

THE
RADIO
ONE

Story of Pop

THE FIRST
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
POP IN 26 WEEKLY PARTS



THE DOORS: Thinking-mans Rock
JAMES BROWN: Mr Dynamite
THE FOUR TOPS: Super Soul
PLUS: On Stage, Glitter Rock & more

PART 23
25p
EVERY THURSDAY

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If record sales have been the bed-rock of the pop industry then live performances have been the life-blood. But the two are not necessarily synonymous. James Brown, for example, is probably more noted for his electric stage shows than his (not inconsiderable) record sales. Some groups have sold millions of discs without making any great impression in concert. The supergroup, progressive and heavy music trend all but killed showmanship. Jagger, of course, was as demonic and stimulating as ever, but the period was marked by a puritanism that demanded T-shirts and jeans as wardrobe, and backs-to-the-audience introspective insularity as performance. Musicians playing long, often tedious, solos and totally ignoring the audience were commonplace.

As an antidote to such musical isolation there sprang a need for entertainment, for the razz-a-ma-tazz and outrageous showmanship that the early rockers had shown. Theatricality, glamour and gloss were missing and the audience craved them. In response came the spectacular stage shows, the glittering gear and gimmicks that were to become part of the '70s pop scene. Then there was rock theatre starting with the unbounded exuberance of 'Hair' and carried through the spiritualism of 'Superstar!' Last came 'glitter rock' in which performers, taking their lead, perhaps, from Sha Na Na harked back too but outdid the gold lame suitings of Presley and the diamond-spangles of Little Richard. Entertainment, razzle-dazzle and Liberace-style extrovert outrage returned.

It is obvious from readers' letters that 'The Story Of Pop' has met with their approval. Indeed, many have asked if we could amplify the work to include some artists and topics that the necessity for brevity has forced us to treat concisely; others would like to see new subjects, outside the original scope of the work, covered. In response to this demand we are pleased to announce that a special Volume has been prepared details of which will be published in the next issue.

Although the radio programme and this publication have been linked for readers in the UK, we have taken care to ensure that readers abroad will find this publication complete in itself.

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EDITOR: *Jeremy Pascall*
 DEPUTY EDITOR: *Andrew Kershaw*
 EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS: *Joselyn Morton*
Jan Henderson
 GENERAL ASSISTANT: *Kitsa Caswell*
 MANAGING EDITOR: *John Paton*
 DESIGN DIRECTOR: *Graham Donaldson*
 ART EDITOR: *Robert Burt*
 RESEARCH: *Jill Milsom*
Allan Smith
 PRODUCTION DIRECTOR: *Don Mason*
 ASSISTANT: *Phil Howard Jones*

CONTRIBUTORS:

Andrew Weiner: Writes for *Cream* and *NME*.
Clifford White: Writes for *Black Wax*, *Shout* and *Black Music*.
Michael Wale: Writes for the *Times*. Broadcaster for *Radio 1*. Author of a book called *Vox Pop*.
Mick Gold: Writer and photographer for *Let It Rock*, *Cream* and *Creem*.
Dave Laing: Associate Editor of *Let It Rock*. Author of *Buddy Holly* and the *Sound Of Our Times*.
Dave Godin: Monthly columnist for *Black Music*. Writes for *Freedom*.
John Ford: Was the theatre editor of *Time Out*. Now a freelance theatre administrator.
Mitch Howard: Writes for *Cream* and *Record Mirror*. Poet, motorcyclist and drummer with *Forces Favourites*.

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James Brown: Mr Dynamite

"I'd like to know are you ready for some super dynamite soul? It's star-time, ladies and gentlemen. Introducing the young man that's had over 35 soul classics. Tunes that will never die. Tunes like 'Try Me', 'Out Of Sight', 'Papa's Got A Brand New Bag', 'I Feel Good', 'Sex Machine', 'Superbad', and 'Soul Power'. Introducing the world's greatest entertainer – Mr Dynamite – the amazing Mr 'Please Please' himself – the hardest working man in show business. Ladies and gentlemen, the star of the show – **JAMES BROWN!**"

For over 12 years, variations on this bombastic theme have introduced into the spotlight the most dynamic ball of energy so far unleashed by the post-war pop explosion. A man who has 83 consecutive hit records and over 50 albums to his credit; who still maintains an average of over 300 personal appearances every year, and who, between gigs, finds time to jet around his chain of restaurants, radio stations, production and promotion complexes. James Brown is an expert at getting that little bit extra out of all on his payroll – at keeping the whole shebang rolling on a charge from his personal powerpack.

James Brown is at one and the same time the last great vaudeville entertainer, and one of the most powerful of the new wave of black executives. A man who learned how to fight and overcome seemingly impossible odds at an age when most of us are safely in society's warm cocoon. He took



America's cultural heritage by the scruff of the neck, remoulded it after his own image and spat it back to surmount racial oppression, with a gesture that took him straight through the stratas of showbiz into the uneasy zones of political power.

His music has the vitality of rock & roll and the honesty of the blues wrapped up with the personality of a man constantly in tune with the times. Each performance, presented with every available aid to excitement, is inextricably bound to the hopes, fears and demands of this self-made, black giant. Each song is a single expression of defiance tempered in the heat of achievement. He is, in the original terms of reference, truly a soul singer.

Born in South Carolina in 1932 of parents who were soon to part, young James was raised by an aunt in a wooden shack on the wrong side of Augusta, Georgia. As if the burden of this black, bare-foot cast-off wasn't heavy enough, he was an unattractive child, shorter than the other kids of his age. The pains of prejudice and poverty can be endured as part of a community, but in his personal torment of size and appearance, James was alone. It is not surprising that from an early age he developed a compulsive need to prove himself. A friend who had to pull him out of many a fight with boys twice his age and size remembers "James was always the best at everything. He had more determination and guts than the rest of us" – and later a more prophetic memory – after James had scraped together enough from shining shoes to buy baseball equipment – "Along with being a hard player, James was a poor loser and if he got really angry he'd simply take his bat and ball and quit. One of the reasons the kids put up with him – we needed his equipment to play the games."

The Famous Flames

By the early '50's James had formed a gospel group, The 3 Swanees, with Bobby Byrd and Johnny Terry. Mounting success by two relatively local acts, the Five Royals from Winston-Salem and Little Richard from Macon, prompted the group to move into Macon to try for themselves. When Little Richard rocketed to national prominence with 'Tutti Frutti' and got too big for his manager (and his boots), Clint Brantley was able to devote his attention to James and the boys – now calling themselves the Famous Flames, after Charles Brown's Three Blazers, and performing rhythm & blues hits of the period.

Their chance came in February, 1956, when Ralph Bass, producer and talent scout for King Records of Cincinnati heard their dub of 'Please, Please, Please', a Brown original. He drove down to Macon, signed the group on the spot and rushed them back to the studio to re-record the song for immediate release.

Formed as a race label by Syd Nathan in 1945, by '56 King had seen considerable success with R&B acts including Billy Ward and the Dominoes and Hank Ballard

and the Midnighters, as well as a strong country catalogue. As one of the true independents they manufactured, designed and packaged their own products for distribution and promotion in the southern states and along the eastern seaboard. 'Please Please, Please' first hit in Georgia, then slowly snowballed in the confines of King's territory, selling steadily throughout 1956. When the market had been saturated, it died. Only years later after Brown became a star was the record re-activated to become a million seller.

From Bad To Worse

As sales dropped so did the group's enthusiasm and Nathan's smile. Two follow-ups had been pushed out while the record was still selling and several more followed over the next 18 months – each less successful than its predecessor. Although Brown was already writing most of the group's material, he had not yet improved on an uncomfortable blend of styles drawn from the church and those popular acts around him.

Crisis point was reached in the summer of 1958 when, responding to a last chance ultimatum from Nathan, Brown came up with 'Try Me'. This was the big one – the song that Brown affectionately remembers as the turning point of his life. Recorded at his first New York session in September of that year 'Try Me' was based on the same gospel pattern as previous releases, but with a subtly smoother performance than had been offered before. The feeling is of tender longing, rather than anguished suffering. It hit the Hot 100 and struck gold.

After two years of touring, Brown was beginning to learn more about showmanship. With the kudos of his first national chart entry behind him, he was able to employ a regular 6-piece road band, which made it possible to begin the creation and development of what was to become the hottest act in the business. Being able to rely on a well-rehearsed band, had a telling effect on Brown's writing. Whereas 'Please, Please, Please' had been followed by an erratic selection of derivative attempts to find a winning formula, the half dozen sessions from January '59 to February '61 produced 12 hits in succession – songs that finally broke away from and surpassed earlier influences. The James Brown sound was born, helped along by the close relationship between James and the Flames, punctuating and emphasising rhythms and vocal interplays.

While he was bending the music around his own personality, Brown was also strengthening and clarifying his image. The precision timing now being demonstrated on stage, gave the band a short solid riff to link the last notes of each to the opening sequence of the next; exhaustive rehearsals ensuring that nothing interrupted the flow. He grew his hair and had it elaborately styled, discarded his baggy suit in favour of Italian mohairs, silk shirts and all the trimmings, and threw in as many lightening dance routines as possible – complete with

a dramatic collapsing scene and robe-shrouded recovery. Sharp as a razor and fast as a flyweight, the final effect was electrifying.

By the beginning of the '60s, the James Brown revue, complete with supporting acts including singers, dancers and comedians, had reached a polished near-perfection and was breaking box office records in ghetto theatres across America. Brown himself was receiving from black audiences the same sort of hysterical reaction that Presley had provoked from young whites, a few years earlier.

An album recorded in Harlem's Apollo Theatre on October 24th, 1962, captured the full power of this amazing road show. Implicit throughout is the authority of the man on stage and his complete mastery over the emotions of the audience. 'Live At The Apollo' became a million dollar seller and the following season Brown was voted no. 1 R&B singer of America.

It would have been a reasonable assumption that, considering his colour and the uncompromising style of his music, Brown was then at the peak of his career. Many other black singers have reached these hallowed gates only to fall back into obscurity (Solomon Burke) or be drawn through with the stupefying hands of white manipulation (Ray Charles, Sam Cooke). But Brown wasn't about to be bought or rejected. By modifying his music to the pulse of the times rather than the tastes of an existing establishment, he went on to reach an international multi-racial audience, and by adopting business policies learned from a white-dominated capitalist society, he achieved a personal stature way above the limitations of being a black rhythm & blues singer.

From this point on, James Brown was making the decisions. He rejected other people's business ideas and built himself into the living legend that he is today. The appearance of full page ads in trade magazines announced each new release, giving an indication of the money being ploughed back into the enterprise. Banner headlines drove home the message – the hardest working man in show business, soul brother no. 1.

Brown's Fair Deal

Back in 1962, there had been a tentative approach to new markets when, at the insistence of King Records, Brown had unwillingly cut four standards with a lush string orchestra and choir. Although 'Prisoner Of Love' was able to be transformed so dramatically that it became an integral part of James' repertoire, it was a policy that could have ended in disaster if followed through to its logical conclusion. A more decisive move was made in 1964. Realising that King was just not geared to keep pace with his expanding horizons, Brown formed his own production company, Fair Deal, and promptly delivered his next batch of tapes to Smash Records of Chicago – a division of the nationwide Mercury Corporation.

