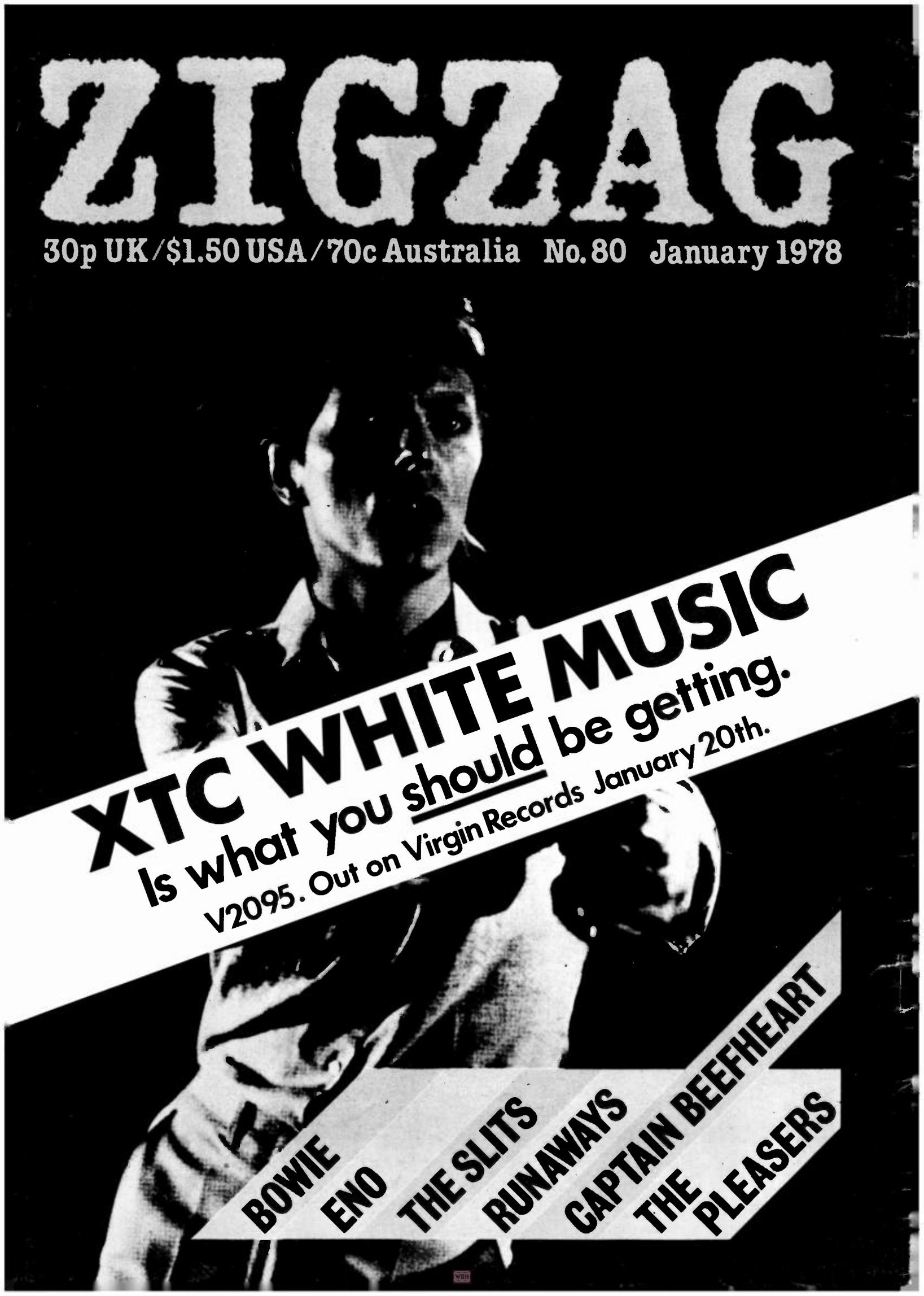


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THE DRONES: Further Temptations (Valer VRLP1)

A Manchester group and label, and in both cases the most promising of their type to emerge recently. The LP title refers to the group's first, and completely self financed EP, 'Temptations Of A White Collar Worker' which came out on the O.H.M...S. label during the summer, and reportedly sold the eight million copies claimed by every independent label for every release. In fact, it was considerably superior to most of the vinyl waste which comprised much of the debut records of the last few months and the Drones were thus able to attract the attention of Valer, a new company with high ambitions and more than somewhat financially. The album, which contains new versions of two of the EP tracks in 'Corgi Crap' and the excellent 'Lookalikes', plus the two tracks on the recently released single, 'Bone Idol' and the presumably autobiographical 'Just Wanna Be Myself', another standout track, is, if not perfect, a good deal nearer to listenable than 95% of its recent competitors. What seems to stand out is a certain musical ability, much like, say, Joe Strummer, the Drones have obviously been involved in rock'n'roll before, and the inspiration provided by Rotten and Co. has made them change.

M.J. Drone (what an ace name - scores points immediately) is an above average singer and a reasonable guitarist, although I have to admit I'm still a lot happier if I can hear the words without intense concentration, a discipline necessary too often here. But when you can hear the lyrics (or, with the EP, they're written down)

there's no doubt that while the message from the Drones often amounts to be yourself, it's put out in a more interesting way than most. Guitarist Gus Callender does a great job of being minimal, while demonstrating on two other very good songs, 'City Drones' and 'Lift Off The Bans' (the latter about the closure of the Electric Circus) that he is easily capable of subtlety as well as power, and Steve Cundall on left handed 'redarse' bass has a certain amount of rich Jean-Jacques about him. Which leaves M.J.'s brother, Pete Purrfect (Howells) on drums, who is perfectly adequate (no put down intended).

Musically, there's bits of Pistols, Clash, Iggy (especially on 'Movement') and doubtless several others. And talking of the Clash, I'm anxiously waiting for the tape which the Drones made taking the piss out of those nice boys, which the Clash reportedly find quite funny themselves. Back to the record, there's also a joke version of 'Be My Baby' as in the Ronettes/Phil Spector, which is actually a bit obvious - much better to have their version of 'My Generation', which provoked an on-stage pogo invasion at the Marquee the other night. I'm rather hopeful for the Drones.

John Tobler

vinyl but isn't, although it should have been a double with the set from beginning to end to recapture the escalating joy which reached fever pitch by the encores.

You get seven songs - "Marcus Garvey", "Slavery Days", "Black Soul", "Lion"? "Old Marcus", "Man in the Hills", "Throw Down Your Arms". All are highlights with Aswad laying down a hypnotic rythm bedrock for Winston Rodney to soothe, croon, shout and sing his personal words. He uses his voice like an instrument a lot of the time, heightening effects. Then there's his bird whistles on "Man in the Hills", his weird chuckling weep. This album is so emotional, I can't describe its effect. It's moving, you can dance to it. Buy one and stay in. D.T.



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BY ALAN ANGER

THE HOLLYWOOD BRATS: Grown Up Wrong

Chez Maximes/ Another Schoolday/
Nightmare/ Empty Bottles/ Courtesan/
Then He Kissed Me/ Tumble With Me/
Zurich 17 (Be My Baby/ Southern Belles
Drowning Sorrows/ Sick On You

This album was made in 1973 and came out in 1975 in Scandinavia. The group was British, apart from Casino Steel (now with the Boys) who came from Norway. They were a sort of British New York Dolls and Malcolm McLaren showed an interest in them, but never signed them. Apart from singer, Matheson (who now plays football in Canada) there was E.S. Brady (guitar), Wayne Manor (bass), Louis Sparks (drums) and Casino Steel (keyboards/voc/guitar). All the songs on the album are by Matheson and Steel, except "Then he kissed me" which closes side one. In those days, a man singing lyrics like those was quite outrageous. The LP was produced by Matheson and featured only one slow song, "Drowning Sorrows", which is like the Stones doing "Love in vain". The rest of the album has fast rockers which are better than the second Dolls LP, but not as memorable as the first Dolls LP.

The best song on the album is "Sick on you" - which the Boys now play and is on their first album. It ends great with Matheson spewing the words out and being sick.

