

NEW ZEALAND'S FREE MONTHLY ROCK PAPER

RIP IT UP

FREE

NO. 8 FEBRUARY 1978



NZ ROCK
SEX PISTOLS
HOT NEWS

MARC HUNTER, DRAGON.

BEACH BOYS

Good Vibrations

The Beachboys play one Auckland concert on Sunday afternoon, February 26 at Western Springs.

It's a long haul from 1961, when they ripped off Chuck Berry and recorded a hit in the family garage, but the Beach Boys are still performing and they're due in Auckland this month. They'll give an afternoon concert at Western Springs on Sunday 26th. For those many fans, now in their 20's (& 30's), who partially charted out their adolescence with Beach Boys records the concert will be almost a compulsory pilgrimage. No matter which way you argue the Beach Boys were one of the greatest groups of the 60's, at least in the top 5, (and if you add the Beatles and the Stones that leaves only two places to play with.)

In the early days — '61 to '66 — Brian Wilson's ability to encapsulate perfect images of teenage heaven into bright clean songs was real pop art. His subjects ranged from surfing to cars to upright all-American chauvinism, but always he celebrated the dreams of youth. Fans the world over became de-facto Californians, believing in that Lotus land of perpetual holidays, sand, sea, sun, girls and motorised freedom.

But then Brian had never really actively participated in these teen delights. His songs were always consciously 'composed' and as he developed musically he became more and more self-conscious about his creativity. As he mastered the recording studio the group's music developed sophistication; no longer as light or fast as it once was. With the release of *Pet Sounds* in 1966 it became clear that Brian had undergone a major change. That masterful album was the work of a brooding romantic. He was hailed as a genius and produced "Good Vibrations" to prove it. Then there were the stories of his purple house, sand pits and a pitched tent in the living room, his burning the tapes of six months' recording, and the nervous breakdowns.

The Beach Boys continued to record albums as other members of the group struggled to fill the place left by their creative master. There were artistic successes and some wretched failures but the group never again achieved the huge popularity that peaked with "Good Vibrations". Sure, they still had legions of devoted fans but by the end of the decade their following had almost diminished to a cult, (albeit a large one.)

In '71 came the *Surf's Up* album which, succeeding the fine *Sunflower*, began to restore a lot of faith in the group as a creative entity. Yet sales were not that good, (for a Beach Boys' album anyway), and now it seems that their recordings in the '70's have only succeeded in retaining the ever-loyal.

What then of the schoolkids one sees with the group's name carved on their cases beside 'Starsky & Hutch' et al? It's the early '60's hits that these younger followers go for, the records that were made before some of them were born and are now available on compilation L.P.'s. (Which only goes to show that teendreams haven't changed that much. We all still want to dance 'dance dance dance' 'fun fun fun' 'all summer long'.)

But it's 1978 and the Beach Boys are due here soon. What are we to expect? Will they just recycle the hits or will we get the most recent works, or a bit of both? It's hard to say.

I'm certainly going to find out.
Peter Thomson



Boz, Lowdown at Springs

Boz Scaggs plays Auckland's Western Springs Stadium on Tuesday February 14.

As with his old high-school mate, Steve Miller, it's taken William Royce Scaggs some time to make the break from cult status to mass popularity. But seven albums and nine years on from his first solo outing, he has definitely made that move.

Boz Scaggs' seventh album *Silk Degrees* was released in mid 1976 and took off in no uncertain terms. By early last year it had sold 2 million in the United States, reaching the Top 3, making it a double platinum seller. In Australia it's fared even better, holding the Number 1 sales spot for 17 weeks. Such large-scale Australasian success has no doubt prompted his first excursion to this part of the world which brings him to Auckland's Western Springs Stadium on Tuesday February 14.

Scaggs first came to the eye of the rock'n'roll public when he travelled to San Francisco in response to a telegram from an old high school buddy, Steve Miller. But Scaggs' residence in the Miller band was to be short. He lasted one year and two albums.

Embarking on a solo career, Scaggs produced one of the classic recordings of

what was to become known as the Southern sound. His first album mixed elements of soul, country and R & B into a healthy amalgam.

His following three albums for CBS continued his flirtation with black musical forms with a reliance on blues based big band stylings derived from his love for 50's R&B. These albums were consistent critical favourites but commercial flops.

As Boz told *Creem* magazine: "About 5 years ago it dawned on me that the most innovative music was coming from the Philly Studios. This was before disco happened. I wanted to work with the new rhythms. The resulting album from this experiment (*Slow Dancer*) saw Boz rather buried in Johnny Bristol's orchestral excesses. But the next album *Silk Degrees* was a success in all respects. Producer Joe Wissert managed to link Scaggs' white soul voice and strong melodies to Philly based disco rhythms. The result was a deserved success. For his latest LP Scaggs has wisely stuck with Wissert and *Down Two Then Left* is an equal success.

With Scaggs' acknowledged skill as a stage performer his Auckland gigs should consolidate the vast popularity he has won in 1977. Remember the date!



marchy-USA

It seems that America has been a little slow to pick up on the 'the Sex Pistols are really lovely young chaps and their mothers are all proud of them' line which has been popular in England lately. While *Svengali* Malcolm McLaren was talking about cleaning up their image to ensure plenty of crossover sales in the U.K., the American Immigration Department was having none of it.

The Pistols were initially refused permission to enter the States for unspecified reasons — although the list of reasons for declining applications includes; criminal records, 'sexual deviation', and drug convictions. It appears from earlier Sex Pistols publicity when such information was 'good copy', that at least two members of the band have minor convictions.

McLaren threatened to fly the band to Canada, and attempt an illegal border crossing, although how exactly he intended to go about getting Johnny Rotten through Customs is not explained.

In the event it proved unnecessary as the U.S. government relented and visas were granted at the last minute. The Pistols played the first show of their tour at San Antonio, Texas, to a packed house of five hundred, and were greeted without a great deal of hysteria, until Sid Vicious and Steve Jones waded into the crowd with guitars flailing.

After it all settled down, the promoter commented that there had been no trouble to speak of. Obviously, them good ol' boys are made of stern stuff.

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QANTAS TAA

SMALL STUFF

The Latest & the Greatest O'seas Rock News

For all you A.J. Webberman fans out there, keenly awaiting confirmation of the Bob Dylan tour, comes news that the Zimlick, Reynaldo and Clara, has been released in America. There is no word on New Zealand release as yet. Sarah Dylan, the Clara of the title, does not receive billing in American ads for the film. Oh yeah, Bobby Neuwirth plays 'the Masked Tortilla' ... Hold your breath — Bette Midler has landed the choice title role in the Janis Joplin bio-film, Pearl ... Film scoops continue with the news that Nicholas Roeg will direct an English remake of Flash Gordon: and here was me thinking Richard Lester already did that one ... Just to remind you that this is a rock and roll magazine, we can inform you that Cher and Gregg have called it a day — or at least an afternoon — and Cher has filed for her fourth (count'em) separation order from the man from Macon ... There really is some rock and roll here you know, you just have to look for it ... How about this? Captain Beefheart announces the reformation of the Magic Band ... Ozzie Osbourne has left Black Sabbath to (ahem) 'pursue a solo career' ... Rumours abound that Queen are to split to 'pursue solo careers' ... Roger Chapman has left Streetwalkers to (you guessed) 'pursue a solo career' ... Rat Scabies has said farewell to The Damned and is probably pursuing solo mothers ... Southside Johnny, accompanied by his many Asbury Jukes blew out a recent British tour, as did Aretha Franklin a week or two later ... Some of the ruins of the Sensational Alex Harvey Band have regrouped around guitarist Zal Cleminson. The band will be called Zal ... Elvis Presley's next single is that all time foot-stomper, My Way ... The Rock Follies gang are going to do a film, despite promises to leave us alone after their second television series ... John Rotten, currently wowing them in Allmans' country, spotted backstage at a Garry Gitter show — obviously making a play for credibility ... The Tubes, with tongue firmly in cheek, have been announcing their credentials as 'punk rockers' to a credible British press during their current tour, and must be gratified at 'Shock-Horror-Probe' stories which put the effort of the Sunday News to shame ... The Who are embroiled in the making of an autobiographical movie called 'The Kids are Alright' — it includes live footage and Let It Be — style studio film as well as a touch of humour, Keith Moon-style ... Somebody up there obviously likes it. Jesus Christ Superstar has just broken the record for the longest-running musical in Britain previously held by My Fair Lady ... Emmylou Harris has a new platter almost upon us — Quarter Moon in a Ten Cent Town, as has her fave, Dolly Parton. Dolly's is called Here You Come Again ... John Martyn, star of the August Arts Festival in Wellington, is making another bid for a place in the sun with a new album called One World ... Back to Bob Dylan — it seems more likely that Jerry Wexler will produce the next album — not Phil Spector as the rumours had been going ... It took a ghoul to point out that David Bowie has been on two T.V. shows in the last few months, the respective tas of Marc Bolan and Bing Crosby — after the recent Radio with Pictures, perhaps Doctor Rock will be needing a little something from his black bag ... Top-selling albums of the year in Britain? I thought you'd never ask. Those doyens of the New Wave, Abba, were comfortably clear of Fleetwood Mac, the Eagles and Kristofferson and Streisand — maybe next



Enz News

Robert Gillies, saxophonist for Split Enz, has been sacked from the group to make way for Phil Judd who is rejoining. It is the second time in the history of the group that Judd has rejoined Split Enz after leaving amidst talk of giving up live work for good.


According to reports from Australia, his eight month career as a song writer ended when his songs were rejected by ATV publishing in London. At that point he approached Split Enz, via their manager Mr Hopkins, about his playing for them again.

The group decided he should return although the decision was not unanimous. Because of the groups' poor financial situation, it was decided that Robert Gillies be sacked and this was done in early January, after the group's Dutch tour.