With such a prize at stake, all parties



Redferns

James Brown, the man who has produced 83 consecutive hit records.

involved, immediately set their lawyers at one another. Before an injunction could restrict Smash to only issuing instrumentals under James Brown's name, plus any records made by the various artists in the revue, they did manage to get on to the market one vocal album and two singles.

The first of his records to sell in large quantities to whites, 'Cut Of Sight' was also the first of a string of successes based on compulsive dance riffs laid down behind Brown's singing of an easily remembered tag line. There had been a shift of emphasis from vocal harmony to strong rhythm accompaniment. The band were now

punching out the responses previously tackled by the Famous Flames, who were soon to be phased out altogether.

In bringing up the band on rhythms that appealed to a more lucrative market and a new generation of black record buyers, Brown was hot on the heels of the Motown and Stax Record Companies. Later, by gradually extending these rhythms in a series of repeating riffs and phrases and reducing the songs to broken cryptic verses and staccato outbursts, he alienated all but a minority of his white audience. He just got too black for comfort. The results, a hypnotic brew of blues and gospel, Afro-

Cuban and Puerto Rican, anticipated and influenced a generation of soul music.

Taking advantage of mass communication, Brown began to cut down on his personal appearances to the extent that it was intimated that he was about to retire. Away from the stage he was producing a flood of releases from his many protégés and taking time out to use his own success as an example for soul brothers still trapped in the confines of the street. As early as 1966 he had cut 'Don't Be A Drop-Out' for the Office of Economic Opportunity, but by 1968 he was becoming involved in less controllable ideals.

Following the assassination of Dr Martin Luther King, two marathon TV appearances by James in Boston and Washington, were said to be directly responsible for preventing inflamed rioting on the streets. It was undoubtedly a personal triumph for Brown, the effects of which were perhaps more volatile than he would have wanted.

Although his social conscience gained him a place at LBJ's dinner table, black militants weren't so impressed by his involvement with white establishment and rank capitalism. Brown was none too happy to be caught in such a vice and was soon to play down his role as a black leader. He stepped out of the threshing machine when, on the eve of endorsing Hubert Humphrey for President, he stated, "After tomorrow I'm going back to singing, dancing, and telling kids to stay in school."

After a year away, Brown had returned to King in 1966 with all the reins at his command. They couldn't afford to lose him, so they gave him the works. As his music became progressively more rhythmic, he dropped all pretence at pandering to any particular audience and more than ever his records were expressions of his own thoughts and emotions. Remembering the advantages of his earlier flirtation with Smash, he eventually left King once and for all, leaving behind him a company with nothing to do but go bankrupt. In his new deal with the International Polydor Corporation he is assured of world-wide distribution without compromising himself or his music.

Human Bulldozer

Today at 40-plus, James Brown may have to approach his athletic stage routines with a hint more caution than he would have ten years ago, but, as long as the box office receipts reward it, the show will roll on. Recent involvement with film soundtracks and his first attempt at acting testify to his restless need to conquer every frontier. Records are still issued as fast as his adrenalin can pump them out and, despite criticism (from whites) of their production-line similarity, each shows a keen awareness of the changing times. Because Brown is constantly on the move so is his music, as unique as the man who makes it, influenced by many and influential to many more. Although he has forged armour plating about him to bulldoze his way to the top.

NEXT WEEK IN BLACK MUSIC: Soul In The '70s.

THE SUPERSTARS

THE FOURTOPS



Chris Walter



L.F.I.

Of all the innumerable vocal groups that have emerged from the States over the last decade or so, the Four Tops are one of the very few that can be justifiably termed superstars.

Although during the time they were contracted to Tamla Motown, they were just slightly over-shadowed by the phenomenal success of their stable-mates the Supremes, they presented an inspired and individual interpretation of what was generally known as the Motown Sound. Apart from collectively having an abundance of talent and musical expertise, their eventual success owed much to their own determination and persistence as well, and, where others might have become disheartened and disillusioned along the way, they had enough faith in themselves to keep on keeping on. One is happy for them they did eventually make it.

This long musical apprenticeship began way back in 1953, and even had roots stretching beyond then, because each of them had been singing in various other groups before coming together to form the Four Tops. Levi Stubbles (later amended to Stubbs), Abdul Fakir, Renaldo Benson and Lawrence Payton, would all no doubt have paused a little had they realised that it was going to take 11 long years before they would come up with a smash hit record, but in some ways it could be reasoned that this time was not wasted.

A Time For Learning

They perfected their style, their unity, (groups can suffer from much internal disharmony and disagreement), and above all, strengthened their own confidence in themselves. They loathed their previous amateur status and were burning to be true professionals by the time they had a hit record. So often they had seen an inexperienced artist or group hit lucky with just one record and had then shared the audience's embarrassment when watching them live, in realising that there was too small a reservoir of real talent in the performer to follow through with either continued hits, or successful in-person appearances. It was a period during which they paid their dues, but they paid them and learnt from the experience, and reckoned that it was better to pay them before you hit the big time, rather than just as you hit the top.

At the time of their formation, although Detroit had a large black population which ensured plenty of night club and concert work, there was as yet no record company based there, and it took three years of arduous work on this circuit before they were spotted and signed to Chess Records. Along with such companies as Atlantic and Vee Jay, Chess were leaders in producing and marketing records for Black America, but despite this, none of their records for the company were successful and their contract was allowed to lapse. It was perhaps due more to the prevailing trends that were popular at that particular time,

rather than to any lack of merit in their recordings. Black America was not yet ready for them, so the rest of the US certainly wasn't! But rather than modify their style, they put on a brave face and went back to the night spots which at least had the advantage of giving them valuable experience.

The setbacks and disappointments continued however. Having signed and cut some tracks for Red Top Records, the company decided not to release them, and after this, their excitement at being signed to giant and influential Columbia Records was quickly dashed, when a couple of singles released by them did very little to further their careers. It was not until they met their old friend Berry Gordy Jnr., that they began their long climb to the top in earnest.

New Label and Producers

In March 1963, they signed to his then infant Motown Record Corporation, which at that time had a label called Workshop, devoted to jazz and experimental recordings which were not easy to place in any one category or musical style. In order to give them their head and to work out their own level in the musical spectrum, they were launched with an album called 'Breaking Through'. Although highly praised by fellow musicians, the album made little impact on the public, but, whereas their previous recording companies' interest in black music was financial before aesthetic, Gordy felt they had the potential to succeed and it was decided that they should move to the Motown label with new producers and A&R men steering them. To gain more exposure and experience, they toured for a whole year with Billy Eckstine's Revue, and back in Detroit, Eddie Holland was relinquishing his career as a solo vocalist in favour of concentrating on composing and producing with his brother Brian and Lamont Dozier.

Between them, Brian, Eddie and Lamont had written a song called 'Baby I Need Your Loving' which was not in the usual vein of most of the other songs they were creating at that time, but as soon as Berry Gordy heard it on the demo tape, he realised that this would be a superb vehicle for the Four Tops. Unlike many singers, the musical diversity of interest in all types of records that the Tops shared, had been quite influential on their own developing style, and, although undoubtedly a soul act, these absorbed idioms from artists like Billy Eckstine, Sarah Vaughn and mainstream jazz musicians, had overlaid their style with an indefinable quality and mellowness that had made them unique among musical groups. It is a quality that they have maintained to this day, and it was a characteristic that made them readily and easily acceptable to the mass record-buying public in America, rather than just the black market. It is perhaps well evidenced that in one of their very first press interviews they were quoted as saying; 'We are inspired by anyone with talent'.

The record became a smash in the States, but success in Britain eluded them since the song was covered by a local group who took chart honours from them. In the States, however, all they touched seemed to turn to solid gold and their releases became hits with the same regularity that the Supremes were enjoying, and by the time they were ready to break through in Britain, they were already one of Motown's hottest properties.

Their delayed popularity in Britain was boosted by a personal tour in the summer of 1965 to promote their release of 'I Can't Help Myself' which, (despite the fact that it has since become something of a soul classic), failed to click, as did their follow-up 'It's The Same Old Song'. But, this type of disappointment was nothing new to them, and by the time the record-buying public was ready for them when they released 'Reach Out I'll Be There', the group that had previously cheated them of chart honours had slipped into total obscurity and oblivion.

Now established as hit recording artists in Britain as well, the chances to perform concerts and live shows (together with TV spots) increased greatly, and it was through the unique and really extra special magic of their live performances that they began to build up a legion of devoted followers, and soon their albums were making the charts, and their earlier 'misses' were being so enthusiastically received, that their record company was forced to re-release them (a tricky manoeuvre since their revived hits were in danger of competing with their newest recordings), and it can be safely said that for a time, the Four Tops were the most popular Motown act in Britain.

British audiences for live concerts can be notoriously difficult to handle, and many American artists fail to appreciate the very vast differences that exist between them and those they have known back home, but whereas for many this sometimes proved a fatal stumbling block, the Four Tops had an act that was almost better suited in Britain than their local venues in the States. It is difficult to locate the secret of their appeal, because all greats have that indefinable 'something' that is known simply as 'star quality'. But, not only were they armed with a first rate repertoire of songs to sing, they also had a certain class and maturity about themselves and their music that made them appeal to a very wide age group. They pleased the die-hard soul fanatic as much as the well-heeled set who were into Ray Charles and Nancy Wilson; their fans were as varied and as assorted as their own musical influences.

Polish and Perfection

Serving such a long apprenticeship as they had, before making the big time, had also given them a perfection and polish that was not only detectable in their vocalising, but also in their choreography, stage techniques and routines. They were slick, soulful and very together,



L.P.A.

BACK TRACK

Stateside

1964: September. 'Baby I Need Your Loving'.

1965: January. 'Without The One You Love'.

Tamla Motown

1965: March. 'Ask The Lonely'. May. 'I Can't Help Myself'. August. 'It's The Same Old Song'. November. 'Something About You'.

1966: March. 'Shake Me Wake Me (When It's Over)'. July. 'Loving You Is Sweeter Than Ever'. October. 'Reach Out I'll Be There' (No. 1).

1967: January. 'Standing In The Shadows Of Love'. March. 'Bernadette'. June. 'Seven Rooms Of Gloom'. October. 'You Keep Running Away'. December. 'Walk Away Renee'.

1968: March. 'If I Were A Carpenter'. August. 'Yesterday's Dream'. November. 'I'm In A Different World'.

1969: May. 'What Is A Man'. September. 'Do What You Gotta Do'.

1970 March. 'I Can't Help Myself'. May. 'It's All In The Game'. September. 'Still Water'.

1971: April. 'Just Seven Numbers (Can Straighten Out Your Life)'. June. (With the Supremes) 'River Deep, Mountain High'. September. 'Simple Game'. November. (With the Supremes) 'You Gotta Have Love In Your Heart'.

1972: February. 'Bernadette' (Re-release). (With the Supremes) 'Without The One You Love'. July. 'Walk With Me, Talk With Me Darling'. September. 'I'll Turn To Stone'. November. (With the Supremes) 'Reach Out & Touch (Somebody's Hand)'.

1973: March. 'So Deep Within You'. June. 'I Can't Quit Your Love'.

and this magic combination proved to be irresistible and stunning. Although their lead vocals have always been taken by Levi Stubbs, it is interesting that they have always maintained a corporate image rather than being identified as Levi Stubbs and the Tops, and it is probably indicative of the true and lasting affection they have for one another that this should be so.