Another song that the Boys do is "Tumble with me" and the lines of "Chez Maximes" include "We don't care what you do". "Another Schoolday" is really good with lyrics such as, "Oh Mother, not another schoolday; I got to sit up straight and dress in grey; I got to survive." "Empty Bottles" is a small guitar instrumental, but the rest of the songs really rock. This LP is really rare. I had to borrow this to review it. The Dolls get a lot of (deserved) credit, but it's a pity the Brats are forgotten.



THE HOLLYWOOD BRATS

Just for this month we present our very own Blackmail Corner. Victims of their past are the coiffured, pouting pretties in the picture - none other than the Hollywood Brats, another important part of the British New Wave family tree. This group made one LP, which was released only in Scandinavia and is very rare, but we've unearthed a copy and it's reviewed here too. The Brats line up as (l-r): Casino Steel (now in the

Boys, piano); Louis Sparks (drummer, went to Canada); Wayne Manor (bass, now works on a stall in Ken Market); Brady (lead guitar, in the Tools for a short while); Andrew Matheson is in the front (vocals, became pro-footballer in Canada for a while, now rehearsing new band with Brady, which also includes John Belsen - ex-Tools - on bass, and Geir Wade, a founder member of the London SS on drums

ALBUM REVIEWS

RADIO STARS: Songs For Swinging Lovers (Chiswick WIK5)

At about this time, I reckon we all ought to be looking for the bands with the vision to transcend the sound of 1977. While punk rock has happily killed off a lot of apathetic music, it seems to be generally accepted that as a movement it has more than one foot in the grave (Charlie Chime said so, and several other even less real people have confirmed it), which must mean that in musical terms it didn't really have any great staying power. Nevertheless, punk saved a lot of people from dying of boredom, my own case perhaps being a typical example. From an early distaste, a consuming interest developed, to the point where I found myself avidly defending the movement to non-believers. After all, the situation which gave birth to punk rock is a lot more serious than some bozo with a safety pin through his eyelid - the lack of work for school leavers, who are also the innocent victims of an educational system which no longer seems to prepare anyone for anything, hasn't changed too much even

since punk focussed the attention of a somewhat larger slice of the population on the problem. Had the music been more accessible to those in influential positions, maybe the story might have been different, and a lot of energy has been expended without a significant number of non-believers being converted. It also doesn't help that practically every unsigned punk band (not to mention quite a few who are signed) completely lack any musical ability or talent, and the fact that recorded punk is no substitute for the live experience, and perhaps that's why boredom has set in so quickly.

So it seems that there will be bands who started in 1977 who will vanish, but there will also be quite a few who will distill the lessons learned from the punk explosion. They'll probably retain the energy (the most important thing about punk in musical terms), and add to it more musical expertise, some lyrical ingenuity, and in recorded terms, some production technique. In case you haven't guessed, Radio Stars are one of the bands who I

suspect will be in the vanguard of 1978 music. I don't intend to say too much about their debut album - it's good that it's finally released, but it's less than perfect perhaps due to the fact that some of the songs are a little on the thin side in terms of ideas, and I would have preferred to see some more of the already released singles included. Nevertheless it's considerably more accomplished than 95% of their peers achieved, and is rather more listenable domestically than the uninitiated might expect. Best tracks seem to be on side one, plus the idea behind the 'Buy Chiswick Records' final track. I hear that a major record company is looking to sign them, and if they do, no doubt the instantly recognisable Andy Ellison voice will be able to capture some more of Martin Gordon's generally excellent songs. If you haven't seen them live yet, don't hesitate, and buy this record anyway it's the result of a lot of self confidence from the band, and a lot of faith from Chiswick.

John Tobler

PAGE 33

this female assault. A few kids dare bring their seats nearer. "Put those fucking chairs away, you cunts!" screams Ari and teachers look at each other.

Halfway through the second number she leaps from the stage and rampages through the crowd, which parts in front of her like the Red Sea. It's like a weird game of playground tag. Ari's obviously enjoying herself and does this several more times during the set, often to the expense of her vocals. She's electrifying to watch, completely uninhibited, but if I was writing a school report I'd probably say something like "Must stop singing away from the mike".

As I said The Slits have improved enormously. Viv's guitar has gained a lot of melody and dynamics but retains that nerve-shredding metallic edge, while Tessa just gets better all the time on bass. She locks in with lethal effect with the powerhouse drumming of Palmolive, who still whacks em as hard as anybody but has stepped up her time-keeping so she now sounds like a cross between Sly and Gary Glitter's two drummers rolled into one. So with all this improvement the sound has gained a lot more bottom and strength as well as melody. There's nothing stopping 'em now.

The set is basically the same as before but revamped and with two great new numbers, "Instant Hit", which could be with its great hook, and "Femme Fatale", the sultry song from the first Velvets album given a new lease of life as the Slits' first cover version! It's still developing - on this occasion the backing vocals were a bit flat - but ...well it knocked me out cold.

By now more and more kids were daring to come and stand in front of the



stage. Reactions now initial impact had worn off varied from still disbelief through sheer innocent enjoyment (the best reaction) to playground hostility (such as the little buggers who lobbed the smoke bombs onto the stage and chucked eggs and bread - the latter which was eaten onstage by its victim Palmolive).

If nothing else that gig certainly gave the Slits the taste for live work. Now they plan to rehearse a bit more, get even better and start gigging. I'm not saying nothing about those rumours of Malcolm McLaren taking them over

like you want me to but The Slits will sign a record contract soon - it's inevitable and so necessary. One of the things I most want in 1978 is to hear vinyl kissed with a needle scream with Slits-power.

Kris Needs

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SCHOOL HALL, 5pm - 5p.

THE Slits

I babbled my feelings about The Slits for four pages in ZZ75 last July, and happily that resulted in crazed Radio One producer and Zigzag society columnist John Walters making his first venture into the depths of the Vortex to see them. He ended up pissed, got their autographs and promptly booked them for a John Peel show session, which has now been put out no less than five times and many agree is the best of the year, showing how The Slits will channel their uninhibited energy into producing some of the best records of next year when they finally get in the studios. For the radio they had to make the

songs stronger, more defined and added touches like backing vocals. These changes were subsequently worked into the live set and that's why the group hasn't been gigging recently. They've been rehearsing, getting better to the point where they could dismiss the

radio sessions as out-of-date..

Since their first gig at Harlesden in March last year I've tried to see The Slits as much as I can and always enjoy it like mad even when they have an off night, which they quite often did. I loved seeing 'em improve from gig to gig, getting stronger all the time. But the change between the last time I saw them about three months ago and the gig at the school was pretty astounding and I was so pleased I could hardly speak, even though there were fuck-ups and the group weren't altogether happy with it.

First of all what were The Slits doing playing Holland Park school on a Thursday afternoon? Well, they wanted to gig again and away from the posy London clique and this was Ari's school where a load of eleven to sixteen-year-olds could make a great audience.

In the corridor on the way to the school hall I pass a scrawled crayon poster which said "The Slits, 5pm, adm 5p". Outside the hall were a gaggle of excited kids watching The Slits set up, faces squashed up against the glass door. It was probably most of them's first ever gig - what a great way to start!