"Charlie", one of the group's popular live numbers, which was re-recorded in December for release as a single has now been shelved after a decision by the group's U.K. record company, Chrysalis. An album is planned in the near future.

year Johnny ... Thin Lizzy guitarist, Brian Robertson managed to stab himself in the hand with a flick-knife after taking the pledge — 'I was drinking two bottles of Scotch a day. I think I looked very good, but my playing was lousy.' ... Locally-sprung jazz-rock band Pacific Eardrum beginning to attract attention in Britain on the eve of the release of their new (first) album ... spare a thought for the travels of the rock and roll jet set. 21-year-old Jerry Hall, fiancée of well-known Bryan Ferry was last seen disappearing from Orly Airport with even-better-known Mick Jagger for a grubby week on the Riviera ... Speaking of Abba (I was!), their fifth album — called Abba — the Album will be out world-wide on my mother's birthday — February 3. Now that's a cunning marketing ploy ... And 'midst all this disaffection and woe, there must be someone out there glad to hear that the Supremes, despite persistent rumours to the contrary, are to continue without the last of the original members — Mary Wilson ... See ya.

RIP IT UP No. 8, February 1978.
 Postal Address is PO Box 5689, Auckland.
 Edited by Alastair Dougal.
 Ads & Design by Murray Cammick.
 The typesetting is by City Typesetters and printing by Putaruru Press.
 Special Thanks to Frank, Bruce, William, Mike and Peter.



Graham Parker Competition

Do you want to win a copy of the new album by Graham Parker and the Rumour? The album is titled **Stick to Me** and is packaged in a special imported sleeve. The first 8 correct entries to be opened will receive a copy of the album and an imported promotional poster.

Now for the test of knowledge! **One** — Name Parker & the Rumour's two previous albums. **Two** — The maxi single containing his hit, 'Hold Back the Night' was entitled, 'The P... k Parker' — What are the missing letters in the title? **Three** — What is the title of the Rumour's first album?

Send your entry to RIP IT UP, PO Box 5689, Auckland. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, February 15th.

Rumours

Nobody bothers much about Wellington these days, with fewer concerts than most other places and much more bad weather. It isn't just the overseas rock acts we're missing out on down here — and believe me, we're missing out on most of them — but we're not seeing a lot of our Wellington groups either.

It isn't that Wellington bands are greedy or over-ambitious either, just very broke. I couldn't tell you what **Rough Justice** are up to, nor **Schtung!**, and **Rockinghorse** haven't played here for ages. **The Country Flyers** moved to Auckland months ago.

The Hinuera and Great Western Festivals will prove that many of the top up-and-coming New Zealand bands are from the bottom of the North Island but Wellington has gained a reputation for being the most unprofitable place for a band to gig in.

Venues are the main problem — there is nowhere in Wellington to compare with The Island of Real or the Gluepot in Auckland. There's the Royal Tiger if you fancy a squash, or the Broderick Inn/Oion Tavern/New Zealand Breweries typical pub scene.

Hello Sailor played two shows at Doctor John's Disco which wasn't ideal, and the other clubs in town (Uncle Albert's Attic and Slack Alices) have resident bands and resident clientele.

Most music-minded freaks would pay two bucks to see a good local band play in pleasant surroundings and perhaps the most promising rock event happened just a couple of Friday nights ago up at the Skyline Disco (top of the Cable Car). **Spatz** arranged and vigorously promoted a Rent Party there because over the silly season they had had to resort to Private Functions to pay the rent.

I spoke to the manager of a Wellington band who told me how hard it is to make a living here unless you land a residency: "... you may get \$350 for four nights at the Royal Tiger. Divide that between five and you can see how ridiculous it is. The Broderick and the Lion Tavern are better but the crowds aren't as receptive."

Incidentally, **Spatz** is the new name for **Les Hots!** Guitarist/singer Tony Backhouse says that no-one seemed to click on the original name, so they changed it, and now everybody wants to know why they changed it.

Lynne Attwood



The Doomed

New Wave has finally established itself here. There are six bands already playing ... **Johnny Velox** and the **Vauxhalls** **Doomed**, **Vacuum Blue Ladder**, **Vapor** and the **Trails**, **Soundchaser** & **Vandals**. As the summer continues more bands are forming, with at least two in the making at the moment. The **Gresham** is the only pub, at the moment, where people can hear a new wave band play with the **Vandals** doing a three quarter hour set — kindly donated by Maud and the **Kippers**, the resident band. They seem to be drawing large amounts of people up there.

Christchurch is currently undergoing a re-emergence in the active music scene, thanks to the club **De Rox** (situated downtown Colombo St., in an old ex market). It was started about four months ago by **Vapor** and the **Trails** as a place where they and their friends could play. It's proved so popular with the people that it has now become a regular fortnightly occurrence where any band or variety act can perform (nobody gets paid). It's \$1 to get in, all of which is recycled into the club. The first date for the New Year ... January 15 with **Ollies Band**, **Doomed**, **Vandals**, and **Vapor** and the **Trails**. The dates are basically, every two weeks on a Sunday, starting at 8p.m.

Vapor and the Trails: Alan Park, guitar. Leigh Perry, lead guitar. Ian Whitehead, vocals. Dick Cottral, bass. Murray Oldes, drums (replacing Karl Marsden). They play 60's R&B with a new energy ... most recent influences Johnny Thunders Heartbreakers & Graham Parker. Major achievements! Starting their own club and doing an abortive video for T.V.2 and consequently not scoring Radio with Pictures.

Johnny Velox and the Vauxhalls: Johnny Velox, vocals; Kid Buick, guitar; Eugene Dipstick, bass; Dick Distant,

drums. First new wave band in CHCH, aspiring punks they play to get you moving, doing **Velvets**, **Who** and other old new wave bands. They also write their own material and one song "Bob Brown" is going down really well. They're working on more of their own material so they're sure to have a few surprises up their sleeve when next they play.

Doomed: Johnny Abort, vocals; Ian Costello, rhythm guitar, Blair Alchurch, lead guitar; Tony Miller, drums; Peter McKelvie, bass. They've been together only for a short time, and the addition of Blair on guitar can only lead to better things. They play the only true punk that's been heard publicly here.

Vandals: Charlie White, lead guitar; Alan Park, rhythm guitar; Luke Neary, bass; Bob Ogilvie, drums; Christine Neate, vocals. Tony Peake, vocals. Originally a nine piece they play their own songs as well as drawing from Richard Hell & the Voidoids, Ramones, Feelgoods, Clash. Tight, sharp grinding guitar, manic vocals. To see is to believe ... they're coming to get ya.

Tony P

The last of the local rock festivals for this summer will be the **Riverhead Rock Sunday** to be held 25 miles out of Auckland on Sunday the 12th of February.

Running from noon to 8pm, the festival will feature a diversity of entertainment on its two stages. Besides the rock of **Hello Sailor**, **Living Force**, **Urban Road**, **Tama's Band**, **Citizen Band** and the **Suburban Reptiles**, there will be jazz-rock from **Cohesion** and theatre from the **Boys and Ratz** **Theatrix**. **Emcees** **Rob Man** and **Neville Purvis** will keep the show moving with a touch of humour.

The venue, which is five miles out of Riverhead, will be clearly signposted on the day with signs from the top of the **Albany Hill** and from the end of the **North Western motorway**. The site features a natural swimming hole and is surrounded by native bush. Overnight camping sites will be available.

Tickets for the **Riverhead Rock Sunday** are available from **Taste Records**, **Record Warehouse** and the **Island of Real** and are \$4.50 pre sold. Tickets on the day will cost \$5.

Congratulations to **12M** and **Hauraki** for putting some effort into promoting local groups this summer. The **Great Western Music Festival** was well patronised thanks largely to 12M's enthusiastic involvement and Hauraki's rock concerts at Albert Park are going well, giving little known groups like **Alien Blade** a chance to voice their wares and the public a chance to air their vices ... The company that is putting the effort in, **Mandrill Records**, has three singles released this month. **Rick Steele** has a self-penned piece, "Suzie Star", which features **Red McKelvie** and the rhythm section from **Swayde**. There is **Alastair Riddell's** single and the new one by **Citizen Band** which is entitled "Out in the World" and is a G. Chunn/W. Sly composition. The **Mandrill** label is now being distributed by **Phonogram**. **Golden Harvest** are coming along nicely. Their single "I Need Your Love" has received much radio attention and their appearance with **ELO** should establish a fan following in Auckland ...

Barry Coburn, once manager, record producer, entrepreneur, publisher, promoter and managing director of **White Cloud Records**, **Coburn Music Ltd** and **Coburn Artists Ltd** is residing in Melbourne. He is involved with **Brent Parlant's** group, **Home Groan**, and a group called **Manning** which features Aucklanders **Peter Cuddihy**, formerly of **Kindred Spirit**, on bass ... Watch out for **Chapman and White**, a very talented duo that have written a song entitled "Nambassa" to coincide with the festival of the same name. ... Watch out for the **Tourists** ... N.Z.'s largest punk rock outfit called the **Mongrels** (Wellington) have been in the news lately. The group achieved superstar status at Otaki recently for their song "Hey, What You Lookin' at, Mate". The flip side "I Wanna Scrap Your Face" has also been a smash hit. The group is a 17 or 28 piece depending on whether it's Saturday and features four metal-workers on chains with the rest on bottles and sticks ...