It has been said that the Four Tops' records have outsold those of any other Motown group in the UK, and so identified were they with Motown and the Detroit Sound, that it came as a shock when they announced that they were joining Dunhill Records in the States, when their contract with Motown expired. They had successfully weathered the departure of Holland, Dozier & Holland, and had gone under the production wing of Frank Wilson, but even so, many loyal fans were uneasy when they learned they were joining a label that until then had been almost totally inactive in the soul field. Not that the Four Tops could any longer be claimed by soul fans as their own exclusive property, but in any event, such fears and apprehension proved to be groundless.

They themselves admitted that the

decision to quit Motown was the biggest one they had ever had to face. They had had a winning streak that had lasted 12 years, but above all they feared stagnation and felt a departure would enable them to spread their wings more and explore other musical avenues that they had tentatively flirted with, way back when they were anonymous enough to do so.

Their Special Magic

Before long, the success of 'Keeper Of The Castle' proved that, despite their change of label, their popularity has remained undiminished. Analysing artists who are in, or who are very close to, the superstar category, is a difficult and hard job to do. What makes them so special above all other male vocal groups who are scattered in profusion across the US as well as in Britain? How can one define that special magic that sets them apart from their contenders and describe in words what is essentially a musical and emotional experience?

In the case of the Four Tops, one is forced to conclude that it is simple sincerity and dedication of purpose. Charm-

ing, unassuming and clearly no heads turned by fickle success, they learnt much in their struggle to the top, and, in profiting from their sometimes bitter experiences, they achieved a maturity and poise that some never find. They are brim full of characteristics that everybody can easily identify with, and their sophistication is that of class performers. They neither have, nor need, any special gimmicks and they don't pass themselves as 'heavy' heads, or make pretentious statements about matters which they are not involved in. This may rile some who see significance in the most mundane gesture and who seek good copy rather than accurate perspectives, but Levi, Duke (Abdul), Lawrence and Obie (Renaldo) must enjoy some of the greatest personal satisfactions that are possible – they set out to become great singers, and they achieved just that.

Looking back now, they can see the bad times in perspective, and as they look to the future together they can also take personal satisfaction from the fact that over the years they have brought a lot of happiness to a lot of people . . . and the world is a richer and better place for the Four Tops having been here.

Talking 'bout my generation

YOU'RE SO VAIN

words and music
by
CARLY SIMON

*You walked in to the party like you were
walking on to a yacht,
Your hat strategic'ly dipped below one
eye, your scarf, it was apricot.
You had one eye in the mirror as you
watched your self gavotte
And all the girls dreamed that they'd be
your partner,
They'd be your partner and . . .*

*You're so vain.
You probably think this song is about you,
You're so vain.
I'll bet you think this song is about you.
Don't you? Don't you?*

*You had me several years ago, when I was
still quite naive,
Well, you said that we made such a pretty
pair, and that you would never leave.
But you gave away the things you loved
and one of them was me,
I had some dreams, they were clouds in
my coffee,
Clouds in my coffee and . . .*

You're so vain . . .

*Well, hear you went up to Saratoga, and
your horse nat'rally won,
Then you flew your Lear jet up to Nova
Scotia to see the total eclipse of the sun.
Well, you're where you should be all the
time and when you're not you're with
some underworld spy or the wife of a
close friend,
Wife of a close friend and . . .*

You're so vain . . .

© Warner Brothers.

Women have generally been rather unfairly dealt with by rock. Only a few ever seemed to reach eminence, and fewer still managed to make the forefront as writers. The late '60s and early '70s saw a rise in the popularity of singer/songwriters and, at this late stage, women who wrote meaningful songs for themselves to perform at last had a share of the limelight. Two of the very best were Joni Mitchell and Carly Simon.

Joni Mitchell's songs were largely introspective, frequently dealing with her own experiences, telling of her friends or, as in the case of 'Woodstock', chronicling some event important to the generation. Her lyrics were always pointed, and often sharp. 'Big Yellow Taxi', for example, wittily but sadly warns about the environmental destruction of the landscape. The ideas and the way they're expressed are clever. Paradise is paved and makes way for the car, trees are only seen in museums, and it is all summed up with the plaintive cry: 'You don't know what you've

BIG YELLOW TAXI

words and music
by
JONI MITCHELL

*They paved paradise
And put up a parking lot,
With a pink hotel,
A boutique and a swinging hot-spot.*

*Please! Don't it always seem to go
That you don't know what you've got till
it's gone?
They paved paradise
And put up a parking lot.*

*They took all the trees
And put them in a tree museum,
And they charged all the people*

A dollar and a half just to see 'em.

*Please! Don't it always seem to go
That you . . .*

*Hey, farmer, farmer,
Put away that DDT now,
Give me spots on my apples
But leave me the birds and the bees.*

*Please! Don't it always seem to go
That you . . .*

*Late last night
I heard the screen door slam,
And a big yellow taxi
Took away my old man.*

*Please! Don't it always seem to go
That you . . .*

© Warner Brothers.



Peter Campbell

got till it's gone.' The excellence of the lyric lies in the fact that she has said in a few pithy lines what doomwatchers had been forecasting in a welter of tomes.

Carly Simon's 'You're So Vain' perfectly echoed the insistent voice of Women's Liberation in the earliest years of the '70s. It is probably the most devastating put-down of the male ego ever to achieve widespread popularity. It is so well observed, so accurately barbed, that one cannot help feeling that it is about a particular person from her past . . . and indeed there was much speculation as to the object of her attack with many famous names being bandied around. What makes the song so stunning is that it has *truth*, and any man feels that had it been directed against him, he'd probably crawl away into a corner and die. Both lyrics are triumphantly successful because they mirror so factually the thoughts of others and, in comparison to the work of a few years previously, they contain things well worth saying.

The Doors: Thinking-mans Rock

The Doors were by far the most commercially successful and resolutely controversial of all the West Coast underground bands of the late 1960s. More than anyone, they were responsible for taking the new underground rock to the mass overground teenage audience.

In their music and stage shows they pioneered an array of lyrical obsessions and theatrical devices whose full implications are still being explored. Arguably the most inventive and imaginative white American act since Elvis, the Doors were hailed universally as an *important* and *significant* band. And yet, within just three years, the Doors were to fall from grace. Their leader Jim Morrison would be condemned as egomaniacal, obnoxious and irrelevant by the very same underground media that had first built the myth.

The Doors' highly personal and idiosyncratic obsessions, greeted as liberating and extraordinary in the heady days of 1967, were looked on as embarrassing and excessive by late 1969. Rock had moved on, the pundits argued, and left the Doors far behind. And when Morrison died his untimely death in 1971, the tributes and obituaries seemed perfunctory.

Incredible Success

In a relatively brief spell at the top, the Doors managed to attract the hostility not only of the forces of authority and law and order, but also of the people they had once considered to be on their own side. No mean feat. How it all came about had something to do with the behaviour of Morrison and the Doors, and their reaction to sudden and astonishing success. But it had a great deal more to do with the fast-changing tides of rock fashion, shifting uneasily to leave the Doors high and dry.

The Doors got together in 1965. Jim Morrison, son of a US Admiral, late of Florida State University, drifted west to study film-making at the UCLA Film School. There he met Ray Manzarek, keyboard player in a local student band, Rick and the Ravens. Morrison was a would-be poet, played no musical instruments and had never attempted to sing. But lately, he had begun hearing strange songs inside his head. Encouraged by Manzarek, he now tried to get them down on tape, aided at first by Manzarek's brothers.

The final line-up of the band arrived when Manzarek met up with drummer John Densmore and guitarist Robbie Krieger in a meditation centre run under the auspices

of the then-celebrated Maharishi Yogi (the Beatles' Sexy Sadie). Krieger was a bottleneck player from a jug-band, Densmore had leanings towards jazz. But when the four began playing together, the Doors' unique sound would soon emerge: Morrison singing loud and furious, or soft and mysterious, Krieger's glittering melodic guitar lines meshing with Manzarek's spiralling keyboard phrases, Densmore driving it all along with his precise and powerful drumming.

The name was Morrison's idea. He got it from a line of William Blake's: 'There are things that are known and things that are unknown; in between are the doors.' That same line had been used by Aldous Huxley on the fly-leaf of *The Doors of Perception*, a book that had attained cult-status in the emergent Californian youth-culture of the mid-1960s. In that book Huxley had described his experiences under the influence of the old Mexican-Indian drug Peyote, making no secret of his belief that peyote opened the doors to new perceptions and inner discovery. In his later years, Huxley argued just as strongly for the merits of the Swiss synthetic 'psychedelic' (mind expanding) drug, LSD. Morrison was surely not unaware of the link between the name of his band and the title of Huxley's propaganda piece.

In any case, LSD - 'acid' - was then very much in the California air. It was the new all-season leisure fad, bigger than surfing had ever been. And, like the surfers before them, the acidheads now looked to rock music to provide songs for purposes of solidarity, self-celebration and recruitment: *acid rock*. The Doors, with their trippy name and trippier music, would quickly become renowned as an acid rock band, an image they hardly resisted.

Bottom Of The Bill

The Doors gighed at first in small clubs along Sunset Strip, Los Angeles, re-working rock and blues standards and developing their own material, playing bottom of the bill to established bands like Them, Love and the Seeds. During this period they didn't exactly have to fight off the recording offers. Columbia had held an option early on, but let it run out. At first too ragged for the big-time, the Doors were rapidly becoming too *heavy*. Talent scouts didn't quite know what to make of songs like 'The End', their long, semi-improvised theatrical set-piece, a tale of madness, patricide and incest:

*'He took a face from the ancient gallery
and he walked on down the hall . . .*

*'Father . . .
'I want to kill you''*

Now that may have been a highly sophisticated updating of the old Greek tragedy of King Oedipus, with erudite neo-Freudian footnotes about old and cold seven-mile snakes. But it was also, in 1966, just a little *controversial*. In fact, it got them fired from their prime venue, the Whiskey-A-Gogo. Before that happened, though, Jac Holzman, president of Elektra records, happened along to the Whiskey to see his top rock band, Love. He saw the Doors playing the warm-up set, didn't much like what he saw, but was fascinated enough to keep on coming back. And finally he signed them up.

The Doors Open Out

The Doors went into the studios and came up with their first hit single, 'Break On Through (To The Other Side)' - also the first song on their album, 'The Doors'. Album and single were well-received by critics and audience as the latest sensation in acid rock. One track from the album, in particular, picked up a lot of airplay - the near seven-minute orgasm-rock epic 'Light My Fire'. Issued as an edited single, it became a US no. 1. The album followed it up the charts. The Doors had arrived.

The Doors' rapid success was then based about equally on their own talents ('Light My Fire' was a magnificent rock song) and on the enthusiasm of the mass media for the band. Rock journalists of the day, underground and overground, loved the Doors for several reasons. First of all because they were bizarre, extraordinary, perhaps the biggest and most sensational thing to hit American rock since Elvis. But second, and just as important, was the fact that the Doors' leader Jim Morrison was so amazingly articulate, he practically wrote their stories for them.