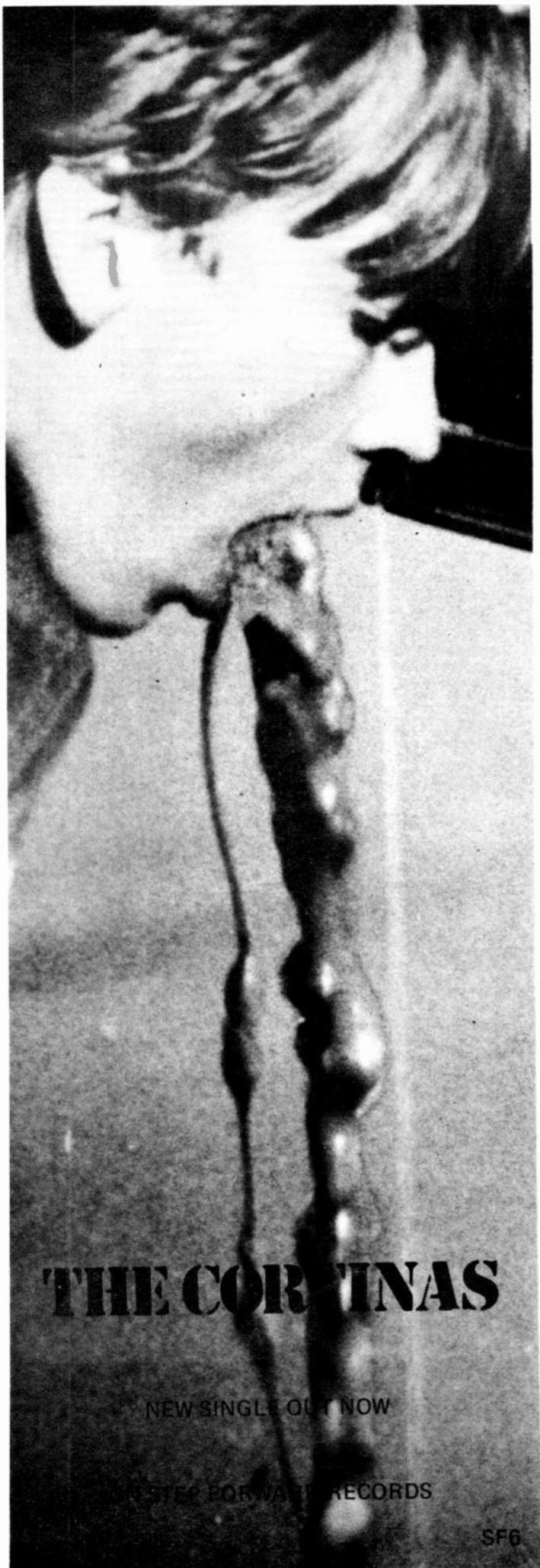
The Slits are waiting to do their soundcheck. Palmolive tests her drums with a stomping reggae beat, surrounded by a sea of ecstatic black faces. Ari talks to her school friends. Don Letts films a little boy who can't be more than eight wearing a Sex Pistols t-shirt. "I don't know what this is going to be like", says guitarist Viv looking at the empty hall. Well, it ain't every school that gets The Slits for it's Christmas knees-up!

Around 5.30 the group shuffles on for the sound check with half the audience already in the hall. "This is only a practice", says Viv and they launch into "Let's Do the Split", complete with new backing vocals. Couple more

numbers and the whole audience was in the hall. The barrier between sound check and gig got pretty thin so The Slits decided that would have to do and trooped off stage only to come back straight away and start the proper set with a driving "Vaseline". Most of the kids stood or sat at the sides and rear of the hall, some gaping with awe but some obviously pretty terrified/shocked by the four GIRLS thrashing out hard, driving music on their school stage.

There's a small crowd gathered at

the foot of the stage. Ari stamps and preens in her yellow mini and tights inches from their upturned faces. Some of the lads shout insults, probably to assert their toughness in the face of



THE CORINAS

NEW SINGLE OUT NOW

STEP FORWARD RECORDS

SF6

got tangled up in 'Midsummer Nights Dream' - incidentally I wonder if the punks will drift into respectable showbiz like the last lot of rebels - you're always finding them in plays and films and Rod Stewart presents awards while Elton pops up on Morecambe and Wise. I don't really look forward to Siouxsie doing 'Send in the clowns' for the Sunday Times' approval, but a future pop Midsummer Night's Dream isn't beyond the bounds of possibility - but is there an audience for Johnny Rotten's Puck to Elton's Bottom? ('Doubt it old chap' muses M. Black).

Anyway the Ants were making such a racket that Jordan beckoned me into the band room at the back of the stage to 'talk business'. We then found that the door had locked behind us and could only be opened from the stage. Continued banging availed us naught against the raging: New Wave beyond. Sort of 'Oh baby, we're so vacant...' bang, bang 'I'm so livid, I'm going to be sick...' thump thump 'Punk is driving me insane...' thumpity, bump 'I'm so bored I'm going to have a coronary...'.

'Cripes girl', I cried, 'don't you realise we could be the basis for the first punk disaster movie - locked in a band room, probably with limited oxygen - why we might have to eat each other!'

'Ooh ain't you the bold one', she shrieked, 'let's hurry up then, this is the last number!'

The band let us out. Actually I made some of it up to brighten this otherwise dull edition. (OY! - Ed.)

Whereas our problem seems to be the danger - or perhaps the inevitability - of 77's music gradually being sucked into the mill of the biz, the Americans seem unable to extract the essence of rock music out of the influence of showbiz (which is surely what the kids here did to make the British new wave). Whenever I see an American act which we have been led to believe is on a comparable course to our own bands, Runaways, Ramones, Blondie or the Tubes for instance, I still get the feeling that like most Stateside entertainment, it's probably backed by the Mafia with Las Vegas in mind.

'Don't touch me there' happens to be a favourite of mine but despite all that out-pistolting the Pistols publicity, a visit to the Tubes reveals an off Broadway rock show by persons of the type who 'flunked' (whatever that is) from the college where they were majoring (whatever that is) in something like dramatic exposition and creative motion (whatever those are), because, like Janis y'know, they were born to rock. There's a certain amount of simulated sex and so on but a lot of bits where dancers run about the stage in skimpy silvery creations which fit over the hips in such a way as to expose a great deal of bum in true Las Vegas showgirl tradition. Now on a recent visit to the famed Vortex, I was watching a lady named Tanya Hyde and her boys and noted that she had taken off her skirt to reveal little black knicks and big fishnet tights. I don't mean that the tights hung like plus-fours. For the last number, Tanya simply took the knicks off. (Cripes!)

Now that's what I like about the British new wave - if you're going to show us your arse, show us your arse, don't bother with the ballet. At the start of the Tubes set girls rushed around the stage twirling parasols to make patterns - don't they do that in Salad Days? I don't really expect the revolution to come but if it does it certainly won't be choreographed.

I don't think the Americans will ever accept our new wave because, to them, even outrage has to be geared to money and success. I'm told on good authority that a leading American based international rock magazine polled its contributors to find the most important band of '77. The result was the Sex Pistols which so alarmed the editor that for fear of alienating his readers, advertisers, the flag and mom's apple pie he changed the winner to, you guessed it, Fleetwood Mac. What's the matter with kids today, can't they express their revolt through something with a decent profit margin like skateboards? I'm afraid that whatever the Americans may think, Johnny Rotten bestrides the current scene like King Kong while the Tubes are merely the P.G. chimps.

One of the nicest stories I heard over Christmas was from vintage rocker Waxie Maxie who is now a grandfather. He was spending the festivities with his daughter who married what Max would describe as a hippy. Apparently the son in law insists that the assembled spend Christmas listening to albums of avant garde German stuff like Kraftwerk and Kraan. Max got his own back though. He bought them a huge mirror with a picture of Elvis on it bearing the message 'The King is Dead'.

John Walters

WALTERS

GREETS THE NEW
YEAR WITH A SMILE!

Well, here's a guid New Year to ye all and lang may your lum reek - or whatever the Rezillos say at this time of year. A benison - or whatever Derek Jewell says - on all those who have sought me out at clubs and concerts and claimed to be regular readers thus earning themselves a free drink. This year you can buy me one. Perhaps we can make it into one of those competitions like the old News Chronicle used to have round the holiday resorts - you will have to approach me carrying a current copy of Zig Zag and say, "I spy Mr. Wallaby Woo and claim the right to buy one pint of lager" - I may then gracefully accept or pretend to be someone else much to your embarrassment - tomorrow afternoon I shall be on Morecambe Central Pier. Thanks also to the letter writers. Needs tells me that one recently arrived from Tom Robinson - quite friendly fortunately. I had fears of a hit man from Gay Lib leaping out of the dark, slapping my wrist and saying, 'And that's just a warning, you cheeky bitch!'

Actually, we've had quite a lot of excitement here at Zig Zag House and even now Needs is yet again recounting to Dee File, our punk typist, his dramatic Adventures in Geordieland. Needs, apparently, was in a party of journalists transported at great expense to see The Jam perform in Newcastle. Why take journalists all the way when the group could have been seen at somewhere like the Greyhound, Croydon? Don't ask me, it's just the way the business works.

Course, it's always the same with these Wardour Street working class heroes - tell you all about the beat of the streets, keep going up to alarmed Pakistanis and saying 'Gimme some skin Jim' but never get nearer the working class than on their walk from the record company limo to the Rainbow. I could've told them, having spent several years in Tyneside climbing over piles of wounded to get into gigs but no - do the young ever listen? (Hm, hm, hm sighs irate reader M. Black of Norwich, staring into the dying embers.)

