive fast to the Middlesex & Herts Country Club. Cortinas, tight dresses and sweet Martinis shimmer in the heat of the night as the disco pounds out a midweek serenade for upwardly mobile swinging lovers.

Alive and kicking at the Country Club? Well, it seemed that way before Funkapolitan went on stage. Mouths slowly drop open and half-glazed eyes stare across an empty dance floor. Nobody was prepared for the funk attack.

Rumour has it that the Brits are using a new sonic weapon against the corned beef eating scrap metal merchants. It temporarily scrambles the brain rendering the listener passive and severely disorientated. Years of research went towards the development of this unique pitch. What do Funkapolitan know that we don't?

A tiny shift in emphasis, a subtle sway to the left, leaves the deodorised country clubbers grasping for the comforting security of familiar circles and velvet covered seats. The deejay has gone, the music's too loud and the group are dancing alone.

This is a crime of life because Funkapolitan are one of the finest live bands currently

touring our wonderful little empire. In the flesh their sound bounces with a disciplined zest few white funkateers could hope to match. Forget the great pretenders, this gang even sweats in harmony.

But behind a group of expression of passionate control lurks a set of characters united by their determination to improve and advance, yet divided by a vitriolic bickering over the minutiae of every move.

Reflecting on the Middlesex & Herts communication breakdown, keyboardist Toby Anderson remarks with a his nasal-toned, pedantic voice that "the data was certainly pretty weird. The audience was very self conscious."

"But we've had a lot of teenagers at our other shows," singer Nick Jones chips in optimistically.

"Well, I'm not particularly interested in just playing to teenagers," Toby continues more moodily.

"Oh come on, it's teenagers who buy records man. Check it out, it's the kids who keep things going!" insists exasperated percussionist Greg Craig. And so it goes on.

The raw ends of a working democracy remain concealed beneath their polished performances. Somehow the final solution arrives. A compromise, a mandate, a state of middling anonymity? Where then is the public image?

Crossing over from club funk to latin pop, Funkapolitan brilliantly bridge too many styles for their own good. It's not that they're dilettantes; they simply lack that bright shiny handle which ensures a

conumerable identity and opens the doors to success.

"It's true," admits Nick ruefully. "We haven't got a persona to latch on to. With a lot of stuff you hear the record and you immediately think of this mug with a guitar or a silver suit. We never had that. It's the reason we lost out on the TV."

Aside from richly consistent dance music (never enough though is it?) their most identifiable feature is a three man front line that harks back to black originals like The Isleys and The Four Tops.

All a happy coincidence according to star crooner Kadir Gulrey: "It just happened that way. We never designed the group to have three singers at the front. We sorta mutated that way."

"And we'll probably mutate another way as well!" Toby interjects. "I think we should change the frontline by getting rid of Simon and getting a girl."

Greg: "No man, no! Girls can be such a pain in the neck on the road man!"

Does Simon know about this plan? Inquire? "No he's probably..."

"Toby, Toby," pleads Kadir half smiling, half wincing, "please shut up, just shut up."

And so it goes on.

IN CASE you didn't know Funkapolitan have just released their debut album produced by August Darnell with two songs, "Run Run Run" and "In The Crime Of Life", remixed by New York disco king John Luongo. In retrospect the

reviews, which were quick to prod any suspected weaknesses, now seem hypercritical, maybe a touch myopic and in some cases almost cruel.

A record that slowly takes a grip, full of memorable songs and shifting rhythmic hooks, it represents the apogee of the now rampant white funk movement. Its quality could be the one thing they all manage to agree on.

"I think it's really good for a debut album," Greg states with a solid confidence.

"Especially when you consider that most of the band had never played instruments before we started out."

"Darnell didn't want too many effects and clutter. He likes it all laid down very clearly. It's good because we can actually go out and play it live."

Kadir: "He did what was necessary. When there's eight people there's so many ideas you've got to funnel them in some way. You can't give everybody free rein - it just becomes chaotic."

"Actually I don't think he's a very good producer," Toby announces with typical authority. "He's good at recording songs in an honest way which is what he's done with his own stuff. He's not very good at re-mixing either. I think that's part of the reason it hasn't taken off. The songs that John Luongo mixed have more impact. They're much more popular in America too. Mostly though we don't have the super slick Trevor Horn glow."

Greg: "Yeah, but who wants to sound like that! I don't want to sound like ABC. They can't even go out and play their fucking stuff!"

The choice of Darnell as producer - they wanted Bootsy Collins but couldn't afford the deposit - is the

culmination of a longstanding friendship, but like everything else they've done it's been turned around and used against them.

A conspiracy has been mounted against them, Nick reckons, and the tragedy is "that the public don't know the full story. All they know is that we're a big band with a dodgy image."

FIRST on the funk, they were branded as white boy colonialists; their first press appeared in *Harpers And Queen*, they were deemed

spoilt aristos; they carefully avoided playing the rock toilets and stuck faithfully to select venues; they were dubbed as effete darlings of a crumbling debutante scene. Just what was going on here?

"It's vicious rumours put out by other bands," claims Toby bitterly. "People like Steve Dagger and all of that crowd. They tell everybody that that we're this and that. All the time these people are slagging us off behind our backs, pushing this debby thing."

Kadir: "Yeah, but those parties were fun, so what? I kinda get off on that scene."

"Well you would," says Greg indignantly, "your family comes from that kind of angle."

"And what's wrong with that?" Kadir replies curly. "Besides we sorta dropped out from it anyway."

Toby, impatiently: "Whatever it's all a conspiracy... And so it goes on."

In fact their righteous disgust at the way they've been methodically smeared - it was even suggested that Darnell only did the album as a tax dodge wheeze - is understandable. Toby's flat may be littered with deco relics from his days as an an

antique dealer, but there's no hint of anything like class conceit in his attitudes.

As he says: "We aren't like Spandau Ballet. We all went to comprehensive schools and learnt about survival. I think it's an integrity that comes through in our music. We don't want to be a fast food funk band. We've got a really psychedelic guitarist you know."

Kadir: "We draw on lots of different sources. I like to draw on *The Drifters*."

Toby: "Well I like to make it up straight from my head."

Nick: "Yeah, that's how we started to make a completely different sound."

Toby: "I don't want to lean on *The Drifters*."

Kadir: "Well I like them y'know."

OKAY boys, let's leave that one. What's in store for Funkapolitan in the future?

Greg: "I think it would be a good idea if we did some spontaneous open air shows."

Toby: "Yeah, we could do the carnival (Notting Hill Gate's annual street celebrations)."

Greg: "Nah, we can't do that. It wouldn't be right, it's too much of a West Indian cultural thing."

Toby: "I've seen loads of funk bands there!"

Greg: "Oh yeah. Who have you seen?"

Toby: "Well, er... I saw Eddy Grant."

Greg: "Oh he's roots man, he even does a bit of calypso."

Toby: "Well I still think we should do it. That would blow the debby image forever."

Greg: "Well I'm not doing it for a start..."

And so it goes on.



MATTERS finally came to a head after the show that night. In the cramped dressing room, Ken McCluskey, the Bluebells' harmonica player, picked up a plank of wood, walked over to Alan Horne and threatened him with extreme violence if he didn't vacate the room, like NOW! Quaking with anger, it was only the restraining arms of his friends that kept McCluskey from inflicting the awful damage he had in mind for the Postcard supremo.

Relationships hadn't always been so strained between band and manager. After only their second concert as the Bluebells, Horne had burst into their dressing room and told them how great they were. How they should go away and rehearse Lovin' Spoonful songs. Polish their exquisite pop tunes into an efficient, organised form.

Horne knew that Orange Juice, his ace card at the time, would soon be leaving Postcard for a major, and he saw the Bluebells as his last chance. They would record the last ever Postcard single, an EP of three cover songs, plus an original and Postcard could go out in a blaze of glory. The record was never made. Horne had a masterplan and the Bluebells just wanted to take things as they came. Easy come, easy go. Maybe do it tomorrow, maybe not. The result: friction.

Eventually, Horne turned



around, called them the "new Lindisfarne," said they'd become far too soft and that they should listen to the Clash for a week. Then he got them a Postcard show and put them at the top of the bill. The Bluebells played their hearts out and won over the audience with ease... the next night, they claim, they were demoted to bottom of the bill.

Which is when Stan picked up a plank of wood and all hell was let loose. The end of a love affair. The start of the Bluebells proper.



BOBBY BLUEBELL doesn't look like a pop star. He's tall, gangling, wears glasses and should be advertising

Charles Atlas bodybuilding

courses — as the seven-stone weakling. By the end of this year, Bobby Bluebell will probably be a pop star and the heart-throb of millions. That's where the smart money is.

For future reference Bobby Bluebell likes moaning, sleeping, nurses, National Health specs, Italian food and lying. He dislikes waking up, singing and good manners. He also likes: a) a creams, Gary Crowley, London parks and interviews, which is why he's a) eating one, b) talking to him, c) standing in one and d) doing one. Clever chap, really.

We'd been talking about the history of the Bluebells. How Bobby used to "write" in a Scottish fanzine called the Ten Commandments and formed a band called the Oxfam Warriors with Clare Grogan's best friend. The relationship with Horne and the Bluebells' amazing luck in supporting both Haircut One Hundred and Altered Images as both bands were breaking big.

Now it's their turn to be chased by the majors, and they still haven't decided on a company. "That's the whole trouble," says Bobby, "usually we've been really indecisive because you don't have any options anyway. You have one thing and you either do it or you don't do it. We always decided to do everything."

Such a free and easy lifestyle is no longer possible because of the current interest in the band. Apart from the lucrative offers flooding their way, the Bluebells have also been recording with Elvis Costello ("the King") producing.

"He was really encouraging and patient," enthuses Bobby, "and it was good because we weren't uncomfortable at all at any period with him. We could take the piss out of us and no-one was going to be offended. We weren't ever in awe of him like we thought we were going to be, and the B-side... well, the B-side convinced us to do it with him."

"Well, it's not a B-side, it's just the second song we did with him. On one song, 'Everybody's Somebody's Fool', we just let him do what he wanted to do with it and didn't argue. Just did the best we could and let him change it as he wanted. On the other song, half the group went to see Haircut One Hundred and Stan and I stayed. And I think



because there were less of us there we were afraid to speak up and suggest things to him and say 'can we do it again?' or whatever." Eventually the band

emerged with two songs and the idea of putting them on F Beat's offshoot Demon label, home of the TV 21, Department S and Bananarama debut singles. But now the band have decided to hang onto the tape and use it to entice the majors into their wallets — Bobby, in fact, wasn't too impressed by Costello's work on the songs.

"I want to see him last night," says Bobby, "and told him what I thought about it all and he was like worried. He was saying, 'I want to do an LP', and I was saying 'yes, I want to do it'. Because the whole group were worried when we were coming down because I said I didn't like it and was going to tell him. The whole group were paranoid because they like it, but they don't love it."

"We shouldn't say, 'ah, it's quite good, let's get it out'. They were all worried in case I put Elvis off, in case he was going to get the hump. But I knew he wouldn't. He asked me to tell him what we thought and I told him."

their delicate three minute pop songs, but there is a theory, currently being perpetuated by desperate hipsters, about a so-called pop boom; the Bluebells are destined to be categorised in it.

"It's ridiculous," Bobby explodes. "There hasn't been a pop boom since 1956 if you think about it. Every record that gets into the charts is a pop record and all the records that don't get into the charts are classic pop records that failed, which is pathetic. Or the ones that don't get into the charts aren't classic pop records but are 'ahead of their time' or 'way out man', which are just great expressions for fucking terrible."

A naive statement, maybe, considering the amount of good records that are refused play on radio, TV or haven't got a gimmick. But where do the Bluebells differ? What's the difference?

"Nothing particularly," Bobby says laughing. "We were talking to Steve Sutherland, even though he didn't put it in his thing, we tried to make the point quite clear to him that as far as we were concerned there's good and there's bad and it's nothing to do with styles in pop music or soul music or whatever."

"There's a good song and a bad song," says Bobby, starting to warm up. "A good group and a bad group, bad singing and good singing, and that's all there is. So if we do a bad record fine, it's our fault; but if we do a good record it should be accepted as a good



BOBBY BLUEBELL doesn't dress like a pop star. Corduroy trousers, Mosh Puppies and lumber jacket shirts. There's no Bluebell image to go with



EVERYBODY'S SOMEBODY'S BLUEBELL

Paolo Hewitt gets hooked on classic pop, Eighties style, from Scotland's BLUEBELLS. Snaps by Tom Sheehan



record and we shouldn't have to rely on what's in vogue at the time."

You shouldn't *have* to, but you're going to have to.

"The best groups transcend it anyway. See, we love that Chas and Dave song at the moment, and it's nothing to do with the fact that it's catchy, it's just a great bass line.

"I don't like any group in particular, but if they have a good song then we're not going to say, 'Well I don't like it because that group hasn't got a good image or that group's not

hip'. Just say Modern Romance, by some miracle, brought out a good song. People should say it's a good song and not worry about the fact that the guy is a prat.

"The trouble with that is ABC. They totally destroy all my opinions. I can't stand them, even though I suppose it's a good song, I just don't like it. I don't think it's sincere."

But in the flashy pop Eighties, I tell Bobby, image is essential to any band wanting to make an impression.

"I don't think they do," he

replies in his fast Scottish accent. "You'd be surprised. Think of all the people who buy The Face and the NME, and then think of the hundreds and thousands who buy records. There's a massive difference. You may get the initial push by being in fashion, but look at Blue Rondo. They got enough push to get into the top fifty, but they haven't got a good enough song or a good enough performance to get it further in the charts. They can't catch the imagination of the public."

"Are lyrics important to you?" questions Crowley, his mouth on overtime as usual. "Depends on the band," replies Bobby. "You write about what you're interested in. If Clare Grogan was interested in politics she's write about it. But she's not. And if Nick Hayward was interested in the people of El Salvador, I'm sure he'd write about it. But he's not. It depends on your circle of friends. What we write about is our circle of friends almost exclusively. You don't mention names, but write about what they've done.

"Kevin Rowland said it as well, writing about personal politics. You don't have to mention Maggie Thatcher and Reagan or a country to have a political song. That's Joe Strummer's problem, Paul Weller as well I suppose, because that really dates a song if you mention specifics in it, a specific time or place."

At the mention of Weller's name, Crowley goes in for the kill, citing "Down In The Tube Station" as just one example of the timeless quality of Weller's

political songs. Bobby waits for him to finish, agrees with him and says, "show your intelligence in a song. There's no excuse for banality."



BOBBOY BLUEBELL wants to be a pop star. Badly. Why? "Och, the money and the fame and the girls," he says frankly (well he is half Italian). "It's true. I don't write songs to express my art and all that. I do it because I like to get up onstage and play songs and you can't do that unless you've got good songs."

Bobby Bluebell and his mates are going to be pop stars. They write pop songs with great titles ("One Last Love Song", "Everybody's Somebody's Fool"), great melodies ("Some Sweet Day"), "Wishful Thinking") and play them with an unforced empathy with the pop tradition. In fact Bobby Bluebell often wishes he wrote "Sugar, Sugar" by the Archies, or at least played in the original Monkees.

Instead he and the Bluebells are now on tour with Haircut One Hundred again, picking up rave reviews and front covers,

and playing cover versions of songs like The Cure's "Boys Don't Cry".

"What's happened in the independent boom," says Bobby, "is that lots of great songs have been recorded really badly. So if we got to the stage where we were really big it'd be great, sort of like a mission. I've got hundreds of songs at home on the Dead Shit label, or whatever, with really great words and melodies that haven't been done justice. Absolute goldmine."

The Bluebells are poised on the brink and they know it. A few days after talking with Bobby, Mark Wilson, their manager, comes down from Glasgow to have a cup of coffee and sort out the deals they've been offered.

"It's ridiculous," he says.

"You go into their offices and say you want £70,000. They offer you £10,000 and then you spend the next two hours trying to get to £50,000, which they were going to give you anyway. The first one to say, 'Good morning, we offer you £50,000' and don't mess around, we'll go with."

As for Bobby, how does he feel about impending Bluebells success?

"Depends on who you talk to," he says nonchalantly.

Tuesday night I was talking to Gary Kemp (another admirer), and he was really giving us huge heads. Saying daft things like he wants us to go on

Reformation, which I thought was hilarious because you can

imagine us with Greek biondini and muscledbound guys, but he was laughing at that as well.

"He was saying that's why he wanted us because he's sick of it as well and that's why Spandau are dressing down. He realises what I was saying about the worth of good tunes and songs, and how dangerous it is to get caught up in a fashion. It's just a sure way of getting a good year out of it, and that's the end of it.

"He realises that, and even a month ago we would have been jumping for joy and running round each others' houses and getting drunk at such praise. But now... say we got offered £20,000 we think that's not enough now. I would have been killing mothers for that last year. That's dead frightening and that's the only thing I've got against it. But it's dead funny when you see people like Bananarama worrying about whether their record is going to go into the charts next week.

"I know people like Mark would worry about it, but I know the rest of us are not sufficiently self-centred enough to bother. We're not particularly worried about it. Being big is really silly."

He bursts into laughter at the absurdity of stardom. "I think we've convinced everyone and I think it's out of our hands now already. In fact, I know it's out of our hands already."

Some sweet day the Bluebells will see how far it's gone.



IT TOOK me back to school, it did. A mountain of tapes and hundreds of bands and hours of listening, and I was reminded of nothing so much as Gerard Manley Hopkins, poet, and his theory of inscape.

Inscape: the way in which outer appearances can suddenly illuminate the real uniqueness, the soul maybe, of any living thing. You know how an unconscious smile or a spontaneous gesture can tell you something of the real nature of another person. Well, now apply the principle to music; how its outer characteristics should guide the listener to an individual life-force within it its motivating spirit.

Unfortunately, too many young bands have no motivating spirit at all, content to copy, or deal with the superficial aspects of music-making. Their gestures are empty, their flesh is in the pan, because there's no substance, no living spark... no soul!

Toiling into the early hours, looking for music of confidence, passion and distinctiveness proved a largely unrewarding search. Most of these people could do worse than take a crash course in Hopkins. If he was around today, he wouldn't have found his notion of inscape confirmed in many of this week's tape releases. In the end, I could find little that yelled out: "What I do is me; for that I came!"

Zoot And The Roots

ONE of the most professional offerings of the week came from Scarborough five-piece Zoot and the Roots, a funk-orientated dance band with flair and an attractive humour. There's a definite sense of purpose at work here; a determination to avoid the clichés of conventional funk, using it as a musical basis for something light-hearted and individual to the band. As a non-funk-fan, I can see this appealing beyond the normal audience.

What impresses most is the care that's gone into these songs. The arrangements tread a happy line between control and exuberance, giving varied duties to the sax and trumpet — from lead lines to snappy punctuation. The selection opens with an intro number used at gigs. "As yet we haven't thought of a title", the band tell us — well, since it begins with a cry of "Zoot and the Roots", and proceeds instrumentally, they could always call it that. "Zoot and the Roots": A warm, happy piece of music with jiggling rhythms and brass and guitar alternately leading the melody, it's as bright as the moment in the morning when you draw the curtains back and see the sun shining.

Next, a guess. Who's "Ronnie Get Your Gun" about? Uncompromisingly danceable, it interprets the lyrical idea with staccato burts on the inchline: "Shoot!" Looser, but still irresistible in a twitchy, hiccuppy way is "Hey Joe" (not the "Hey Joe"), and "Sock It To Em JB", a live favourite, wraps the tape up in good spirits, a perky song with clipped brass, spry, sprightly guitar and an infectious, comfortably familiar ring to it.