"Think of us as erotic politicians," he was quoted in *Newsweek*. "I'm interested in anything about revolt, disorder, chaos, especially activity that seems to have no meaning," he told the whole world, "it seems to me to be the road to freedom." And on one level this was all very deliberate and very intelligent PR work, shamelessly manipulative of lazy, copy-hungry journalists. As Morrison explained later, "they look for catch-phrases and quotes they can use for captions." Morrison gave them those catch-phrases and quotes, because he and the rest of the Doors badly wanted to sweep the press coverage and make it really big, to 'make a million dollars'. And yet, on another level, he meant every word of it.

"It is a search, an opening of doors. We're trying to break through to a clearer, purer realm" - Morrison attempting to define the Doors' mission in life and delving into some fairly stereotyped, psychedelic, acid rock rhetoric, circa 1966-'7. And yet the Doors chose to define acid rock in a manner very much in line with their own ideas and obsessions, and very different from their San Franciscan



contemporaries and competitors.

The first hit single in many ways said it all. 'Break On Through'. The Doors' music was full of urgent, obsessive songs about the need to break on through to higher states of consciousness, fuelled by sex, drugs, violence, madness, revolution, whatever. 'To The Other Side'. Alongside these songs came a series of strange, elusive glimpses into the mysterious realms out there beyond reality:

*'Take a journey to the bright midnight
End of the night, end of the night . . .
Some are born to sweet delight
Some are born to endless night . . .'*

For the Doors, breaking through was always a struggle. Nothing came easy. The San Francisco acid rock bands, at their most naïve, seemed to suggest that a few hundred microgrammes of LSD would bring sunshine everywhere. For the Doors, the trip was a journey through a psychic wilderness. In a song like 'The End', there is a very precarious balance between the possibility of genuine liberation through violence and temporary madness, and the possibility of complete and final insanity.

In these songs, Morrison wasn't interested in anything as simple as happiness or universal love. He was gambling for much higher stakes, for *freedom*. Not political, but general, beginning with freedom from self-repression.

Morrison's concern with freedom, with breaking through, was widely understood as a whole generation's struggle against repressive adult authority. In fact, as it later became clear, Morrison was speaking for himself alone, his concerns only *appearing* to mirror those of his audience. His obsession with freedom came from his extensive reading of existentialist texts, of Celine, Sartre, Camus and Mailer. In these songs, Morrison took hold of all those wordy and weighty notions about strangers, outsiders, inauthenticity, being and nothingness, roads to freedom, and re-shaped them into relatively concise and accessible rock lyrics. The result, arguably, was pulp – in the sense that a song like 'End Of The Night' bears about as much relationship to its source, Louis Ferdinand Celine's novel, *Journey To The End Of The Night*, as Mickey Spillane does to Ernest Hemingway.

But if the result was pulp, it had a certain sleazy grandeur. Like the mass circulation crime magazines, Morrison's songs distilled out every ounce of sensationalist appeal from their subject matter. And they took rock songwriting into new and previously unthinkable territory. A song like 'People Are Strange', on their second album 'Strange Days', isn't especially faithful to Camus, but it is concise and understandable. The average teenage acidhead may not have known very much about being and nothingness, but he knew very well what it was like to feel 'strange'.

The music accompanying these journeys into mystery was just as concise and clear. In point of fact, it was nearly too

obvious: whispering organ and aetherial silvery guitar, straight out of the soundtracks of a hundred mystery movies, one pulp form borrowing from another Morrison and Manzarek didn't study film-making for nothing. But if the music was obvious, it was also exactly right. *This is mysterious*, it announced.

'Strange Days' was probably the Doors' most artistic album. The first album had some fine songs, but this one was more of a whole; running smoothly through from the stoned alienation of 'Strange Days', to the apocalyptic rage and confusion of 'When The Music's Over':

That particular song showed the Doors in near unison with their audience: it reflected the growing desperation of the youth-culture in the face of the unending Vietnam war, the ghetto riots and campus confrontations and assassinations. Above all that, it captured exactly the almost evangelical importance then attached to *the music*:

*'The music is your special friend
Dance on fire as it intends
Until the end . . .'*

The Doors' live appearances in this period were increasingly chaotic. Near-riots occurred in 1968 at Long Island, New York and in Phoenix, Arizona. Several songs on the Doors' next album 'Waiting For The Sun' apparently showed the group following the path set by 'When The Music's Over', moving out of the inner landscapes and acid psychodramas and into direct engagement with political concerns. 'Unknown Soldier', for example, appeared to be a straightforward protest song, and was banned as such by several radio chains. Later, Morrison denied that it was a political song and claimed 'it was about sex'.

Meanwhile, 'Five To One' appeared to opt for straightforward youth revolution:

*'The old get old and the young get stronger
May take a week and it may take longer
They got the guns but we got the
numbers
Gonna win, yeah, we're taking over . . .'*

It's difficult to believe that Morrison meant this song to be taken literally. More probably it was designed as some kind of ritual exorcism, to make the Doors' audience at least aware of their real power. But the song was taken literally by the critics and condemned as banal and incredible – not to say incongruous, coming from a bunch of millionaire superstars.

Wounded by the criticism and controversy, and well aware that the youth revolution was going to take a whole lot longer than a week, the Doors edged back to their former role as mysterious rock shamans. Their fourth album, 'The Soft Parade', buried the politics and opted for some dazzlingly obscure song-poetry. It was already too late. The acid craze was over, and the rock audience was reorganising itself around different sensibilities: the hard rock of Led Zeppelin and their heavy metal



successors, the country rock/singer/song-writer school of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. The Doors were left stranded somewhere in the middle. People had stopped taking them *seriously* anymore, either as poets or politicians.

It's doubtful, in any case, that the Doors ever carried much political weight. As their career advanced and the hit singles piled up on top of one another, they found themselves playing to younger and younger audiences. Their concerts caused chaos and hysteria, undoubtedly, but it was always primarily a *sexual* hysteria, centred around the stage *persona* of Morrison, the self-proclaimed Lizard King, vamping around in his snakeskin jacket and tight leather trousers. Revolutionary hysteria hardly entered into it. Jim Morrison and the Doors were the true heirs to Elvis, and Morrison's famous indecent exposure burst in Miami, Florida, in March 1969, was one of the most memorable moments of rock & roll theatre.

Morrison later described that incident as "the culmination, in a way, of our mass performing career. Subconsciously, I think I was trying to reduce it to absurdity." He was tried on a felony charge of lewd and lascivious behaviour, plus counts of public profanity, indecent exposure and drunkenness. The case was still on appeal at the time of his death. A few weeks after the 'Miami Flash', a 'Rally for Decency' attracted a crowd of 30,000 to Miami's Orange Bowl. President Nixon sent a telegram of congratulations. It was perhaps Morrison's finest hour.

For the rock press, though, it was about the final straw. *Rolling Stone* covered the event in tones of massive sarcasm. The Boston paper *Fusion* would soon announce that 'The Doors Are Closed', accusing Morrison of narcissism, egomania and actual madness. The Doors had served

their purpose, and were to be dispensed with as decadent and redundant Los Angeles booze-hounds.

The critics, though, missed the point. In fact it had *all* been pure theatre, the whole Doors trip – the sex, the drugs, the mystery, the politics, everything. And it had always connected only *incidentally* with the needs and demands of the rock audience. Morrison was quite clear on that point.

Privileged Onlookers

Morrison probably never cared very much about the audience: they were merely privileged onlookers to his own private search for personal freedom. There are many stories of him putting on astonishing shows in almost empty clubs in the Doors' early days. He didn't, finally, *need* an audience. Certainly, he resented becoming a focus for their fantasies: "I wonder why people like to believe I'm high all the time. I guess, maybe they think someone else can take their trip for them."

Morrison's tragedy was that he began as a poet and ended up as just one more performer. And so, in time, the magic he attempted to invoke on stage degenerated into empty ritual. The music became formulaised and hollow. The response of the crowd became completely predictable.

At Morrison's instigation, the Doors began to cut down on performances, finally stopping altogether. They still made albums when their contract demanded them. The last two Morrison/Doors albums, 'Morrison Hotel' and 'LA Woman' were both superb works very deliberately paced and programmed as mixtures of driving-hard rock and casual mystery. Yet it was all a little half-hearted, it never looked like trying to *break on through*, but it was fine, relaxed music . . .

perhaps the best the Doors ever made.

After recording 'LA Woman', Jim Morrison went off to Paris to write and rest and re-think his increasingly uncomfortable position as a rock superstar. He died there on July 3rd 1971, one of a long line of rock casualties of the '60s. The other members of the Doors, who had already begun rehearsing without him in anticipation of a probable split, reappeared after a decent interval as a three-piece band, augmented for touring purposes. They made two more albums, 'Other Voices' and 'Full Circle', characterised by their usual instrumental brilliance, but also by some clumsy songwriting and painfully inept singing. In July 1973, they chose to call it a day.

Jim Morrison wrote the Doors' best epitaph, and his own too: 'The Wasp (Texas Radio And The Big Beat)', his own personal tribute to rock & roll on the 'LA Woman' album:

*'I want to tell you about Texas radio and
the big beat
Comes out of the Virginia swamp cool
and slow
With plenty of precision, and backbeat
narrow and hard to master
Some call it heavenly in its brilliance
Others, mean and rueful of the western
dream . . .'*

At their best, Morrison and the Doors spoke to us in new languages – secret alphabets in which everything became possible, and most things probable. They made wholly synthetic and manipulative music, which somehow transcended its own carefully juggled elements to become genuinely moving and evocative. They took people into those strange, glittering half-worlds where the truth always floats some way out of reach.

The Doors, from L. to R.: Ray Manzarek (organ), John Densmore (drums), Robbie Krieger (guitar) and the late Jim Morrison (vocals).



NEXT WEEK IN PROFILE: James Taylor and Cat Stevens.

ON STAGE

In the glamorous, glittering pop world of the '70s, news of an impending tour by a big-name group or artist tends to be greeted with such ballyhoo that the uninterested spectator might be led to wonder if Moses were yet again on his way down the mountain.

At the top of the pop tree, where money is talked about in five-figure units and 'going on the road' more likely means flying from city to city or country to country in chartered jets, the complexity of organisation and the dearth of suitable venues means that tours can often be few and far between.

So, when a group *does* appear on stage, their performance – headlined around the pop press – cango a long way to furthering their reputation, record sales and future earnings for a considerable time.

All these factors have had their effect on the way live shows are approached. From the days when Buddy Holly would stroll on to a bare stage with his backing group and spend an hour or more running through his repertoire of two and three-minute songs, to the Roman spectacle of the Rolling Stones or Yes or ELP surrounded by flashing lights, billowing smoke and elaborate light-shows, the audience has come to expect much more than just the music from a stage show.

Back in the '60s, when Liverpool and London between them dominated pop music on both sides of the Atlantic, there was very little that groups like the Beatles could do to make themselves or their music heard above the constant screaming of their audience. In many ways this was the beginning of a fresh approach to on stage performances. From then on an act had to give more than music to their audience. Live performances were transformed into events of which the audience was an integral part – the door had been opened for any amount of showbiz to come on to the rock stage.

On stage then, the spectacle and the music have both, by the mid-'70s, become essential and expected ingredients of a performer's act, and on the following pages are photographs that show many of the top acts of the '70s... 'live', on stage.

NEXT WEEK IN POP INFLUENCES: Bubblegum.