Anyway it seems that Needs and Melody Maker reporter Chris Brazier (one of those - 'surely rock's purpose is to further political consciousness and social awareness - who but a fool would deny this?' - types) approached the Newcastle ballroom only to 'find it blocked by dole queue malcontents who had been refused admission. Brazier who, besides being a bit of a lefty had also seen an episode of 'When the Boat comes in' while at his mother's, grabbed the free passes and addressed the crowd (of course I only have Needs' word for all this). 'Howay, bonnie lads,' cried Brazier ' let us up the apples and pears so that we may have a quick look at the, er, so called lap dogs of the capitalist system, the self styled Jam, who have turned their backs on their proletarian origins and betrayed their working class traditions by working for a living. Once inside, er, myself and my round faced friend here (points to Needs), will attempt to take back some of the excessive profits which, if you worked, would be wrung from the very sweat of your brows, by, er, getting totally drunk at the boss class record company's expense - and I can assure you that they can expect nothing in return but blood, sweat, tears



and a jolly favourable write-up in the next edition'.

At this the crowd became menacing and Needs, apparently, decided to take control... 'Out of the way, there's only one thing these chappies understand - form a circle Brazier - its not for nothing that I'm called the Charlie Magri of Leighton Buzzard, the Aylesbury Tiger - my hands are registered at Princes Risborough police station as deadly weapons', at this point the proles converged and Needs suffered a broken nose and slight concussion.

Mind, I've had a bit of excitement myself. I went to see Adam Ant and the Ants at a college at the invitation of Jordan - that girl with the streaked spiky hair and all the gear who's been in all the punk photos since it started - actually she's quite normal to talk to - rather like one of the cast of 'Meet the Huggets' who's

STEAMING INTO 78!!



ZIGZAG PIN-UP: NIAGARA

OF 'DESTROY ALL
MONSTERS'

PIC: ROBERT MATHEU.

PAGE 28

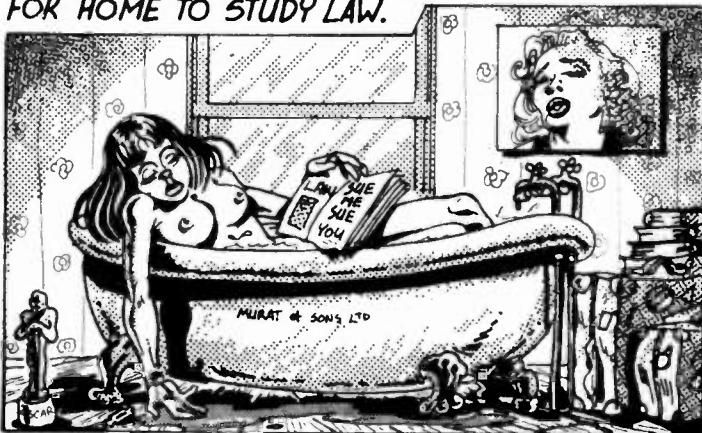
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THEIR ALBUMS REACH THE JAP CHARTS... "LIVE IN JAPAN" ALBUM RELEASED.



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A WHILE LATER, CHERRIE GETS ASKED THAT OLD QUESTION...

YOU'RE LATE AGAIN... WE'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR BIG HEADED ATTITUDE, CHERRIE... WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT, THE BAND OR YOUR FAMILY?!

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THE RUNAWAYS



WHAT NEXT?

CHRIST, I DUNNO,
WHY ASK ME?!

(VOICE OF MAN IN THE STREET)

THE RUNAWAYS ARE A TIGHT, HAPPY ROCK & ROLL BAND. WITH NO PROBLEMS PERSONNEL WISE (AS JACK LEMMON USED TO SAY)

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SUCCESS IS THEIRS FOR THE TAKING!!

GOODBYE NOW.

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CHERRIE CURRIE

TRIS NEEDS
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The Story of...

THE RUNAWAYS

QUEENS OF NOISE

Final part:

THE RUNAWAYS ARRIVE IN BRITAIN!!



THEY SPEND THE DAY DOING INTERVIEWS WITH THE NEWS MEDIA...

I MEASURE
36-25-37.
LOST MY VIRGINITY AT ER...
FOURTEEN!



MAKING THE HEADLINES, AS EXPECTED.



THE GROUP OPEN IN GLASGOW. JOCKS FLIP OUT WITH APPRECIATION...

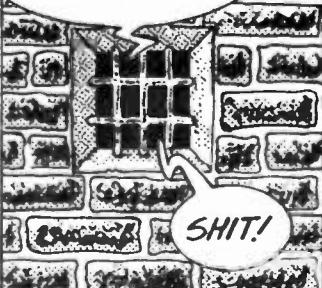


MID-WAY THRU THE TOUR JOAN, CHERRIE AND SANDY ARE ARRESTED, ACCUSED OF NICKING THE HOTEL KEYS AND HAIR-DRYERS...



THEY ARE PUT IN DOVER JAIL FOR NINETEEN LONG HOURS.

AREN'T BRITISH COPS CUTE?



WHEN FINALLY RELEASED, THEY'RE IN TIME FOR THE ROUNDHOUSE GIG - HERE THE GIRLS PERFORM THEIR SADO-MASOCHIST ACT...



TROUBLE STARTS UP AS SECOND ALBUM "QUEENS OF NOISE" IS RELEASED DURING TOUR.

I SING ON MORE TRACKS 'COS YOU CAN'T SING ROCK & ROLL... YOU'RE TOO MELODIC!





NEW HEARTS

the record and the bite that the song has live doesn't come across. They are currently looking for a top man to produce their first album. Names that have cropped up so far include Nick Lowe, Mick Ronson, Bob Ezrin and even David Bowie.

They would like to put about seventeen tracks on the album if possible. The main reason is that a lot of their songs were written at the height of the new wave and they want to get those on record as soon as possible, so they can start on new stuff. John told me that by next year they may only keep one or two songs from their current stage set. I asked the band about the song, 'F for fake', which is a song that puts down poseurs who go to shops like 'Boy' and 'Seditionaries'. They told me that they don't hate the actual kids, but they hate the shops and people that try and rule the kids' lives. They are a band who believe in individuality. I asked them how they would feel if the fans started copying them and turned up at gigs in red suits like Ian's. Ian said he would respect them more if they wore something different and kept their individualities.

You've closed the doors
On you new round scene
Musical Whores
Of the new wave elite

Don't try and tell me
That you're a kid from the street
When you get your clothes
From a punk boutique

(Lyrics from 'F for Fake'
by Ian Pain.)

I asked Ian Pain if the band were really as organised as they seemed to be.

"We've got music that we want to get across to a lot of people. We have to be organised. You can be there ready to change the world, but

if nobody's listening, then there's no point in doing it. We've got an old wave approach, but we're saying new wave things. It's silly to do it any other way".

I asked the band what differences they had found from touring with the Jam after touring with Chris Spedding.

John said, "There's no comparison, really. We feel that we've gained a few more fans from this tour. The Spedding tour was boring. The audiences were crap on that tour. We've had a good laugh with the Jam as well. We take it in turns to smash up hotels. We don't feel like a support band, either. The Jam are such good blokes."

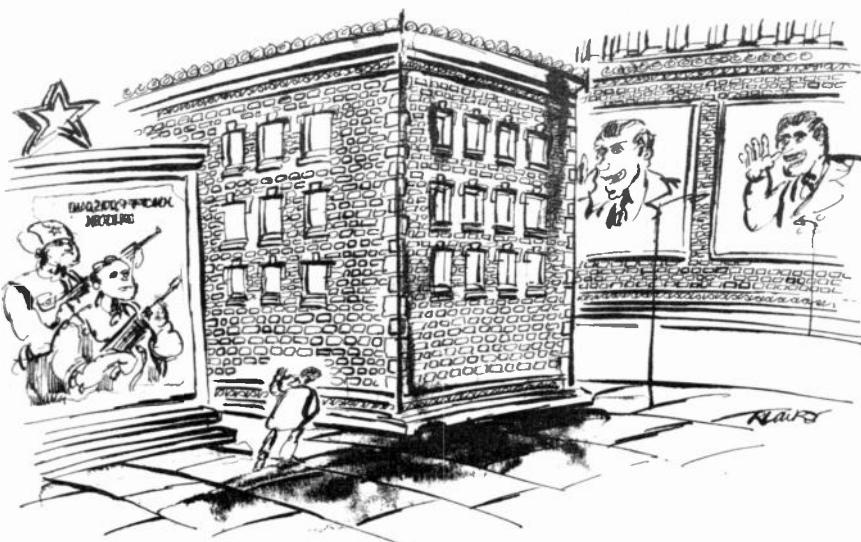
The New Hearts were banned from playing the Civic Hall, Wolverhampton when Matt hurled a bottle at someone in the audience. I asked the band if they had much bother from audiences.