Wally Wilkinson (ex you-know-who) was in town recently however rumours that he is reforming **Moses** are untrue ... **Godley Head** a group of over 30 years olds is due in Auckland for live work soon. The group carries \$60,000 worth of equipment which includes an articulated truck which they supposedly sleep in. Sounds intimate. **L.B. Sands**

<p>BILLY JOEL</p> <p>THE STRANGER</p>	<p>BOYZ n the MOOR</p> <p>DOWN TWO THEN LEFT</p>	<p>BOYZ n the MOOR</p> <p>DOWN ONE THEN RIGHT for a Touch of Silk</p>	<p>BOYZ n the MOOR</p> <p>DOWN TWO THEN LEFT</p>	<p>BOYZ n the MOOR</p> <p>DOWN ONE THEN RIGHT for a Touch of Silk</p>	<p>DRAGON RUNNING FREE</p>	<p>THERE IS AN APRIL SUN OVER WELLINGTON</p> <p>-RETURN TO CUBA</p>
<p>LOOK OUT FOR THE STRANGER</p>	<h1>Rockopoly</h1> <p>A game for the skilled at knowing what is excellent in today's contemporary music scene. This game is international as good rock does not recognise boundaries and it has been found that the most successful players are those whose minds are open to new and exciting things. Like good wine, the music contained herein is all the better on repeat samplings. Rock music from CBS. Play it hard and play it often. You'll love it.</p>				<p>JT</p> <p>Winner Rolling Stone readers poll best male vocalist</p>	
<p>NEIL DIAMOND</p> <p>YOU HAVE STRUCK DIAMOND</p> <p>Scratch your back - cat</p>					<p>JT</p>	
<p>NEIL DIAMOND</p> <p>YOU HAVE STRUCK DIAMOND</p> <p>Scratch your back - cat</p>					<p>ETC ?</p>	
<p>NEIL DIAMOND</p> <p>POINT OF KNOW RETURN</p> <p>Collect a stranger and proceed to Kansas for solid gold rock</p>	<p>CBS RECORDS</p>	<p>CBS RECORDS NEW ZEALAND. PARNELL. AUCKLAND</p>	<p>CBS RECORDS</p>	<p>CBS RECORDS</p>	<p>CBS RECORDS</p>	<p>Paul Simon Greatest Hits, Etc.</p>
<p>POINT OF KNOW RETURN</p> <p>Collect a stranger and proceed to Kansas for solid gold rock</p>	<p>CBS RECORDS</p>	<p>WINNERS</p>	<p>CBS RECORDS</p>	<p>XI WHAT A BIG SURPRISE BABY</p>	<p>CBS RECORDS</p>	<p>LET IT FLOW because we just disagree</p>



1am, Sunday, the scene: a dingy, dirty, run-down attic above Queen Street's Classic Cinema.

The creatures of the night are out in force.

A sultry lady with long, dark hair, wearing leopard skin and carrying a riding crop is right beside a PA speaker functioning nearly at the threshold-of-pain level.

She doesn't care or doesn't notice. Nor do dozens of others. Guys wearing plastic rubbish bags, Glad Wrap waistcoats and safety pin earrings dance a demented fandango with girls wearing spiked boots and cropped hairdos.

If you thought punk fashion hadn't caught on here, just walk past the Classic late on a Saturday night. Then think again.

The Suburban Reptiles are playing. Nine months old and already taking it to the limit.

The Reptiles are an honest band, especially when it comes to their recording. Their first single, "Megaton", with "Desert Patron" on the flip, doesn't exactly fill them with joy.

Recording it was "problem after problem after problem" according to Billy.

"We recorded it on tertiary bursary

budgets for a start," he says. "It's a f**in' old song and it's taken a f**in' long time to be pressed. It was one of the first songs we ever wrote."

So "Megaton" is almost redundant in terms of how the Reptiles sound now, and how their song-writing has advanced. Billy says it would have come out last October, but for what he says were "contractual difficulties".

Phonogram agreed to release and help promote the single, as long as the band paid the recording costs themselves. The contract calls for two singles and an album this year, and the Reptiles have at least 20 numbers to choose from.

Their first-ever contact with a recording studio scared them more than somewhat. To a band that's used to doing everything live, cutting down the separate tracks and recording them one at a time was a new and strange experience.

"Doug Rogers from Harlequin was really good with us," says Billy. "he knew what we wanted and he gave us a really good deal, devoted a hell of a lot of his time to us, sometimes in a 12-hour session lasting till six o'clock in the morning."

"He knew we really couldn't afford the single and were just keen to get ourselves on vinyl, and he gave us f**in' good rates."

Doug's production knowledge, which he passed on to the Reptiles, has given them more confidence for their next single, which they'll record within a few weeks.

Billy isn't happy with the final mix of "Megaton", but the band was so sick of delays in getting it out, due to what they term "bureaucratic holdups", that they let it go.

Radio airplay is also only a remote possibility. The band agrees the song is too long, at 4 minutes 20, and too raw for radio play, but when there's people like Dr Rock and Bryan Staff around, there's hope.

"It's a start, anyway," says Buster. "A foot in the door."

It's 1978. '77 is already way out of sight. There's more to a young life than corn flakes and Merv Smith.

A new breed of cat is on the loose. His coming will gradually make everything more than six months old obsolete.

The Mamba is the dance, the Reptiles are the band, and Kleensacks gird the torso.

What are you doing this year?
Duncan Campbell



Sex Appeal or Soul

When Renee Geyer last toured New Zealand (in July/August 1976) I was asked to review her Auckland concert. Now, I'd never even heard of the lady before, but that was the whole idea, the music ed. told me. The other half of his brainwave was to send another woman (female singer-female critic) too and print both reviews.

I really enjoyed the concert, in fact I even went so far as to buy a Renee Geyer Band album the next day. I thought Ms Geyer had a powerful, expressive voice and her backing band was excellent. My colleague however, did not agree. Ms Geyer was accused of "fitting admirably into the Barbarella syndrome" and perpetuating the "stereotyped picture of women as sex objects". Chacun a son gout I guess, but since then I've often wondered whose interpretation was right; Renee Geyer super singer or Renee Geyer sexist sell-out.

But since her last visit there's been little heard of Renee Geyer although several albums have been released in those eighteen months. Her most recent release, *Movin' Along*, produced by Frank Wilson, an alumnae of Motown who has produced albums for Stevie Wonder, Diana Ross, Eddie Kendricks and the like, was recorded in Los Angeles early last year. Since then she has made two extensive tours of Australia plus several return visits to California.

During that time her band line-up has changed frequently, in what she calls a "big recycling thing" using almost all the musicians who have backed her at one time or another in the last seven or eight years. Renee took Mel Logan (keyboards) and Barry Sullivan (bass) with her to record *Movin' Along*; this year when she returns to L.A. to record another album Mark Punch, her guitarist, will go too.

Renee's decision to record in Los Angeles was prompted by finding a producer "more sympathetic to my type of music than anyone I could find in Australia." Frank Wilson will also be producing the second L.A. album which will be released shortly before Renee's New Zealand tour, scheduled for April of this year.

Even though the lady's only 24 years old she's been around long enough to have already recorded six albums in Australia. In 1976 the Renee Geyer Band virtually cleaned up the Australian Soul Appreciation Society awards with Best Album (*Ready to Deal*), Best Performance, Best Blues Performance and Best Songwriter (Mark Punch for "Heading in the Right Direction"). Even in New Zealand after only one tour her latest album, *Movin' Along* has already sold over 5,000 copies. The great coup however is still to come. Renee's contract with Polydor demands two albums a year and if, as the American radio station bible, Cashbox, proclaimed, she is ripe for the American market, it will be the next couple of years that will bring her into international prominence. The price is high, however; *Movin' Along* cost her record company \$80,000 in recording costs, with an additional \$15,000 for trips to and from the States for Renee and her Australian backing musicians. But the quest for success doesn't seem to bother her a great deal: "It would be nice if I could get to that level. But all I basically want to do is to

keep making good music and getting some sort of recognition for it... anything else would be a bonus."

Having extracted the above info I felt it was time to confront Ms Geyer with my conflict. The trick, I thought, was to ease it into the conversation gently and see if any sparks flew. In the media blurb I'd been given Renee was quoted as saying, "If you go on your own — if you're a woman — there's no way you can progress. You can only go down. You progress only if you have a unit behind you." Renee still agreed with that which moved us onto the question of the role of her sex in her success. "I don't regard it as being important to me as a woman; it's just important to me full stop. I'd even say that my being a woman has helped me because with so many more male singers in the rock scene, a female singer with a voice like mine is a novelty."

What about the stories of innocent young ladies being taken for a ride by big bad wolf promoters, producers and whatever else the music industry can churn out?

Renee has met other female singers who've come across deals and disadvantages such as this "but with me it's never happened. No-one's ever offered to do something for me if I sleep with them or anything like that. No way, because they know me and if they don't they soon find out."

Into the deep end now. I explained the dichotomy in the responses to her stage presence. Laughter and then, "I've got big boobs maybe, and I wear low-cut tops because I like the fact that I maybe look nice to men. Why not? I like men. But if I'm on stage I'm there to sing and — all the rest? If it's good I'm grateful. But I don't go out there to go "Come on, guys!" and then sing. I can't sing and do that at the same time — I'm not *that* talented."

It seemed I'd struck gold with the question of singer/performer, and Renee continued "I'm not talented enough as a performer to do all that cabaret stuff — to carry an audience through a performance by my personality, body and dancing, because I haven't got that much performing talent. All I know that I've got is my voice. I've got a loud voice and it's strong and I know it's all right and I know my singing is better than anything else I could do on stage."

So we had another glass of beer and she chatted about her dog in Vaucluse in Sydney and her suntan and how she got homesick only when she'd been away for a long time. And that was it really. I came away having solved the problem of her attitude towards her profession — her heart was definitely in her larynx and not, contrary to scientific belief, hiding behind her rather large left breast.

Louise Chunn

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MORE HOT NEWS

Some last minute world rock'n'roll news... **Steeleye Span** have decided to call it a day after their current British tour. Singer Maddy Prior will record a solo album and the other members will pursue individual projects... **Randy Newman's** "Short People" single has been banned by two radio networks in the States as offensive to diminutive members of the human race. Apart from wondering where they lost their sense of humour, it's worth considering what other toons of Newman's they could ban — "God's Song" as blasphemous? "Sail Away" as racist? With Newman the possibilities are endless... currently recording an album together in the States are three top female singers — **Dolly Parton**, **Emmy-Lou Harris** and **Linda Ronstadt**... those of us eagerly awaiting release of the **Elvis Costello** album (*My Aim is True*) will be relieved to hear that EMI have scheduled it for February. Meanwhile his second album is due for British release in March, once again it'll be produced by **Nick Lowe**... Nick himself has his first album released in February on the new label, Radar, established by breakaway Stiff Records mogul Jake Riviera. Lowe's album is modestly titled, *The Jesus of Cool*, and the first single from it will be "The Sound of Breaking Glass"... P.P.S... forgot to mention that the **Beach Boys** are also playing a Christchurch show. Tuesday 28 March at QEII Park...