Taken at Rotterdam in November, 1972, this shot of Tina Turner and the Ikettes shows pretty clearly why it is that their audiences usually include more than a sprinkling of the older generation. Tina can sing anything from straight gospel to out-and-out pop, but no matter what the material, she gives it her own stamp of 'soul'. Backed up by Ike and the band, Tina slinks or strides around the stage with the Ikettes in her wake, and from the moment she steps out into the spotlight she's got the eyes of the whole audience glued on to her glistening brown body . . . and she acts as though she's loving every minute of it. The result is always the same by the end of the show the audience has become a screaming, whooping mob, and back she comes with one last, loud number to blast everyone off into the night.

Pic: L. Van Houten.





On the left, Gary Glitter. On the right, Alan Osmond. Both Gary and the Osmonds have struck gold in the '70s playing to kids who for a long time had been left out of a pop world. A sort of singing Rocky Marciano in black leather and sequins, Gary uses motorbikes, dancing girls and the whole bag of tricks to put on a show that has the tinies leaping gleefully out of their seats. Things are much the same at an Osmonds show, but the smooth Hollywood glamour and romantic image is what causes the havoc there.
Pics: Ian Dickson (left); L. Van Houten (right).



Left: 'The King' in sequined splendour during the first number of his last performance on the Las Vegas night club circuit in September, 1973. Playing to a sophisticated, 'mature' audience, Elvis had acknowledged the spectacular by making his entrance on the shoulders of a burly porter, with the chimp perched on high . . . Right: Airborne Mick Jagger with the rest of the Stones in the background during their performance at Rotterdam in October, 1973. On stage, with lights, smoke and buckets of water, the Stones know what the audience wants . . . and they give it.
Pics: L. Van Houten.

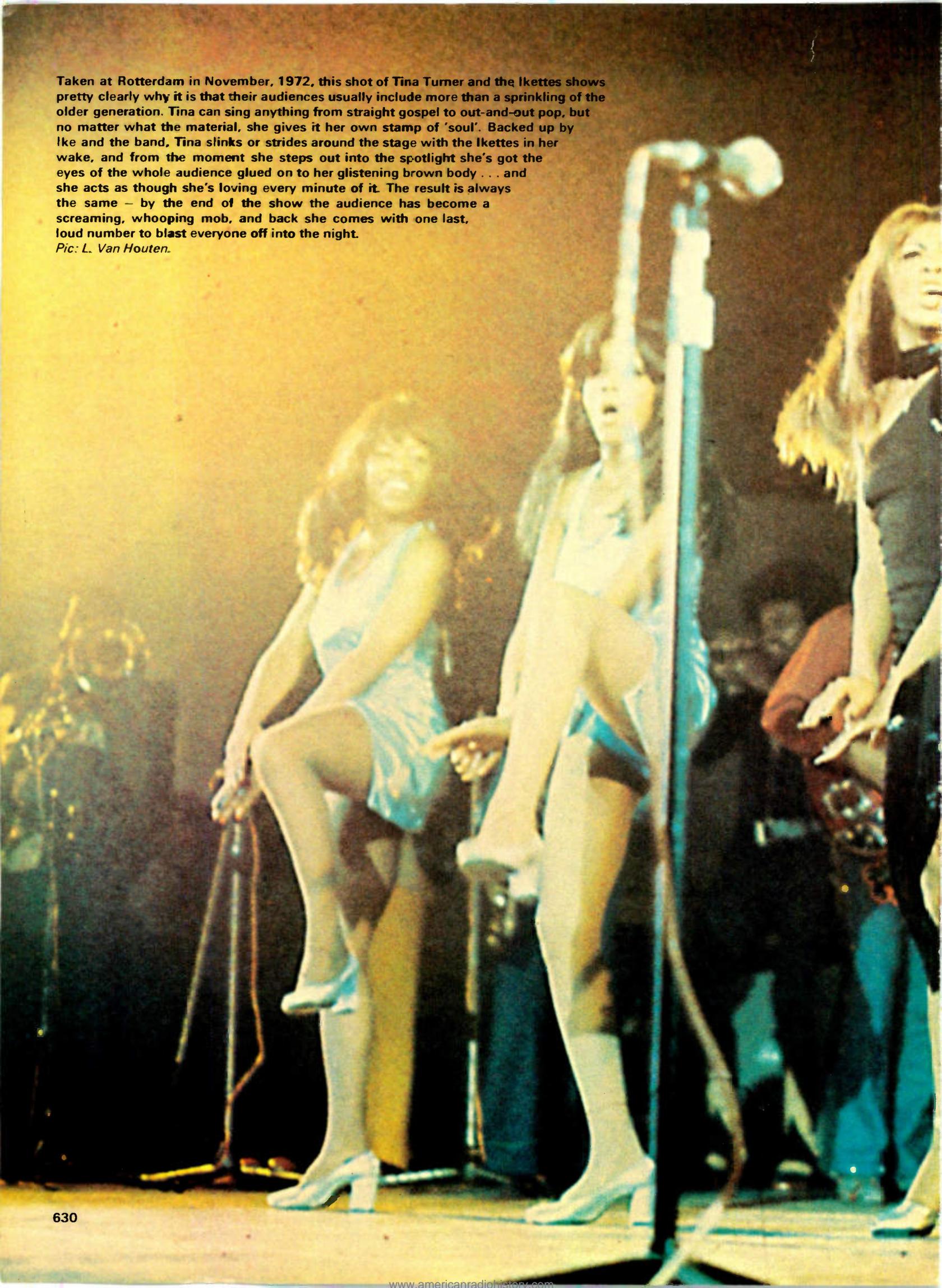


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Pics: Ian Dickson (left); L. Van Houten (right).



Rock Theatre

The summer of '67. Electric music for mind and body from the West Coast, the camp evil of the Velvet Underground in NYC, the Pink Floyd and the Soft Machine bathed in the psychedelia of London's damp basements.

But it wasn't just the music. New magazines sprouted by the score, spoke headily of 'revolution' with the innocence of new-born children, and folded a month later. This was to be the dawning of the Age of Aquarius, the establishment of a genuinely alternative counter-culture for the children of World War Two. The battle hymn was orchestrated to 'progressive rock' and there, up front waving the banner, was *Hair*. Ideas and music came together on a shoestring budget off Broadway, and swept the world. It opened in London to an audience of trends, hippies and young people in general, and closed six years later, playing to an audience of coach-tripping bankers' clerks.

Between the London opening and closing of *Hair*, something has been slowly and sporadically defining itself – rock theatre. It has the same roots as 'underground' music, but its relationship to commercial interests has been entirely different. Whereas many bands were promoted from the club circuit to the superstar bracket, *Hair* remains virtually the only show to have mirrored that progress.

The real rock theatre successes have stayed underground – the commercial rock theatre shows have been manufactured. Ever since the success of *Hair*, producers have been trying to find an equivalent money-spinner, and have succeeded.

But shows like *Godspell* command a totally different audience from those of rock music, or indeed true rock theatre. The appeal of such theatre is middle-aged; and so it should be, since commercial rock theatre is written, conceived, managed and produced by middle-aged men for a middle-aged market, using young people and polite rock to give the shows a hip veneer. The list is as endless as it is depressing: *Rock Carmen*, *Mother Earth*, *Decameron '73*, *Godspell*, *Joseph And His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*, and so on – some successful within their own terms, some frankly terrible. In musical terms, the rock theatre situation is rather as if Cream were still playing the club circuit and the best-sellers were 100-piece orchestras of studio musicians playing arrangements of

the Simon and Garfunkel hit numbers.

What made *Hair* the first piece of rock theatre? What made it so radically different from all previous musicals? It wasn't simply the use of rock music. It also heralded innovations in terms of style and content. Traditional musicals (even *West Side Story*) had a plot, a clear narrative with a beginning, a middle and an end. This story was often interrupted by illustrative songs which in no way advanced the action. *Hair* didn't really have a story at all. What there was in the way of a story was contained within the songs and accompanying action, which was occasionally interrupted by dialogue. And *Hair* wasn't about two young people falling in love – the staple diet of musicals – it was about people carrying smells from lavatories, about smoking dope, about homosexuality and guiltless sex, about recruits for Vietnam burning their draft cards. And significantly it was directed by Tom O'Horgan, graduate of the Café La Mama Troupe, and founder of America's new expressionistic theatre.

Hair's major achievement – yet to be rivalled – was in terms of stylistic balance. Music and theatre had an equivalence of power, of tension and energy. This is the major problem of all rock theatre. Rock music is loud, spectacular, often crass in its emotional effect. The bigger the better. How can a puny actor, with only his body and voice encumbered by a microphone, find a scale of effect that relates to the energy of the music? It is rock theatre that has recognized this problem, and attempted to come to terms with it in different ways.

Immemorable Songs

The most obvious answer, is to try and make the stage action as big as the music. Jack Good first attempted this approach with *Catch My Soul*. He took Shakespeare's most boldly-coloured tragedy, *Othello*, and painted it in primaries. Unfortunately, reduced to its plot-line and robbed of its poetry, the play became little more than a rather silly story of a man who makes a lot of fuss over a handkerchief. The explanation of a complex plot rather than the accumulation of images was a step backwards from *Hair*. The lyrics did their best to carry the story forward, but Good was hampered by immemorable tunes. Perhaps the effort was worthwhile if only for the beautifully laid-back performance of Lance LeGault, which showed what balance could be achieved if you



The Welfare State an open air theatre

carefully brought the presence of a rock singer towards the demands of theatre.

Catch My Soul also served to pave the way for *Jesus Christ Superstar*, which must surely be the most appropriate resolution in bringing the stage action up to the scale of the music. Not only is the entire theatre wired up like a recording studio, but the technical effects rival Cecil B. DeMille as spectacle is piled upon spectacle.

It would seem from these two experiences that by making the theatre as loud as the music, the most that can be achieved is an excited but wordless scream. If one is also concerned with content, a subtler approach is to reverse the coin and scale down the power of the music to the level of the acting . . . whilst retaining the rock energy. This isn't an easy task, but the Pip Simmons Theatre Group achieved it with 'Do It'. Loosely based on Jerry Rubin's history of the Yippie movement in the States, the form was entirely suited to the content. There was no story: the action progressed by image and anecdote. And when the cast ripped into the totally integrated songs, the ruthless display of sheer rock energy overcame fears of their slightly impoverished musical ability. And that's what rock & roll's all about, isn't it? With all that going



Roger Perry

group, in *The Travels of Lancelot*, who are now associated with the best of rock theatre.

for them and no need for microphones, action and music became one. The audience, battered and confused, were treated to a complete history of the last five years in the States.

At the end, they were smoked out of the theatre to the accompaniment of shrieking sirens, the cast in gas-masks with night-sticks menacing them from patches of light in the swirling, stifling gloom. If something can be created in the theatre which is more exciting than Hendrix burning his guitar on stage, then you're beginning to get towards true rock theatre. The Pip Simmons Group repeated their success later with 'The George Jackson Black and White Minstrel Show', which used rock energy in the articulation of the liberal dilemma over the question of Black Power.