Dave said, "No, we get a bit, but know how to handle it. We don't like the gobbers at some gigs, though."

One thing that did surprise me about the New Hearts was when they said they had very little trouble getting regular gigs. I suppose this must be down to their manager, Brian, who the band have nothing but praise and admiration for. The band are now with CBS and look set for an interesting future. They are, obviously not a band who are in it for a hobby. They want to be respected musicians and when a lot of the small punk bands have been buried and their members have gone back to being clerks and working in factories the New Hearts will still be there. After all Ian Pain is a lot more than just another teenage heart-throb.

Alan Anger

LOWRY



ing and kids playing: Gareth - "As far as that piece is concerned, we were playing along with a tape that Charles had made earlier that day. We were playing very quietly and the window was open because it was a very hot day. So we had actual natural sounds coming through the window and taped natural sounds from the tape recorder."

CB: "So in that specific instance there was a very definite mood set by the temperature and the climatic conditions."

During the course of this discussion of music in relation to environment Gareth illustrates a point by playing me a tape of a record by LA MONTE YOUNG. The actual record lasts for 38 minutes and is a continuous humming caused by two notes played simultaneously. They tell me that the composer of the piece lived with it as a constant soundtrack for over six months, only switching it off to listen to other music. The playing of the piece was arranged in three nine-hour cycles so that he was living a 27-hour day.

As an experiment we move to different parts of the room and discover that the noise appears to alter in pitch and tone, depending on where one stands in relation to the sound source. An aural illusion. This brief experiment prompts me to put forward the theory that sound is continuous. Charles Hayward applies the theory to one of their own numbers: "'Davy Jones' Locker (Not Waving but Drowning)' is an 'arc' if that's what you mean - that you just happen to hear a bit of something that is infinite and has been going on before and will continue to go on afterwards. It reminds me of that Gavin Bryars thing about still being able to hear the band playing on board the TITANIC'.

Charles Bullen puts it another way: "There are some things we do that are very textural - they don't go from point A to point B to point C, etc - they're all point A."

If my writing so far gives the impression that THIS HEAT specialise entirely in subtle, barely audible atmospherics then forgive me. The set that I witnessed at the London School of Economics was an unnerving display of contrasts. Complete opposites, sometimes juxtaposed, sometimes combined. At one moment they attack you with a menacing cacophonous wall of sound (a "bulldozer" as Gareth so quaintly puts it). The gaunt angular figure of Charles Bullen delivers prickly, uncomfortable solos from his guitar with surgical precision. Gareth's organ emits chords reminiscent of shattered windscrews and Hayward's drumming is solid and rhythmic but mobile enough to stop you getting content with one rhythm for too long. Suddenly it all dissolves - dischordant washes from Gareth's organ stain the soundscape - a shifting envelope of miasma!! Bullen removes his guitar and picks up clarinet. A quaint, nauseous, halting tune emerges. These "quiet interludes" often employ quite pretty melodies, but the kind of charm they exude is that sinister sense of foreboding that one associates with Victorian music boxes. I listen and watch transfixed with a morbid, unhealthy fascination. "Something evil this way comes..." Squeeze boxes suggestive of other sounds- escaping gas (the title of one of their numbers), spectral asthmatic breathing, maybe the odd

death rattle from the nursery, who knows? THIS HEAT cover the whole spectrum of madness, from stark but colourful explosions of psychotic release to the grey twilight of complete schizophrenic withdrawal. You wanna list of their songs? Titles like "Diet of Worms", "Makesshif", "Not Waving But Drowning", "Fall of Saigon" and "Escaping Gas". I asked them about the songs...

CH: "We get ideas that sustain themselves for a certain amount of time and I think that it's better to present those ideas by themselves rather than let them all emerge into a whole - to talk about the lyrics by themselves is to deny them the ambiguity that the music gives them - it's like defusing the bomb - our words are parallel with different sets of overtones."

CB: "...but they do carry verbal information which by definition makes them different from, say, the guitar part."

"...but it's not necessarily more relevant information," Hayward concludes.

As they said themselves "our music accommodates learning" rather than being object to technique. When Gareth first joined them he was unable to play any organ at all apart from "a series of morse code messages", but because Bullen and Hayward had developed some degree of musical empathy between them he was able to use his then limited knowledge and technique to limited effect and ability to good effect. They use this fact to point out how reactionary is the 'Punk' dictum of "learn three chords and form a band". In fact, THIS HEAT operate a totally anti-dictatorial policy at all times - a policy which is self-evident in their music and the political structure of the group. "It's very much all three of us - there is no one frontman", Bullen emphasises.

Their aims with the music are "to stimulate and excite themselves and other people - we want to be more efficient at what we do and for more people to hear us - we're not trying to be esoteric."

They also have ideas about the visual aspect of their performance, being especially interested in film and video - particularly the latter, due to its similarities to the tape recording process. Their set at the LSE was preceded by an African drummer called Mario, and three short films by a filmmaker friend of theirs called John Smith.

They explain that at the moment lack of expenses prohibits exploring the visual side of things, but they were pleased at the suggestion that film or video soundtracks would be a good field for them to start working in.

So that's THIS HEAT. Visions of the apocalypse. The Dawn of the New Ice Age. THIS YEAR'S BIG THING? I'm not saying what I think but I strongly advise you to check them out next time they play. They don't make for easy listening - you may like what you hear - you may not - they are, after all, not everyone's cup of para-noia. Either Way THIS HEAT certainly won't try to dictate how you feel about them. One man's meat.....

Steve Walsh

The New Hearts have been together since June 77. They came together from the ashes of a new wave band from Essex called the Splitz Kids. Dave Cairns (lead guitar) and John Harty (bass) brought with them several songs like; "City Life", "Here Come the Ordinaries" and "Angry Young Man". They teamed up with a local seventeen year old vocalist who also wrote songs and was a trained musician. His name is Ian Pain and his ideas and influences stem from Bowie/Tubes/Eno. The band finally found a drummer in Matt McIntyre, who was once a member of Jesse Hector's Gorillas.

They hate the idea of amateurish bands monopolising the pub and club circuit. They are all accomplished musicians themselves. John has been playing bass for two years, while vocalist Ian Pain can play the piano as well as guitar, though he doesn't play either on stage. The band has an average age of 18, but their ideas are quite extreme.

Here is some of the New Hearts philosophy;

THE MEDIA: is uncaring and abuses its power which effects;

ORDINARY PEOPLE AND POSEURS:

aren't aware of the power the media has on them. They're treated like morons and become morons. Poseurs kill off any scene. Punk poseurs have helped kill off that scene.

LOVE is just a word, cheapened by the media.

So, even though you may not agree with all they say, they do have their own ideas and aren't afraid to put them across. They come onstage in flash stage clothes (Ian in a red suit) which instantly shocks the young punk audiences who have just spent lots of money on new bondage trousers because its the in-thing. They are individuals, every one of the band.

Ian Pain doesn't like the idea of bands like the Jam, who just go on and play even in front of the front row gobbers. He tells the audience what he feels about them - and more often than not, its pretty sarcastic. At this moment in time, the band are not liked by many people. The press hate their attitudes and the audience hate them because they are neither punk nor pop. In fact, that is what I admire most about them. They play pop music with harmonies and melodies, but Ian Pain's lyrics are really very much to the point. In a way, its like when the sixties bands (Who/Stones) played pop music with strong lyrics (My generationetc.).