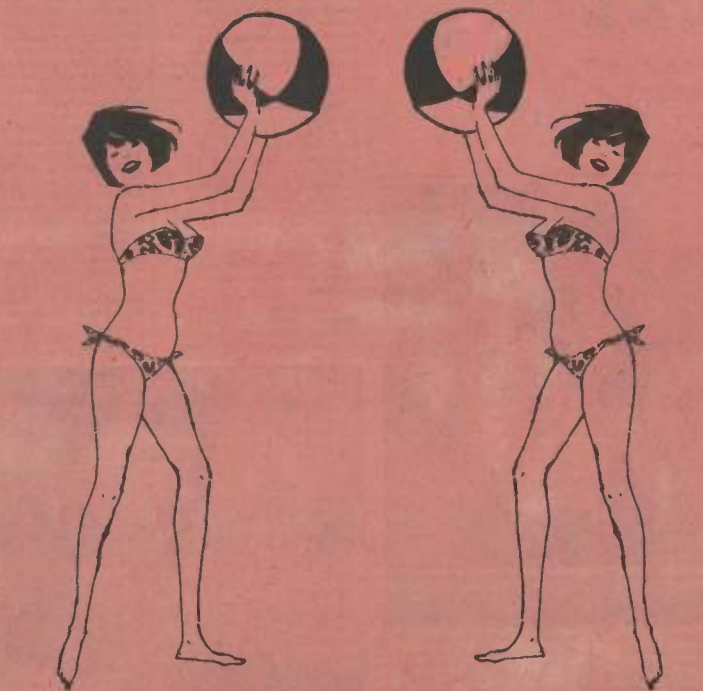
More critically, Zoot and the Roots could pay more attention to their lyrics. The possibility of a song like "Ronnie Get Your Gun" affords more than a bit of huffing and puffing, and while the nature of the music automatically restricts any great lyrical extravaganzas, a little more imagination could work wonders.

It's Blair

TWO things attracted me. One was the name of the band. The other was the letter they sent with the tape. There was nothing to tell me which of the three actually wrote it. He apologised for a "rough recording on an equally rough two

CAROL CLERK
reviews tapes
sent in by
'undiscovered' bands

PLAYBACK



track", but spent more time and space worrying about balliffs coming to possess everything in his flat and vowing to see "Kend wiped off the face of the earth" than telling us about the band.

A Folkstone trio, It's Blair interest me for their ability to sound dangerously disturbed, right on the edge, the vocals delivered with the hidden desperation of a man who is about to have his belongings carted away by balliffs, the notes he sings accordingly peculiar, and the synth used to help create an unsettling texture rather than swirling off on its own.

The gem in here is "Other Side". It carries shades of the Animals circa "We Gotta Get Out Of This Place", but bears just the right element of oddity/insanity. "Burning" would almost compare if it didn't tinkle too much and on "I Need To Know" the vocals are too delicately frosted and the rhythms too clipped and mechanical. A little more growl on the bass, more unassuming suggestion in the vocals and a few rough edges might do some justice to a song that's basically quite hypnotic.

It's Blair want to re-record these tracks. If they do, they should concentrate on their *pervers* qualities; the songs could so easily take a coat of gloss... and it would polish 'em off.

The Epics

TOGETHER from June '81 to January '82, the Epics get together occasionally these days

"for laughs". A Basildon outfit, their main claim to fame has been "half a dozen gigs at the Basildon Highway"; their president boast that they "never gave in to synthesizers and drum machines".

I found the tape somewhat confusing, the order and titles seemingly mixed up. But the two tracks which best sum up their potential — and their failings — are "No Reward" and another which could be "Murder Is Murder" or "Boy With The Evil Eye", depending on whether the information in the letter or the tape is correct.

"No Reward" evokes a languid, late summer feel with its slipping/skipping/sliding rhythms, veering towards reggae, and danceable in a laid-back way. Still it lacks a real direction, a proper intention, for all its delicious atmosphere; it almost registers but doesn't quite make it.

"Murder Is Murder" impresses for its internal builds of power and a sax that sounds capable of any mood, but it all meanders along too freely for its own good. There are two separate hooks, for instance. I'd rather see the band going for one theme and building on it. Good ideas are too often obscured by detail, like a river in its late stages complicated by its own tributaries.

The Last Rites

KINGSTON-Surbiton three-piece The Last Rites seem obsessed with endings of one sort or another, reflecting them with suitably dispirited songs.

The vocalist sounds as if the weeping and the wailing's already got to him, if not quite the gnashing of teeth — a kind of one between Joey Ramone on downers and a wide-eyed and very legless Andy Fairweather-Low. Truly awful, the vocals rise on rhythms that are strong by suggestion as opposed to brute force.

"All Good Things Come To An End" gives us a lighter, a most bouncy intro, strange in an individual way, leading into a song built on one simple idea — carried out effectively. (Catching seems the wrong word in connection with this band.)

The danger for The Last Rites is the danger of slipping into the self-conscious down-mouthed morbidity of a hundred other bands. On "The World Below", they do. An experiment in atmosphere, it's a tedious song without any purposeful theme to hold the interest. But if their set contains more numbers of the calibre of the first two here, they'd be well worth a visit.

The Palookas

THE five-piece Palookas from Stoke Newington have offered quite a variety of songs for our scrutiny, the three tracks quite different in mood and delivery and degrees of success. I can smell a potential hit single in the shape of "Was A Time", a jaunty little curiosity; cute but not cutesy with punchy, popping rhythms, a cleverly attractive hook on the chorus and a

deft touch of piano from 17-year-old keyboard player Trudy Holt. Well-crafted, intelligent pop... could be the future of the band.

"Shake The Collar" opens with enthusiastic drums and a bubbling bass riff that carries the song along while oddly disjointed vocal lines slot together on top. The impact depends on melodic repetition which is fine if the line is strong to begin with and the landscape lively behind it. In this case, the Palookas just about get away with it.

They don't get away with "Old Lie". It rolls and rumbles along without actually going anywhere, like the band took a walk into a maze and couldn't quite find the way out.

The Famous Five

THE Famous Five centre on the doings of one Joey Parratt, scourge of the South Wales Echo and a modern day Pied Piper, threatening to lead us all clapping and dancing into a new world of "fantasy rock". Or so the letter, postmarked Barry, South Glamorgan, would have us believe.

Visions of demons and wizards and the usual images sprang unpleasantly to mind; were demolished by the simple rock 'n' roll vigour of "Come Silent The World", a commendably tuneful and vibrant composition. The other tracks, though, are straining their necks for a look-in and ending up only with an attack of cramp.

"No Peace For The Wicked" pledges its being to one fairly ordinary guitar riff, and it could do without the big harmonies too. "Rehling The Roof" comes too close to Gillan for comfort, despite its peppy thrust.

More songs like "Come Silent" could lead the Famous Five into their biggest adventure yet. The rest need a re-think. To their credit, though, the band have steered away from the horrendous extravaganzas of others of their ilk, and even as they are, can be perfectly capable of winning hearts in the hard rock camp.

The Table Committee

FORMERLY Connexion, Nottingham's Table Committee use synthesizers more intelligently than any band I've heard for a long time. "People should need to get a licence to play those things," I've remarked loudly, indignantly and often — but if more people used them like this, it wouldn't be necessary.

The Table Committee manage to explore all kinds of different ideas without losing the identity of the band, their songs ranging from "The End Of All Songs" — a recitation, the spoken words turning into singing, set over rising and swelling synth patterns (an effective idea) — to the tuneful, almost punky, almost poppy "Ruins Of The Mind".

"Departure" is a singalong, too, in a most unusual way; and "Shadows" offers a clinging, accessible chorus that says a lot for the band's ability to reach a wide audience.

On the negative side, "Save My Life", quite poppy but relatively insubstantial, needs a stronger pull, and on "Chaos", the band abandon melody and accessibility altogether in search of cacophony.

Generally, though, it's an interesting and inspiring collection of songs with an indication that there may be bigger things coming up on the Table Committee's agenda.

Send tapes to: **PLAYBACK**, MM, Berkshire House, 168-173 High Holborn, London WC1V 7AU

FUZZ IN A MILLION

SET in an immovable rut during the winter of 1979, two-thirds of the Nottingham enigmas, One Million Fuzz Tone Guitars decided that there was only one way out of the depression. Robert, blunt and as blatant as ever, immediately slammed his hands down on the table.

Crowe, always the more sensitive and inhibited, emulated the action slowly. A strange shiver went through their two bodies as the seance took shape. The shivers turned to violent shock as a full-blooded voice began to speak slowly and confidently.

Then it was over. Crowe and Robert rose slowly and went their separate ways for a couple of days. When they returned to each other they were refreshed and full of inspired ideas; the voice had set them on an unpredictable, even volatile path.

Three years later Crowe and Robert are sat around another table - with your humble scribe and their latest recruit, Chris Cellupica. Although the scene isn't as dramatic, there is an immediate shock in store - for me.

"It was definitely Jim Morrison talking," Robert tells me, his face not flinching in the slightest. "And as a result of that conversation we came up with 'Rock Section'."

I gasp, taken aback, not at the situation he has just been describing - but because I've just discovered that one of my favourite songs by The Colours Out Of Time, isn't actually by The Colours Out Of Time after all.

"It's true," Robert tells me with a look that defies the slightest contradiction. "We got 'Rock Section' lyrically and musically from that seance." [Editorial note: If this story sounds familiar, Anti Pasti made an identical claim in our feature two weeks ago].

PERHAPS at this point I should introduce you more generally to the two bands mentioned. Both have had records out on the Monstarkit in Orbit label, both possess that

undefinable talent to create stirring music.

But whereas The Colour's progress has already been fairly well-documented (check Lynden Barber's piece last year), the Fuzz Tones are still largely unknown.

And that shouldn't be the case. Through their preposterous use of stylophones as a major instrument, the Fuzz Tones are now coming up with some of the most sinister music to be found - anywhere.

"Initially, the idea was to go out and make as much noise as possible, and annoy as many people as possible," strong words from Robert, who refuses resolutely to discuss what he's been doing for the five years previous to the Fuzz Tones. "Look that's irrelevant," he shrugs. "The main point is that we emerged seriously last year because every other group we listened to was coming up with the most atrocious garbage imaginable."

"We were a positive counter to the white funk thing," Crowe chips in. "We went out and did a demo which was the exact opposite of that. Bizarre thing was people actually liked it."

I was one of those people. I found the way in which the Fuzz Tones huddled crazy influences together in dazzling, albeit digressive sounds irresistible.

"Although we ignore all trends, we do keep returning to those things which are closest to our hearts," Chris admits. "Right through punk to today I don't think any of us have ever stopped listening to people like the Velvet Underground and the Doors."

But although these are admirable influences, the Fuzz Tones don't actually dip them off. No, they have pushed

Conversation from beyond the grave with ONE MILLION FUZZ TONE GUITARS. Spirit guide: Frank Worrall. Special photographic effects: Bryn-Jones

forward with a laid-back, sleazy style of their own - which allows for certain other styles to seep through now and again.

"We're extreme and proud of it," Crowe tells me. "We try desperately to avoid getting into a rut. We're constantly changing our music."

The Fuzz Tones' first single, "Hawkeye," was not as extreme as the band would have liked. "In retrospect, it was too commercial," Crowe claims. "None of these is much more out in a funk."

I'D AGREE with that. The Fuzz Tones hold their music from an inextinguishable foundation of frustration, violence and dark humour. "I get frustrated and bitter when I see rubbish selling in vast numbers," says chief lyricist Robert.

"It annoys and saddens me that the public is taken in by hype. At least our music is a credible alternative to all that nonsense."

But will people necessarily see or understand the subtle attraction and humour within your music?

"If they tried, yes," Chris affirms. "But the reason people don't see things like subtle humour is because they don't listen to the words in the first place."

"They're programmed to looking out for a dense ball before lyrical content," he adds. "I'm not at all sure that the general public is as intelligent as Chris believes but I would like the Fuzz Tones to be part of the heart on a wider scale. To mould them."

"Look," Chris responds. "I have a very low opinion of Nottingham that matter - us and Posh! Zoo. They're about as widely known as 'jazz innovators', but in comparison to us they're as dated as the hills."

"So surely it's about time that people paid us a bit more attention if they're talking about innovation. Do you get my drift?"

Indeed I do.

Getting by (with a little help...)

Poor old Ian Pye doesn't know how to cope with listening to a pile of cassettes for Playback. So recoiling from giving the "pat on the back", the "shove in the right direction" he assumes we're desperate to receive, he opts for another piece of smart-ass journalism relying a little too heavily on the Roget's Thesaurus at his side, that ends up saying far more about him than any of the tapes reviewed.

Yes, the rise of the independents was a positive thing, but you miss the point Ian. One thing you have that the independents don't is mass circulation. Maybe you don't like it but you took the job.

And while you're worrying about letting your readership know that at least you're on the side of the angels, our problem is breaking even on a bunch of cassettes. The namecheck's fine but we're not asking to be patronised — that sounds like your hangup.

For any of your views, complimentary, derogatory or just plain irrelevant, we'd have opted for you just printing an address so that anyone with any interest could get in touch. If you do want to be useful, cut the soul searching and stick to information. Now I'm giving the advice. I won't let it bother me. — MIKE ADCOCK (The Lemon Pop Band), Bedford Road, St. Albans, Herts.



Send letters, complaints, abuse, plaudits etc to Backlash, MM, Berkshire House, 168-173 High Holborn, London WC1V 7AU

Frankly, Todd

HAVING agreed a lot with the criticism levelled at your reviews recently (eg Asle and Jethro), I must say that Frank Worrall's opinions on Todd Rundgren (pictured left) were a refreshing breeze through your pages. I went along to The Venue in Victoria not knowing quite what to expect, but having seen Todd three times previously that was hardly surprising.

My initial reaction was one of disappointment, especially when the amateurish meanderings of his first video attempts appeared on the screen to a Debussy backing track. However, as the evening went on one objectively questioned the reasons for liking Todd and in my case it's primarily because the man is always prepared to experiment. I finally came out of the Venue having had a thoroughly good evening.

But anyway back to the main point of this letter — have more "Frank"ness.

— STEPHEN CROSSIE, Parkway, Dorking, Surrey



Watching the defectives...

DARLINGS.

So enjoyed the competition entry of a day in the life of Elvis Costello. I must say I never realised Elvis' wife was a budding journalist — it must have been his wife who wrote it, sillies — who else could even begin to guess at such personal details of a relationship?

I'm sure the subject must have enjoyed it enormously — we all know how keen he is to prattle on about his wife and son.

More in the same vein please — perhaps an investigation into Paul Weller's bowel habits? We really need to know these things.

P.S. I'm sure the first Mrs Costello was so glad to hear how loyal her ex-husband is. — ALISON, Horn Lane, Acton.

Who needs real life on TV?

CLIVE Assender writes well — although language freaks wouldn't call all his sentences sentences.

However, as the writer of winning stuff on TV and the music scene (rather than the POP scene PLEASE), it was content rather than form that struck me as most short-sighted; or did the "Rock Writer Contest" in fact set out in the beginning to laud the originator of the most CRAZY approach?

Of course, there is no doubt that TV presentation of the music scene could and should be changed for the better. Clive Assender's idea of attempted back to basics,

however, is one change we don't need.

For although the "Cine Verite" school he wishes to emulate has produced a number of successful films (notably French) the viewer eventually arrives at the saturation point when he fails to see why the cameras are there at all.

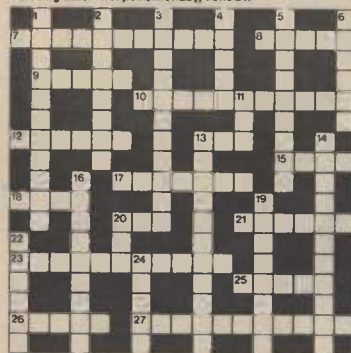
Why see real life on the TV screen when you can see it with real eyes — and perhaps even support the local sounds around at the same time? Or is Clive's addiction to the silver screen so complete that even the most scorable sights in life seem instantly more thrilling on TV? I might need the box in my routine like I need my coffee, but he must need it like

something a lot stronger...

Really living is feeling the dry, piss-rotten air on your skin; smelling the sweat, hair lacquer, urine, vomit and old shoes (sweetened with perfume if it's the Ladies); sliding on anything but a banana skin on the floor; and waiting for other people to piss off (literally) — and that's bloody great camera, although God knows how it's going to — so you can bolt yourself in the case and send pints of beer back where they came from. Real life is the same, but it's a lot more dramatic and more sensitive than anything on the box, more ecstatic and more bleak, more and more crass. — CATHY JAKOWSKI

PRIZE CROSSWORD

● The first correct solution opened a prize of £25 record token. Send your entry to Prize Crossword, Number 15, MM, Berkshire House, 168-173 High Holborn, London WC1V 7AU. Closing date: First post, Monday, June 21.



The winner of Crossword Number 12 is Philip Hulme, 8 Stoke Hill Crescent, Exeter, Devon. Solution — ACROSS: 8 The Professionals; 9 Indiana; 10 Leah; 11 Laine; 14 Wig; 16 Hair; 17 Lynron; 17 Roll; 20 Chapter; 21 Plug; 24 Defects; 25 Anna; 26 Not; 28 Midem; 29 Shee; 30 Classic; 31 Pamela Stephenson. DOWN: 1 Shakata; 2 Spinner; 3 Aawad; 4 Modis; 5 Fleetwood; 7 Fun Boy Three; 8 The Gift; 12 Hippies; 13 Robert Fripp; 18 Spanish; 19 Rusty Egan; 22 Radio One; 23 Anderson; 27 Pense; 30 Cale.

ACROSS

- 7 Truck and car on "Into The Mystic" and "Beautiful Vision" (3,8)
- 8 Pub party for the pair who had a hit with "One Step Further" (5)
- 9 Repetitive base part done about right (5)
- 10 She is an Altered Image and altered Carol G. Regan (5,6)
- 12 Gene's very loud arrangement for Asia's record label (6)
- 13 Word for an electric pick-up and a creepy crawly (3)
- 15 Garrett's changed life (4)
- 17 Metal percussive instrument on Japan's album? (3,4)
- 18 Quiet act of the musician's score (4)
- 20 Adam Ant and Nicole's label — two chords? (3)
- 21 — — — injection (Straight into the mind) (6)
- 23 Ex Soft Machine member with single "At Last I Am Free" and LP "Nothing Can Stop Us" (6,5)
- 25 Object of admiration — a quiet pun I make (3-2)
- 26 Association of working musicians (5)
- 27 H.M. band on "Four Cuts" with a precious stone on top? (7,4)

DOWN

- 1 Lustful new male on "Little Criminals" and "Sail Away" (5,6)
- 2 He champions undiscovered and up-and-coming bands on his radio show (4,4)
- 3 Easy brains on "Promised You A Miracle" (7,6,5)
- 4 I dine out with this type of record label (5)
- 5 Ex-Fil. bass player with a Reggae quiver? (3,6)
- 6 The Sisters on "Don't Love Me Too Hard" (6)
- 11 Rock performance that's partly a giggle (3)
- 13 Ex-Gillan guitarist in Electric Gypsies (6,5)
- 14 Singer/song writer with a small microphone and two other males! (4,7)
- 16 Put on act for the visual, not musical, side of a live rock performance (5-4)
- 19 Mike wild about the female singer on "Cambodia" (3,5)
- 20 Carve a record out of vinyl? (3)
- 22 Band on "Hardware" and "Pain Killer", an early spring flower from the continent? (6)
- 24 The Photos' Miss Wu from the West End, why? (5)

Gardeners' world

THIS was going to be a detailed recital of all your current shortcomings but since you apparently are so complacent that you'd have dismissed most of it as the senile ramblings of yet another refugee from the Sixties, I'll be brief. In common with many others of my generation, I'd always regarded MM as the quality music weekly. This was still true as recently as the late Seventies, but it isn't any longer. Why not?