A similar approach has been used by two Japanese companies, the Tokyo Kid Brothers and Tenjo Sajiki. With the Kid Brothers, the music is constant throughout the play, the actors speaking monologues and dialogues over the sound. The transitions into song thus seem totally natural, aided by the nature of the Japanese language. They carefully border sentimentality to produce an absolute joy which always has the audience genuinely impelled to dance with them on the stage at the end of the show. Tenjo Sajiki are

much more aggressive and anarchic in their approach, a kind of hari-kari desperation, matching the power of their music when they chose to use it. The problem of scale has been solved by another Japanese company in a totally original way. Stomu Yamash'ta's Red Buddha Theatre, having the advantage of a brilliant and gifted musician, play throughout – and no words interrupt the musical flow. The stage effects, however, are meaningful and spectacular in their simplicity. In their 'Evocation of Hiroshima' which closes the evening, actors come on to the stage one by one and mime everyday tasks, freezing into an expressionistic position while the music builds to a climax of white light. A young girl and a hunchback simpleton play a joyful game among the frozen figures. The effect is extraordinary and moving.

Latest Success Formula

So: some have attempted to scale the action up to the music, some the music down to the action. Why not let the two meet in the middle? Surprisingly, this is a resolution which is only now being explored, and which points a direction for the future of true rock theatre. *Feast of Fools* at the London Roundhouse Christmas '73 showed the way. The audience

were invited to celebrate during a conscription party at the beginning of the Crusades. They sat on the sand-covered floor or hung from the balcony, ate and drank whilst the actors pushed in amongst them, argued with them, kissed them and flew over their heads. There was torture, striptease, rape and sing-along; so much happening at the same time and always close to you, so that the action always matched the level of the music. By dis-jointing the events in this way, a meeting of the media on equal terms was made.

A theatre group which has been working on events with music for some years is the Welfare State, who describe themselves as 'a fine arts theatre circus'. They work best in the open air, where they create spectacular environments animated by grotesque figures and happenings. They use rock music, but also silver bands, string quartets, marching jazz bands, ancient fife and drum music. Nevertheless, the energy they generate in relation to the music and events is that now associated with the best of rock theatre.

Richard O'Brien, play and songwriter, has turned all the problems of rock theatre to his advantage. *The Rocky Horror Show* looks like repeating the success story of *Hair*. Originally scheduled for a month's run at the 100-seater Theatre Upstairs in



Cue Consultants

The cast of one of the first rock musicals *Hair*, that brought rock theatre to mass audiences throughout the world.

London, it now seems to be set for an indefinite period in a 300-seat cinema in Chelsea, London. It has the talents of Tim Curry in the lead (a veteran of *Hair*), and Jim Sharman as a director, who directed the London production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. It deftly skirts round all the gaucheries of musicals and rock theatre by sending them up. The story of clean-living, all-American Brad and Janet, and their encounter with the creatures of the planet Transsexual, is told in dead-pan, comic-strip, sci-fi horror terms to the accompaniment of gloriously banal mid-

'50s rock. Everything stops for the songs while the singer gets a microphone and the cast do routines to the Zip-a-dee-doo-daa choruses. The songs should all be at the top of the charts; there's room for some superb camp-cult performances with lines worthy of Mae West; and it looks like New York might see it too. But you can only send up the worn out clichés once. As far as the stylistic development of rock theatre is concerned, *The Rocky Horror Show* is a cul-de-sac.

If the smaller scale groups really get closest to surmounting the stylistic prob-

lems of rock theatre, then they're going to stay underground and nearest to the ideal that motivated both them and the progressive bands of '67. They don't want to play in West End theatres or on Broadway. For them, the problems of rock theatre are best solved outside the structure of enormous commercial investment.

The context of rock theatre often determines its stylistic success. More and more, its content is being related to a principled political stance – the inheritance of *Hair*. The child of '67 is growing up. And in rock theatre we still have the Cream.

Glitter Rock

Just as modern British rock music tends to reflect, if not completely draw upon the past, so the emphasis on presentation, for so long played down, has returned to where it began. In some instances it has even managed to glitteringly out do its origins.

In the first Presley era in the States, and then during the Mersey boom of the early '60s in Britain, the presentation was almost as important as the music itself. This wasn't surprising really, since the music was mainly limited to tunes three minutes long at the most. It was the age of the single, the charts were the thing, and if you had a hit record you dressed and behaved like a star.

It's hard to believe now that the Kinks, when they had their first hit with 'You Really Got Me' in 1964, arrived for their first confrontation with the press dressed in long, pink hunting jackets and white frilly shirts. You really had to have something to distinguish yourself in those days apart from your music – and often the dress was more memorable than the music. It was the last lingering hold of showbiz over rock. A year or two later, the music had progressed to a point where the mohair-suited showbiz managers could no longer come to terms with it. It was only then, when they left, that British rock found its own identity.

The Album Arrives

The rock upheaval of the early '60s began to produce its own managers as well as artists, and they were no longer governed by what had gone on in the past, and no longer always looking for the next single hit. The coming of the album in its own right settled that. LPs no longer consisted of a string of singles which were recorded in one morning, as was the Animals' first album.

At first then, the presentation of rock



Marc Bolan one of rock's ace glitter superstars

on stage was influenced totally by a showbiz past. Many people in the business saw rock merely as a passing phenomenon, convinced that the calypso would be the next craze.

At first the presentation of groups was basically sexual, because the permissive society had yet to take over. The pelvic gyrations of Elvis Presley were reflected in Britain in the late '50s rock & roll movement by artists like Billy Fury, Cliff Richard and Marty Wilde.

Short Gigs

Although the Beatles never really went in for outright sexuality, because by that time sexual barriers were beginning to blur on stage as they foresaw what was happening to the attitudes of their audiences, they at first still had to contend with the show business style of presentation. In their early days of 1962-'63, they toured cinemas like any other rock group, as these were basically the only venues open to groups, apart from ballrooms. Concerts in those days would consist of up to eight groups walking on stage, plugging in to the gear already set up and playing for about 12 minutes at the longest. Therefore it was as much the individual presentation of the groups in such close competition, as their music, that would sell them 'live' to their public.

Groups like Sounds Incorporated appeared, touching the stage with the backs of their heads as they played, Dave Berry peering around the nearest piece of scenery, even the Beatles shaking their heads and hair in unison to the shrieks of their audience, a trick, by the way, almost

identically copied by the Osmonds on their 1973 tour of Britain with similar audience results.

If a group wanted to get ahead, it had to have first of all a stage uniform. The first thing you did when you signed a recording contract was to rush off to a show business tailor and get yourself kitted out. Apart from The Kinks' hunting pink suits, even the Beatles themselves went into show-biz glamour by pioneering boxy suits minus lapels, velveteen trimmed in light grey with tapered trousers, and the famous Beatle boots.

The Beatles also killed barbers stone dead, in fact the hairdressing industry has only really recovered from those first dark days of long hair, by working out that you can charge double to cut less. But in those days you had to rely upon a willing girlfriend.

Anti-Heroes

Gradually the stage dress approach of managements and groups bred its own rebellion, and when the 'underground' first started to stir in about 1967, groups were beginning to decide that it was the music, and not their dress, that mattered.

There was then a period of the anti-hero pop star. It was a period that nurtured DJ John Peel as its mouthpiece, because he talked in the flat fashionable Liverpoolian vowels and represented the unpretentious that was the mode. In fact, the more famous you were, the tatter the clothes you wore. This public dressing down became a uniform of its own. Groups would come on stage in their everyday clothes, often not even communicating

verbally with their audiences, and sometimes even to the point of standing with their backs turned to the auditorium.

It is this background which produced the current vogue for a return to glitter and showbusiness. Stars themselves were tired of not appearing as stars, so too were the audience. They paid their money and they began to want entertainment as well as music.

The first person to diagnose this change of attitude in Britain was Marc Bolan. Bolan had been in on an earlier sartorial rock trend, that of the 'Mod', which formed the basis of the Who followers. Young working-class boys and girls who decided to dress very stylishly, spend most of their money on clothes, and often, in the case of the males, wear a certain amount of make-up. They were also often pilled out of their minds. The early jerky and aggressive music of the Who reflected them. And they are immortalised in the Who's recent work, *Quadrophenia*. Marc Bolan, in his early teens appeared in the then highly trend-setting magazine *Town*, pictured by Don McCullin, now a famous war photographer.

Immediate Success

During the rise of the 'underground', Bolan reappeared again as part of the acoustic Tyrannosaurus Rex, producing a style of music which totally reflected its spaced-out market. But Bolan was one of the first to feel that the days of the anti-hero in rock were numbered. From having been one of John Peel's favourites, he now went electric and commercial with a vengeance, and was rewarded with almost immediate success.

He changed the group's name to T. Rex and with 'Ride A White Swan' and similar tunes, was soon being mobbed by the just emerging new market of teenyboppers. One of the reasons for Bolan's new appeal to a wider and more commercial audience was his frizzed out hair and use of make-up and glitter-dust on his face. The phenomenon was slow, as usual, to be noticed by the media, but when they did realise what was going on they enlarged upon it with no holds barred.

It was inevitable that in a particularly imitative industry, Bolan's glittering lead would be followed. Another 'underground' figure, that of David Bowie, was soon to re-emerge in a more high-camp style than had ever been witnessed before, even in rock. Bowie purposely set out to confuse the sexes, wearing make-up and sparkling outfits. In fact he set out to be outrageous, but far from causing this supposed affront to his audience, he was grasped as the leader in an ever glittering movement.

What Bowie was putting over was a bisexual transvestite image. But just as drag acts appealed to their parents, the rock audience now was to fully embrace the camp side of rock. Bolan battled bravely to keep in the lead, and with some success. But he was almost halted by over-exposure in the media, while Bowie settled for an unobtainable approach,

giving few interviews and relying upon startling photographs of his ever more startling stage outfits to get him across to the public in general.

If the movement had been started, as so often before, in Britain, then America too was soon to produce its own rivals, mainly in the person of Alice Cooper. Cooper was a preacher's son and had been a musician on Frank Zappa's record label at one time. But he realised that an ordinary approach would get him nowhere, and with the backing of the giant Warner record company – set out to shock.

Apart from the groups name – which was confusing enough, Alice appeared on stage dressed in all manner of women's clothes and playing suggestively with a pet python. His stage act has gradually grown more outrageous as he strives for ever more effect, and a recent tour of America was dominated by a guillotine scene in which he was, with the help of an illusionist, seemingly beheaded. He has only been out done in America by the New York Dolls, a group who appear almost entirely dressed in female clothes, but, unlike Alice Cooper, their music does not match up to their image.