What's wrong with me, teenage and

naive

Be a cynic all the time, there's nothing to believe

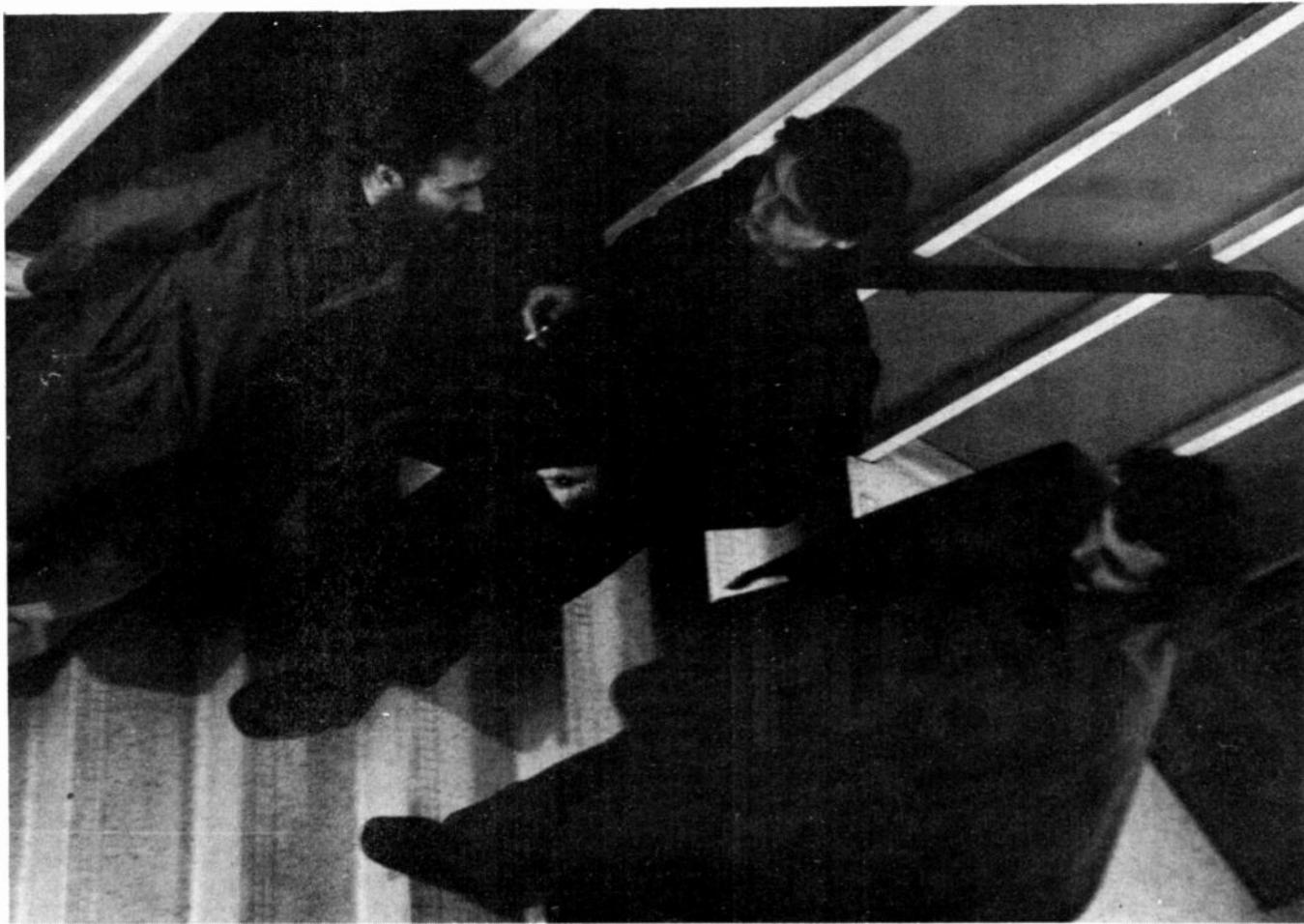
You criticise everything we say
Say you've heard it all before
We're saying it today.

Oh no, just another teenage anthem
If you wanna hear something new
Then you'll have to make your own
cliches
Cos their the only thing left for
you; Over to you.

(from Another Teenage Anthem;
lyrics by Ian Pain.)

They put out 'Teenage Anthem' as a single, because they believe it says all that they believe in. They also feel that the producer has ruined

THIS HEAT



COLD STORAGE is a spacious concrete blockhouse situated in a yard in South London. Inside, the walls are uniform grey galvanized metal. The building's previous occupants were dead pigs - bloodless, frozen hung up, impaled on meathooks. COLD STORAGE is now used by 'THIS HEAT' for rehearsal purposes - they are pleased with the atmosphere and 'acoustical response' here - stark concrete echoes. THIS HEAT are a trio who have been together for 2 years. During this time they have done 2 sessions for the John Peel Show and limited number of gigs in the London area. They are still existing, as they say, "on a shoestring basis".

As I said before - there are three of them: CHARLES BULLEN: who plays guitar, clarinet and sings, CHARLES HAYWARD, who plays drums and sings and GARETH, who plays bass and organ. They claim that THIS HEAT was formed out of: "the collective desires of its members not to be in other people's groups."

'Heat is all relative'. When they called the band THIS HEAT they weren't necessarily referring to the hot end of the temperature range. The name can denote temperature changes at any level, right down to -273° on the KELVIN scale.

I feel it to be necessary at this stage to forestall any accusations

which may be levelled at 'THIS HEAT' of either aspiring to the AVANT-GARDE slot or having any lofty intellectual pretensions. It transpires, in fact that none of them have been to university and that they are all self-trained musicians who resent being labelled full-stop.

About their music: In the interview Charles Bullen used the term 'FREE MUSIC', i.e. music that is free from rules, restrictions (self-imposed or otherwise) tradition, i.e. cliches and thereby music free from limitations. They are also about SOUND - sound as atmosphere, sound as texture, sound as environment - sound for sound's sake. In their music they combine the interference of chance factors and random elements with precisely calculated moves - constants against variables. GARETH: "There are some things we do where we are aware of things like bar-lengths, but in some parts we're much more free flowing - where I can rely on the other two to be doing something in the region of what they did at the last 3 performances. Then there's TOTAL improvisation where we keep things from each other". . .

So you're interested in accidents? "Oh accidents are wonderful things" replies Charles Bullen.

On stage they make extensive use of pre-recorded sound, and it is for this

reason that they are looking for a "creative engineer" to join them on a permanent basis. His role would be more that of a fourth member than an assistant, as Charles Bullen says "The tape-recorder is very important to us." Charles Hayward continues, "Even when we're improvising, we sometimes play to the tape-recorder - and we consider our own positions in terms of where the microphone is."

Charles Bullen: "A large part of the way we work has evolved from making sounds into a room, (i.e. an acoustical space), and the recording not being made from the individual sound sources, but from a point in the room, realising real time."

The phrase 'real time' refers to the fact that most of THIS HEAT'S recording is done on mono or stereo tape recorders, as opposed to multi-track systems, where each instrument is laid down separately - in its own time. This is not to say that they are not interested in the multi-track process - in fact both methods hold equal attractions for them.

CB: "Yeah we do use technology... in a limited form."

CH: "The fact that it's limited makes it interesting."

We go on to discuss a track on one of their many tapes - a barely audible piece with the sounds of birds sing-



all this?' That isn't humility or anything it's just I feel embarrassed to get this kind of attention when I know there are things going on which are at least as interesting and probably more. Because I have a background or a reputation I automatically start three steps up the ladder as regards attention, and it just doesn't seem fair to me. If my record is any good it will survive. If it isn't, it won't.

It's difficult to calculate exactly how long it took because it took a long time and I was two weeks in, then time off, you know. It took a long time. I think the reason this took so long was because a lot of the time I was struggling against the way I work, which has previously always produced results that interest me and surprise me. I didn't do that this time, but I still haven't formulated another way of working. I really got into a state about it, you can't believe how ill I got, thinking about this record. I couldn't sleep because I'd be thinking, 'Oh shit, I've got to do something about that track', and just lying there all night making notes about things. I thought, I've got to set a deadline, get this record out for better or worse, whatever it's like I've just got to get it out because it's just...it's like when a relationship is breaking down between two people. You can keep talking to each other, doing all this stuff to keep it together, but at some point you have to say, "Look, we gotta split". I had this thing with the

record to release it for better or worse whether I was confident with it or not. That was why I would have preferred a low-profile marketing campaign that almost said, 'Don't just buy this on trust, listen to it in case you don't like it', and the whole point of the Obscure label was to say that actually. It was to say 'These are records you might not like'. I think it's always better to come through on being heard for what it is rather than for reputation or anything like that. It's just really embarrassing, you know. I just don't know what to say to people. (I'm sorry I'm so pessimistic at the moment. I'm just going through a rather pessimistic time...you'll have an exclusively pessimistic interview... I don't lie in interviews. I keep back things that are inconvenient. My present sense of pessimism, for example, which is contingent on a whole number of personal things, so it's not strictly speaking of interest to other people. On the other hand, I can't be bothered to play games any more.)