1. Obsession with new bands, most of which sink without trace.
2. Shameful treatment of folk and jazz.
3. Cheap jibes at established artists, and readers who write in support of them.
4. Introduction of non-music sections — films, video etc — see (2) above. What next — a three page gardening section?

5. Loss of virtually all your decent writers and their replacement by smug fashion-followers.

I realise that your circulation probably relies partly on a buoyant current music scene and that you've a vested interest in trying to promote one. However, it would do you greater credit if you were to take a stand against the torrent of mediocrity currently being produced, instead of pretending that today's output is top while and exciting as at any time in the past. Will The Jam ever write a memorable melody? — sound

politics doesn't equal decent music!

Only Allan Jones and Patrick Humphries are apparently immune from this massive decline. Otherwise, large sections of each issue are devoted to writers' personal crusades on behalf of obscure nonentities, most of whom mercifully make their only impact on the record stores' bargain bins.

I can only assume that Colin Irwin — whose judgement I once admired enormously — either still has his ears full of "Tinashe" gunge or has had an important section of his brain removed.

Sadly, the MM which was capable of recognising the worth of, say, "Hissing Of Summer Lovers", "Kate And

Anna McGarrigle", "East Side Story", and "Rise Up Like The Sun" is virtually dead. — JOHN CLAYBROUGH, Green Lane, Lofthouse, Wakefield, W. Yorks.

1. A lot of us think that "new" bands might just have something new or refreshing to offer, which explains the coverage.

2. Pass.

3. It's called humour. A joke. Comedy. Laughter. Not to be taken seriously.

4. You obviously don't watch TV, go to the cinema or gaze in at Rumble's shop windows. Fine. Have a nice life.

5. If you read closely you'd see that writers are taking stands against the "torrent of mediocrity".

Poets' corner

HERE is an excellent poem (relevant too!) for your consistently insipid Poets' Corner — cf. Miles Collins and Hemsworth!

**Soldiers are callous
Hard skinned.
(Animal).**

**But you ask any butler
If they're not squishy inside.
(Vegetable).**

**Bullets are callous
Hard skinned.
(Mineral).**

No, this is not derivative of the latest album by Messrs Strummer, Jones etc. Alas, it was written before. So with that I say goodbye in the hope that your reaction to big-headed poets is at least comparable with bloody awful poets — Puberty Postal!

Love and kisses — ROLAND HOWARD, Luxemburg Gardens, Hammersmith

David Fricke talks drums with THE BONGOS

CLOTHES, Steve Strange has proved, do not make the artist. But you can certainly tell a Bongo by his record collection.

Consider the two tall cabinets packed with albums, meticulously filed alphabetically by artist and chronologically within the artist, in the late afternoon sun-kissed living room of guitarist Richard Barone and bassist Rob Norris' cosy thrift store-furnished Hoboken, New Jersey, walkup.

Eddie Cochran is just down the shelf from Captain Beefheart. Sloussie and the Banshees share space with T. Rex, Television, and Sparks. Eno, Big Star, the Velvet, and essential Motown are all present and accounted for. And that does not include a crate-full of Beatles bootlegs on the floor.

"Hey, that was really one of his better albums," exclaims Barone, his dark cherubic Italian features alight with enthusiasm as he comes to the defence of Donovan's "Cosmic Wheels."

Conversation turns to the merits of Iggy's last few records, Lou Reed's "The Blue Mask," all things Beefheart (Norris has a "Trout Mask" button pinned on the breast pocket of his dungaree jacket), Neil Young, and the hoary old Stones.

Norris also blows a horn on behalf of fellow Jersey heroes the Feelies and makes a public service announcement to promote a new album by Intriguing Athens, Georgia, instrumental combo Love Tractor. Obviously, the Bongos take their listening seriously. And when they listen to music, they listen to it all.

"We like every era of rock 'n' roll you could name," declares Norris, a native New Yorker with a bright but slightly crooked smile that breaks the thin, gaunt blond lines of his face. "There's always good stuff somewhere."

"People that specialise too much are just doing themselves in."

Barone follows through. "That's a bad trend, this whole heavy punk attitude of wiping out everything that came before 1977."

"That's like saying 'Why read Shakespeare instead of Tom Wolfe,'" returns Norris. "There's good stuff, going all the way back."

On the surface, that seems strange talk from a band being hailed at home and abroad as something very, very, very new. True, echoes of pop's illustrious if not always timeless past ring loud and clear in the tasty folk-rock and vaguely psychedelic hints of Richard Barone's songs, the bright argumentative jangle of the guitars, and the band's celebratory player-fan garage thrash.

Yet from their 1980 demo tape-cum-debut single "Glow In The Dark"/"Telephoto Lens," through the recent Fetish mini-LP "Time And A River" (issued in the US as a 15-song banquet including all the previous British 45s as "Drums Along The Hudson"), the Bongos add Frank Giannini on drums and recent recruit James Mastro on rhythm guitar — have always striven for an immediacy in sound and vision that already characterises the band in the dB's, Squeezie, Sloussie, the Fleischtones, and the late great Rockpile, etc. etc.

You hear it in their assertive humbleness of Barone's tunes and Norris and Giannini's danceable propulsion. With minimalist streamlining and cheery enthusiasm, the Bongos prove a pop song really can physically grab you by the collar and shake you out of your post-punk funk.

Certainly in America where Styx and Journey rule the airwaves and FM radio is usually afraid to waive the rules, the Bongos have scored considerable airtime in the last six months. First, their devotional reading of Marc Bolan's effin boogie "Mambo Sun" sneaks on to the playlist of New York AOR radio powerhouse WNEW-FM. Soon the station dares to name the Bongos "Breakout Artists Of The Week," for the import single "The Bulrushes", no doubt subdued by the song's spooky acid-folk rush and fortified choirboy harmonies.



BONGOS OVER HOBOKEN

THE Bongos buzz spreads even further with the release here of "Drums" and the inclusion of the UK single "Zebra Club", a moody reggae-like musing on clubland romance with a gripping chorus and a scrappy Barone guitar break.

Then, much to the group's astonishment, they go on tour opening for the B-52's and discover people not only know who the Bongos are, but know the songs well enough to sing along. And contractually, the group is not even allowed to be advertised on the bill.

"The momentum really started when we put out our first single," notes Barone, grateful for this snowball of minor, then major successes that followed by only a few months the band's formation in late 1979.

A typical example of the way the US record industry ignores its young, the Bongos got their first break when Rod Pearce of Fetish Records signed them on the strength of a show he caught at Maxwell's, a small, highly regarded Hoboken niter that doubles as the Bongos' rehearsal space and one of the New York metro area's most musically astute clubs, booking more local bands than the bigger Manhattan rooms care to shake a stick at.

"But this LP is a big step for us here," Barone continues, "because

it's the widest distribution we've ever had in America. Even if it's small potatoes, selling 5000 albums, it's not that bad. That's all the record company pressed. And that's more than anything we've gotten out before."

The timing could not have been better. Young middle America is just now discovering in the Bongos the same modern pop punk and rejuvenated sense of rock adventure they already like in the Go-Go's, Human League, Police, Waitresses, and XTC.

The grand irony is that the Bongos have more respectably to do with rock's past than most of the dinosaur boogie monsters they have for competition. Because they take selected pieces of yesterday — the ringing Byrds' "Beatles" guitar chimes, the full-throttle glam bash, even the subtle Indian buzz of Rob Norris' "star" in the sprightly instrumental "Burning Bush" — and reinvent and reinvent them, creating a new sum total of familiar but not tiresome, clichéd parts.

They approached making "Time And A River" ("Drums Along The Hudson" with the same determination and vigor. How else do you account for the fact that they cut 12 basic tracks the very first day they went into the studio?

The studio we used was the one on John Fox's estate in Surrey," Barone explains. "It was magic, really. The first time we walked into the studio, the place was hit

by lightning and all the lights went out. Then when the power came on, we got right to work and did the whole thing. The funny thing was, we were booked just to do a single."

The group worked a little magic of their own during the session. They recorded acoustic guitars in the kitchen, miking them from inside the cabinets to enhance the echo. They tried putting a guitar amp in the dining room and setting up wine glasses on a table to catch the rattle as they vibrated from the sound of the drums.

They even bought in Throbbing Gristle pin-up Cossey Fanni-Tutti to blow mutant cornet on "Three Wise Men". (Cossey and the other Gristles, you may remember, joined the Bongos on stage during their appearance at last year's disastrous all-New York Taking Liberties revue at the Rainbow.)

IN THE beginning, of course, the magic worked in simpler ways. "There was a vague attempt at doing dance-rock music," says Barone, who is of Florida birth and first met Norris in 1977 at CBGB.

"This was at a time when we were very influenced by the B-52's. When they first came to New York and played, we met them and thought what they were doing was amazing. They brought a real dance spirit to the city."

"I first saw them at CBGB and until then, no one ever danced at CBGB. They had a power that forced people to dance and we wanted to do something like that — without imitating them. Which is one reason why we never used keyboards."

"It started when Richard wrote five songs in one day," notes Norris, who once did time with drummer Giannini in a weirdo rock ensemble called Tin Can. "We had played together in another band with this guy Glenn Morrow who now has this group the Individuals. And Richard said 'I've got these songs.'"

"So we decided to just do them. Maxwell's had this back room, a kind of storage area, and the owner Steve Fallon said we could set up a PA and rehearse there. And that was that. Richard had these five songs and we just jumped into them."

"From there, it just went. At the same time, Glenn was trying to put the Individuals together. I remember there was one day where we were helping Glenn with his band. It was Richard and I, Frank, Jeffrey Lee Pierce from the Gun Club and Peter Holsapple of the dB's kicking around Glenn's songs in this room, actually a shed filled with tools."

It is not particularly amazing that the Bongos are the product, not of smug sophisticated Manhattan, but of Hoboken, a small satellite town just across the Hudson River. Many New Yorkers, including a surprising number of musicians, have found in North Jersey burghs like Hoboken an attractive refuge from blackmail rents and inner city bull.

You can actually hear in Bongos songs like "Glow In The Dark" and "Zebra Club" a relaxing freshness and lack of pretension that comes from living in the shadow as opposed to the belly of the New York beast.

"That's in there," Norris figures, "because if you come back from New York at night, it's still bustling over there. You come over here on the PATH train and walk along the street and it's really quiet. You're really by yourself, not crowded by all the noise and people in Manhattan. Although it is getting harder and harder here to find a parking space for my car."

What is amazing is that the Bongos have survived and prospered, in Norris' words, "amidst a real hideous landscape of bar bands and wet tee shirt contests." No doubt it has something to do with their unflagging optimism and contagious stage energy. Norris tries to come up with a description. The best he can do is the word "positive."

"That's it," echoes Barone. "We want to make a positive projection. Music has all kinds of powers. It can change people's lives, their moods for the days, their moods for an hour. We want to be able to do that, to project a positive feeling."

"That's the way we think," Norris pipes in, "and in these times that's your only option."

Barone has the last word: "You can't hope for too much more." Don't kid yourself. In these fractured pop times, the Bongos are more than most of us could ever hope for.

HOW would you invent a perfect group to embody Britain in the Eighties, with all its problems yet all its hopes for the future? Imagine this: a group that's (a) multi-racial (b) male and female (c) plays reggae and (d) is from Toxteth... there are things about Cross Section that are almost too good to be true: the perfect media find.

Of course, such a phenomenon could never be contrived. The present line-up is almost accidental, the result of a long period of changes through which the group has evolved gradually to what it is today.

The group as it exists now is a relatively new one. It was only during the past year that they've been playing regular gigs under the name Cross Section. And their debut single, recently released as the first record on the Warehouse label (an offshoot of Liverpool's increasingly adventurous Warehouse Club), was recorded by a line-up that had been together only a couple of weeks.

The group are a seven piece: four blacks and three whites; or six men and one girl. Or, to be precise, Graham on lead vocal and acoustic guitar; Junior Spence on drums; Roddie on lead guitar; Neilus on percussion and bongos; Steve on percussion and backing vocals; Julia on flute, saxophone and keyboards; and Lloyd on bass — and Julia's sister Jackie helps out on keyboards for live work. I played safe and opted to talk to just two representatives of the group, who turned out to be Graham and Julia.

We met, appropriately, at the Warehouse Club (which itself caters for a cross-section of Liverpool's public — our interview was punctuated by drum rolls and ear-splitting guitar sounds from the heavy rock group Rage who were the month's current Sunday night residency).

In the course of our conversation both proved to be positive and idealistic about the group but there



their image, had affected their musical identity. Not very much, it would seem: Cross Section music aims for a broader range.

"If someone was to listen to us," says Graham, "we could be from anywhere." Some groups, he admits, are capitalising on recent history but "if anyone said we did I'd disagree. He does feel though that a song like "Psychic Hitmen" though more general in tone, is relevant to the events in question.

But does the group feel no responsibility to reflect the violence of their circumstances in the music?

"There's plenty of bands who are violent," says Graham, as we suffer a particularly strident piece of guitar from the other side of the door. "We're pleasantly militant, if you like."

"If we're not aggressive that suits me fine," says Julia "because I think when it starts sounding masculine then I couldn't play it."

"Can't women be aggressive then?" "I think men and women's aggression can be quite different — there are bound to be things I feel aggressive about that Graham can't appreciate."

This is one reason why Julia, in spite of having written for her last band, is happy to let Graham take responsibility for Cross Section songs. She writes from a specifically feminist viewpoint which might be inappropriate, or too extreme, for this particular band. Graham's aim is to express a point of view applicable to every member of the band while ensuring that no voice is too dominant: the aim in the lyrics as in the music is to keep a balance.

CROSS Section songs use situations and images that seem clichéd, but with subtlety and with their own voice. "Wake Up In The Morning" for example seems at first like a blues lament, updated: "Wake up in the morning/Feeling tired and hungry/Ain't got no money, ain't got no job to do." Yet it turns out to have a positive message.

And a song from the Peel session — "The Dole", with its jokey refrain of "Come on, sign on" — is "like a spoof", but with an underlying seriousness. "Make the best of it, that's the point," explains Graham.

BUBBLING UP FROM THE MELTING POT

Penny Kiley takes soundings from CROSS SECTION

the resemblance ends. In manner and appearance they couldn't be more different from one another. One is small, white, female, quietly spoken and articulate, the other large, brown, male, expansive in every sense of the word.

The two are representative of the group only in as much as each member is totally different. "It's not that we're the token woman and the token black," explains Julia, "just that we're the ones that tend to talk."

Graham imagines the possibilities: "When you talk to Steve, he'll sit there for five minutes before he'll tell you anything. Neil's really into Rasta so he'll try to put that across. Lloyd will come across: 'I play the bass. I like playing the bass and that's where it's at.' Roddie will say 'I don't see the problem really', and Junior, he'll say 'I've got to be off now'..."

The musical backgrounds are as varied as the people, covering a wide range of experience. Julia, for example, has played in a women's band and in various styles including folk rock and jazz, while Junior has played everything from calypso to jazz-funk (and continues to earn a living in a cabaret band), and Lloyd and Graham are the reggae men.

Such differences, whether in

background (musical and ethnic) or in character and outlook, are part of the unique identity of the group, as summed up in their name. And musically the result is as much of a cross section as everything else about the group — a mixture of reggae and more mainstream sounds that has its closest comparison, it must unfortunately be said, in a group like UB40.

"People used to say that a lot," admits Julia, "but I don't think it's a valid comment to make now." Their sound is achieved not through some conscious decision about direction but as the result of hours of "mashing" and improvisation, of continual learning and continual change, with flexibility as the keynote.

Cross Section is, and always will be, a reggae group, not for reasons of image or geography, but simply because that music is Graham's love and it's what he's always wanted to play. "Graham stuck out on this," says Julia.

"It was definitely reggae," agrees Graham "because that's the music, you can put something out across." That doesn't mean it has to be roots though. Cross Section have lost several group members along the

way because of such preconceptions.

As Graham explains: "People have had this attitude — it's got to be roots, man. A lot of guys have got this real hang-up about it. They feel they have to imitate Jamaicans all the time. I can't imitate Jamaicans: my father's Somali and my mother's Irish! And if I sound like I'm from Liverpool that's the way it's going to be" (he certainly does!).

THE obsession with imitating Jamaicans extends into other areas as well, sometimes to the detriment of the music: "They have this idea of people in JA sitting around in furs smoking weed. Okay, in JA they do it while they're rehearsing."

"In the States all the funk musicians are all snorting coke. But in reality you just can't do it — basically it's just your cup of tea or coffee and you just get on with it — or you get nowhere. I've been seen as a snob because of the way I think, but if you want to get anything off the ground you've got to be serious about it."

Graham is single-minded, and is at last seeing the culmination of his ambitions.

"You could say that last year was when we found the real name that we wanted and this year was when we found the line-up. It's only this year that we got the group as we wanted it."

A-side, "Wake Up In The Morning" and "Psychic Hitmen", that showcases two different sides of the group. It's an impressive debut, surprisingly professional even after the promise of the recent Peel session; and "Wake Up In The Morning" in particular is seductively attractive, despite the subject matter (the fashionable burden of unemployment). They might be reminiscent of UB40 at times but they're certainly not miserable.

In a way, their music seems too pleasant. Their recorded songs (both on the single and on the Peel session) are very appealing, while on stage they're relaxed to the point of being laid back: hardly the sort of music you'd expect from the inhabitants of a repressed area. I couldn't help wondering how the shared background of Toxteth, obviously and inevitably touching

"I thought it was something to say." All his songs have something to say: "People have got a choice, if they want to listen to something that doesn't mean anything, but I like to put a meaning across."

That doesn't mean being dry or dogmatic though. "I know what other groups have missed out," says Graham, "the inbetween things — you've got the words and music but there's things in between."

An example is the quiet introduction of the flute at the end of "Psychic Hitmen", a symbol of gentleness to counteract the mental violence that's the subject matter — a solution, but understated. These songs suggest a viewpoint rather than anything else, avoiding the specifically political in terms of raising issues or offering solutions.

If the group believe in anything it's not ideology but idealism. "I feel my songs' purpose strongly," stresses Graham "A song's strong to say something and if that offends people I'm sorry."

And if they stand for anything it's not compromise but tolerance: "taking a cross section — just getting up there and playing — and making it work."

ALBUMS

John Cooper Clarke
ZIP STYLE METHOD
Epic EPC85667

WORDS gush like a haemorrhage; funny words, sad words. Words we use every day, but cleverly rearranged by John Cooper Clarke. He's a card, this Suffolk bard.

The best part of a year in the making, and worth the effort, "Zip Style Method" finds Cooper Clarke back doing what he does best: delivering his poems to a backdrop of tasteful musical accompaniment. Being number one in a field of one led JCC to a state of complacency, but with the rise of opposition like Attila the Stockbroker and Seething Wells, he's had to look to his swinging laurels, and the re-appraisal has paid off.

The punning pyrotechnics of earlier poems like "Majorca" have been replaced by a more deliberate, sensitive choice of words. It's like he's gone from the sunny side of the stone, and lifted it up to see the darker side beneath. Cooper Clarke's been there before, of course, as on the lengthy detour down "Beasley Street". But on "Zip Style Method", the poems are more acute, as on "A Heart Disease Called Love", a touching, bitter love song, soft as a Papal curse.