Who's Where

Golden Harvest Castlecliff Hotel, Wanganui, Feb 1-4. **Awapuni Hotel**, Palmerston North, Feb 7-11 & Feb 28 to March 4. **Furlong Motor Inn**, Hawera, Feb 13-18. **Oxford Hotel**, Levin, Feb 22-25.
Tom Sharplin & The Rockets Aranui Hotel, Christchurch, Feb 6-11.
Citizen Band Friday 10 at Island of Real, Feb 14-18 — 21-25, Globe Hotel.
Schtung Tues, Wed & Thurs nights at the Cascade Bar, Royal International Hotel.
Spatz Windsor Castle, Feb 7-11. Hillcrest, Hamilton, Feb 13-18. Island of Real, Feb 26.
Rough Justice Ponsonby Club Hotel, Feb 6-18. Bell Block, New Plymouth, Feb 22-25. Wellington University Orientation, Feb 27 to March 4.
Rick Steele Island of Real Feb 3, 4, & 11.
Chris Thompson and **Chapman/White**, Island of Real, Feb 2.
Cinema Island of Real, Feb 17.
Bruce Morley Little Big Band, Island of Real, Feb 6.
Archilles Greaves, Island of Real, Feb 5.



**NEVER MIND THE SEX
PISTOLS
HERE THEY ARE...**

This is an interview conducted by an unnamed Newcastle DJ with Sex Pistols Johnny Rotten and Paul Cook. We edited it down from its 40 minute taped length to make it of printable size. It's informative and a lot of fun and taken together with their album, *Never Mind the Bollocks, forms A Beginner's Guide to the Sex Pistols.*

ders with all the way through the music press.

DJ: We went through four or five years of doldrums when so many bands got so big that they had to become unavailable in terms of playing live.

Johnny: No they didn't have to become unavailable. They made themselves unavailable. Deliberately. That was their trip. Do huge halls and ignore everybody and make huge stacks of money.

I've got a whole list of people, all those old big time bands that've bored me to death. Permanent. That have taught me how not to be. And now I know how to be.

DJ: Your music has opened the door for people to just get up and play.

Johnny: Well at least I've done something in my poxy life. The only chance I got and I used it properly I think.

DJ: The things you write about are the things you feel frustrated about and you've got good reason to feel frustrated that people don't understand what you're trying to say.

Johnny: If they don't understand there's nothing I can do about it. If they get some idea about waking up that's all that matters.

People read their own things into the songs and good on them. But I know why I writ it and that's all that matters to me. If you don't understand it well... tough cheese, pal. What else can I say?

DJ: But a lot of people might be offended because they don't understand it.

Johnny: Yeah, but they're the people we don't give a shit about. Your forty year old councillors. They can interpret what they like and the more insulted they get, the better I feel.

DJ: But I'm not talking about forty year old councillors but forty year old people or people of any age...

Johnny: Well they can all drop dead for all I care.

My mum's forty f**king eight and she understands. My old man's fifty eight and he understands. If you don't understand the most basic honesty, then you don't understand nothing.

We are not philosophers. We never claimed to be poets. We're just ourselves. Sorry if I haven't got a smart education and all that but what I say means a lot more to a lot of people than anything like what Maggie Thatcher can say.

DJ: What do you see for the future for the Sex Pistols?

Johnny: I cannot predict the future. God knows what's going to happen. It doesn't matter really, does it?

I'm waiting for a band to take over from us. That's all that matters, just so long as things carry on.

DJ: Johnny and Paul, it's very good to see you here in Newcastle. We've got a lot to talk about. How was the band formed and why was it formed? Was it a case that you formed the band from a purely musical point of view or you formed it to express certain ideas and attitudes that you felt had to be aired to the public or was it a combination of both?

Johnny Rotten: Well... you talk too much for a start. But Paul'll tell you how the band was started.

Paul Cook: We started in... nineteen... God knows when... it was a few years back and...

Johnny: Shut up and tell them how you got the dynamic me.

Paul: We found the dynamic John, what's the classic one? Looking bored in Malcolm's shop (Malcolm McLaren, the Pistols manager).

Johnny: F**k off you hated my guts and you know it.

Paul: We saw him and we asked him if he could sing and he said, "No, course I can't." So we said that's great, that's just what we need. We had a couple of rehearsals and it just worked out from there.

We just started because we were just bored with everything that had gone before us.

Johnny: Right. They got me in the band. I'd never been in any band of any kind before. I'd never sung in my life before and none of us had any direction when we started.

But like in our early rehearsals we really hated each other. The fights were excessive. Everybody quit day after day. Just out of that, like a kind of honesty just came out of it. Everybody grew to like respect everybody else.

Paul: We didn't know what we wanted in the beginning. We knew we wanted something but we weren't sure what direction it was going to take. It just sorta happened.

DJ: They've been talking for years about a replacement for the Beatles that would be original and exciting and whereby anybody could participate...

Johnny: Yeah and they got it through the likes of us. But they didn't like that, because what they really wanted was someone they could completely understand in three easy moves and play snakes and lad-

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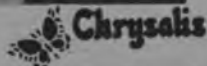


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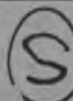
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THE GREAT SCORCH

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MURRAY CAMMICK

ACHSCTUNG!

Sichtung tend to provoke strong reactions.

Morton Wilson, guitarist for the six man aggregation, narrates a little story on this subject. "I was walking down the street in Wellington wearing a Sichtung T shirt which we'd just had printed. And this teenage girl about 16 or 17 came up to me and said, 'I think your band is f**king shit'. They she walked on before I had a moment. It was brilliant."

Unlike most of us, Sichtung don't mind the odd insult.

Andrew Hagan keyboardist, vocalist and guitarist is adamant that a reaction one way or the other is better than no reaction at all. "I do like people who come up to me and really hate it. Some people approach us and say, 'You can't dance to it and this and this and this is wrong!'

They've listened to our music and they've considered it and they don't like it. And good on them. They've made a serious attempt."

Morton backs up this statement: "We wouldn't be doing much good if everybody liked it. In fact, it would probably be very boring and we do want to surprise people."

Luckily not all the reaction Sichtung receives is so negative. On their second night in Auckland they were brought back for an encore after two hours of original material that few in the audience were familiar with. A vindication of their ability to reproduce and even improve on their recorded sound. Furthermore their first album, logically titled *Sichtung*, has already sold out its first pressing, moving 500 copies alone in the band's home-town, Wellington.

So what is a sichtung? The word comes from a Monty Python routine but more particularly it relates to the musicians who have formed around the nucleus of Mort and Andy, the principal songwriters.

The music on the album displays a considerable variety — from what are best described as impressionist sound pictures to more simple, albeit quirky, pop songs.

Andrew admits the music has tenuous connections to rock. "It's more classical than rock 'n' roll," is his description but is hard pressed to explain quite why it's happened that way.

"We are rather specialised. But we don't design it that way, we're just doing what we can do."

Morton and Andrew began writing together on acoustic guitars while still at school. "We spent the next two or three years writing stuff and doing the odd coffee bar around Wellington. Then Jeff the drummer turned up and said, 'You lads need a drummer'. After numerous changes the band has settled into its current line up which has been together for 15 months."

Their beginnings bear some resemblance to Split Enz who also began as an essentially acoustic act. Indeed the Enz have been a great influence on Sichtung, not so much musically but in showing the possibilities of playing out-of-the-mainstream music in New Zealand. Andrew agrees vehemently: "A brilliant band and they've done so much for us. They showed the possibilities of hitting NZ right in the stomach and saying, 'We're going to do exactly what we want to do.' They're the first band that did it and they proved a great incentive to us."

Sichtung have also come in for some stick over the nature of their lyrics. Songs about talking to trees and going 'doon the dunny' are to some meaningless. Not surprisingly the criticism didn't phase Andy.

He maintains their songs are "basically pretty serious stuff. We're singing about what's happening to you and me right now. The things that we've experienced. I talk to trees and I'm not ashamed of it. I mean you're stark naked singing about talking to trees. If you went down the pub and told the barman you talked to trees, he'd think you were crazy. But I still think it's something people should be aware of."

Andrew's explanation of "Doon the Dunny" is equally terse. "Have you ever been down in the dumps? What more can you say? The music's all there."

Their confidence in the quality of the lyrics carries over into a relaxed confidence in the future for Sichtung. Planning is already underway for their second album, but Sichtung is looking even further ahead. "We're gonna make it very big in about two years and we're in no hurry to do it."

In an earlier lull in the conversation Andrew gave perhaps the best idea of what Sichtung are about — "I mean what else can you say about Sichtung except listen to it."

Alastair Dougal

The sky cleared about ten thirty. Then commenced the great scorch. In prospect — ten or eleven hours, sun, seven bands, more searing, midsummer sun.

Shortly after eleven, more or less on time, Wellington's Country Flyers opened. "Hello out there," announced a friendly Midge Marsden, swearing he'd never played at such an early hour. The Country Flyers offered what was in some ways the most enjoyable set of the day. Beaver singing and making eyes at her children in the front row helped enliven an already intriguing and eclectic repertoire. They covered material ranging from Ray Charles to Commander Cody, nursing the crowd into the spirit of things, enjoying themselves in the process.

"Good Morning Citizens", the Chunn brothers burst into action next with their now familiar catchcry. Citizen Band entered in an unprecedented mood of vigour, treating the exercise like the frontal assault on Omaha Beach. Mike Chunn's bass simulating the naval bombardment. Unhappily the band who are consistently impressive in a smaller setting adapted only moderately to the great outdoors. Apart from the fact that the bass overpowered everything, Geoff Chunn's singing didn't carry well and it was fortunate that the material and arrangements remained strong enough to keep the whole venture afloat.

Meanwhile the sun had reduced our lunch to a molten ooze and the St John's contingent were dealing with their first heat casualties.

I believe I spent the first quarter of the Rocking Horse set in a baked stupor. Perhaps it is some small tribute to their energy that they managed to rouse me. At any rate, Rocking Horse, a band to whom Aucklanders have never been very kind, played to their usual high standard, finishing with lively versions of "Dixie Chicken" and "Oh Atlanta". Beaver walked on for vocal backups on the latter two which also featured from Kevin Bayley, New Zealand's most eccentric guitarist, solos which rate as minor classics in the comic grotesque.