ZZ: If this took two years that means you started it before the Bowie albums, but as it's come out after, people are gonna think you were influenced by 'em. Were you at all?

BE: Well I was to a certain extent. I had got into a way of working which was very dry in a way. It was like, over-calculated, and it wasn't fun any more, cos the things I do best, and the things I enjoy most are always things that are done in a spirit of quite light-heartedness, and even if they're fairly heavy or sombre the mood of doing them is nearly always exciting, and then the next step suggests itself. That's

when it's really exciting, when the work pulls you along, so the thing starts to assume it's own life and you just follow it and you just do what it wants. For me always the best things have arisen from that. To do that successfully you have to have a tremendous amount of energy, because there's a period early on in the work when it's just nothing, so you have to be really full of energy and self-confidence to push it through that period until it starts to assume some life of its own and then it takes off. But I've been so physically exhausted for such a long time that that energy kept giving out. I'd have to come back another day. It was all in steps. Traditionally, I'd go in and start a track and by the evening it'd be finished. So what was interesting about working with Bowie is that he wanted me to work with him specifically because he knew that was how I worked and that was how he wanted to try working. The funny thing is, when I went to work on his things, because the ultimate responsibility for the thing wasn't mine - it was his, his name goes on these things - I found it very easy to do that, and once again I had all that energy, and, coupled with the fact that he was there too, so there was a double input of energy! Any time I slacked off then he would take over, you know, and vice versa. I suddenly realised that what I really liked doing most of all was working with other people. I really do, it's the thing I enjoy most, and I don't really care what capacity I'm in. I don't care if I'm just the fucking roadie eventually, I think what other people do is more interesting.

ZZ: Are you going to do another album with him?

BE: I should think we'll do another, I'm not sure. We never talk about it.

ZZ: He just calls you up, doesn't he?

BE: That's right, we don't discuss it in advance, because it wouldn't be wise to. Who knows, in three or four months time he might have found someone else to work with who can do something else for him, and I wouldn't be offended by that, or anything like that, it's his prerogative.

ZZ: Are you gonna do gigs with him?

BE: Well, he did ask me. I gave it some serious consideration. I don't like doing gigs very much but I think there are few people I'd like to do them with, and he's one of them. I think they could be interesting, but the trouble was he was talking about a long tour, and I'm just at a period where that wouldn't be the right thing to do. I must strike again, that's the thing. I want to do something quite soon and the tour would just cover that period. It would mean I wouldn't be able to work again 'till the summer. It's a five month tour he's talking about, I mean fucking hell (laughs) that's a long time!

At this point we had to curtail because the Evening News wanted to interview Bryan for the paragraph they used in "London Scene" a few days later.

Baker and I both agreed that Eno is a good geezer who when it comes down to it just wants to get on with quietly breaking sound barriers and is pleased if you wanna come along for the ride. As we left he promised to keep in touch on those appetising future projects and you can safely bet we won't keep it to ourselves.

Danny Baker and Kris Needs

ist, far from it.

ZZ: If anything I think that's the image that's put forward of you, like with this new "Ice Cold Music of the Future" craze in Sounds and all that.

BE: I know. I didn't agree with that. I didn't think it was ice-cold (laughs). You see, it doesn't derive from that kind of, um, bluesy feel, and people are so used to that, you know, the whole tradition of the Stones, that kind of "it's all felt" kind of movement, and I don't derive from that very much but nonetheless I don't think that what results is therefore cold, it doesn't have that particular kind of warmth...

ZZ: Bowie's lumped in it too, and you've linked with Bowie after the last two albums...

BE: Yes, I'm a bit fed up of it... I'm a bit annoyed at the moment, well not annoyed, just... I'm fed up with myself a bit, that's what it is really.

ZZ: Why?

BE: Well, the way I like to live and work is... first of all I like working more than anything else. It's the one thing that gives me the biggest buzz of all, and when I'm working I'm definitely at my most happy, and it affects everything else that happens in my life. It's all contingent on whether I'm happy or not in my work. If I'm feeling happy in my work I feel very happy otherwise, I feel bright and lively and all that. Lately I haven't been feeling very happy in my work because I've had the feeling for a year or two that I'm ready to undergo a change of some kind, but it hasn't happened yet.

ZZ: A musical change?

BE: Yes... well more than that I guess really, but certainly a musical one, and probably to do with lifestyle as well. (pause) What happened was when I first left Roxy I had a very good time for a period because I was just available, you know. If someone was doing something interesting they could ring and say they were doing this, do you want to join in? I really like joining in with things you know. I'm not keen on permanently being in the role of thinking up the project, then getting it together, then organising it, all the work that goes into making a record, where you're involved in every stage from beginning to end. That way of working, which I've been doing now for a couple of years, has really drained my energy. That's why I enjoyed working on the Bowie things so much, because he was someone else with also a lot of energy and with his own movement which I could jump on to and slightly divert or follow, whichever I chose to do, so... I rather think I fancy doing some things where I keep further back from being the focal point of what's happening; where I take a much more subsidiary role. I did those concerts with Fripp a couple of years ago, which I liked very much. It was one of the last things I did which I really enjoyed a lot, and that was because what I did there was just provide a background for Fripp to work on, so I deliberately wasn't having a lead role.

ZZ: You said you haven't been very happy for a little while. Most people the week their new album is released are jumping all over the place, saying "Look, me new album's coming out!" Doesn't it make you happy that "Before and After Science" is coming out tomorrow?

BE: No, not especially. No. I'm

not sure what I feel about the record.

ZZ: Well, it's certainly got the biggest publicity push out of any of your releases...

BE: It's a great shame (laughs)... Well, it's a peculiar position where it's as if the market or the business has just caught up with me, cos that push is not voluntary, I didn't organise that, it just happened, and it's as though the market has caught up with me just at a time when I could have lived without it really.

ZZ: You could have done with it two years ago really.

BE: That's right, yes. Or not at all. I really don't care if people don't pay any attention to me.

ZZ: I suppose this Big Push was started with the Bowie thing.

BE: That's right. It's just that of all the albums I've released I have less confidence about this one than any of the others. That could be for a number of reasons, quite apart from whatever the quality of the album is, which I can't assess at the moment at all. It could be because I worked on this for such a long time that it's just not fresh for me anymore. I can't hear it as somebody who just listened to it for the first time would. All I can hear is months and months of hard work. I put it on and I think 'Oh God, I remember how long I took to do that', and so on. In fact, the only nice surprise I had recently was when I switched the radio on and Peel was playing one of the tracks, and suddenly hearing it on the radio, with all the other music each side of it, it suddenly sounded good, because it was there, out of my hands, it wasn't my record any more, it was just a piece of music, and that sounded OK. That was the only encouraging thing that happened really, lately. The other thing is, as I said, I'm at a kind of mental and physical low which I've been in for a few months, and it makes it very difficult to muster any enthusiasm about it really. All I want to do is get on and do something new now and, to be quite honest, I would happily not have anything more to do with this album, which is not to say I dismiss it, it's finished now for me, I finished it a long time ago really. It's out of the way, a finished job, and I now want to get on to the next one because I think it'll be much more interesting really. I've got two or three plans for ways of working which I think might break this barrier that I'm feeling up against at the moment. At the moment I feel like I've exhausted a series of ways of working. There's all these ways of working that for a long time paid off and produced good results and still surprise me. But now most of those have dried up, like most ways of working do after a while.

You either have a choice of just plodding on and producing more records that are substantially the same and just getting more polished, which I don't want to do, or else you have to say 'I'm going to abandon that way of working and I'm going to start experimenting with new ways'. Now if you make that kind of experiment you do it at the risk of failing, of course. The new ways might not work either. So I'm moving into a rather nerve-wracking time.