Musically, "Zip Style" is Cooper Clarke's best album to date. Martin Hannett's Invisible Girls provide just the right swirling, shifting patterns to accentuate Cooper Clarke's choice words. The opening track, "Midnight Shift" demonstrates that, a driving rhythm which amplifies Cooper Clarke's laconic delivery.

The lighter side is still there, though there's none of the lone-line, quick-kill of "Twist", though "The Day My Pad Went Mad" manages to rhyme "ransacked" with "Dhanasked", which is fine by me. "I Travel In Biscuits" takes that ominous occupation into interesting areas, and "The Day The World Stood Still" manages to make the apocalypse sound like fun. "Zip Style Method" is the best blend yet of John Cooper Clarke's clay-pigeon poetry and moody Invisible music. Zip, crackle and pop, "till you drop." — PATRICK HUMPHRIES.

The Carla Bley Band
LIVE!
Watt/12

IF use of the exclamation mark after the title raises expectations, the contents stubbornly deflate them. Quite simply a live set, replete with sweat, occasion and risk, "Live!" might as well have been laid down in the studio track by track. It's clean and casual, excitement severely lacking.

New York apartment music, more than suggested by Bley's last set, "Social Studies", a dispassionate record partially saved by bouts of elegant writing; its follow-up suggests coffee tables.

Carla Bley used to lace her music with the steaming aroma of sex. Now the sex is on the cover, glossy pin-up style. Instead of showing her arms around the listeners she now shakes their hands and smiles politely.

"Live!" has comparatively little of that common Bley commodity "satiety", a point in its favor, though not much else as replacement. Stiff-as-ware jazz-rock rhythms, professionally tidy playing and lightweight themes are the general score, the whole adding up to a depressingly middle-of-the-road spread.

Man-of-the-moon is Gary Valente; his rousing trombone froth on the steamy gospel "The Lord Is Listenin' to Ya, Hallelujah!" borrows the wild dog mood of Mingus and just about saves the day, but the following "Time And Us" is pure Lou Grant theme, a softy toot of minimal interest.

If some angelic patron bangs down the loot for another Jazz Composer's Orchestra bash with the rest of the helm I'll be all ears again. Otherwise it's head down to the pillow. — LYNDEN BARBER.



Plastic apocalypse

Toyah
THE CHANGELING
Safari VOOR 9

AS science fiction turns, with harsh inevitability, into brutal science fact, Toyah's kindergarten fancies and play-pen poetics assume handy aspirations to apocalyptic truths. Like warnings from a plastic womb, her brat babblings burst forth with the upstart authority of some business alliance between John McEnroe and Minnie The Minx; her every single motive and method reducible to a petulant "ME!"

Now all the scare-mongering hoo-ho over morals and meanings is little more than a memory, now Ms Wilcox automatically claims her place in the charts, now pop and politics — always odd bedfellows at the best of times —

no longer even nod to each other before they turn out the light. Toyah's insidious fascism has become frighteningly acceptable.

Denouncing the whole parliamentary business as an older generation's bullshit, her pantomime protest touts her own success as a socialist example. Her naked ambition, her unquenchable greed — acting, advertising, singing, dancing; all conquests for the conquest's sake, are neatly disguised behind a melodramatic conscience as benevolent education. "If I can do it kids, so can you" — but it's really megalomaniac myth-building.

When it comes to manipulation of the public, Toyah makes Clare Grogan look like Loopy Lou, when it comes to brightly-painted hypocrisy, "The Changeling" makes past Toyah product sound as heartfelt as The Clash.

Success may be the sweetest revenge against myriad accusations of plagiarism, but bundles in the bank and a household name can't acquit the debts that "The Changeling" owes to Bowie's "Diamond Dogs", Siouxsie's last three singles, Simple Minds and even, oddly, Dexy's.

"The Changeling" is a classy collage of

other people's ideas shielded by an enormous ego. In some ways it's a cosmic masterpiece but, as any horoscope-hating cynic will tell you, that amounts to nothing more than bunkum contrived to pick the pockets and purse up the souls of impressionable dulleards who need some god to lean on.

"The Changeling" finds Toyah in confident voice, mouthing off her word-heavy arrogance over borrowed riffs and grandiose arrangements to the detriment of any real commitment to songs. There are neat little hooks and the occasional captivating image, but her melting pot of history and fantasy is far too pea-brained, clichéd and cluttered to ever really convince as a symbolic argument for street credibility as a saviour from social decay.

"Make the most of what you've got. Be proud. Be loud. Be heard," Toyah tells us as a lyrical afterthought, but no matter what "The Changeling" seems to be saying, the truth is that Toyah's success draws vampire strength from a worsening world situation and unemployment, nuclear threats, racial unrest and mushrooming poverty as convenient props for her sick masquerade. — STEVE SUTHERLAND.

Cabaret Voltaire
"2X45"

Rough Trade ROUGH 42

PHEW!... Few records ever hit me like this; incinerating preconceptions, snapping modes and meanings, mocking expectations.

So you think Cabaret Voltaire are an esoteric independent electronic indulgence deluding a number of desperately lemming-like disciples in search of some holy grail? Well, "2X45" will make you think again... and again... and

Whenever I've previously caught the Cabs, my impression was of a mercilessly monotonous and self-defeating cacophony but the couple of tastefully jacketed discs that make up this package substitute an indefinitely urgent sense of direction for their characteristic dogmatic dirge without ever sacrificing mood or intensity.

"2X45" touches on random genius and never sinks to self-indulgence, its open-ended arbitrariness is powerful enough to suggest points being made without ever dictating interpretation. Along with Skidoo's "7 Songs" and "Tearing Up The Plains" and, to a lesser extent, the more formal Clock DVA, "2X45" is a free-wheeling example of what often ignores ridiculed free-form is not. Whatever squitters and squabbles the Cabs care to create are scattered or maybe, deliberately scored over rigid repetitious back rhythms. You can dig and digest its pretensions in private or you can use it to dance yourself dotty in public — either way "2X45" is a stimulating triumph of neurotic impulse and imaginative planning. It is something regrettable on these days; it is music you can use.

Playful phased vocals, shattered snatches of disjointed dialogue, errant electronic pulses, argumentative saxophones, clattering cans, bullying basses, "2X45" comprises six varied statements, all individual, all roughly aligned. Whether they act as a reappraisal, a reaffirmation, a departure or a development from past Cabs product seems strangely irrelevant. Whether you liked, loathed or simply ignored Voltaire before, records like this only pass now and then so halt this Cab, shift several gears and get your groove on. — STEVE SUTHERLAND.

Shakin' Pyramids
CELTS AND COBRAS
Virgin V2216

THERE'S this lamentable point where all spirit gives in, where all reason and will are tossed to the winds, where all demerol is consumed to defeat and desperate greed — or, maybe, stark survival — guide each tentative step to the future. "Celts And Cobras" sounds damn near that point to me. The end of a dream for three hugely likeable Scottish no-hopers who hit King's Road with more than brass, busked their way into a big commercial bank account and hitched a ride to fame and fortune on the randic rockably revival.

The Shakes' brash, fresh and unstudied approach always suggested they'd see the lad through but someone's faith must have faltered somewhere down the line. Compared with the gormless gimcrack of re-launching Lonnie Donegan, "Cobras And Celts" is some shit-kickin' classic. Compared to most everything else of its ilk it's little more than a pile of shit.

All the Shakes' simplicity through muscle and strength has been smoothed out by a trick-conscious production and an ever dimmer choice of material — Elvis Costello for Chrissakes — bird-crazy broncking blues crooning from a single man's perspective miserly Sadly, the originals fare much the same, nothing but a squashed up pot of the washboard wonder of "Reverberity Boogie".

The Pyramids have got bags man. The Shakes' simplicity this, I feel let down. They should feel ashamed. — STEVE SUTHERLAND.

Kate & Anna McGarrigle
LOVE OVER AND OVER
Polydor Super
POLS1062

THIS is a very rare creature — an indifferent Kate & Anna album.

All the ingredients are there... those exquisite harmonies, the tender inflections, Chaim Tannenbaum, the usual charm, poignancy and intrigue... but the material basically doesn't crack it.

It's not unpleasant, of course, and includes two obvious high points with the dramatic "I Cried For You" and the inspiring "Work Song", but when you consider the aching beauty of the first two albums and last year's flawless "French Record", then the disappointment is acute. At their best Kate &

Anna will break your heart — this barely tugs at the strings.

Mark Knopfler makes an unspectacular contribution to the lively title track, but his presence merely emphasises the way their delicacy is so easily fractured by any production that fails to leave the two sisters in total dominance. Left to their own devices they frequently stumble in a shambling haze which paradoxically adds weight to their honest majesty; smoothing the edges here creates an album for aghast rather than fans.

As a result the bittersweet "Star Cab Company" is almost completely lost in the proceedings, and even "St Valentine's Day 1978" fails to wield the stunning impact it had when they played it on stage over here last year.

And when you get a gospel title like "Jesus Lifeline"

which fails to inspire, move or excite, then you know it's got to be the least compelling album the McGarrigles have made. — COLIN IRWIN.

Jon Anderson
ANIMATION
Polydor POLD5044

RAISE the mast, and set sail for the Topographic Ocean. Steve Howe has taken his guitar showroom to Asia; Vangelis is scoring for athlete's foot and Jon Anderson still floats on a cosmic sea of incoherence. Words like "dreams", "illusion", "reality", "infinity" and "universe" still dominate Anderson's vocabulary. Frankly he's always struck me as someone who's sorry he wasn't born a Hobbit. His whimsical world of fantasy is

an empty place, with only the odd explorer on the horizon, still searching for the territories Yes opened up.

In that distant world before words like "inflation" and "unemployment" entered the language, in the days when Pete Banks was still playing guitar for Yes, they were a band to be reckoned with. Jon Anderson was very much a part of their triumph, but that was over 10 years ago.

Anderson now sounds rather pathetic, piping his flowery lyrics over a growing barrage of technology. The album is titled "Animation" which is a joke, as it's about as lively as an Ian McDonald press conference.

When Anderson displays restraint, as on the gentle, folksy "Boundaries", the effect can be quite touching. But too often he doesn't know his

Olias from his elbow, and off Anderson goes, flying off some cosmic odyssey of little consequence. He does aim for simplicity, though, as on "Surrender" (which actually sounds like the St Winifred's School Choir with naive lyrics. You know the type: "Wouldn't the world be nice if all those nasty bombs were exploded in outer space without killing any flowers...")

"All God's Children" sounds like a negro spiritual, stripped of commitment and faith. A soul-less, Caucasian exercise which celebrates something that's bigger than all of us. Something like Jon Anderson's ego.

At the moment, Jon Anderson is the picture of a Dorian Grey in Julien Cope's attic. Is that cosmic enough for you? — PATRICK HUMPHRIES.

New Asia
GATES
Situation 2 Situ 3

ABSOLUTELY nothing to do with the technos currently provoking salvation in the mouth of Derek B. Cool, New Asia are a stimulating proposition.

A debut album of rare intelligence and imagination, "Gates" reeks of artistic determination, its attention to fine detail consistently intense.

Not so much a group as an idea, New Asia is the brainchild of Ian Little, an engineer working at Phil Manzanera's studio in deepest Surrey, and the title suggests something of the spirit of the Orient without recourse to the literal interpretations of conventional East-meets-West attempts. The result is a kaleidoscopic array of modern dance, sound collage and electronic trickery, dramatically different ideas taking focus with every twist.

Modern studio technology often robs music of its naivety and vital imperfections, wrapping the results in germ-free cellophane. Little, in common with the Associates of "Sulk", uses the studio to suggest distance and hint at enigmas, filtering every dot and dash through a softly overpowering haze.

There is no single "style" (usually taken as meaning the repetition of one limited set of ideas) in New Asia, only the existence of style. For flavour, listen to "Waiting For Surprise", fuelled by the tension indicated by its title; swirl into "Chant For Running", its insane teams of drum boxes running wild as Tibetan monks chant quietly in tandem; slam into "The Time Has Come", its moon-noise a relative of recent Chrome, enter "Gates", a manic fast-cut assault crammed with a dazzling array of sound fragments, and explore the ethereal, synthetic soul of "Balance".

Recorded with a bunch of unknown musicians (the exception being Manzanera), "Gates" is an album that repays repeated listening, new layers hitting the consciousness at every spin. It's contemporary in sound, spicy in spirit.

That, to me, sounds like a recommendation. —LYNDEE BARBER

Randy California
EURO-AMERICAN
Beggars Banquet BEGA 36

MORE years ago than I care to remember, the hallowed pages of Rolling Stone carried a story of what was then unselfconsciously billed as an "ego clash" between Randy California, embarking on one of his less-than-frequent resurrections, was fooling with some of his old Spirit pals on stage in some small seedy club when Neil Young, stirred by an excess of booze and the regard, stumbled over and attempted to usurp proceedings. Well, our Randy, beafling pacenik though he is, did what any blue-blooded American would do under such provocation: He shoved the old bozo away.

I only mention this as evidence that Randy California, a bastard case of erratic and oddly occasional brilliance, has no conception of time passing or past. Apparently that right-wing rage and embarrassment still rankles today because within the soft-focus, younger-than-yesterday, career-opportunistic cover of "Euro-American" there festers a song called "Rude Reaction", a thinly veiled reprisal of that self-same event.

Own-up time, I really mention this because among all the other possumer, surf 'n' sun, day-dream clichés and twee tie-dye tunes hopelessly masquerading as rockabilly songs, "Rude Reaction" is the one — albeit ugly — true expression of emotion that Euro-American has to offer.

The rest is typically Randy — mucho stimp-bending, sweet voice saying nothing, a clearly slipping back into the comic. Shame, the man was, and still is, some kind of hero to me. If you feel much the same, look upon this as a legend updated and forget that this record even exists. —STEVE SUTHERLAND

The pagon
supermanRick James
THROWIN' DOWN
Motown STML 12167

IN WHICH the prince of punk funk returns to stalk his hard won chunk of the black empire. With Bootsy and Clinton banished to the outer reaches of the R&B zone, Rick The Impaler rules the crucial crossover territory basking in a castle fleshpot of chained maidens and superstud rituals.

The street fantasies that tied together his last return to roots triumph have evaporated. Instead of black leather and thigh-length boots, we get armour and axe guitars.

A warrior image too heavy that the star of many a kitsch absurdity staggers under the sheer excess of chained women and macho herotics, veering from peaks of greatness to pits of crass indulgence.

Conan started it. Meatloaf copied it and Rick James has taken it to the next level. Greasy kids' stuff

redolent of tacky exploitation and comic book propaganda. But it wouldn't be so bad if the clichés were only conceptual. There's something far too familiar about much of this record; something that smacks of a man come to claim his taxes from a docile populace of escapist junkies. Middle America, this one's for you.

Pull away the trappings of a bad dream merchant, though, and underneath we get the funk (pronounced "fonk") and nothing but the funk. Check the single, the album's opening song, and realise that he still has the goods. Mean machine dance music with a sparkling Roy Ayers vibe solo and an itchy, wind-up guitar hook.

This is a big party record with guests that include Narada Michael Walden, Grace Slick and John McFee. In fact it's altogether busier than his past work, pushing the horns to the rear and filling one too many spaces with synths and background babble. Strange from a man who used to say "it's not what you put in, but what you leave out."

Weaker lyrically than the semi-autobiographical "Street Songs", the main concern here are women, getting down on the "fonk" and the paradoxically lonely life of a filthy rich superstar. When he devotes his attention to the

latter on "Standing On The Top" — a song that also appears on the new James-produced Temptations album — he strikes gold with a winner.

Its only match is the hard nosed "Money Talks". A beautifully deep, dropping bass line holds down a scathing attack on the cruel realities of sado-monetarism. In comparison, the pale re-run of "Superfreak", disguised as "Hard To Get", appears as a cheap shot attempt to give the people what they want and more again.

"Girl you're cute, you're sweet/You're such a sexy treat", whines Rick, before admitting, "You are the girl I write about in every song". Painfully true, I'm afraid, as the nudging spills into "69 Times" — subtle, eh? — and the surprisingly flat title piece "Superdown".

That leaves just the predictably schmaltzy ballads. Teena Marie does her "Fire And Desire" number on "Happy", while elsewhere Rick gets very steamy and laughably histrionic without ever really convincing.

Any discerning listener will take the funk and leave the dungeons and dragons to Prince James and his court of inflatable wenchens. And if you should buy this record make sure it comes in a brown paper bag. —IAN PYE

The Art Ensemble of
Chicago
URBAN BUSHMEN
ECM 1211/12

PLENTY of marvellous moments on this double-album, and very few in which the collective concentration wavers. Jarman's "Theme For Sco" in four movements is the most impressive piece here, despite an overlong passage of squabbling fury, while the equally extended "Urban Magic" — a collective composition — gives the impression that they could improvise suites spontaneously forever.

"Theme For Sco" begins jocosely with a boyscout march for corn trumpet ticks and dabs of on-the-beat piccolo. Much of the humour comes from the instrumental overqualification, the ease with which the players impersonate the Little League, yet show their sophistication in timing and harmony. By the end of the "March" section the piece has put on passion.

There's a blistering transition in which Moye and Favors — now with Yve

another suffix, Maghostut — explode into rhythm, but the horns allow things to deflate before committing to a bopish theme with morosely sustained notes beneath the whirling top.

"Soprano" takes the foreground, bailing furiously, yet still ominously slower than the rising tension, and the piece concludes with superb Bowie over a funky beat.

"Urban Magic" makes you see the music as much as hear it. Celeste is a jolly animated skeleron, and the flute and trumpet duet feature a couple of Stravinsky's puppets in courtship. One of the many marvels of AEC rapport is the way they can drain a mood by deleting instrumental volcings, so that the soloist without clue brings its content — is left sounding either forlorn or defiant. This is fine drama.

Roscoe Mitchell's lengthy "Uncle" is less impressive, sparse and deliberate in the first half, tautening as Favors swings out on bass, and saved by a building tenor solo.

Bowie's "New York Is Full Of Lonely People" can't quite take itself seriously, and there's a weedy dip in the middle over man with randomness.

Trumpet top and tail are lovely, however, and beautifully supplemented with horn obligato. Perhaps they have an avant-gardist's embarrassment about ballads; certainly the lovely "Peter And Judith" — to be heard in a vocal version by Fontella Bass on "Home" — is kept regrettably brief.

Of the three Don Moye pieces, the second version of "Anemadec: Cote Benaco" is the most interesting — cluded hand-drums, conch shells and flutes. "Ancestral

Meditation" is almost too quiet to hear as if the players had left their instruments to be played upon by draughts. Trembling on the threshold of silence, the piece changes as conspicuously as afternoon light.

We may have grown accustomed to the group's shocks, but it doesn't hurt always catch you off guard. Good recording, good album. —BRIAN CASE

Jedrejz Dmochowski
STALLIONS OF MY
HEART
Whaam B4

FIRMLY in the tradition of Whaam's past releases, "Stallions" carries its torch for a decade ago and revolves with its head in the clouds. It takes a special kind of talent to inject fresh personality into well-worn styles, a certain

burning commitment or intuitive skill to invest the contemptuous familiar with something engagingly new. The TV Personalities carry it off despite themselves with a spooky, fragile humour, The Times follow around with ironic notions which, as often as not, fly back in their faces and now ex-VIP Jedrejz Dmochowski tries it on with some out-and-out jocular.