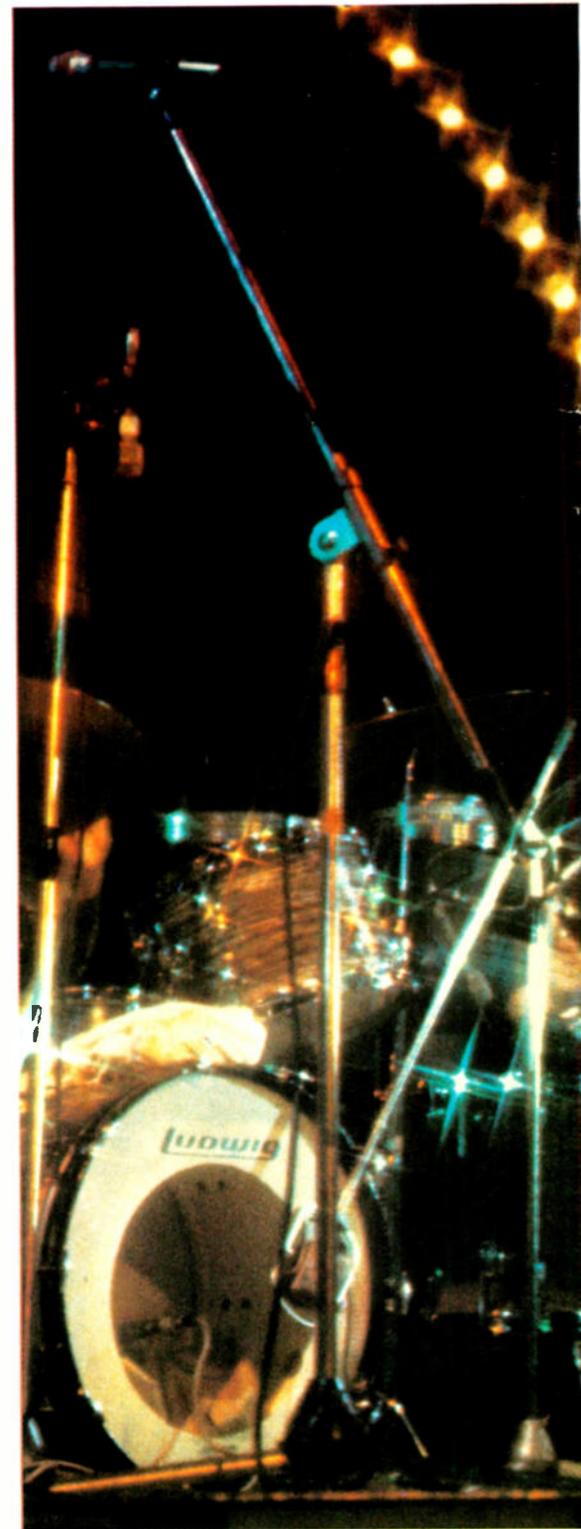
Meanwhile in Britain, the glitter movement began to spread with the success of groups like Sweet and the incredible Gary Glitter. Sweet based their success upon a series of hits commercially written for them by Nicky Chinn and Mike Chapman. On stage they daubed make-up and sparkle over themselves, although it seemed to have little to do with their sound.

But by far the most successful candidate of the glitter movement took the name unto himself: Gary Glitter. He was an amazing phenomenon who had been appearing as a rock & roll singer since the days of Tommy Steele and other British rock stars, back in the '50s. He had gone through a series of name changes ending with Paul Raven. Although he had always earned a living, he remained little known to the public and prior to his reappearance as Gary Glitter, had been appearing for almost four years continuously in Germany.

Big Break

He then went to London and prevailed upon the record producer Mike Leander to listen to him. As he says: "I asked him to come and watch me work. He'd heard a few of the records I wanted to make and was not all that impressed. But when he saw me work an audience, he got to like me a bit better. Then I was standing in the wings at a Little Richard concert in Germany and it suddenly dawned upon me. What I should do was what I had always known best, rock & roll."

And that was precisely what he did do. Glitter realised that what was wanted by the public was a show, and he set about to do just that. He has never given his age and there are rumours as to how old he actually is, although amazingly his audience is very much the teenybopper,



who usually confine their adoration to young artists only. Glitter camped it up outrageously, and wore sparkling suits, showering glitter upon himself, and his band the Glittermen. The result was even greater success and he closed 1973 with the biggest selling single of the year 'I Love You Love Me Love'.

Band after band followed this example of success, and it could almost be said that even the mighty weenybop successes the Osmonds themselves were a glitter act. They certainly had sparkling lapels on their all white suits during their British tour in the autumn of 1973. Even Roy Wood's



Redferns

Wizzard appeared on British TV's *Top of the Pops* in sparkling outfits as they strove to out do their rivals.

Stage outfits were back, as silk suits turned into satin and glitter dust replaced dandruff as a disease of the youthful performer. Yet what did it represent? Keith Reid, the thoughtful lyricist of Procol Harum, the man who in 1967 wrote 'A Whiter Shade Of Pale', thinks that it has replaced real musical talent: "I think that the more theatrical rock gets, the more it is covering up for a real lack in musical originality. It is like a sleight of hand, where the performance takes over from

what is being performed. I don't know where it will end, but certainly there seems to be a striving for each group to be more outrageous than the last."

There is, of course, another side to presentation with thoughtful groups like Pink Floyd, Genesis and Yes, using lights, color and theatre to enhance and deepen the music, creating total atmospheres.

This could not be said of the glitter movement which inevitably must be replaced by the next fad. What it will be is anybody's guess. But certainly to be stuck with the name of Gary Glitter may not be the most helpful attribute in 1974.

Gary Glitter (above) became to 1973 almost what Scott McKenzie was to the flower power year of 1967. Amid an ever blossoming host of camp/glitter/rock & roll revival acts and so-called stars, Gary stood out as someone who certainly *wasn't* putting one over on anyone — there was never any doubt that Gary knew exactly what he was doing, and who he was doing it for. His stage act combined the warmth of a great big cuddly teddy-bear with all the growl and passion of a true, teenybop Elvis . . . and the kids loved it, right down to the hairy chest and roaring motorbikes.

NEXT WEEK IN ROCK: Country Rock.

The Girls

When Sandie Shaw sang about being a puppet on a string in 1967, she had neatly summed up the general position of women in pop for much of the '60s.

Although male singers since Elvis Presley had developed styles and images far removed from those of earlier pop generations, the '60s girls had to be content to echo the kind of appeal projected by Doris Day, Vera Lynn, Connie Francis and Ruby Murray.

While the men could always get away with a touch of aggression and rebellion, it was unthinkable for a female pop singer to be anything but wholesome. The songs they were given to sing usually reinforced this, varying from the cheerful to the tearful, but never attempting the sensual.

The most perfect example of this process was the selling of the Supremes. It's true that their hit singles like 'Where Did Our Love Go?' and 'Stop In The Name Of Love' were brilliantly arranged pieces of music, but what clinched it was their consistent image. They were like idols – sometimes they even moved jerkily – and their stage act was carefully rehearsed to be every white boy's fantasy of black beauty.

Talent Crushed

The point was, that if you were a girl, you weren't expected, or allowed, to be any kind of actual *musician*. The image took precedence over everything else, so that it was virtually impossible for a pop woman to satisfy any musical ambitions she might have. In Britain, Billie Davis and Dusty Springfield suffered in their careers because of this strait-jacket approach.

Out on the fringes of pop though, in jazz and folk music circles, things were usually a bit easier for women. Nina Simone, with a repertoire of gospel songs, Billie Holiday material, and her own compositions, blazed a trail in cabaret and concerts; and in the Folk Boom of the early '60s, Joan Baez and Judy Collins were accepted along with Bob Dylan and Tom Paxton as equally important carriers of the messages of protest and authenticity.

The situation of the female folk singer was to play its part in the erosion of the rigid role of women in pop, but the first blows came from the new music of San Francisco in the mid-'60s, and the groups who became associated with 'underground' music. Two people were outstandingly important: Grace Slick of the Jefferson Airplane, and a young Texan who

sang with Big Brother and the Holding Company – Janis Joplin.

Grace and Janis sang hard and strong. Both their backgrounds were in black music – blues and soul – where female singers were without the inhibitions of most of their pop counterparts. But equally important for their impact was the way they and their bands presented themselves to their audiences. Because much of the impetus behind the San Francisco sound was to do with the rejection of the established, petrified system – whether in morals, dress or entertainment – the girl singer mould was broken.

Daughters of Janis

Because the attention and publicity focused on pop stars is so great, Grace Slick and Janis Joplin also affected the attitudes of their listeners both towards girl singers, and, in the case of female listeners, themselves. Lillian Roxon has described the effect Janis Joplin had on the Woodstock Generation:

“. . . before very long you could walk around a concert or a festival anywhere in America and see them, the daughters of Janis, their tough and battered little faces defiantly free of make-up and other synthetic improvements; their hair positively triangular in its electricity; their clothes long, loose and nomadic; and look ma, no pantygirdles, and better even than that, nipples!”

Janis Joplin paved the way for many other singers on both sides of the Atlantic. Some, like Maggie Bell – formerly of Stone the Crows – were just starting out in the late '60s. Others, notably Elkie Brooks of Vinegar Joe, had been singing for years, waiting for the chance to be allowed to perform as they really wanted to. The San Francisco breakthrough gave them that chance. It also set the stage for the moment when women performers would be accepted on their own terms both by the moguls of show business and the audiences.

Ironically, the first artist to benefit from the changed situation was herself a survivor from the conventional years of the early '60s. Carole King had cut a few records then, and scored one hit in Britain, with 'It Might As Well Rain Until September'; but more important, she had played a crucial role behind the scenes, writing many of the big hit songs of those years. When the success of Dylan and the Beatles in the mid-'60s, made it the thing

for everyone to write their own songs, Carole King moved from New York to the West Coast and a new career as a performer. In this she was influenced significantly by James Taylor, the first successful member of the new breed of singer/songwriters. Her first solo appearance was with Taylor at the Troubadour in Los Angeles in 1970. A year later she received the Grammy Awards (the pop equivalent of the Hollywood Oscar) for 'Top Record Of The Year' ('It's Too Late'), 'Album Of The Year' ('Tapestry'), 'Song Of The Year' ('You've Got A Friend') and 'Best Pop Female Vocalist'.

Carole King's music is poles apart from that of Janis Joplin, but they share the distinction of being the first women artists to stamp their individual personalities on the face of pop music, and the very fact of their difference showed that by 1971 the prejudices against women performers at the highest level were starting to relax – although the first major female group has yet to emerge.

The songs on albums like 'Tapestry' and 'Fantasy' are reflective and low key, and with them Carole King broke the taboo that women in pop were supposed simply to emote, and not sing songs with thoughtful lyrics. Her sudden emergence as a vastly popular artist was evidence that pop possessed a new kind of potential audience – post-teenagers who had come through the roller-coaster of adolescent feelings, faithfully recorded in songs like those Carole King herself used to write. This audience was ready for songs about friendship as well as love, about the intermediate shades of relationships as well as the black and white.

It is probably no accident that Carole King appeared on the scene with her restrained yet passionate songs at a time when the radical energies of Haight-Ashbury and Woodstock were dissipating. Just as Joplin had somehow caught the mood of the late '60s, so King and another, younger singer – Carly Simon – seem bound up with the early '70s.

If Carole King's persona on record is that of the experienced woman aware of the importance of even the smallest gains and losses in living, Carly Simon's songs show someone going through it all for the first time. The first song on her first album, 'That's The Way I've Always Heard It Should Be', already expressed a very different perspective from Carole King, whose assumptions about the nature of love often tended to be little different from those of earlier generations of songwriters. In the Carly Simon song, the singer is wary of what marriage may do to the love she has:

*'You say that we can keep our love
alive
Babe, all I know is what I see
The couples cling and claw
And drown in love's debris.'*

On the page, the words may seem melodramatic, but in the context of a carefully arranged song they represent one side of an unresolved and basic argument.



L. Van Houten

L. Van Houten

LFI

Record Mirror

Top left: Elkie Brooks of Vinegar Joe. Top right: Susi Quatro, one of the latest and more dynamic of the contemporary girl singers. Left: Carly Simon wife of James Taylor. Right: Sandie Shaw, the original puppet girl singer.



Dusty Springfield who went solo when the Springfield trio split-up.