Next up: Alistair Riddell and his Wonder Ones. Although Riddell's comeback is as yet limited to one good single he and the band have an album in the offing and all bar one song was prospective album issue. None of the material has the immediacy of "Wonder Ones" though it passed by inoffensively enough. We will really have to wait for release to see if its impact grows with familiarity.

At this stage the recorded disco noise pollution that the P.A. pumped out between acts was conspiring with heat stroke to drive me bananas. When will promoters understand that, given a whole day's rock and roll, people appreciate a little silence, that this incessant intervening throb bores and deafens and jades the pallet.

Presently the portly 12M D.J. who had been doing the honours all day welcomed "My personal friends" (quick read of his clip board) "Ah, Graeme and ah Harry" (another glance at the list) "and Ricky and Lyle — Hello Sailor". Hello Sailor were probably the chief crowd pleasers of the whole function. They lost a little to Dragon in that Dragon were the headliners and exuded a professional gleam, but held a prior advantage because their material was more familiar. Hello Sailor's image and approach has become unified over past months, a development which adds a stage presence to existent talents. Their adopted air of amused toughness is expressed in the winning little rhyme from new song "Son of Sam" which runs *Son of Sam I am, Son of Sam, bam bam bam bam bam*. Altogether a humorous and punchy wee number.

And so to Dragon. Three and a half years in Australia have suffused Dragon with confidence, given Marc Hunter greater singing competence and the ability to handle an audience. The younger Hunter has become very much a focal point, teasing the crowd with his drawled pseudo-theatrical patter, dominating the hit singles with some fine and well defined vocal work, dancing with eye catching flexibility. Dragon's performance was, one feels, well tempered to their Australian market, opening with the strongest and best known material from *Sunshine* and winding up with some hard and fast played boogie. There was evidence here that Dragon have the polish and do very nicely for themselves indeed.

So staying just long enough to observe Living Force playing more crisply than is usual and with their habitual enthusiasm, we left, like most of the crowd, to nurse our ringing ears, our tired limbs and our sunburn.

Bruce Belsham



Graham Brazier, Hello Sailor.

Dragon ~ the Bea

When Dragon played the Great Western Music Festival, while the bulk of the crowd was yelling out for their latest single, "April Sun in Cuba", one old fart with a long memory called out for "Weetbix". That request caused much laughter on stage and the next day Marc Hunter remarked "My God, what a fossil", when I reminded him of the interjection.

His reaction serves to underline the massive changes Dragon have undergone since they left New Zealand three or more years ago. Then they were a somewhat turgid "progressive" band playing original material interspersed with more commercial songs. Two albums and constant work got them nowhere fast here so they split for the Big Apple — Australia.

They were instantly disillusioned. As vocalist Marc Hunter explains, "We went there thinking we were a terrific band with all that long winded crappy stuff with 20 minute lead guitar breaks. We thought we'd teach these swine . . . we'd heard the stuff they were playing over there and thought it was terrible. I mean it was *pop music*. At those words Marc puts on an exaggerated grimace. "We thought ooh . . . ooh," he says with mock disgust, "*pop music*. But we learnt."

Just what did you learn?
"We learnt how to pack it into 3 minutes," lanky guitarist Robert Taylor explains.



Marc Hunter at Auckland's 'Big I'.



Sichtung are from left to right — Rob Sinclair, Geoff Bowdler, David Bowater, Andrew Hagan, Morton Wilson and Paul Jeffrey.



Dragon at the Western Musical Festival. Visible are Robert Taylor (rear view), Todd Hunter, Kerry Jacobson and Marc Hunter.

at of the Street

"Before we left we thought it was some sort of crime to be commercial. It was impure. Now we're just a pop band," Marc says. "I mean when we left New Zealand we actually thought playing music was an end in itself. Oh, wow, far out . . . playing music." Marc fakes a spaced out expression.

"But after you've done that for 5 years and you're still carrying your own instruments, you start to think maybe there's something else."

But the change in musical style was not just an adjustment to commercial realities. "We were starving in a stinking flat in Paddington and it became obvious that the music we were playing and our situation were completely at odds. The life we were living was incredibly hard and day to day," Marc explains, "so the music got chopped down into terser statements."

Robert adds: "The whole thing gets very economical. Is this a good song? Can we do it on stage?"

Marc: "We didn't attempt to change. The environment forced changes on us. Once we changed we found that at least for the moment it suits us."

There's no doubt that their first Australian album, *Sunshine*, did reflect their circumstances. Urban anxiety in 4/4 time. And lots of catchy hooklines to deliver it.

But even after they'd recorded it, they had to bring its obvious strengths to the notice of the great Australian public.

"That album sold because we went out and sold it. We went out and played as many venues as possible, anywhere. Even now we do spots in Leagues Club, pubs and clubs. We're working all the time to broaden our audience. To keep in front of people and put bums on seats."

"As a result when our new album, *Running Free*, came out it went platinum in 5 weeks as a backlash from doing all that work." What's more all that exposure and a consistent ability to come through with the musical goods has landed them numerous awards from the Oz music papers — best new band, best album and so on.

Constant work has one other benefit Robert points out, "it's good practise for America where we'll have to do the same thing over again." Their contract with American label Portrait guarantees them a crack at the Stateside market but their strategy is unclear at this stage, though a support tour around America seems the most likely plan.

But with Dragon's matter of fact attitude, they're not worried. Marc: "Now it's a laugh. We enjoy it. Before it was serious. It was ooh, ooh man . . . I hit a wrong note, I'll cut my throat. Now we just get pissed and play."

And Robert adds laughing, "And let everyone else worry about us."

Allstair Dougal



The Horse Rock Back

There's a tendency on these islands to become insulated in your own little town, so that you never know what the hell is going down at the other end of the country. Which is one reason why I hadn't heard much about R.Horse for a month or ten. One of New Zealand's veteran bands, Rockinghorse have been making some of the best music around here for years, enjoying varying degrees of favour with an audience that sometimes didn't quite know how lucky they were. They have had two albums released, and at one stage had a deal for three U.S. releases, which never quite got off the ground. The band have since left their recording company, EMI.

Apparently, the deal with EMI was for management, booking, and recording. The management side was the first to slip, and then the booking, and finally, the band were left to their own devices. I asked bass



Rocking Horse, Barry Saunders, Wayne Mason and Kevin Bayley (top) at Hinuera. Jim Lawrie and Clinton Brown (bottom) at the Island of Real.

player Clinton Brown what happened to their American deal.

"The whole thing wasn't handled very well by anyone. They wanted both albums and the rights to all our songs, as well as a third album. Ray Columbus got a really good thing happening, and put the idea to EMI". Wayne Mason continues, "The Nashville company was a production company, and they would have had to sell us to a record company. They were going to take 3½%, so we would have got 3½%, and EMI hassled over that. In the end there was no money in it for anybody."

The band have been working around New Zealand over the last year, and recently acquired a new manager, ex-EMI man Danny Ryan. They plan to record some demo tapes in Auckland early in 1978, using mainly new material, but also some that they have played live in the past. For the last six months they have had Barry Saunders, a Christchurch musician recently returned from Britain, adding his vocal might, as well as second guitar. Clinton Brown: "Since Barry's come in the band's got a lot more forward, more outgoing. It's another direction for the band, and it's one we're all happy with."

Wayne Mason agrees: "Probably our biggest problem in the past has been soft-sell. We used to think that all you had to do was turn out good songs. We used to do more diverse material, and I think you can overdo it. We used to get things like the publican coming up to us and saying, 'Unless you can play something more well known, you're out!', and now that same stuff is considered middle-of-the-road. Musical tastes have broadened."

Yet despite the more open nature of the rock audience, Rockinghorse play less original material onstage these days than when they were about the only group in NZ who did *any*. Wayne feels that the new approach is justified. "When our second album came out, about three quarters of our live numbers were original. But a lot of our stuff is not suitable for pubs, so we do a lot of covers. We're hoping to change that gradually. It's a lot easier when you have an album out."

With NZ bands such as Dragon and Split Enz hitting it off in Oz (and even further afield), and NZ producers Peter Dawkins and Alan Galbraith pulling good jobs over there, not to mention New Australians Mark Williams and Brent Parlane (the list goes on and on), it's surprising that any bands stay here at all. Clinton Brown: "There seems to be even fewer bands around than there was a few years ago. I think the whole scene has gone backwards. If you relate it to costs — for example, travel costs have trebled — the pay has stayed the same or gone down. The reason is that no-one belongs to the union. If all the musicians joined, the union would get the strength to act. Look at Australia. The proof is there. The union over there is so strong."

They must like it here.

John Malloy

Dragon Running Free Portrait

Some days after I'd been given this album, I met Dragon vocalist Marc Hunter for an interview. Now, he's a big guy. Six foot something and an assured, even arrogant, manner. At the end of the interview Marc fixed me with a stare and said, "You guys got a copy of the album?" I assured him we had. In clipped tones he said, "What do you think of it?"

What do you say? I decided to go for the truth. "Well . . . I don't think it's as strong as your last one." He stared at me. "You're right," he replied.

So there it is, straight from the horses mouth. And I guess I was right, but only partially. *Sunshine* was a strong album. It presented snappy melodic songs in a potent pop/soul/rock composite. Its Australian success was entirely deserved.

Running Free adopts much the same musical approach as its predecessor, but apart from the single, "April Sun in Cuba", lacks the kind of immediate melodic hooks that "Get That Jive", "Sunshine" and "This Time" provided on the last album. On a surface level, then, it's a less attractive record. But Marc assured me the album's strengths are buried deliberately. And he's right.

If I don't like an album I find it difficult to even work up the motivation to listen to it. With *Running Free*, I have no such problems. It contains enough immediate rewards to keep you listening and its strengths are slowly revealed. Particular goodies are Paul Hewson's "Shooting Stars", and his beautiful ballad "Since You Changed Your Mind". In fact, the only really weak tracks are the two rockers "Any Fool Can Tell You" and "Bob's Budgie Boogie". Effective stage stompers though they may be, on record they develop little beyond their first lines.

O.K. then, don't expect to be clouted on the head at first listening. But the rewards are definitely here for those prepared to put in the effort. Marc told me so.