Trouble is, our Jed's infatuated with the Bonzos and an avid disciple of Marc Bolan so, in the most fatal throes of flattery, he imitates them both. Never at a loose end for a model to imitate, Jed's simply rewritten his favourite songs hook, line and singer, warbling like the wizard while pinching his themes from any number of Stanshall's mid-Sixties misdemeanors.

"Stallions", with its broad grasp of genre from Country & Western to glitter rock, is an easy LP to laugh along with, but its plagiarism ultimately irritates. I mean, respect is one thing, but "Stallions" really makes the sublime and the ridiculous. —STEVE SUTHERLAND

Chris & Cossey
TRANCE
ROUGH TRADE ROUGH 44

NOWHERE, arbitrarily Secrecing from the numerous muted conversations that infiltrate Chris and Cossey's electronic attack, the two Throbbing Gristle refugees hit upon the ultimate failure of modern pop music. "You may be able to change the way I look," an American lady defiantly states. "But you'll never change the way I feel".

"Trance" sets about the seemingly impossible with confident tension and literally tears the trouble apart. Shivering shards of buzz-saw revenge decapitate baby-bouncing pre-programmed beats that wouldn't go amiss with Depeche Mode, mechanical squeals and creeping chaos, innocent Pleas and strident instructions reconstitute radio mush for the psychotic dentist or the paranoid fury piled up and sweating in the departure lounge.

This is danceably unsettling stuff, a purer, more perfectionist whole than last year's a/sy "Heartbeat" and a more reasoned, less crucial acceptance than the chic but convoluted Gristle ever got. "Unlil" here could be a chart hit, its simple tingling coda skipping over a mish-mashed echoed drone and hiccupping rhythms. No-one else currently turning out commercial music has anywhere near Chris and Cossey's intuitive grasp of the stimulating possibilities of electronic rhythm.

Every track suggesting its own mental video, "Trance" is just what it claims to be: a mesmerising chance to reassess the suggestive potential of sound which, in turn, attempts to intoxicate the listener into a reinvestigation of surrounding environments. In Chris and Cossey's world, you dare discount nothing because nothing is what it seems. Ignore them at your peril — it could be your terrible loss. —STEVE SUTHERLAND

Artful Ensemble

Degeneration games

The Passage
DEGENERATES
Cherry Red BRED29

THIS journal of balanced taste hadn't given you a hefty hint via the recent sultry flexi freebie, I'm sure that most of you wouldn't even have known of The Passage. That situation would have been ostensibly absurd, given the commendable painful probing and searching this unit has committed itself to over the last four years.

Of course, there's an alternative way of camouflaging basic ignorance, I'm confident that Dick Wits wouldn't object to

you viewing this document as an opening statement from a new group. But the fact is that it's The Passage's third LP and their most distinguished yet.

Not that the group's material is to be easily dismissed as flimsy fodder: on the contrary, it mirrors a pertinent development. "Degenerates" however is the story of The Passage with a permanent nucleus at last, and with something fresh and provocative to say.

"Degenerates" is the ambitious destination reached; a rewarding conclusion to that hard four years' trek. It is daringly different, without being

oblivious. In its own way "Degenerates" is the most complete pop record I've heard for three years.

With admirable ease it cleverly pulls together all the strands essential for the complete pop record. Music, courtesy of Dick's keyboards, Andrew Wilson's guitar, and Paul Mahoney's drums, dances stylishly across a wide spectrum of musical styles. The vocals are both cleanly measured and remarkably articulate and the lyrics are simply dazzling.

If pure pop to you equates with the puerile throwaway sentiments of the embarrassing Haircut One

Hundred and Godley and Creme, sorry ABC, then I'm not promising you'll wrench miracles from this record. But I'd at least ask you to listen to the words — and see if you can recognise any home truths.

Dick Wits is the investigative ferret you hope will never turn up if you've got something to hide. The only pleasure, of course, is that "Degenerates", he always does turn up. As much as I dislike the word, Dick is just about the most relevant commentator we can look to at the moment. Perception should really have been his second name.

Listen to "Degenerates" and you're sure to find it honest. It's not the bulldog honesty of the buffoon who stands up to spout brashly simplistic statements; it's the sincerity of man totally in command of all the idiosyncratic bends of language. "Degenerates" focuses magnificently upon the real world.

In so many ways it's arguing for a more liberated use of words in music. In another sense "Degenerates" is arguing for a more reasoned, less hedonistic attitude towards music in the future. In that sense it's just about sense. —FRANK WORRALL

SINGLES

NO LIFE IN THE HIT HOUSE

Michael Dudley, Adrian Borland and Graham Green of The Sound take on this week's 45s. Pic: Tom Sheehan.

STEPHANIE LA SMOTTA: "I'm Here At Last (So Forget The Past)" (Zilch). Dudley: It's rubbish.

GENE LOVES JEZEBEL: "Shaving My Neck" (Situation 2).

Adrian: If Bowie came out with this, he'd probably be heralded as having a new artistic renaissance, but because they're unknown, no-one's gonna take it that seriously. Noises like this always sound more impressive coming from someone big because then you feel there's some real reason behind it. I think this is genuinely weird, moments are genuinely psychotic. They sound like genuinely disturbed people to me - Pil'ish, Banshees'ish, but darker.

Graham: I'd avoid comparisons; there's something different here. There's loads of echo on everything but it's used in a totally different way; they've escaped from the Bunnymen cliché. It's atmospheric, it's noisy, it's harrowing, it challenges EVERYBODY. My favourite today.

THE BLASTERS: "So Long Baby Goodbye" (F. Beat). Adrian: This sort of record undervalues the intelligence of most of the population; it's so predictable you haven't even got to play it to hear it. Utter crap. Beneath our contempt. Dudley: Showaddywaddy on speed. This band should be tied down, forced to listen to Dr Feelgood for a week... and then shot.

STATUS QUO: "She Don't Fool Me" (Phonogram). Graham: Five words. Back to their old formula.

Adrian: They must write their songs in about two minutes, I reckon - maybe even less! Dudley: It's a bit like trying to review the Albert Memorial.

THE ANAL FLEAS: "Landlord" (Rectal Records).

Adrian: This is obviously just a great record, but it definitely comes from the right attitude. It reminds me of what we were doing about four years ago. They'll probably change their name and develop. It's the right spirit somehow even though it's probably the worst record we've played so far.

THE CLASH: "Rock The Casbah" (CBS).

Adrian: The Clash go even further away from what I liked about them when I first saw them in '76. Then they had energy, originality, power. COMMITMENT. Joe Strummer's still going on about something remote, but who's listening? People who care about stuff like that aren't gonna dance around the room, people who are interested in what Joe Strummer's thinking aren't gonna be interested in what the Clash are playing these days. And people who do end up dancing to the Clash? Well, it's a very chic revolt isn't it?

Graham: There were two moments for the Clash in my mind; obviously the first in '76/'77 and then some of the interesting reggae-orientated tracks on "Sandinista". This is the new American Clash still trying to break the American market... Adrian: This is pure dance music - they used to play music you could dance to and more.

VIRGIN PRUNES: "Pagan Love Song" (Rough Trade). Adrian: The right side of a tribal - if Adam and the Ants came up with something like this, I'd probably like them a lot

better. The Diamond Dogs would have sounded like this. Graham: I think it's great! Perversel! It's one you put on very loud on Christmas Day when everyone's singing carols.

ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE: "Woman" (WXYZ).

Dudley: Oh dear. He sounds upset. I wonder why?

Adrian: Not everyone lives like this. Punk once had a non-sexist message. When you play in a band it's easy to fall into the trap of attempting to be macho when you're 17 or 18 and you don't know what sex really is. But how old is this guy?

MM: Old enough to know better.

Adrian: Quite. He obviously doesn't know anything about anything. I'm the last person to be arch feminist but I can see why certain women get riled by records like this. For a girl (Carol Clerk) to bring it in and

not realise it's degrading her is quite ironic. Blind stupidity.

NEWTOWN NEUROTICS: "Kick Out The Tories" (CNI).

Dudley: This is worth a million Anti-Nowhere League singles.

Graham: It's too immediately offensive to those it's designed to offend.

Adrian: The main thing is they haven't forgotten that people respond to dynamics and melody - even if it is a thrash. It's very basic but the sentiments are so worthy I have an affection for it. If you vote Conservative, I don't think you'll like it.

LIVING LEGENDS: "The Pope Is A Dope" (Up Yours).

Dudley: I like this record. I think I might even go out and buy it. This is what I wanna see on "Top Of The Pops". I love it. The lyrics are absolutely fantastic. I agree with its

sentiments absolutely. Adrian: What I can't understand about the Pope is that half the time he talks almost sense about political things, advocating some intelligence in the world, then he'll go on about other things he has to go on about like contraception. I don't really know much about the guy but apparently he's quite a strict Catholic.

SYNTHETIC DREAMS: "Sulphate Suicide" (Logical Step).

Graham: Fab! Brilliant! It moves me! They've taken all the good essences out of German music and used in an interesting way - they haven't just copied it like most English synthesizer bands.

Adrian: It's got a real propulsion though it's tacky as shit. Quite decadent... very Frapp guitar... sounds like they think about sex a lot... very unpretentious.

Dudley: The sulphate experience summed up in easy stages - starts with a sniff and finishes with a heave.

LEISURE PROCESS: "A Way You'll Never Be" (Epic).

Graham: Aha! The new Human League! Adrian: I'm a bit suspicious of someone like Ross Middleton. If you listen to the Positive Noise single "Charm" his voice sounded a bit like David Byrne. Now he sounds like someone else. I don't really trust people like that. It really sounds like Martin Rushent has this effect on singers that makes them all sound the same.

FASHION: "Something In Your Picture" (Arista). Adrian: They live up to their name - Fashion. They just reek of it - lots of eye make-up. I think this is really bland. The only thing that saves it is the fact it's got a disco beat running through it which

applies to a lot of records these days I reckon.

Graham: This is bad Simple Minds - no energy, soul, feel...

Dudley: Whoever produced it sounds like he's trying desperately to make something out of nothing. It's rubbish.

ELECTRIC GUITARS: "Language Problems" (Siff).

Adrian: I liked one note on the piano in that. This is the disco beat done in the most boring way ever. I mean, what is going on? This is getting ridiculous - you can't tell the difference between that and everything else. There's a complete lack of originality going on. It won't last long; it's on the way out.

GARY NUMAN: "We Take Mystery (To Bed)" (Beggars Banquet).

Graham: It's the kind of record that if a deejay put it on you'd try and persuade him to take it off.

Dudley: Is it the new Japan single?

DOLLAR: "Videothèque" (WEA).

Adrian: This is an attempt to be decadent, but Dollar never really pull it off. The fact that the NME pay more attention to Dollar than to us is probably due to the fact that they drink more with them. It's inverted class.

There's an element of false modesty about getting worked up over a single like this. It's not designed to get worked up over - it's designed to be played in a discotheque to go down nicely with your Bacardi and coke.

Graham: It's loads of little bits all Sellotaped together with very gammy Sellotape. Dudley: It's about time Tin Pan Alley made a comeback I suppose.

ELVIS COSTELLO: "You Little Fool" (F. Beat).

Dudley: I preferred him when he was plundering Stax. I thought "Get Happy" was an excellent album, but he's lost his teeth now and he's trying to find them amidst a fog of old psychedelic effects that got chucked in the bin ages ago.

Adrian: When you talk about a Costello record, you're not talking about whether it's good or bad, it's a question of whether you like it or not. And, as he's lagged "Silent Air", I think it's... only joking. It's good radio music, will get a lot of play and probably become a hit. Why are we bothering to talk about it in musical terms? He's not worth it. It's not bad. That's all.

LOVED SPY: "Diddy Wah Diddy" (Fetish).

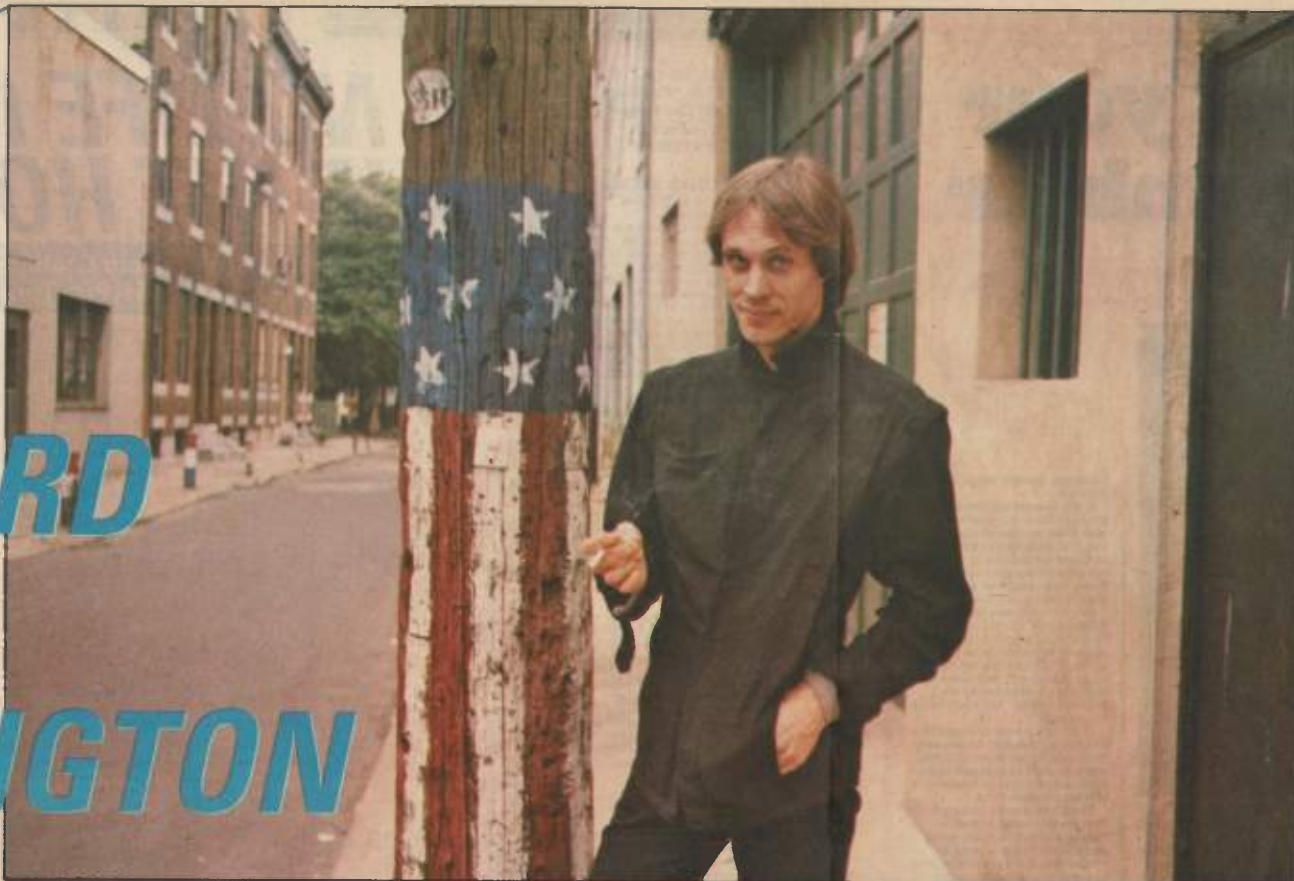
Graham: I've loved everything Lydia Lunch has ever done. Loved? Well, respected it anyway. Most records make you feel that you're just sitting there but she makes you feel pleased to be alive.

Dudley: This is the sort of record you want to hear at a party where you go with the main aim of getting into bed with someone. It's fab.

CONCLUSION:

Adrian: The saddest thing is that most of the best records we've heard today probably won't get much further than this room. There are so many singles worth hearing, not just by an elite few, that will never get on the radio. I think there's something wrong with the mechanism of people hearing records. There are so many records that are better than ever before. People just aren't getting to hear the good music anymore.

Adam Sweeting goes west to track down one of the last American heroes, TOM VERLAINE. Technicolor: Janette Beckman



POSTCARD FROM WASHINGTON



A GUITAR hero in an age of none, a purveyor of hallucinatory fragments of an imaginary saga when advertising slogans are plainly more lucrative, Tom Verlaine is a difficult man to place. Sombre and introverted, he values the virtues of patience and application and would undoubtedly cross the street to avoid a gimmick.

"The Human League?" he asks with a pained expression as we contemplate defunct marine life in a Philadelphia fish restaurant. "Something about that band irritates the shit outta me." He grins slowly. "How young they are, and how little they know of life," he may have been thinking.

Verlaine appears to work in almost complete isolation. His current touring band has been working its way around assorted towns on America's East Coast — Washington, Philly, Boston, New Jersey — and consists of an accomplished and convivial crew. There's original Television bassman Fred Smith, Patti Smith's former drummer Jay Dee Daugherty, and on guitar we find wisecracking Jimmy Ripp, a sidekick of none other than Kid Creole in earlier days.

The results are impressive, and according to both Smith and Verlaine this crew play better than Television ever did. But while the band stick

together both on and off the road, Verlaine remains aloof and withdrawn. He prefers a late-night drive back to his New York home to staying in a hotel, and he has difficulty joining in the backstage laughter triggered by rapid one-liners from Ripp and the urbane Californian Daugherty. It's probably a mixture of extreme shyness and a considerable ego. There's also something painfully fastidious about Verlaine, as if he can't bring himself to sully his hands by lowering himself to the standards of the American pop marketplace. However, extinction of this rare species is looming if it doesn't start to earn some money.

At some stage, Tom, aren't you going to have to nod towards commercial pressure? Verlaine smiles. "I've always thought I was commercial, I swear. What I do is not so dissonant or... It's musical. Why a company can't promote it or sell it is beyond me."

Are you difficult to work with? "Well I never had any complaints. Y'know," reports Verlaine through clenched teeth. "With most songs I have parts in mind or beats in mind and most musicians understand that, so... With other songs, it's just like recommending something and seeing what happens."

Verlaine's new album, "Words From The Front", finds him on Virgin for the first time (in the UK, at least). "Words From The Front", I suggest, contains tracks which can be divided neatly into "songs" and "pieces".

Verlaine agrees. "Well, 'Postcard From Waterloo' and 'Words From The Front' are more songs than 'Days On The Mountain' and 'Clear It Away'. 'Present Arrived' actually, too."

Both "Days On The Mountain" and "Clear It

Away" find Verlaine spilling vocal and instrumental colours across skeletal spines of rhythm. On record, "Clear It Away" is hustled along by Jay Dee Daugherty's crisp sub-reggae drumbeat while Tom sings in a haunted moan, chased through the shadows by chilly organ and hypertense guitar. The results repay attention.

With "Days On The Mountain", on the other hand, I strongly recommend catching Verlaine's band in the flesh. Whereas the piece loiters without intent on vinyl, listlessly watching its monotonous drum machine boat plod by, the live rendition seethes with suppressed menace, simmers in drama.

THIS MAY be because Verlaine's touring band don't get much of a look in on the record, where most of the bass and drum chores are handled by Tommy Price and Joe Vasta. In their pair of shows at Washington DC's 930 Club, the band seemed to grow stronger as they bounded from peak to peak, finally reaching a gruelling summit of performance.

They're able to cover all essential ground and much more, from the Neil Young-ish moodscapes of "Words From The Front" through an emotionally exhausting "Marquee Moon" to an aggressive, physical "Always". There's even Television's "Prove It".

Even Verlaine was impressed with the Washington gig (two sets in a night). "This tour," he says, "stunning out another of his favourite Canadian Export A cigarettes." "I'm getting all these ideas. It's coming from working with another guitar

player. When you start to hear a second part you start to think of all sorts of possibilities."