Carly Simon's work is probably more uneven than Carole King's – who's such a good songwriter that even her weakest compositions are saved by this skill with which they are constructed – but she has a wider and more dramatic range of themes and emotions. In particular, two of her best songs – the rousing 'You're So Vain' and the quiet, sad 'A Legend In Your Own Time' – deal with the pride and problems of 'superstars' who begin to believe in their own image.

That theme – which, interestingly, has not been explored nearly as deeply by male songwriters – is also prominent in the work of Joni Mitchell, the third of the major women singer/songwriters. Unlike Carole King and Carly Simon, her background was in folk music. Joni began in Canada, and her first well-known song, 'The Circle Game', is generally reckoned to be about Neil Young, another Canadian musician.

She went on to write another classic contemporary folk song, 'Both Sides Now', and then, in California, began to develop a more personal and passionate style. There she met up with Stephen Stills and David Crosby, whose soft-rock influences had a lot to do with the feeling of power in her 'Blue' and 'For The Roses'.

On those records, there is a perfect unity of vocal style, lyric poetry and melody. And the songs themselves are

uncompromising in their blend of emotional commitment and piercing analysis. Joni Mitchell can be both fearless and compassionate in a way that other songwriters (male or female) can only envy. And she has the edge over both Carole King and Carly Simon in that she spans the two, relatively settled, generations that they spring out of. Like Janis Joplin, she came of age in the emotional turmoil of the mid-'60s, but – unlike Janis – she had to live with the consequences of that era.

As pop music became more fragmented and open in the mid-'60s, other graduates of folk music found their place in the mainstream. The most important were Joan Baez and Judy Collins, each of whom found their way to linking personal feelings with wider social and political questions. Both have always had a high reputation as interpreters of songs written by others, notably those of Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen, but they have also written many of their own songs since those days. Among these there are some that rank with the best, as reflections of the times we live in, Collins concentrating on the meaning of American traditions ('My Father'), and Baez on love and the roles of women and men ('Love Song To A Stranger' and 'Rider Pass By').

Beyond those five artists, whom many consider to be the most important women

in pop in the '70s, there are others who over the years have always found a ready audience. Among those schooled in folk music are Joan Baez' sister, Mimi Farina and Buffy St. Marie, whose powerful delivery constantly reminds the listener of her Red Indian ancestry – which found the perfect vehicle in 'Soldier Blue', the theme song from a movie about the inhumanity of white man to red man.

Meanwhile, other women songwriters have followed Carole King out of the backroom and on to record. Laura Nyro, a New York composer who wrote hits like 'Wedding Bell Blues' and 'Stoned Soul Picnic', went on to make three successful albums; while Ellie Greenwich, an exact contemporary of Carole King's and responsible for 'Chapel Of Love' and 'River Deep Mountain High', has recorded her own versions of those songs. Dory Previn, a cult figure with four albums of tortured poetic songs to her name, began as a composer for Hollywood films, until the break-up of her marriage to conductor André Previn precipitated her into a singer/songwriting career.

Perhaps the most curious success of the late '60s and '70s has been that of Melanie Safka, whose first album 'Candles In The Rain' contained 'Look What They've Done To My Song Ma' and 'Lay Down', which she sang accompanied by the Edwin Hawkins gospel singers. As well as her distinctive, quavering voice, Melanie was the first of the women singer/songwriters to project a homely, 'girl next door' image, and yet manage to link it to some highly personal and effective interpretations of other people's songs.

There are literally hundreds of other women who have come to the fore as individual artists since the pioneering efforts of Janis Joplin and Carole King. In Britain, for instance, there is Sandy Denny from the folk tradition, Leslie Duncan, Linda Lewis and Lyndsay de Paul among the pop writers, and Claire Hammill and Jaki Whitren somewhere in between. Perhaps Maggie Bell, formerly of Stone the Crows and afterwards one of the voices of the rock-opera version of 'Tommy', is as prominent as any. However she has never had the popular success that her ardent band of followers would wish, and perhaps this will have to wait for the screen version of 'Tommy' to put her face and her voice across to a wider audience.

Among the '70s crop of American singers are Bette Midler, Liza Minelli and Barbra Streisand, who owe much to the theatrical world and succeed in channelling the power and spectacle of cabaret and live theatre into a wide range of pop and rock material. Country rock performers like Linda Ronstadt and the Canadian Anne Murray and Marie Mulduar, were hailed by *Rolling Stone* as new stars of 1974, but the ingrained habits of the pop business die hard, and every year attempts are made to manufacture female 'stars' in the old way. Suzi Quatro is the latest example of this, but despite that, the '60s was a fine decade for women in pop, and the music itself is richer for it.

POP FILE

... the Who's Who of Pop. Week by week the A-Z of who did what and when.

SHA NA NA were formed at Columbia University in 1969 as a joke for a concert, but stayed together and became a great success at the Woodstock Festival with their rock & roll nostalgia/comedy routines and slick choreography. They first performed in Britain in 1971, and have since gone on to put the local rock revival acts to shame.

SHANGRI-LAS (Betty Weiss, Mary Weiss, Mary Anne Ganser and Marge Ganser) were a New York vocal group formed in 1964. They are best remembered for the motorcycle hero death song 'Leader Of The Pack', but they also had hits with 'Remember Walking In The Sand', and 'Give Him A Great Big Kiss'.

RAVI SHANKAR is India's master of the sitar, a multi-stringed instrument whose drone strings, sounding in sympathy with the plucked strings, give it its distinctive sound. Thanks to Shankar, the sitar was used in rock for a while in the mid-'60s especially through George Harrison, who studied under Shankar. Shankar became well known in the West and held many concerts of his own, including appearances at the Monterey Festival and George Harrison's Bangla Desh concert.

DEL SHANNON real name Charles Westover, was born on December 30th, 1939, and began singing during his Army service. In 1961 his own song 'Runaway' made no. 1 on both sides of the Atlantic. He followed this through to 1965 with hits



including 'Hats Off To Larry', 'Hey Little Girl', 'Swiss Maid', 'Little Town Flirt' and 'Keep Searchin''. Although he has since retired from professional singing, he did a final tour of Britain in 1973.

HELEN SHAPIRO was 14 when she made the UK charts in 1961 with 'Don't Treat Me Like A Child'. She had a powerful

voice and blared her way up the Top 10 with subsequent hits including 'You Don't Know' and 'Walking Back To Happiness' before lapsing into occasional cabaret dates.

SANDIE SHAW came from Dagenham, Essex, her gimmicks consisted of a big voice and appearing without shoes. Provided with excellent material by songwriter Chris Andrews, she had a series of hits in Britain from 1964 to 1969, including 'There's Always Something There To Remind Me' (1964, no. 1), 'Long Live Love' (1965, no. 1), 'Puppet On A String' (1967, no. 1) and 'Monsieur Dupont' (1969).

THE SHIRELLES were an all-girl New York soul group who made it in 1961 with 'Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow' (a no. 1 hit). On the 'B'-side was 'Boys', which the Beatles later recorded. They were one of the many groups that influenced the Beatles.

CARLY SIMON became one of *the* faces of 1972-'73, after her hit 'You're So Vain' and her best-selling album 'No Secrets'. Before that, she was singing in New York with her sister as the Simon Sisters, and recorded some unreleased tracks for Albert



Crossman. She signed to Elektra in 1971 and a US hit with 'That's The Way I've Always Heard It Should Be' in 1972. She married James Taylor in 1973.

NINA SIMONE, born in North Carolina on February 21st, 1933, attended the New York Juillard Music School and began recording in the late '50s, singing jazzy ballads. By the mid-'60s



she was singing with a distinct soul twinge as on 'Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood' and 'I Put A Spell On You'. In 1968 she had her first British single success with 'Ain't Got No - I Got Life', which she followed in 1969 with the Bee Gees' 'To Love Somebody'. Since then she has become actively involved in Black Power politics.

NANCY SINATRA, daughter of Frank Sinatra, had a big hit in 1966 with 'These Boots Are Made For Walking'. Since then she



has had success with 'Sugar Town', 'You Only Live Twice', 'Somethin' Stupid' (with her father) and 'Jackson' (with producer Lee Hazlewood).

PERCY SLEDGE was born in Alabama, and after working as a DJ, cut his first record, 'When A Man Loves A Woman', which was a worldwide hit in 1966 on Atlantic. He recorded three soul ballad albums before disappearing from the music scene.

SLY AND THE FAMILY STONE were formed in 1968 and made the charts that year with the energetic 'Dance To The Music'. Since that time, Sly has continued to make highly danceable records that sound fresh and uncontrived, even if they are sometimes similar. The group appeared at Woodstock and are a huge live attraction in the US. Their best-known record is probably 'I Want To Take You Higher'.

SOFT MACHINE were formed in Canterbury, Kent, in 1966 with a line-up of Mike Ratledge (keyboards), Robert Wyatt (drums), Kevin Ayers (bass), and David Allen (guitar). They play a free-form improvised music and are main standard bearers of the rock-jazz fusion approach. They have recorded six albums and their latest line-up is Mike Ratledge, Karl Jenkins (reed instruments), John Marshall (drums), and Roy Babbington (bass).

SONNY AND CHER worked in the '60s as a husband-and-wife duo and had hits in 1965-'66 with 'I Got You Babe', 'Baby



Don't Go' and 'Little Man' among others. Previously Sonny Bono had worked as an assistant to Phil Spector, and Cher Sakisian was trying to make it as an actress. As well as their duo hits, Sonny made it with 'Laugh At Me' and Cher with 'Bang Bang', 'All I Want To Do' and in 1973 with 'Half Breed'.

JOE SOUTH had a huge hit in 1969 with his 'Games People Play', and was quite popular for a couple of years after that. Previously he had worked as pianist on Bob Dylan, Simon and



Garfunkel, Wilson Pickett and Aretha Franklin sessions. He had produced records by Billy Joe Royal and Tommy Roe, run his own record company that featured his own early recordings, and had written the Billy Joe Royal hit 'Down In The Boondocks'.

SPIRIT were formed in 1967 with the line-up: Randy California (guitar), Jay Ferguson (vocals), Mark Andes (bass), Ed Cassidy (drums) and John Locke (keyboards). They recorded four albums before their split in 1970, when Ferguson and Andes started Jo Jo Gunne and Randy California made his own album 'Kaptain Kopter And The Twirly Birds'. The group has since re-formed, with Randy California, Ed Cassidy and Larry Knight (bass).

SPOOKY TOOTH were formed in 1967 by Gary Wright (keyboards) and Mike Harrison (keyboards), and have gone through a confusing series of personnel changes, splits and false starts but have remained an influential British name. Among the musicians who have been in the band are Wright, Harrison, Mike Kellie (drums), Greg Ridley (bass), Luther Grosvenor (guitar), and Henry McCulloch (guitar). After three years' absence from the scene, the band re-formed in 1973 and released two albums - 'You Broke My Heart So I Broke Your Jaw' and 'Witness' before splitting again.



DUSTY SPRINGFIELD was part of the successful Springfields trio of the early '60s whose hits included 'Island Of Dreams' and 'Silver Threads And Golden Needles'. In 1963 she started on a solo career and had many hits including 'I Only Want To Be With You' (1963), 'I Just Don't Know What To Do With Myself' (1964), 'Some Of Your Loving' (1965), 'You Don't Have To Say You Love Me' (1966) and 'Son Of A Preacher Man' (1968).

POP FILE

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