Alastair Dougal

Bob Welch French Kiss Capitol

Bob Welch used to play guitar and do a bit of vocals with Fleetwood Mac (pre—"Rhiannon" days). Now that Mac are enjoying all that lucrative fame he feels it's time to get in on the action, and just to show there's no hard feelings a few of the group lend a hand with his first album. Mick Fleetwood does a bit of drumming, Christine McVie sings some backup, and Lindsey Buckingham plays guitar. Buckingham and McVie also produced track one, the hit "Sentimental Lady".

Welch has aimed directly at top 40 radio and, if his songs lack the distinctiveness that Mac's writers are capable of, they nonetheless contain some very catchy hooks. "Hot Love Cold World" and "Lose My Heart" (which appears in 2½ versions) would also make good singles.

The problem with the album is that, overall, it tends to induce bland-out. Vocals, arrangements and production all want for variety. Welch has a pleasant but nondescript voice — its very lack of character makes Christine McVie's four words of solo vocal on "Sentimental Lady" stand out disconcertingly.

Any variation in the arrangements comes by alternating lead guitar, strings and synthesizer over a standard rhythm section. The production, however, tends to subsume any such differences. Everything, vocals included, is swallowed into one echo-laden sound. No instrument has any bite — the strings have a sharper edge than the fuzzed guitar! This is rock? It's records like this that support my theory that there's an inverse correlation between production



Robert Taylor, Dragon.

and humanity in recorded sound.

Or perhaps I'm missing the point and these songs are meant to be heard between adverts coming from a two-inch speaker on the beach. As they used to say about Marmite, fine in small doses but too much spoils the flavour.

Peter Thomson

The Commodores Live Motown Records

1977 was the year the Commodores brought their brand of funky musical extravaganza to New Zealand. After brilliant shows, they departed leaving in their wake their album *Zoom*, which spawned the singles "Brickhouse", "Zoom" and "Easy".

With the success of *Zoom*, the Commodores were able to undertake a 50 city tour of the U.S of A on which they recorded *Live*, a double album which features all their major hits, except "Machine Gun".

Live was not recorded at a single show and there is no introduction, encores or significant crowd noise. It consists of 11 live tracks plus the studio recording of their new single, "Too Hot to Trot".

The six Commodores are assisted on stage by the 'Mean Machine', — 3 horns and a guitar man. And unlike more traditional Motown acts, the Commodores do not work with an orchestra or dismiss their finest material in fast paced medleys.

With live recordings, the energy expressed on stage — in movement, lighting and dry ice — is not visible. But with the excep-

Running on Empty Jackson Browne Asylum

If I asked you what was last year's record industry cliché, you'd have to say the live album.

If I then asked you what was the worst cliché of the art rock debacle, you'd have to say the concept album.

What then are you going to make of *Running on Empty*, which is nothing less than a live concept album?

In fact, if you have any faith in Jackson Browne, you shouldn't expect anything — because you're going to get a surprise. While the tag 'live concept album' might conjure up visions of *Thick as a Brick* played at Madison Square Garden with a liberal sprinkling of 'improvements' added afterwards, *Running on Empty* can only be described as a whole new type of record.

I don't think I have ever heard a record, with the possible exception of Neil Young's *Tonight's the Night*, which so accurately mirrors its content in the way it is played, and recorded. *Running* is unquestionably a

Joni Mitchell Don Juan's Reckless Daughter Asylum

1977 has been a bumper year for me as far as W.E.A. are concerned. My five top records come from their catalogue — Maria Muldaur's *Sweet Harmony*, the McGarrigle sisters' *Dancer with Bruised Knees*, the Beach Boys' *Love You*, Linda Ronstadt's *Simple Dreams* and Randy Newman's *Little Criminals*. And it seems that Joni Mitchell's new double album is going to be added to the list.

Together with Newman's *Little Criminals*, Mitchell's *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter* is the premier songwriter's album of the year. Yet Newman and Mitchell are strikingly different in their songwriting approaches. Newman writes short and epigrammatic songs whereas Mitchell favours expansive and rhapsodic tales — the prototype of which is probably "The Last Time I saw Richard" from her *Blue* album.

Newman likes to achieve some distance between himself and his song, whereas Mitchell's songs seem almost embarrassingly personal at times. "Talk to Me" from the new album is a case in point with the songwriter searching for "Mr Mystery" and pissing tequila anacondas in parking lots.

"Dreamland", the liveliest and most accessible track from *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter*, sees Mitchell relating her life style to her Canadian origins, and "Jericho", which gets its first airing on *Miles of Aisles*, is a poetic development of the conceit that is at the core of Capra's *It Happened One Night*.

In a concert recording of the late sixties, the lady prefaced her "Fiddle and the Drum" with a long rap on the problems of being a Canadian in America. *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter* seems to indicate that Joni Mitchell is coming to terms with America. The last song on the album, "The

tion of "Zoom" the energy of intensive stompers like "I feel Sanctified" are more impressive than the ballads. On stage, a slow paced song can easily become only a strategically placed breather for a team of song and dance men.

Possibly, the live versions are not 'a patch on the original' but so what? Live recordings are best considered, not as new and improved versions but as 'loud versions'. Unlike the original AM recordings, to get into *Live*, it has to be played loud. What better way to get up in the morning than to your own Commodores concert?

Though the studio album, *Zoom*, remains the best introduction to the Commodres, if you want something loud and live to cherish until they visit again, *Live* is the answer.

Murray Cammick

Electric Light Orchestra Out of the Blue United Artists

ELO's previous album, *A New World Record*, successfully stole from the likes of the Beatles, the Easybeats and Little Richard with possibly unintentional good humour. The humour was most obvious in the mock seriousness of the introduction to "Tightrope" and in virtually the whole of "Rockaria!" For that reason one couldn't help but admire Jeff Lynne for shaping ELO into a hit-making unit where Roy Wood had failed.

But success can do funny things to a person, and *Out of the Blue* raises questions that could be safely overlooked before. ELO sound more like Chicory Tip than ELO these days and Jeff Lynne seems to be taking himself seriously. Someone should remind him that plagiarism doesn't count only if it's done with good humour.

Silky Veils of Ardour" is a strange one with many phrases lifted from the American folk-song book — "Come all you fair and tender school girls!", "I am a poor wayfar-ing stranger!", "The water is wide" etc. etc. This parallels "Old Man on the Farm" from the *Little Criminals* album where Newman concludes:

Goodnight Ladies

Sorry if I stayed too long

So long it's been good to know you

I love the way I sing that song.

In the song "Don Juan's Reckless Daughter" the American problem is crystallised as a snake-eagle duality which works as both the expression of the Indian-European relationship and the songwriter's latent schizophrenia. At the very core of the album is "Paprika Plains", a fifteen minute epic which fills one side of the album.

In "Paprika Plains" Joni Mitchell portrays the European rape of the Indian culture with such artistry and emotional power that one asks oneself "What ever happened to Buffy Sainte-Marie?". The song culminates in the image of a child's beachball which is transformed into a dance hall glitter ball, an image that recalls James Ivory's *Savages* of a few years back.

"Paprika Plains" gains a lot of its power from Mike Gibbs' string arrangements, but the album has an assortment of musicians from track to track. Chaka Khan, Airtō, Wayne Shorter with a brilliant soprano sax solo at the end of "Jericho", John Guerin, Michel Colombier (remember *Wings*?), J.D. Souther and Glen Frey.

It is ridiculous in a way writing a review of such a complex album as this after only a week of listening. But I can't see how your record collection can even hope to attain to respectability without a copy of it, right next to Randy Newman's *Little Criminals*.

William Dart

Plagiarising yourself is one of the funniest things you can do but this time there's no revamped "Do Ya" to fall back on. This is a double album, more than an hour's playing time, choc-full of hit singles as Lou Reed might have put it, but all of such similarity as to make a double album a waste of time.

There is no apparent progression from *A New World Record* to this; Jeff Lynne has found a hit-making formula which he intends to play for all its worth. In the end the choice is still yours; buy this if you like. The question is how much we ask of the records we buy.

Jeremy Templer.

Greatest Hits Roxy Music Polydor

Bryan Ferry's cover for this Roxy compilation is almost unspeakable in its golden vulgarity. But "greatest hits" albums have always been a little blatant.

Greatest hits? Yes, folks, remember all those chart-busters. Still, it's arguably the best of Roxy, striking a good balance in culling from four albums and including the singles "Virginia Plain" and "Py-jaramama".

The remaining tracks are "Do The Strand," "All I Want is You," "Out of the Blue," "Editions of You," "Love is the Drug," "Mother of Pearl," "A Song for Europe," "The Thrill of it All" and "Street Life."

The tracks are not arranged chronologically but there's no jarring in the juxtaposition of songs from different periods. A good sampling of a unique concept. Whether Ferry, whose vision it was, equals the work here in his solo career remains to be seen.

Ken Williams



record about touring in a rock and roll band, and so Browne has recorded himself and his band on tour. That didn't involve setting up all the facilities of the Record Plant in some stadium, but instead we have tracks recorded in hotel rooms, on stage, backstage, and best of all, on the tour bus.

So, if the song is about the rigours of travelling everywhere by bus — "Nothing but Time" — then record it on the bus itself, with the driver throwing in gear changes in time with the chord changes. If its a song about missing out on the girl you had your eye on during a rehearsal, record it at rehearsal, like "Rosie". Virtually every song on the album, right down to the shambling, hotel room version of the Rev. Gary Davis' "Cocaine" not only has a place on the record, but a definite and important location.

Of course, another side of crawling around the country for a songwriter is the difficulty of writing new material. This must be especially noticeable for Browne who has confessed to taking up to five years to get a song right. Rather than skirt around this by retreading old favourites, he has fil-

led the album with collaborations, songs by others, and songs which show a similar instantaneous roughness to the recent output of Neil Young and Bob Dylan.

This more vigorous approach, along with the conspicuous absence of Jon Landau from the producer's chair marks a welcome turning back from the almost-formula slickness of *The Pretender*. I only hope that Bruce Springsteen also escapes Landau's cottonwool clutches.