Typically, the insular Verlaine admits to no particular guitar influences. Not even Roger McGuinn? "Actually McGuinn... I never really paid any attention to his leads, it was just the whole sound The Byrds had that knocked me out. 'Cos I think he's listened to saxophone players too. My impression was that he definitely spent time listening to Coltrane or was knocked out by that type of music at some time in his life."

Verlaine's own listening habits recently have been veering towards more abstruse sources. "The last six months I've been listening to classical people I've never heard. I really don't know Stravinsky's stuff or Debussy's stuff, except for what I heard when I was a kid. So I'm checkin' out some pieces by these guys."

An interview in a Philadelphia newspaper had found Verlaine talking about recording an instrumental album at some point, and expressing a desire to do "something symphonic". Did this mean symphonic in terms of guitar/bass/drums or something broader?

"Well I'd love to work with an orchestra, but... I was talkin' to Jimmy Destri from Blondie a couple of times last year, he just bought this really expensive new machine... I went and heard his record in the studio and this trumpet part came around. I asked him who played trumpet on it and he said it was this machine, which really woke me up to the idea that if you want an orchestra you don't really have to hire one."

"People who play that role tend to be real snotty — in New York, anyway. So I was

figuring out how to play it in front of an audience. On record (I posit) it sounds promising but fails to deliver."

"Well," says Tom, contemplating the cheesecake and assorted super-fattening desserts and settling for coffee, "it's a float sort of a thing rather than a climactic thing. The only climax in it is the fade-out, actually, which is a sort of reverse climax, but it still sounds like something's happened."

"But that was a form I'd always wanted to try, just one beat that never changes with different movements. Sort of improvised guitars against organised parts, that sort of thing."

Even though you hate the Human League, you've used a drum machine in "Days". Your're not biased against machines, then?

"Oh no. When I went to do this I figured the only way to do it was with a drum machine, which also frees Jay to play keyboards since I can't afford a keyboard player. I think it's fun for him too."

Strikes me that you're moving away from songs as such. The new material seems more concerned with textures and arrangements and the lyrics are being pushed into the background too. Verlaine disagrees strongly.

"Oh, no. No. (See?). There's two kinds of instrumental records I've always wanted to do. One was an improvised record with some jazz people. The other was a more orchestrated record, a more studio-type record. And at the same time I was working on songs too."

"It's sort of all the same. Sometimes I'll be playing a guitar part that ends up in a song, and other times I'll sort keep a record of what I wanna do on these instrumental records. I'll remember what it was and write it down in a little book, you know."

"I think a lot of it's just what strikes me in a certain mood, you know. You're in one mood and you turn out a song, you're in another mood and you turn out this... some other kind of piece, y'know, that's vocals and instruments but not a formula."

Like "The Blue Robe", maybe? "Yeah, right. That kinda thing. In fact 'Little Johnny Jewel' was like that too. That's the stuff I tend to listen to more, when I go back and play these records."

As for his lyrics, Verlaine won't be drawn by questions about their content. I mean, how about that line in "Days On The Mountain" about the "ring of a bell"...? Verlaine laughs and turns away. "That was just one of those things," he mumbles. There's a long pause.

"I WOULDN'T say I ever really wrote poetry," he resumes at a safe distance.

"At one point someone I knew said 'do you write anything?' and I said 'well yeah, I've got some stuff lying around'. They printed it in a poetry magazine, but in retrospect I wouldn't call what I wrote in those days poems. They were just sort of gestures or something, you know, they weren't real abstract, they were just certain moods or something."

"In the States now, the poetry... er... market isn't the word, but poetry scene is as glutted as everything else." The waiter reappears to remind us that it is customary

to add a 15 per cent gratuity to the bill. Verlaine and I digress about jazz musicians, and how Duke Ellington never owned a home of his own. How do you regard touring then, Tom? A necessary evil?

"Er... not really. Six weeks in a row is okay."

Isn't it a strain emotionally? "It would be for three months on end. I'd be using drugs like super-heavy if I had to do it for three months. I can see how it happens. Because of the boredom factor and the disorientation factor of being in a different place every day... the food that's available and... boredom. But six weeks is good, y'know."

So you steer well clear of drugs, then?

"I do, yeah." He laughs. "Most people I know don't. I find most drugs, though, in terms of performing, they alter your perceptions in a way that certain feelings become hard to take, so you steer away from them in your playing, you know."

"In other words drugs bring their own intensity with them. What they're doing isn't quite real. Cocaine's the worst. When I've seen people on cocaine... I mean people on heroin are either very social or they're just basically asleep in front of your face, you know, and marijuana music just doesn't do anything for me. The emotional element gets sucked out of it or something."

The drug-free (and non-

drinking) Tom Verlaine has also started working with video. He's done a shortened version of "Words From The Front" plus an edited version of "Clear It Away". He estimates that he maintained complete control over the finished product.

"I told the guy what I wanted right away. One was supposed to be a parody, and the other was supposed to be an atmosphere piece. 'Clear It Away' is the parody, but the people I know that have seen it don't understand it at all. In fact they don't understand either of them."

I saw both video tapes at the new Peppermint Lounge in New York, and I don't really follow "Clear It Away" either. "Words From The Front" is indeed atmospheric, however.

Verlaine, who isn't a fan of anything much, expresses admiration for the video which went with Orchestral Manoeuvres' "Joan Of Arc".

"The thing is," reflects Verlaine of video in general, "the people that are working in video right now, they could learn something by looking at classic film, and they don't do it, so most videos tend to be boring because they don't have roots in the visual arts, they just have effects."

That was the big fight with the guy I was working with (Ed Steinberger), they don't give a shit about content, it's all just a look. I was saying 'look, this image with this line'. They just

don't see content — everything is just this frontal look that has to keep changing every so often."

To be able to do all the things he'd like, Tom Verlaine needs money. "I don't like to think about it," he confesses, "but five years ago the things that I could have done, compared to how bad things are now, it's just too bad y'know."

"It's like I'm forced to work where I can get the maximum amount of time for the least price. If I ever have a big record, it'd be great. It would just be great to do anything you want in that area."

MAYBE the problem is Tom Verlaine talks to himself too much in his music, without taking a look outside once in a while. I certainly get that impression from his guitar playing on stage. He laughs.

"It's not actually myself — it's sometimes somebody that's not in the room, but it's definitely some communication somewhere. I hope."

"Maybe I should start dedicating songs to some imaginary person in the room. Like 'this one goes out to Sarah', 'cos there's probably a Sarah in the room."

"Whoever, you know..."

SAVING
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OUTER LIMITS

'T' for Turkey VIDEO

HARD COUNTRY (Precision Video)

THERE'S no particular reason why you should have heard of Michael Murphy, unless you're a determined collector of obscure American singers: he's had a few hits, written some good songs, cut several albums, but he's scarcely caused a ripple on this side of the water.

What sorts him out from the legions of US nonentities is that firstly he's very good, and secondly he's virtually unclassifiable.

Hailing from Texas and with a strong country base to his music, he ought to be standing alongside Joe Ely, Rodney Crowell and other heroes of New Country, but his determined eclecticism, which has seen him record everything from hard rock to near MOR ballads, has kept him out of pigeonholes.

These days, he's into country rock and the song "Hard Country" is fairly typical of his work: a warts-and-all examination of the Texas lifestyle.

Now Murphy has joined that elite band who have had a movie based on one of their songs: well, perhaps not elite, for most of the films have been turkeys, and "Hard Country" is little improvement.

The two leading players, Jan-Michael Vincent and Kim Basinger, are curiously unsympathetic — who can identify with a bozo who can't tell the difference between fast food take-away and home cooking?

Much of the action takes place at the local saloon ("Urban Cowboy" revisited) which is the basis for Vincent and his pals' highkicks.

The only saving grace is that the resident band is Michael Murphy's, and Tanya Tucker drops in for a couple of numbers. Hard country indeed. — MIKE OLDFIELD.

WHERE would "Maverick" be without its weekly guest star mavericks? Travelling mountebanks of every stripe alight from the stage in Sweetwater, gladstone bags brimming with loaded dice, Hindoo rope tricks and false Saviours, written into the script to preserve James Garner's professional gambler from himself.

Gamblers aren't permitted to be the heroes of Westerns. It doesn't contravene the Hays Code like opposite sexes sharing a bed without keeping a foot on the rug, but it's not quite cricket and no audience is more traditionalist than the audience for Westerns.

"McCabe & Mrs. Miller" broke the rule, ran disappointingly for a masterpiece, and incurred the wrath of the late John Wayne, who proclaimed it filthy. Doc Holliday can win at poker, but he has to be Best Friend, and die of tuberculosis.

Walther Matthau, no stranger to the pastebord, summed up the front-office objections. "The game exemplifies the worst aspects of capitalism that have made our country so great."

Maverick, like a domestic guard-dog, is there to keep the jackals away.

All this of course shows a profound misunderstanding of professional cardplayers.

There's room for rogues Out West, but none for Mensa. Maverick's mastery at poker has to be downgraded into shifty roguishness. For him to be the hero of the series, he must be permanently on appro as far as the community is concerned, and often shown to screw up.

He usually gets the blame. WHURR'S MAVERICK?

Sweetwater's Red Ox Saloon, traditional leisure-centre for letting off steam, can house fighting, killing, ass-grabbing and drunkenness, but — shucks! — never let you in on a game of cards. The players around the green baize are there solely to reveal character, and the ones in the thickest eyeglasses with clerical day jobs will be the first to knuckle under when the ante goes up, while the real failures inevitably reach rather than fold.

Poker in Westerns is an emblem. You don't see the game. "Maverick" didn't come here to lose," goes the theme song, but the script has stacked the pack against him.

Maverick owes a lot to the Burt Kennedy movies, "Support Your Local Sheriff" and "Support Your Local

Support your local gambler

Brian Case deals with 'Maverick'



Gunfighter", both easygoing parody features for Garner and Jack Elam. In turn, they are tributes from Howard Hawks. Most of Hawks' later Westerns, "Rio Bravo", "El Dorado" and "Rio Lobo", used the baldest sets — saloon, jail, hotel — and dispensed with period detail to concentrate on character and relationship.

ROUND the back of the mind, things are even more alike. As soon as you see those knotty, unplanned planks, some trail-scout sense tells you someone is going to be bush-whacked or told a secret. Similarly with the jail, instinct tips off the grizzled Odeon oiwilhood to the stuttering, hobbling deputy and the cosy chess games through the bars. It's meant to be familiar.

"Maverick" groups its old familiarities around the saloon, jail, hotel, newspaper office and, occasionally, Kate Hanrahan's

brother: The senior partner in the saloon, walrus Tom Guthrie, is as boringly moral as the bowler-hatted sheriff, ironically clothed like the only surviving photo of William Bonney. The newspaper is staffed by auburn blow-top Mary-Lou and a puppyish youth in granny glasses and cuff-protectors (he must've been reading MM) called Rodney who plumb can't wait for Real Life, Love & Stuff to happen.

Kate's rinse is a cruder Lautrec red than Mary-Lou's, and she sports rouge and an on-going concern about the Wives Watch Committee even though the saloon has the crimson flock wallpaper. Madame Orr's it ain't.

Guthrie's leather waistcoat comes neat from the peg at props, worn in by neither the gods of Edith Head's Ekimo woman nor habitués. Mary-Lou wears slix, and Maverick himself could've come from any riverboat since Hollywood's

Twenties, except for his weight problem.

Black everything, except white ruffle shirt, grey moire waistcoat and job-chain, pearl-handled derringer and silver hatband with which to raise-see when the clams run out. Waal, he do look like a gambler, even if they won't let him play.

Hearts are plenty big in Sweetwater. Hombres git forgiven for any darn thing from attempted homicide to the white lie. The stuttering deputy wings the sheriff, but faces his medicine, and who wouldn't with that label: "Let's just write this one off."

Conscience buzzes about like a fart in a colander. You've only got to goof near the end of the episode and the cast will either retract their chins or freeze on a sidelong double-take.

The plots may be strictly from that ole Wyoming Wendy House, but the lines are good and Garner is deservedly an institution. Nor for nothing does he wear a couple of loops of typewriter ribbon under his collar. Garner could be mild for money.

Awash with false innocence, the dark eyes remain the prehensile rubber tips on arrows. The semi-retired four-flusher trying to pass, he can't resist the smart-ass line which will raise suspicions again.

"Ever time yuh think yuh know whurr it's at with a woman, they up an' move it on yuh," plods Tom Guthrie, at full philosophical stretch. "Hope they haven't moved it too far," says Maverick.

"I'm gonna hafta kill ya mouth separate," grits one of Maverick's bi-weekly assassins. "Not on yore best day, pants-rabbit," returns the Man.

Plumb hope they don't. BRIAN CASE

The true grit of the overlong goodbye

REMEMBRANCE

CALL it Pynchon's paranoica, but the warnings are everywhere, and going unheeded as per plan. They whisper along the pipes in the shrinking space between patriotic news broadcasts, clearly audible in Ken Loach's "Looks & Smiles" with its drole quaves squeezing school leavers into the Army as easily as toothpaste onto a brush, and distantly heard in Henry's classic lecture in statecraft from Orson Welles' "Chimes At Midnight" to "busy giddy minds with foreign quarrels."

The same warning whispers through Colin Gregg's "Remembrance", which will be shown on Channel 4 following cinema release. It's so timely that one wonders why it wasn't banned. With most of the media, it does easily from bingo to jingo, this is a bit of true grit between the gear levers.

"Remembrance" deals with the last 24 hours ashore for a crew of young naval ratings. Screen leave-takings are usually uniformly damp affairs with strings, Gregg's version for girl-friends, wives and parents is nearer the complex truth. Bickering, embarrassment, boredom and boozups characterise the overlong

goodbye, as if the occasion is too grand for little lives.

Vincent (Pete Lee-Wilson) wants his mother there but she doesn't care, so he hurries his father, who does. Little Mark (David John) can't wait to get shot of his parents and punk schoolgirl sister, while Douglas (Timothy Spall) spends his final hours rasped raw by the sharp end of his pregnant wife's tongue.

Like rock's road rates, most of the sailors are on the run from relationships, and flying the flag which says home is where your ass is.

The film catches exactly the communal life of the services which resembles that of football supporters. Sailors at a disco job beer glasses at the feet of a dancing drunk, creating a disturbance which leads to the drunken lad's manslaughter at the hands of the bouncer. This in turn activates the Navy's herd instinct for reprisals, and they descend mobhanded on the disco and wreck it.

Only one young sailor cares enough to visit the victim who lies in a coma in hospital, unidentified and unclaimed, already relegated to yesterday's excuse for a punch-up. Life is push and shove in the mob.

An inescapable comradeship that sickles like shit to a blanket, it's established from the opening sequence as the soundtrack jostles comments against a home-movie

of the Remembrance Day Service.

Shore patrol and police herd the ratings within Plymouth's sleazy street of pubs, disco and strip club as rigidly as the rank system isolates them from their rulers. "The Navy is democratic. We all rub along together," says a PR officer on TV, watched without comment by a bored audience in inferior barbering. "California here I come!" thrills young Vincent, but you know that'll boil down to the same rip-off strip.

"Remembrance" lets the stunning process of service life speak for itself, and in the one scene where the script radicalizes, it goes adrift as "The Last Detail" did before it. Steve's (John Altman) furious diatribe against a schoolteacher at an off-limits party feels rigged. "Statistically, only sailors and professional criminals wear tattoos," provokes the teacher, unconvincedly.

That apart, it is so well written by Hugh Stoddart that it sounds improvised. If we had a film industry, every young actor in the cast would be well on the way to post-Brits Graffiti stardom: you believe in them completely.

As for the direction, the sadness of the drunk's attempts at handstands in the rain beside the flagmasts, or the desolate dawn wait at the ferry terminal for embarkation get right in among you. The best British film in years. — BRIAN CASE.



MOVIES

EWAN STEWART and PETER JONFIELD in "Remembrance"



IT'S sink or swim, I thought, as the guy on the door took my ticket for the first of five nights of German rock music. To date, I'd not made much headway against the rising tide of the Neu Deutsche Welle. This was partly a language problem. New Wave in a foreign tongue was an

almost nightmarish prospect. But this stuff was gathering momentum fast. These concerts at the Munich Alabama Halle marked a kind of official recognition. Bavarian TV and radio would document the entire event. Two hundred journalists were on the way from all corners of Europe. Even the Japanese were coming. I really couldn't keep my head in the sand much longer...

PILE-UP ON THE AUTOBAHN

Words: Steve Lake/Pix: Signe Mahler

THE first thing that struck me was the diversity of dress styles in the audience. In England, it's always uniforms, utterly predictable. If it's the Human League at the Rainbow, expect 60 per cent little Oakeys, squinting at the world through one eye. If it's the Stray Cats — wall to wall quiffs. But here, 15 years of rock fashion are mirrored. Waist-haired hippies, heavy-duty bondage punks, urban guerrillas, Spandau Billies, chic Haircut One Hundred types. Even lots of normal humans trying to prove nothing at all.

The first band, Mythen In Tüten (that's Myths In Bags to you), reflected this diversity. The singer looked like Robert Palmer in a drape jacket, the keyboardist could have been Thunderclap Newman. Musically, they similarly lacked a centre, wobbling between 'Fifties' kitsch, Boomtown Rats flash and a free form electronic row that was never quite tough enough. The vocalist strutted, took photos of the photographers, and didn't really convince anyone. I felt an overwhelming thirst coming on, and fell upon the bar.

Carambolage (it means pile-up in the auto-accident sense) were four young ladies, according to a reliable source the girlfriends of Ton Steine Scherben. (Of who? Hang on, TSS will be with us soon enough.) The girls played guitar, sax, bass and drums and one or the other would occasionally double on keyboards. Pretty primal all round, though. In one number I counted three different notes from the saxophonist; normally she was not so expansive. The guitarist, a sulky, dark haired gypsyish girl barely five feet tall, looked like rock 'n' roll. Looked like sex, in fact, if I may make so bold, and played a big semi-acoustic jazz guitar slung at 45 degrees to the groin.

They were well received, but had they been men... well, you know the score.

Five days! I'll never make it, I thought. A fight broke out in the bar area. Punks. Most interesting part of the show so far. Apart from the odd boot in

the teeth, quite a clean match. I stepped over the bodies to check out Trio.

Is there anything that can raise the spirits like a good rock band? For a truly objective appraisal you'd have to calculate the negative impact of Mythen and Carambolage, add the number of beers consumed and take away the figure you first thought of — but, in the circumstances at least, Trio seemed like a revelation. On one level they are a joke, arch and cynical, but their parodic references to various pop styles are so bang on target and so well performed that they also qualify for face value acceptance. Trio has stripped its instrumentation to the minimum, working from a basis of snare drum, guitar and vocals, interspersed with various weedy rotten sounds — rhythm box, triangle, Casio frills and trills — but everything is made to count, and the group's sense of timing is immaculate.

AND on the second day... Sigurd Kämpf (sorry, can't translate it), a local band, played with some force and it sounded as though Beefheart was one of their inspirations. The singer tried hard to be eccentric, wheezing and puffing and getting red in the face. But, as Dylan said, nothing was revealed.

Ton Steine Scherben (Clay, Stones, Shards) were much better. The band's been together for more than ten years and sounds that way, tight and tough. They have always scorned the commercial music machine and trodden their own path, putting out their often intensely political songs on their own label. In the mid Seventies they abandoned the conventional gigging circuit completely and put their energies into working with various fringe theatre groups.