The band — basically The Section (Kortchmar, Sklar, Kunke! and Doerge) with David Linley added — has to be good to come up with the goods under these kind of conditions, and as you would expect from L.A.'s finest, they come through, with an extra edge you seldom get from them on more familiar territory.

I saw Jackson Browne and David Linley perform together here early last year, and swore then that I'd sell my grandmother to sit in the front row of a real full-scale concert by them. Now I've heard one I'm in no mood to change my mind.

Francis Stark



Down Two Then Left Boz Scaggs CBS

Boz Scaggs may be the most elusive artist I know. Repeated listenings to his music leave a sense of not having heard, the tunes ethereal and beguiling.

The new album is no exception. The first impression is of a bland dehydration. Persistence forces a reversal of opinion. This is extraordinarily good.

Down Two Then Left is produced by Joe Wissert who did *Silk Degrees* and is in a similar mould, with the musicians creating an "atmosphere" for Boz. There's no impression of a "band" in the usual sense. This move can be traced to the Johnny Bristol-produced *Slow Dancer*, which has been re-issued.

Like *Silk Degrees* the songs ease their way into your spine. It's an insidious process.

Scaggs' accessibility depends on repeated exposure and it may be this that for so long kept him a beloved cult figure, seldom venturing beyond the Bay Area. And perhaps it's the slow-burning quality of his music that made the sleeper *Silk Degrees* such a lingering success. Scaggs has been playing impeccable music since his sojourn with Steve Miller, another trouper only recently to gain worldwide prominence. He deserves his new-found success.

I find it hard to name my favoured Boz tracks (apart from the gigantic "Loan Me A Dime" — a desert island disc). My favourite is usually the one that's playing. It's that kind of music. Maybe I'll plump for "Hard Times", "A Clue" and "1993". But ask me later; I'll be playing this one for a long time.

Ken Williams

Slowhand Eric Clapton RSO

Alas, poor Eric. I knew him ... and then he just seemed to fade away. To say the least, Clapton has always been an erratic figure, a god figure without fixed identity, assuming the characteristics of his companions. In this case, in repose.

Clapton will always exist in the shade of his classic *Layla* album (one of the rare double albums worthy of the vinyl), but that's not to bad mouth his other work. 461 *Ocean Boulevard* was a real pleasure and

the following two albums only a little less in overall quality. *No Reason to Cry* showed an aimlessness, a desultory tossing off that might have come off if the songs had been stronger.

Even the less arresting moments of *No Reason to Cry* don't prepare for the sheer slumber of *Slowhand*. The material is thin and the delivery pale. The songs (Clapton owns up in most cases) are, in the main, one-line sketches drawn beyond endurance. A notable exception is the blues "Mean Old Frisco", but it's the kind of thing Clapton can do in his sleep (and here, he does).

J.J. Cale's "Cocaine" opens the album. Maybe it's over-familiarity with Cale's version, but it just sounds like a cover that you might hear in half a dozen pubs around town. Next is "Wonderful Tonight". That's about Clapton going out with his old lady and she looks wonderful and he feels wonderful. Gee. "Lay Down Sally" is four-to-the-bar country rock, J.J. Cale-ish. Some excellent guitar interplay and sustained drive.

The other songs tend toward either the Eric Clapton "romantic tune" (example, the end section of "Layla") or the Eric Clapton "upbeat tune" ("Hello, Old Friend"). An instrumental, "Peaches and Diesel", which has a stylistic kinship with "Wonderful Tonight," might have made a dreamy little filler to round out the album. At 4.48 it remains filler.

Slowhand is very disappointing, the most disappointing Clapton album I know. Many Clapton fans have been disappointed for years. I haven't been among them ... but to extend the metaphor ventured in the opening sentence "where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table in a roar?"

Ken Williams

The Crusaders Free as the Wind ABC Records

As a unit the Crusaders, 'Stix' Hooper: drums, Joe Sample: keyboards, Wilton Felder: saxes, Larry Carlton: guitar, and Robert Popwell: bass, fair bristle with competence. Admiration for their degrees of instrumental proficiency and crispness of execution is virtually mandatory. And it should be said before anything else that *Free as the Wind* maintains all the standards of production, all the clarity of sound, all the understanding of musicians who have had long association, that we expect from the Crusaders.

On the other hand one must begin to be wary of such uniformity. Certainly there are new compositions of value on *Free as the Wind*; on just a few listenings "Nite Crawler" and "Free as the Wind" stick in the mind. But it would be stretching the imagination to say that the Crusaders are assuming new directions. It takes quite some concentration to separate out any single number from the record in the mem-

ory, the evenness of style, and consistently funky rhythm becoming reminiscent, in the end, of good television music. That is not necessarily a criticism, but it does typify it as something one tends to put on in the background — the sort of stuff you bop along to while doing the dishes.

In 1976 the Crusaders did some work with Van Morrison. Many must have hoped that this would produce something that was more up front but sadly the venture fizzled out. Since then the band have gone along in their own steady way and *Free as the Wind* can only be described as continuing the pattern.

Bruce Belsham

The Boomtown Rats Mercury

The Rats are an Irish band who have grabbed a slice of the music biz pie by the time-honoured method of being more outrageous than the next guys, to the point of using live rats, blue movies, and chunks of raw liver in their stage act. If you saw them on the box recently, you may agree that they're right up there with the Pistols for live excitement. Forget about the punk label — there's nothing new about rock 'n' roll, and the Rats are hot stuff.

The big difference between the Rats and bands like the Motors and the Stranglers is that the Rats are nearly as young as their audience. It shows in their first album. Most of the songs have a high teenage identification quotient. This ain't bad, depending on whether you're seventeen or twenty three, but to a boring old fart some of the lyrics sound a lot like what was going down in the sixties. And just as corny, *Don't wanna be like you*, *Don't wanna live like you*, *Don't wanna talk like you, at all*.

They redeem themselves with a surfeit of energy, and a couple of songs that show just a touch of social awareness. "Never Bite The Hand That Feeds" has feminist sympathies, believe it or not. "Joey's On the Street Again" stands out with a Springsteen feel and a good hook. And the rest are mean and nasty enough for any pogoing vinyl-suited crowd.

One for the safety pin set.

John Malloy

FOREIGNER

ALBUM OUT NOW



VOTED BEST NEW GROUP OF THE YEAR - 1977.

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LOU GRAMM. Lead Vocals: Ex-Black Sheep.

IAN McDONALD. Guitars, Keyboards, Horns, Vocals: Ex-King Crimson, McDonald & Giles etc.

ED GAGLIARDI. Bass, Vocals: Various New York Bands.

DENNIS ELLIOT. Drums: Ex-Hunter/Ronson, If, Roy Young etc.



'LIVE' IN N.Z. - MARCH!

Dave Swarbrick
Swarbrick
John Renbourn Group
A Maid in Bedlam
Transatlantic

Good to see material from the Transatlantic catalogue appearing in local shops again. Now that RTC have got the rights to this label, perhaps we shall get more material coming through. Incidentally, both of these albums are rather brave releases in this part of the world, considering the music of both these men is so much tied in with the contemporary folk-club circuit in England.

Swarbrick's album is a splendid achievement. Well, just what you'd expect from the driving force behind Fairport Convention's "Bridge over the River Ash" and "The Hen's March". For a taste of Swarbrick's high voltage fiddle-work try the opening number, "The Heilanman/Drowsy Maggie", with Beryl Marriott kicking up a storm on the ivories, in the best ceilidh band style.

There are some more familiar names on Swarbrick's album, including Martin Carthy who adds guitar on four tracks and Simon Nicol and Dave Pegg who add guitar and bass to most of the other tracks. Carthy recorded several duo albums with Swarbrick in the late sixties, and Nicol and Pegg were with Swarbrick in Fairport Convention. When Swarbrick does have a full band sound it is much the same feel as the Albion Country Band.

A lovely album this, and an obligatory purchase if you like English trad folk.

Now to John Renbourn.

I was never really that stuck on Pentangle, of which Renbourn was a member. The group's rather 'cool' and tasteful version of folk music was somewhat kicked in the guts by Steeleye Span and some of the electric groups. In fact I think one of the happiest albums that Renbourn produced was his *Lady and the Unicorn* which was much more classical in both material and the treatment of the music.

A *Maid in Bedlam* exudes taste from



Dave Swarbrick

Rossetti cover onwards but it doesn't really make much impact with me. I don't particularly like Jacqui McShee's vocals, and Keshave Sathe's over-predominant tabla-work almost drove me to distraction. Renbourn is a fine guitarist and this shows through the album, but with all the musical distraction going on around him, it is rather like looking at a beautiful gem in a rather awkward setting.

Still, "Nacht Tanz/Shaeffertanz" is an attractive version of these medieval tunes with strong oboe and violin work. But even so in hearing the oboe I am reminded of how much more enterprisingly this instrument was treated in Ashley Hutchings' *Compleat Dancing Master*.

But give Renbourn a listen if you can. I have a sneaking suspicion it will grow on me — I am already quite happily listening to it for the third time.

William Dart



Flora Purim
Encounter
Interfusion

With lush ballads and funky beats on her previous album, *Nothing Will Be As It Was ... Tomorrow*, Flora Purim appeared to be reaching for a broader, more popular appeal. The album was a melange that never really excelled in any direction. Now, with *Encounter*, she has left the big commercial arrangements and returned to her familiar ground of working with a small combo (varying here from two to seven members). 'Returned' is really a misnomer because with this set Purim has moved ahead, exploring and improvising with a freedom and surety that mark the progress of a mature musician who is still extending herself. As in the past she operates, not as a singer with a band, but as catalyst and integral member of a group.

The musical empathy evident here is remarkable. Perhaps it is to be expected of such long-time associates as Airtio, George Duke and Hermeto Pascoal, but everyone's playing deserves high praise. Rhythms shift and swirl with a marvellous cohesion; beats are stated or implied with masterful subtlety. (Bassist Ron Carter is amazing as always.) These sensitive musicians can provide delicate support for Purim as she employs her vast range to float and soar, or

they can build blistering tempos to propel her silken yet elemental cries.

Followers of Purim's music will be familiar with the way her vocal work extends to a wordless, almost scat style. Here she continues the shift from singing words to creating sounds — the few lyrics are largely non-English anyway — and this often provides a more direct emotional concentration rendering the music positively atmospheric.

Besides Purim's voice there are many delights on this album: Chick Corea's typically light and airy composition "Windows", the rhythmic development of the ballad "Uri", Joe Henderson's tenor solo on his own "Black Narcissus", the tripartite vocal work on the title track. Mention must also be made of the two tracks involving piano giant McCoy Tyner. Perhaps initially the most inaccessible, these employ Purim and Tyner exploring interesting harmonic patterns.

There's a lot I could say about this record because there's a lot to listen to. Suffice that it keeps getting better. A word of warning however: it's not an album to easily assess after 20 minutes in your local store. (After one hearing I didn't even want to re-view it.) It requires — and amply rewards — serious listening.

Peter Thomson

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Rick Steele

Island of Real

With the upsurge of interest in country bands overseas, it is heartwarming to see that there is home-grown talent to match anything that we can import on vinyl. But as any good shitkicker will tell you, country music has gotta be heard live before the feet start stomping and the yaas start ho-ing. So I strapped on my Colts, pulled on my boots, and with my *C.F. Martin* patch embroidered prominently on my jeans, I headed off to the Island of Real to catch Rick Steele.

Well it ain't no Texas bar, and it sure ain't no Eagles Eyrie, but its not bad, to paraphrase Merle ("I'll fix your flat tyre.") Haggard. Rick now performs with "and Friends", but when they start playing, the music takes over. They ran through a number of songs, including some of his own, a few country classics, and some so-called "longhair country" tunes.

Rick Steele certainly puts himself into his music. He bobs up and down like his guitar was wired up through his pants, and with the whole band grinnin' and stompin', it doesn't take long before some anonymous

city cowboy is punctuating the solos with rebel yells.

Speaking of solos, there was some rather fine pedal steel playing from Billy Brothers. Mostly he's pretty laid back, but he really started to rip when they did the Truckie's anthem, "Six Days On The Road". Just a few more decibels, Billy, and Hank himself will be humming the refrain. Dave Maybee, ex of Smokestack, played some sweet guitar riffs, and he sure can make your eyes sting when he's running with the slide guitar. Harmony vocals were beautifully supplied by Colleen Ralphs (who also sang on Rick's album) in a voice reminiscent of Emmylou, or perhaps Dolly Parton. Bass was supplied by John Dacre on guitarrone, an acoustic bass guitar. He also played a mean piano at times.

If you missed this one and you like country music in a big way, keep your eyes out for Rick Steele and Friends. Your feet keep tappin' all the way home.

Drew Slegert

Urban Road

Island of Real

Urban Road are an Auckland rarity, a band with a horn section providing a general diet of soul music.

They opened with a protracted version of George Benson's "Breezin'" which was, frankly, a mistake. The weakest member of the group is the guitarist and this was somewhat too ambitious a project, lacking the fluency which makes Benson's work pleasant if not distinguished.

Not until sometime later when the band took to playing shorter snappier songs did they start to impress as a controlled unit, although I was pleased to observe that Keith Ballantyne's horn arrangements were consistently simple, effective and tightly played by himself on trumpet and Julian Barre on tenor sax.

The surprise of the night was an excellent version of Sanford Townsend's "Smoke from a Distant Fire" which, although largely a cover of the hit single, gained from being short and to the point.

Both Ballantyne and Barre soloed well throughout, my one major criticism being that the solos were often too long, developing initially but continuing well past their logical points of conclusion.

Yet given more time together, a few more songs and perhaps a greater sense of economy Urban Road should develop into a good working band.

Bruce Belsham

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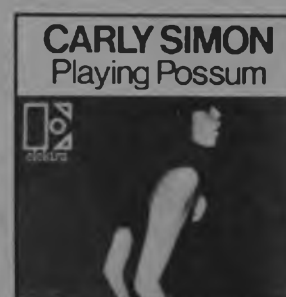
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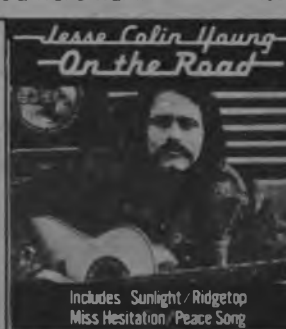
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Richard Hell and the Void-Olds
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Dead Boys
Young, Loud and Snotty
Talking Heads
Talking Heads: 77
Sire Records

The problem in attempting to categorise music as "New Wave" is that the phrase itself is meaningless enough to include virtually every new rock group, and yet leaves no room for distinction between widely-differing styles. The Ramones and the Sex Pistols are placed side by side with Tom Petty's Heartbreakers and Talking Heads. In healthier times there wouldn't be the same need to categorise and both Tom Petty and Talking Heads would be thought of as simply new artists, period.

As it is, Talking Heads, Richard Hell and the Void-Olds, and the Dead Boys are all "New Wave" artists, however ill-fitting the term may be. All three have played as regular acts at New York's home of "New Wave", Manhattan's CBGB's club, and yet all are very different.

Richard Hell holds the same dispassionate interest as Tom Verlaine; a coldly analytical approach to his songs which may come as a result of his having played bass in the original line-up of Verlaine's band, Television. It's more likely though that Richard Hell is in actuality the Brian Eno of the New Wave, with Television as equivalent to a seminal Roxy Music and Verlaine as an early Bryan Ferry. At the very least Richard Hell is the New Wave's Steve Harley.

His album bears the signs of failed genius; two classics of their kind and eight also-rans, "New Pleasure" ("Your minds are wrecked but that's fine/It corresponds to mine") and "Blank Generation":

*I belong to the blank generation
 And I can take it or leave it each time
 Well I belong to the ... generation
 But I can take it ...*

The Dead Boys are less memorable; a third generation punk band, an American equivalent to the Damned. They have no identity of their own, their music is made only for the moment.

Talking Heads are the pick of this crop; originally a trio of three students from the Rhode Island School of Design — David Byrne, singer, songwriter and guitarist; Chris Frantz, drummer; Tina Weymouth, bassist. In April last year Jerry Harrison, a former member of Jonathan Richman's Modern Lovers, joined as keyboard player and guitarist.

Their influences come from neither the Stooges nor the MC5 but from such third generation rock/pop bands as 10cc, early Steely Dan and Tubes.

And yet the music is startlingly original. Though it is purposely kept sparse, the effect is the opposite; the music becomes complex through its simplicity.

David Byrne sings with an honest intensity. While the themes to the songs he sings may be common, the lyrics are definitely not.

"Psycho Killer" goes so far as to include a verse in French and, I know, the Beatles did that a long time ago. But not quite like this:

*Ce que j'ai fais, ce soir la
 Ce qu'elle a dit, ce soir la
 Realisant mon espoir,
 Je me lance, vers la gloire ...*

"Talking Heads: 77" is a demanding album. It may very well be the best album you will hear this year. Listen to it, buy it if you can. No less than the future of rock'n'roll is in your hands.

Jeremy Templer



TOURS

With the news that the David Bowie dates in NZ are cancelled, comes the more than compensating story that Bob Dylan may be playing here in March.

What is known is that Dylan is undertaking a tour in this part of the world, including Japan and Australia. But is he going to make it to Godzone?

Overseas reports have Dylan already involved in rehearsals with the musicians who constituted the core of the Rolling Thunder Tour in 1976. The musicians Dylan is believed to be rehearsing with for the tour are bassist, Rob Stoner; drummer, Howie Wyeth; guitarists, Steven Soles and T Bone Burnette and multi instrumentalist, David Mansfield; a percussionist and keyboard player may also be added. So fingers crossed for what may be the event of 1978.

Tours set for later in the year include:

J.J. Cale, king of laid back rock, plays several dates in New Zealand including 2 nights in Auckland's Town Hall. Dates are: Auckland 3 & 4 March; Wellington 6 March; Christchurch 7 & 8; Dunedin 9 March. A Hamilton date will also be included.

George Benson popular, jazz-rock guitarist is set for 3 dates. Christchurch 23 March; Wellington 25 March and Auckland on the 26th at His Majesty's Theatre.

Billy Joel American singer-songwriter, is set for one NZ date. Auckland Town Hall April 19.

Also potentially set for March 7th, Auckland Town Hall, are Anglo-American rock band Foreigner. While attractions later in the year are Dr Hook and Manhattan Transfer in May and Joan Armatrading in June.

The visit of black rock band **War**, has been postponed.

Red Mole on Road

Red Mole Enterprises take their major work of the year on the road during late February and early March, visiting four main North Island centres. *Ghost Rite* will draw on the talents of the Red Mole Theatre Troupe, the Country Flyers, and Beaver, together with magician Jon Zealando to present what Mole member Deborah Hunt describes as a "spectacle. It took six weeks to prepare and it's serious in that it is a major work."

The first half of the show entitled "Sixteen Years on the Road" will draw on a year of cabaret work to present the Red Mole Cabaret to end all cabarets.

The second half, *Ghost Rite*, they mysteriously describe as the drama of our state and its origins. As usual it's a totally original show, this time complete with a full original music score.

With Red Mole's announcement that they're quitting Enzed for foreign shores later this year, you'll want to remember these dates:

Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 February — His Majesty's, Auckland.

Tuesday 28 — Hamilton's Founder Theatre.

Thursday 2 March — Opera House, Palmerston North.

Sunday 5 and Monday 6 — Wellington.

ROCKFLIX

Rockflix appearing over the next while around the country will include *The Harder They Come*, which will be playing at the Lido, Wellington from January 27.

Another film of interest opening in the near future will be Ken Russell's *Valentino*. Russell, who directed *Tommy* and *The Boyfriend* among many others, has made a film about the meteoric rise and subsequent life of fabled silent-screen lover, Rudolph Valentino. Rudolf Nuryev, famed ballet dancer, takes the part of Valentino in his first screen acting role, while ex Mamas and Papas member Michelle Phillips plays Valentino's wife. The film has received encouraging reviews overseas which suggest that Russell has moved away from the visual excess that has marred his later films to a more balanced style.

Plus don't forget, March or April should see release of Martin Scorsese's *The Last Waltz* which documents the Band's farewell concert.



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