But now they're back, short-haired and looking vaguely like a vegetarian Clash. Occasionally their vocalist's neurotic outbursts were uncomfortably reminiscent of Peter Hammill, but he smiled when a fan passed him up a bunch of roses. Did that ever happen to Joe Strummer?

Many of the songs were clearly familiar to the crowd and were greeted with frantic applause.

Altogether, the atmosphere on the second day was markedly more relaxed. A friend explained that the

opening night had been overpopulated by record company people. The crowd for Sigurd Kämpf, Ton Steine Scherben and Schwoissfuass was enthusiasts only. Yeah, Schwoissfuass. It means Stinkfoot. They began with a harmonica blues which, while hardly Little Walter or Paul Butterfield, was quite pleasantly raunchy. It was the only time in their set they came close to a groove and the music reached a nadir with appalling Louis Armstrong scat singing imitations from their bare-chested oaf of a singer. Dreadful.

DAY THREE was more or less a wash-out all round. Oetro 430, named apparently after a birth pill, were about the best

of the night and they weren't much. Another girl group — sax, drums, keyboards, bass. Their lyrics were a fairly thorough exposé of the woman's lot, veering from goody knickers in moments of passion to the tediousness of Women's Lib meetings. The music was little past the grid however, and without the metronomic pumping of the keyboard player the band would simply have fallen apart.

Jeiler Träumer (Lusty Dreams) were a lumbering blues rock band that would have been dull in 1968. Their leader fancied himself as either Jagger or Stewart or maybe local heart-throb Peter Maffay. Unfortunately, he wasn't even Ian Gillan and the punks pelted him with paper beer cups. Strassenjungs (Street Boys) didn't do much for me either, though they had plenty of

support from the dog-collar and Sid Vicious tee-shirt brigade. But you've heard the formula a hundred times. Old songs like "And Then He Kissed Me" and "Let's Have A Party" cranked up to Ramones velocity. In German of course, but so what? And their original songs had such captivating titles as "Panik In Frankfurt".

A word though about the security force. In a stroke of genius, promoter Hage Hein had put girls along the stage front to repel over-ardent fans. Not Amazons either, but just regular women. In several instances of trouble the girls reasoned gently with the offenders and sanity quickly prevailed. Even the most obtuse punk could hardly pick a fight with a girl; it would demean a completely his already insecure sense of manhood.

DAY FOUR: And opening up, the best band of the whole shebang, Peter Hein's Family Five. Ironically, not really a band at all, though I hope it'll prevail. The group was assembled for the festival by singer Hein, a former member of Fehlfarben, one of the front runners of the German New Wave. It featured Xiao Seffcheque on guitar, plus a female back-up singer, alto sax, bass and drums. Hein and Seffcheque had apparently written all the material for the set in one day — maybe that's why it seemed as fresh as tomorrow.

A genuinely inspired jazz-funk music, it would have shown James Chance to the door in double quick time, and given Defunkt a run for their money. At its most bracing the music recalled the white-hot rock of Miles Davis' "Agharta" band. Hein was obviously not a funk singer, but somehow that only made the blend all the more piquant, the more unique.

With Liaisons Dangereuses and Krupps, unfortunately, we were back in Toytown. The pre-programmed synthesizer, the pre-recorded tape and beautiful people to pose and dance along. Liaisons Dangereuses sang in most of the languages of Europe which should make them jolly useful as mediators the next time somebody invades somebody else. Krupps were such froth, mere air bubbles, that almost nothing remains in the memory.

SATURDAY, the final fling. One of the nicest things about punk was that it gave everybody the chance to form a band. The problem is that everybody did. Bärchen Und Die Milchbubis are four of them. The name means Baby Bear And The Milk Babies. Bärchen turned out to be a feckle faced young woman, approximately of Teddy Bear proportions with a big cheesy grin and a tendency to blush a lot, particularly when she sang off-key, which was most of the time. No doubt a Nice Person. I was wishing she had chosen to portray Pollyanna in rep rather than assault the ears of rock fans. All the group smiled too much for my taste — c'mon people, life is serious! — and generally came on like Herman Hermit in an apple-a-day advert.

Modern Man were even worse. Sloppy, untethered and rhythmless, half their repertoire seemed to be based on the riff from "London Calling" and their singer was an egregious twerp, a prancing ninny, positively begging for a custard pie between the eyes. It never arrived.

Abwärts, who took it all home, seemed to be fairly authentically unpleasant and degenerate people, but by this stage of the game almost any variety of authenticity was welcome.

One of two drummers crawled into the crowd and pushed the microphone into people's faces. Yeah, like the Doors, Stooges, PIL. Later he chopped up the stage with an axe. Yeah, like the Move, like the Plasmatics. And for an encore they knocked over the drums and trashed the photo montage backdrop behind them. Yeah, like the Who, Patti Smith, Damned etc etc.

They actually seemed more dangerous when playing music. A colossal loud kind of tribal stomp that shook the walls, it was almost without definition, and all vocals were inaudible above the roar, this massive cacophonous thrash.

Yet it had an hypnotic, near-dancelike quality, was actually relaxing. You were sucked downwards with it, into the ugliness, and left somehow dazed but purged. When they finished we all filed meekly out, in near silence.

There was nothing left to say.



ABOVE: ABWARTS/TOP:TRIO

CAUGHT IN THE ACT

CHARGE

Marquee, London

THE Stones were playing round the corner in Oxford Street. "Hello," said Charge guitarist Stu P. Didot. "We're the Rolling Stones." And belted out the "Satisfaction" riff.

Fact: Charge have a sense of humour. They'd have to, really, considering the nearby competition, considering the Marquee was sold out and considering... the way they look.

They may have walked onstage as if they'd just fallen out of bed, but in fact they'd just fallen out of the infamous Ship pub, Stu ejected on account of his mini skirt, make-up and fishnets, and the rest abandoning Ship in protest.

The band are as interesting musically as they are visually, spurred by punk but creating round its basis a dramatically imaginative atmosphere, vocalist Moose giving an appropriately theatrical performance (despite a sore throat).

Charge supplied a varied set that reached from the hard-line thrust of their early days to the more adventurous investigations of recent material like "Absolution" and "Fashion", the current single. And so what if the Stones were round the corner? We had a good time in the Marquee too... CAROL CLERK

THE ICICLE WORKS

Pickwicks, Liverpool

WHAT kind of group has a synthesizer as an integral part of their sound and plays songs based on lush melodies and vocal harmonies? What kind of group on stage in drab grey and black clothes and intense demeanour?

What kind of group has the appearance of what is still sometimes called "new wave", yet has obsessions which predate that era? What kind of group plays in front of a kaleidoscopic projection of coloured light and writes songs with long descriptive titles like "As The Dragonflies Fly" (When Winter Lasted For Ever" and "Factory In The Desert"?

The Icicle Works do have a basis in certain local traditions: the use of the synthesizer is an obvious one, but there are others. The impassioned yearning for example, or the sardonic commentary from the lead singer that passes for communication or stage presence ("I'm doing this so you'll all think I'm arrogant and hate me"). A few observations in the form of answers might clear the confusion.

The sounds: after being together for just over a year the group is obviously in a process of continual change. In their gaining of an edge than their old recordings (on tape and the John Peel show) would suggest. On this particular occasion they played with plenty of muscle especially in the drum corner. The result is a full sound from a mere three-piece.

The group: they're young; quietly unremarkable in appearance (the light show is the most colourful bit about the group); obviously ambitious; sound serious but look as though they're enjoying themselves.

The songs: some, such as the melodic "Love Hunt" are very appealing. Others are frankly embarrassing. One day this group will make an "album" and people will play it to their friends and say "listen to the lyrics, man." This group have been listening to the sort of records that as the rest of us would have hidden at the back of the collection because we're too embarrassed to even take them down to the second hand shop.

The conclusion: none, but another question. What kind of band ends their set by playing a guitar solo; quoting the last song from the previous group; and quoting the first song from themselves?

Well, what are they? I still don't know — that much makes them interesting. — PENNY KILEY

Combat city rockers



The Clash conquer New Jersey. Pic: Keith Bernstein.

THE CLASH

Convention Hall, Asbury Park, New Jersey

"How'd ya like the London fog outside?" Joe Strummer cackled playfully between numbers. The body heat generated by the maddening crowd inside was in stark contrast to the dark cool ocean mists that had settled over this sleepy beach resort town. "We imported 22,000 tons of fog just for you — we figured we'd show groups like Styx and Foreigner how to do it right."

On the second night of their 1982 American offensive, establishing their beach head in Bruce Springsteen's back yard, The Clash didn't just try to right. They did it *real*. In a sly bow to the rampant press speculation over Strummer's recent AWOL escapade and the sudden exit of Topper Headon, they

prefaced their appearance on stage with a pre-recorded tape of Roy Orbison's "Runnin' Scared".

But if they were at all scared, it didn't show in the strident goose step and upper cut guitar punch of the opening serve "London Calling", or the hard metallic return of "Safe European Home".

With typically heroic Clash perversity, they were at their tightest, their most aggressive, their most committed when they were at their most desperate. And ironically, the heart and soul of the storm were its most unpredictable elements: the return of the rejuvenated Strummer and "pick up" drummer Terry Chimes kicking into the hard funk of "Radio Clash" one minute and the next anchoring the liquid mutant reggae of "Combat Rock".

Chimes played this show like he'd been rehearsing the set a year instead of less than a week. He was the boot in the band's pants during "Clash City Rockers" and even the hall's trash-can acoustics couldn't deaden the crack of his machine gun drum fill in "I Fought The Law".

Then there was Strummer, rallying the troops on and off stage in his chic new combat fatigues. Whatever the cause and effect of his recent bug out, he still sang with spirit and bite. He spat out the poisonous satire of "Know Your Rights" and "Go Straight To Hell", then lead an angry romp

through "Garage Land" to close the show, returning for a pained meditation on "Armageddon Time" with Mick Jones' guitar slicing the humid air over Chimes' and Paul Simonon's hard reggae thrust.

What Strummer and Chimes had been obviously contagious because Jones traded in his occasional guitar hero overkill for dramatic power chord and clipped riff punctuation, adding his own vocal muster to a stirring version of "Somebody Got Murdered" that, in one fell swoop, buried the accusations of diluted passion and commercial rock flab dogging the "maturing" Clash.

In fact, the longer they played, the clearer it became that The Clash were playing hard here not just for their reputation but for their very lives as a rock 'n' roll band. Pop fashion has left them eating clouds of its smug dust; the changes of the last month threatened to blow them apart.

Yet they responded with the best show I have ever seen them give and they did it in front of a crazed cross section of disenfranchised American rockers, from hippies in Grateful Dead tee-shirts to hard core punks in their Dead Kennedys regalia to stunned Jersey beach bums. The Clash fought the odds and we all won. It was only one battle, but the war is far from over. — DAVID FRICKE

SQUEEZE

Fair Deal, London

SQUEEZE albums go with Squeeze's record players, "A Kind Of Loving" and formula topped tables. A Squeeze gig is a part of a larger, lathered into a sweat and forgetting Monday follows Sunday.

Initially it looked like the size of Brixton's Fair Deal would overwhelm the impact of Squeeze music. Removed from the intimacy of the drawing room Squeeze sounded like they were struggling. Oh, the hits just kept on coming — "Tempted", "Another Nail In My Heart", "Black Coffee In Bed" — but they were getting lost in the Moorish village surrounding the stage.

Was getting anxious, then Glenn Tilbrook pulled every tear-jerking stop out on "Labelled With Love", and the hairs on the back of my neck went on strike, and you just knew everything was going to be alright.

Squeeze's finest music is

The Likely Lads

vulnerable; contemporary love songs that wring chart emotional encounters. That sensitivity was lovingly evoked on "Labelled With Love". As a single, I'd always found it a mite trite, but live it conjured up everything Squeeze are capable of, and what their audience expects; the stalls wrestled the final chorus away from Tilbrook, and from then on Squeeze never let go.

Bursting straight into a joyous "Cool For Cats", no one looked back, only forward to the favourites. It's only when you see them live that you realise just how many great songs Squeeze have written and if "Squeeze Greatest Hits" isn't under everyone's Christmas tree this year, A&M want their bumps felt.

As a band, they are so

likeable: bassist John Bentley prowling round the stage, living out a rock 'n' roll fantasy; drummer Gilson Levis never missing a beat; new keyboardist Dan Snow enriching the sound. And the front men... Tilbrook was cute enough to charm a mussel from a shell and Chris Difford effortlessly out-spined George Cole.

Stage front, they were the focal point; admirable, but not aloof, reveling in the music they have created. The night grew old, the temperature rose and the band played on. A "Tears Of A Clown"/"Time Is Tight" medley got the thermometer working overtime. An invigorating diversion down Memory Lane brought the evening to a close, "Up The Junction", "Pulling Mussels", and "Take Me I'm Yours".

They did, I was! It was a great evening, with Mar Wilson and the Wilsons a perfect appetiser. Their act has improved immeasurably, and Mar's version of the classic torch ballad "Cry Me A River" almost brought a tear before bedtime. But the night belonged to Squeeze, they managed to make the Fair Deal feel like a Depford pub on a Saturday night.

Madison Square Garden watch out! — PATRICK HUMPHRIES

RE-FLEX

Embassy Club, London

IF THERE'S one golden rule in surviving calamitous gigs, it's this: never step up to the microphone and announce, "Surely nothing else can go

wrong now." Believe me, John, it always does.

They must have had more technical problems than the Channel Tunnel and were understandably pissed off by the end of the night, especially as this was a showcase gig in search of a deal.

Presence isn't enough for Re-Flex, it's pressure they want to apply, driving home what are really curly haired pop songs at honed needed point. The effect, exhausting, compulsive and could have been exhilarating: the broken leads and difficult connections hadn't got them down.

That was a shame since the power and the spiky melodies would be enough on a strong day to carry anyone. Covering the cracks involved too much animated jumping, sweating and fabricated bonhomie until the strobe in Embassy resembled a colour your own edition of "Top Of The Pops". I left battered, but still brightened. — PAUL COLBERT

DIANA ROSS

Wembley Arena

"It's not television," said the lady after about four numbers, as a gesture for audience participation. And she was right.

A quiet moment — "the evening's just going too quickly, so I'd like to slow things down for a minute..." "Sit down!!", comes a shout from halfway back to some over-enthusiastic fans standing at the front. "It's really great to be back in England..."

"SIT DOWN!!!" A pause. A thought. And she starts to sing... The first of four nights for Diana Ross at Wembley Arena certainly didn't prove to be the well-oiled ride into glory that everyone, including the lady herself, expected.

The sound wasn't right (she threw down her mike and stormed off at one point, she was almost knocked off the stage by one fan and there was a bunch of berrackers. But though it spoilt the dream it perhaps helped to illustrate the resources and tremendous talents of the lady as a performer. She quashed the hecklers with a song and with all the guts and composure of an old blues singer in some sweaty dive.

And when the sound just wouldn't behave on "Upside Down" she stripped away all the instruments and sang it bare and beautifully. Never before has a soundtrack been performed so elegantly!

She promised to touch on all 20 years of her bountiful career and for the most part she did. Songs from "The Wiz" and the gorgeous theme from "Mahogany", a couple of Chic tunes, a few recent hits and a quick dip into the Motown bag with "Stop In The Name Of Love".

"Reflections" and "You Keep Me Hanging On". Even recent slinger numbers like "Mirror Mirror" and "Why Do Fools Fall In Love", which perhaps seemed to indicate the end of her reign, were pleasant surprises.

Lifted out of the studio by sheer power and glory of her voice, they took on overgenerous proportions. Halfway through the set the lady on stage, looking out to the audience, caught sight of the blissful, idiotic grin of a young truly in the aisle row.

"You smile," she said with a lovely flick of irony. And for her trouble, her spirit and her voice, and many others, did. — PAUL SIMPHER

MOOD SIX

The Venue, London

With the so-called newspaper coverage of the Falklands fiasco effectively muted, Mood Six has the collective power of individual consciences can influence international affairs, the dark seeping shadows of a jingoist support against a strong anti-, or at least, a pathetic public trend, Mood Six has the collective power of individual consciences can influence international affairs, the dark seeping shadows of a jingoist support against a strong anti-, or at least, a pathetic public trend, Mood Six has the collective power of individual consciences can influence international affairs, the dark seeping shadows of a jingoist support against a strong anti-, or at least, a pathetic public trend.

With record sales and gig attendances plummeting as the "kid on the street" loses interest in pop, the ritualistic innuendo and suggested star worship that permeates Mood Six's single, "Hanging Around" seems a self-deluding, anachronist noise.

But, given that the new psychedelia is little more than a faded fashion item, Mood Six have shored up against the inevitable jibes in the only way left open — by beginning to make the most of the music. Their stance, the dry ice and films — may be more corny than cute, but the poppy promise of Plastic Flowers carries a commitment beyond their polished professionalism.

Mood Six are a gimmick that may yet catch on; Phil Ward is a mean Jagger impersonator; Tony Royce rehases the odd James Sixties song and any band who could so blasphemously understand and overstate the kitsch subculture of Andy Williams' "Music To Watch Girls By" and still have the savvy and style to pull it off without the deserved barrage of plastic beakers must have something going for them. Even if it's only more bottle than brains. — STEVE SUTHERLAND

CAUGHT IN THE ACT

HAIRCUT ONE HUNDRED

Liverpool Empire Theatre

CAN I write a review of Nick Heyward's legs? They featured in the second encore in a pair of shorts — more fitting to the weather than woolly leg warmers. But before that, something more serious: an illustration of fantasy and of reality:

Reality is a man on stage saying "Hello Liverpool... we've been told by the police that there's a bomb in the theatre. Please look under your seats." This is not the sort of thing you wish to hear when you've recently watched "The Long Good Friday".

However, it turned out to be a hoax, and soon forgotten. Everything else that happened tonight is pure fantasy.

What makes a teen idol? I wondered as I surveyed the mass of adolescents (mainly female) waiting patiently for action. Suddenly there's a T. Rex record playing that makes me both feel my age and realise what it is they're waiting for. It makes me wonder, too, how many of tonight's audience are old enough to remember T. Rex and do they feel the same way about Nick Heyward as I did about Marc Bolan?

Is it possible for wool to equal the charisma of satin and glitter? At any rate, a fan in leg warmers on a night as hot as this is surely devoted.

Devotion is something there's plenty of here, and it manifests itself in the only way possibly — screams. The screams seem out of place after the recent announcement, but there's no place in this world of fantasy for such considerations.

The screams are regular and in almost all the right places. There's screams for the support group The Bluebells (more Scottish nursery pop, one dimensional but charming, and probably with a future).

Screams as the house lights go down. Screams as the stage lights go on or off effectively. Screams as the different members of the band appear and begin playing. For the drummer, the percussionists, the bass player, the brass section... the roadie.

And eventually for the star of the show, Nick Heyward who only has to smile to get a scream. The audience have a disciplined obsession, the screaming's not continuous, merely used to salute a familiar song or acclaim an utterance or gesture from their idol.

The band do what they can to deserve all this. There's nothing whimsical about the music: it's tight and strong, music for



Long and shorts of it

dancing, not daydreaming. The sounds themselves are fashionable even if the image isn't. The first song is all brass and percussion, with no guitar but plenty of exuberance, both vocal and physical. Party time right from the start.

Hundreds of scarves waving in the air, hundreds of pairs of hands keep time in the air too... you've seen it all before. Don't mock: most of the audience probably haven't. By the third song "Boy Meets Girl" — everyone's on their feet. Not that they're allowed to stay there very long of course, which is stupid because after all this is dance music not just scream music.

Later, there are more relaxed songs too. Haircut One Hundred have two moods, and two types of songs: the brass dominated funk and the more gentle romantic pop songs. The contrast is useful in providing the variety essential to a live performance (though to a detached observer it's still not quite enough).

The set's well paced, and the pace is fast. Each song is announced with the speed which could suggest either enthusiasm or haste (but which I hope is the first). And some of the songs like the over familiar "Fantastic Day" suffer in the same way. But the planning is perfect, with plenty of familiar songs from the LP, the singles the right distance apart, and the occasional new song well integrated.

And everything of course punctuated with screams. They scream for an encore (who can resist hundreds of female voices shouting "we want more"?). They scream for another (and "Love Plus One" is worth hearing again). And they scream the most when the band throw their towels at them. Fantastic Day for everyone.

As for the legs, I've seen better. — PENNY KILEY.

RORY GALLAGHER

Dominion Theatre, London

THE temptation with a new album as excellent as Rory Gallagher's latest "Jinx" must be to fill the live set with it, to fulfil the murderous potential of tracks like "Signals" and "The Devil Made Me Do It" and rest assured of a few hundred more LP sales.

At his first night at the Dominion, though, Gallagher opted for the opposite course of action, showcasing only a few of "Jinx" treasures and motivating through a comprehensive selection of his best-known songs for the fans who've come to expect it. That's the thing about Rory: he's predictable, but in his case that's no crime because the things you can depend on from him are the things every band should be capable of offering their fans: a visually and musically dynamic show, value for money, intelligent pacing, thoughtful set-listing, emotion... and commitment. The keyword, quality.

No matter how many times that man plays "Bullfrog Blues" in the encore, he still makes it sound as exciting as it did way back... when? And no matter how many times he slips into the bluesy "I Wonder Who", the moodiness, the anguished guitar give you the shiver that they always did.

New songs like the

powerful "Big Guns" fitted logically into a collection that took in favourites such as "Rolling Me", "Moonchild", "Brute Force And Ignorance", "Shadow Play" and "Out On The Western Plain" (part of the acoustic section) and while Gerry McAvoy (bass) and Brendan O'Neill (drums) observed the various changes of atmosphere and tempo, with contributions from two sax players, Rory made the stage and the crowd his own. A triumph. — CAROL CLERK

DAVID THOMAS

Danceateria, New York City

"The question for tonight," announced Peter Ubu's singer and soul captain at the beginning of this remarkable solo affair, "is 'is hyberbole man's best rhetorical friend'?"

The answer, certainly not in discussing the emotional breadth and depth of Thomas' two and a half man show (if you include a tape recorder and Swollen Monkey Ralph Carney playing horns and

bubbling strait man) of songs, verse, and bedtime stories. Superlatives would just trivialise this strange, wonderful performance. Dressed quite formally in black shirt, pants, tie, and suspenders, lording over the stage with his impossibly thin and flamboyant serio-comic stage manner like a Shakespearean Oliver Hardy to you include a tape recorder and Swollen Monkey Ralph Carney playing horns and bubbling strait man) of songs, verse, and bedtime stories. Superlatives would just trivialise this strange, wonderful performance.

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Mr Tape Recorder got a four song workout, running backing tracks from Thomas' recent solo LP "The Sounds Of The Sand... over which his voiced howled, hollered, cajoled, cackled, and did hair raising swan dives spanning whole octaves. But there was a small nagging sense of detachment about the taped segments, the difference between performance and genuine interaction, not to mention the difference between the disembodied thrash of tape and the cheerfully disturbing locomotion of the live performance. When it was just him (and Carney) against the world in that room, there were real fireworks — the mysterious Ancient Mariner chit of his unworried vocal improvisations on "Sloop John", the bitter sarcasm of the half-poem half-song on the sorry demise of the dinosaur, the sprightly banter with Carney's "Miserable Goats".

And lest we forget this is entertainment, he encored with a couple of scolding variations of Simon and Garfunkel's "Feeling Groovy" and a telescopic all-vocal imitation with Carney of "Hooked On Classics". After that, nobody went home a misery goat. — DAVID FRICKE

RICHARD PINHAS

The Venue, London

THAT vague, amorphous blob of a term "Eurorock" really shouldn't have any relevance at all — we don't after all, lump together Saxon, the Gang Of Four and the Exploited and call them "Brit-rock" — but somehow it seems peculiarly apposite when applied to the music trotted out by Pinhas. Richard Pinhas is a four fifths empty Venue last week.

If the phrase brings to mind any images or associations at all, it's usually bands of synthesizers, anonymous faces and hints of a mid-Seventies "progressive" feel. Richard Pinhas thus fits the bill.

At the centre of the Pinhas stew is a kind of chewy, throbbing gristle that usually denotes a minimalist design, though this band is too overblown, too tasteless to deliver any promises of seduction, raucous excitement or hypnosis.

Far-right, the bear-like figure of Bernard Paganotti sweated out huge bass drops, though mostly in vain. Leader Pinhas appeared to be an essentially uninteresting character, his synthesizer posturing unchallenging, his guitar work undisciplined and obsolete in conception, his overall vision limited. The familiar, enigmatic chords of Fripp's "Lark's Tongue In Aspic" were unmistakably heard at one point, a move that revealed Pinhas' aims to be not so much based on the principles of the explorer but those of the flutist saluting to greet the ship at the end of its around-the-world voyage. — LYNDEN BARBER.

ALAN VEGA

Venue, London

VOU dispute me. Hey, don't look away, I'm talking to you! First you're willing to kiss the corporate ass of some two-decade-old industry just to say you were in on the act when it designed to crawl out of overdue retirement and go through the motions to placate the tax man (I'm talking Stones dummy).

Then you go and pay lip service to some nebulous legend and goggle up your feet in a determined effort to get your money's worth despite Alan Vega's witless performance.

Despite? Why? The words hardly do degrading justice to the pitiful pantomime of neoprophetic gestures that paraded itself at

The Venue as rock. Such a tired and tiresome routine.

Let's get this straight: Suicide — of which Vega was half — produced one transcendental single called "Dream Baby Dream" and a whole heap of feish-suggestive crap. Vega alone is an offish Lou Reed clone, Manitas De Plata in a plastic Beatles wig continually knocking down his mistake as some stupid symbolic anti-authoritarian gesture.

His glitter jacket doesn't fit, his three-piece band sound like gormless old hacks just hauled out the pub, his songs are based around banal (tongue-in-cheek?) rock 'n' roll repetition ("J-J-J-J-J-J-J-J-J-Juke Box 8-8-B-Baby" for 15 minutes anybody?) and any implied irony is lost in the unconvincing ineptitude of his

let's-all-pretend-we're-junked-out-but-don't-care theatrics.

Alan Vega would con you he's a world-weary survivor rebelliously biting the very hand that feeds him. In fact he's just a wearisome wally. I don't know who disgusts me more — him for putting it on, or you for not walking out. — STEVE SUTHERLAND.

DE DANANN

West End Centre, Aldershot

"THE best gigs always come A. In the most unlikely places. I mean... Aldershot?

De Danann are an Irish band who've been together since the late Seventies, soaked in the glorious musical tradition of Ireland, but with an irrepressible flair for adventure which finally

reached full blossom last year with the addition of a singer who'll break your heart and blow your preconceptions.

Maura O'Connell. They didn't have Charlie Piggott with them this time, but their recent run of success has injected a supreme confidence and warmth

fronted by the irrepressible young fiddler Frankie Gavin, they were positively jovial and ebullient when they used to be surly and introverted.

A bit of instrumental magic between Gavin and accordion virtuoso Jackie Daly, and then on came Maura, her voice soaring and swooping through the hall. You could virtually see the sagging open at the sheer purity of it all.

When they let rip they blaze like no band on earth, and

when they apply the tender touch then the audience becomes a pathetic mass of sobbing wrecks. They even allow Ireland's bodhran king Johnny McDonagh the indulgence to play an extended gaoil-skin solo.

All the favourites were there, of course. The classic "Maggie", the eccentric American Thirties number "Star-Spangled Molly", and still best of all, their wonderful interpretation of "Hey Jude".

When they started to play it one guy stormed out under the impression it was "Don't Cry For Me Argentina". It somehow seemed symbolic of the misconceptions that have constantly plagued and held back this type of music. — COLIN IRWIN.

GANG OF FOUR

Sheffield Poly

TOWARDS the drab and of the Seventies there was always one group of people who believed irresolutely in one group. Those people were the Gang Of Four; and that group was the Gang Of Four.

The Gang often seemed oblivious to exterior opinion, and for that reason they were judged with an ultra critical eye. The Gang argued that they were offering a perceptive overview; the people sensed that it wasn't however a realistic view.

Sensibly, the Gang succumbed to opinion and I applauded their retirement. Then in a spirit of heady optimism and fresh conviction they re-emerged at the start of

this year. I cringed at the news, but curiosity got the better of me.

Basically I couldn't resist seeing if they had got the suss for change. On Friday the Gang returned to find that some things just don't change. Like their popularity: they're greeted politely by a thin, only vaguely interested audience.

The Gang, however, have changed. They're no longer

just fierce individuals throwing themselves staunchly behind hard slogans. No, although the lyrics are still as one-dimensional as ever, the Gang have been taking stock of what has been happening here in Britain.

Three men and one woman of self-appointed principle have returned to us as an hilarious cabaret outfit, producing an overblown

sound which plumps itself heavily into the Spandau Ballet and Talking Heads.

The Gang are sick of being in a depression, although they do still reserve the right to lecture us on it. The Gang want the big time, not on their own terms, but on any terms. It's a new world for them: a blue world for us.

I'm not talking controversial words like "sell out"; they never provoked me that much

Lumpy proletariats

in the past to set me spilling uncontrollably now. I'm just surprised that they decide to humiliate themselves so pitifully.

It's not even competent funk that they're offering — just a jumbled set of rhythms with no soulful centre. Just imagine the prospect of Jon King singing incoherently around the stage like an inebriated Tony Hadley.

The Gang have returned to a new oblivion, lost in an uncomfortable world that they're not really sure of, but desperately want to be a part of. They're now about as essential to modern music as Iron Maiden or Queen. It's a new world to face the truth, but if you like the Gang, you've got real problems. — FRANK WORRALL.

DATELINES



WE'RE TALKING TOM TOMS

TALKING Heads and the Tom Tom Club play two nights at London's Wembley Arena on July 12 and 13.

The line-up of Talking Heads will be: Chris Frantz, Tina Weymouth, Jerry Harrison, David Byrne, Steve Scales, Bernie Worrel, Alex Weir and Dollette McDonald.

For the Tom Tom Club, it's Chris Frantz, Tina Weymouth, Steve Scales, Bernie Worrel, Alex Weir, Lani Weymouth and Laura Weymouth.

Tickets are £8.80 and £5.80, including 30p booking fee, and they're available by post from Talking Heads Concert, PO Box 77, London SW4 9LH. Postal orders only, payable to Kennedy Street Enterprises, including an s.e. Tickets will be available to personal applicants from June 19 at the Wembley box office, London Theatre Bookings, Keith Prowse, Premier Box Office and Albermarle.

WORTHY UHURU

BLACK Uhuru have now been confirmed as the headline act on Friday June 18 at the Glastonbury CND Festival. As previously reported, Van Morrison headlines on Saturday June 19 and Jackson Browne wraps the festival up on Sunday June 20. Other acts appearing at Worthy Farm over the three days include Aswad, John Cooper Clarke, the Blues Band, Richie Havens, the Chieftains and Randy California.

BO'S BACK

FOLLOWING an extensive tour of Europe, which included dates in Germany, Holland, France, Switzerland and Italy, the mighty Bo Diddley returns to the UK. He plays just five dates starting at London Dingwalls this Wednesday, followed by Nottingham Rock City (June 10), Edinburgh Playhouse (11), Leeds Forde Green Hotel (12) and Gillingham King Charles Hotel (13). Diddley's band includes his two daughters Terri and Tami.



In addition to dates already announced, Blue Orchids are playing Liverpool's Warehouse on June 11 and The Venue in London on June 28, supported by The Decorators.

CLUBBING TOGETHER IN LONDON

LONDON gets three new clubs this week with the opening of special nights at the Barracuda and Gullivers. First of the new ones is the Hotel Marmakoko at Gullivers which starts on Thursday and specialises in African music, it will run on a weekly basis with a live band every week.

The other at Gullivers is Fatman's which is a disco being run by noted "London Mafia" deejay Graham Center. That runs weekly from this Friday.

And finally The Members have opened The Membership at the Barracuda (on Wednesday this week). Said Members spokesman Nicky Tesco: "It's about time London had a club that's about providing entertainment for the people as opposed to entertainment for the people that run it." The first night features The Members.

EBONY AND IVORY

THE Ivory Coasters, who have just released a new single, embark on a further series of UK dates this week. The single in seven and 12 inch formats features "Chevali" Charlie and "Mungaka Makossa" with an additional track on the 12 inch - "The Bongo That Ate Pk Bother".

Dates: London Moonlight Club (June 10), Bournemouth Midnight Express (12), London Clissold Park (13), Bath Males (18), Glastonbury CND Festival (19), Stoke Newington Pegasus (20).

CURTAIN UP

AFTER touring Europe extensively over the last month or more, Theatre Of Hate return to Britain to play a selection of dates in Scotland, not normally covered by touring bands. Dates: Aberdeen Fusion (June 20), Dundee Maryhill Hall (22), Dunfermline (23), Fort William Milton Hotel (25), Aviemore Centre (26), Glasgow Triforce (27). The band then plays two dates in the south at St Albans City Hall (July 3) and Guildford Civic Hall (6).

THE Passions have added more dates to their current British college tour: Crewe Assaig College (June 18), Reading University Westsex College (23), Durham Bede College (25) and Lincoln Drill Hall (30).

club calendar

THURSDAY

PIED BULL (Islington)
Reggae Night
BEATROOTS
+
SECTION 10

8 p.m. £1.50

BOTTOM LINE
GONZALES
01-866 5366
BULL AND GATE
389 Kewish Town Road
PUTNEY BLUES
£1

HALF MOON, PUTNEY
TRIMMER & JENKINS

PEGASUS
Green Lanes, N.16

MORRISSEY/MULLEN
8.30 £2.50

THE TRAMSHED
Woodwich New Rd, S.E.18
Blues Night with
JOHNNY MARS
SEVENTH SUN
plus THE ESCORTS
£1.00

FRIDAY

BATTERSEA ARTS CENTRE
Lavender Hill, S.W.11
223 8413

Tonight 8 p.m., £1
HARVEY & THE WALLBANGERS

BULL AND GATE
389 Kewish Town Road
NO GOOD WICKS
£1

HALF MOON, PUTNEY
JO-ANN KELLY BAND

PEGASUS
GREEN LANES, N.16

JUICE ON THE LOOSE
8.30 £1.50

SATURDAY

BATTERSEA ARTS CENTRE
Lavender Hill, SW11, 223 8413

HARRY BECKETT QUARTET
8.30pm-12.00am £1.20/2.50am £1

BULL AND GATE
389 Kewish Town Road
MORRISSEY/MULLEN £2.50

(Sunday 13 June)
GREENS PARK BAR/STAND
Overseas

HUMPHREY LYTTELTON
Admission Free, 7.00pm

PEGASUS
GREEN LANES N.16

BIG CHIEF
8.30 £1.50

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PEGASUS
GREEN LANES, N.16
THE REPUBLIC
8.30 £1.25

BULL AND GATE
389 Kewish Town Road
JUICE ON THE LOOSE £1.50

HALF MOON PUTNEY
FRANKE MILLER BAND

BRIGHTON LIGHT
Hewitt Rd W.6
STEP BY STEP
A little more of a blues
A little less blues

MONDAY

BULL AND GATE
389 Kewish Town Road
SHORT STORIES £1

TUESDAY

BULL AND GATE
389 Kewish Town Road
JAYWALKERS £1.30

WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, 23 June
AT THE TRAMSHED
51 Woodwich New Road, SE18
New week 8.00pm £1

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BULL AND GATE
389 Kewish Town Road
TONY McPHEE'S BLUES BAND

THE RAILWAY, Tottenham Lane, N3

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NELSON'S
45 DUNSMOOR ROAD
WIMBORNE, SW19
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JO-ANN KELLY £1

Sun. 20
COOL SNAPS £1

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ELEGIC GYPSIES

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Putney, London SW15
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TRIMMER & JENKINS

Fri. 11th
JO-ANN KELLY BAND

Sat. 12th

CRAMING

Sun. 13th
FRANKE MILLER BAND

Mon.
GORDON GILTRAP

Tue. 14th
MORRISSEY/MULLEN

Wed. 15th

BOB KERR'S WHIPPY BAND

Thurs. 17th

DAVE KELLY & JO-ANN KELLY

Fri. 18th Sat. 19th Sun. 20th

CHRISTY INNES

WHITING HEARTS
8.00pm from 10.00pm

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Thurs 17th June—depart Bristol 1005 1105 1205 6.1305.

Sat 19 June—depart Pilton 1800 2000 6.2200.

Sun 20 June—depart Pilton 0900 1000 1100 1200 6.1300.

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Marionettes & Marines
The Three Wilsansons Courgettes
WEDNESDAY 30th JUNE 7.30pm

King's the king...

JAZZ NEWS

AL TOMAN Peter King has won the ABC's Jazz Musician of the Year award which was presented to him at London's Purcell Room.

US Bebop veteran pianist Al Haig also won a special award for his contribution to jazz piano.

King and Haig will be recording together for Tony Williams' Spothite label, while the Peter King group will record this summer for Spothite, scheduled release for early August. Williams also plans to record Edith Piaf, which won this year's Durrant prize.

JINUS Records plan to record the last three nights of Company Week which runs from June 23-July 3 at The ICA in The Mall. The pool of Improvising musicians includes US harpist Anne Le Baron, US trombonist George Lewis and pianist Ursula Oppens. Japanese instrument maker Akio Suzuki and bassist Motoharu Yoshizawa, and British guitarists Derek Bailey and Fred Frith, singer Julie Tippet, pianist Keith Tippett, and violinist Phil Wachsmann.

JCS's two-week Summer Course will run from July 26-August 6 at The City Lit, Kaseley House, Kaseley Street, London WC2. This year's tutors include Bobby Wellins and Jimmy Hastings (tenor and flute). Fees are £65 under 21, £70 over 21. Applications, which should be submitted as soon as possible, to Summer Course, JCS, 35 Great Russell Street, London WC1 (telephone 01-580 8532).



ALLEN EAGER

US TENCHMAN Allen Eager, who will be recording from Bruce Lundvall's Elektra Musician label, is to return for a month session in August at Connet Garden's Cottage following his successful residency in May.

THIS week's top ten jazz discs are:

1. **PAPA COLTRANE** THE PRINCE OF PEACE NEW ORLEANS RAGTIME JAZZ AND BROADCASTS 1980-1, Folklyric

2. **THE IMPERIAL JAZZ** JIMMY DOODS, VJM

3. **SKETCHES OF SPARK** Miles Davis, CBS

4. **A CLASSY PAIR** Ella Fitzgerald and Count Basie, Pablo

5. **SOMETHING WONDERFUL** Roy Williams, Hep

6. **WINGY MARGIE** Vol 3, Rutgers

7. **TELL ME YOUR DREAMS**, Cheo Barent, Rainbow

8. **LOUIS - 50 HOT CHORUSES**, Bent Persson, Kenneth

9. **SALAD** THE LONDON QUARTET, Herman

10. **MELODY AND MADNESS** Vol 4, Arto Shaw, Phonic

© Chart made by JAMES ASHMAN, 23a New Row, London WC2

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