One project I have is: I'm going to record some songs with Aswad, and I'm looking forward to that. They won't

necessarily be songs, they'll be pieces that I shall do something else over the top. What I imagined was, if you had a long dub piece, like ten minutes long, and over the top of it you had very beautiful, slow kind of melodies, very long and slow. So you got this really interesting, intricate backdrop and these lovely floating things over the top, which hasn't really happened yet in reggae. It's something I can always hear when I listen to dub records but they don't do it, and I want to try that. I'm thinking of trying it in collaboration with Robert Wyatt, who is a master of those kind of melodies.

ZZ: You'll probably get all the hacks saying "there he goes, jumping on the reggae bandwagon..."

BE: I can actually anticipate what the critics are going to say before I've made a note of music!

ZZ: You should enclose a review.

BE: Yes! Good idea. I could enclose two - a good review and a bad review. Please choose! That's one project. Another one is: I'm trying to assemble a group of ten musicians, which would be the largest group I've ever worked with, and would be quite a daunting prospect. What I want to do is - it's hard to explain - I want to work on found material. For example, I was in Morocco a little while ago, and I recorded these two blind men sitting in the streets singing and they had really incredible voices, not like Western voices at all. Deghdeghdegh! (emits deep gutteral rasping noise) that kind of voice, you know, very degghh! Real nasty voices, like John Cale tries to achieve sometimes. After a while this little girl of about six came along and she started singing with them, her voice was about fifteen octaves higher. This was really a beautiful little piece, and one of the projects is to take that piece, stick it on a piece of tape, and then add instruments to it so that you actually orchestrate this piece that was never intended to have any orchestration, and to just treat it as a found melody and work from that, so you'd have a full ten-part band with these old men singing over the top, and this little girl. That's the kind of project I'm interested in at the moment, but they're not easy to organise because, apart from being costly, they're all ways of working that are not commonplace, there aren't techniques for doing that kind of work readily available.

ZZ: Polydor can hardly launch a full-scale advertising campaign on two old men singing in the street either, can they?

BE: Good. To tell you the truth, I don't like advertising campaigns, they make me very nervous, because I think all that can happen when you do that is you disappoint people. I have a built-in reluctance to listen to stuff which comes out with all this razzle-dazzle. All this does is encourage the wrong mode of listening. They're waiting for something to happen. All my favourite albums I've discovered by accident.

ZZ: How long did the new album take?

BE: I started thinking about this in August, 1975, I think. Yes... and it's been a real trial. One of the real problems about it has been: there's been so many interesting things going on, really exciting things and I think, 'Shit, what have I got to offer? What can I add to

You could say Bryan Eno was pissed off on the day the dynamic Zigzag interviewing team were supposed to be interviewing him. Quite the opposite mood to what we'd expected. I mean, that week saw the release of the long-awaited new album two years in the making and the unpredictable Eno seemingly getting the publicity and acclaim which had avoided him for some time. All eyes and ears were on Eno following his work on last year's two classic Bowie albums - "Heroes" and "Low", in which he had played a major part. So why wasn't he happy?

Well, there's a number of reasons, but basically, he doesn't like all the hype and publicity (which includes being lumped in with some "Cold Wave of New Musick"), and, what's more, he doesn't see "Before and After Science"

the new album, as the final fulfillment of the blossoming Eno we'd been led to believe.

As we walked into publicist Tony Brainsby's office Bryan was trying to convince his press people that he didn't want to be the subject of a superficial, look-kiddies-ain't-we-up-with-the-times article in the Daily Mail. Seemed to sum it all up, really.

We talked for about one and a half hours during which Bryan explained the reasons behind his current pessimism, his dissatisfaction at becoming a record company's product and, much more excitedly, got onto his future projects (which may include more work with Bowie). Not knowing his mood though it looks like we kicked off on the wrong foot!

ZZ: What makes you laugh?

BE: What makes me laugh. Let me think of what has made me laugh recently (pause). I've actually been rather sad for the last few months, so I haven't been laughing very much. Bowie makes me laugh a lot because we have a...we've developed these two kind of characters that we play, who I guess are loosely based on Peter Cooke and Dudley Moore, but a rather more extreme version of them, and he's incredibly good at it. He can really...he's the only person who can really make me cry with laughing, where I'm actually aching and begging him to stop because I can't take any more, and it's a side of him that I never expected, you know, because he doesn't come over in any way as being a humour-





and used incredibly startling methods of writing, anything from random selection out of books, musically as well, I mean, chord changes. We were quite arbitrary sometimes and the total effect astonished both of us when we sat back and listened to the finished thing.

ZZ: Do you intend to pursue this direction rather than getting back to the more lyrical...

DB: No, er yes! (laughs) We've always said, because we are both arty, we've both said we'd do a trilogy so our triptych will be completed. We will do one more at least. We do have a very solid relationship with each other. I think it also is very strong outside of the musical area, because when we're together the last thing generally we talk about is music um, as you probably well know, Eno's a wonderful conversationalist and one can sit there and laugh all night and also I'm working on Fripp's next album. He's asked me to do some work with him in America when I go over there. I don't know what yet. I'm very excited about it. I don't know what he wants me to do.

ZZ: Are you sort of using the lyrical side of your ability to do Iggy's albums, I mean, not that you write the words...

DB: Well, one must look at it this way. Jim hadn't worked for um at least 2 years, had been thru some very bad times, and needed more than a little bit of support emotionally and mentally as well as materially and I think he resolved most of his problems on the first album, and if it shows at all my influence or attributes won't be quite as recognisable in any future stuff that we're doing and we're doing another album after this. Jim is very much in charge of his own situation and he realises what he wants to write and what he wants to write about. He's becoming an excellent song writer. I think he always was an excellent song writer but he had that lapse and that peaking thing.

ZZ: Really. He was most impressive on stage.

DB: Oh he's fantastic. I've always thought he was for me, rock'n'roll, absolute rock'n'roll, uncompromising rock'n'roll.

ZZ: Did you in fact go out with him on the first tour because you were somewhat sceptical about whether he could cut it alone.

DB: No not at all. He encouraged me

to play piano with him and I thought the idea was thoroughly enticing and very tempting and I did it for the nerve of it really. I never enjoyed a tour so much, because I had no responsibilities on my shoulders at all, I mean I just had to sit there, drink a bit, have a cigarette, wink at the band, I mean ya know, and watch him.

ZZ: Right, which is something to watch.

DB: Oh yeah.

ZZ: You said a couple of years ago that you didn't really care if your LPs continued to sell or not.

DB: Yeah.

ZZ: Does that apply to Iggy as well in any way because you're very much involved.

DB: No that was personalised to my albums, of course I really want Jimmy to regain his old audience and find an even bigger, newer one because I've always considered him very important. No that applies strictly to my albums.

ZZ: Does it still apply?

DB: I still feel very much that way although now I have to go against myself because I'm so excited about the new stuff I want people to hear it so I'm rather in a quandry.. "Well I don't care". but then on the other hand I do care 'cos I think they're really good. I think they're really good albums.

ZZ: Do you look back on the stuff you've done and say, "Well that one wasn't really...ya know".

DB: Oh yes, yes I look at them all and there's not one I like, I...the only one I like is "Young Americans" because its the only likeable album, but the others, one could hardly apply the adjective likeable to any of them. Some of them I think were sketchy ideas that I didn't work on hard enough. That didn't quite cut it. Its like painting really I mean, not every painting that you do is gonna be good but you've done them and there you are. I tend to look at albums rather like that. I admit some of the ideas didn't come off, but theres some good work in there somewhere though. There's a logical sequence. I mean if it just seemed to meander on and didn't seem to make any sense to me. I can just about see the year that I wrote that album, or I can say, "Yes, that describes that environment and that year very well" I think. Which is very good, sort of what I set out to do.

ZZ: There's been a number of people involved with you all through this time and you're unlike many, many other rock stars in that you never seem to go backwards to these people with the odd exception. Mick Ronson for example. Do you ever see Mick Ronson?

DB: I haven't seen Mick Ronson for years. But to flatten your other point my rhythm section has been with me for 4 albums and 2½-3 years I think (laughs).

ZZ: But you basically discovered them. No I was thinking of people like...I mean it was rather bizarre that both Marc Bolan and Bing Crosby both of whom you worked with snuffed it recently.

DB: You really want me to...what do I say?

ZZ: I mean do you see anything sinister in that?

DB: No I don't.

ZZ: I'm glad to hear that. You did do a Bing Crosby T.V. show didn't you?

DB: Yes I did.

ZZ: Which could be very interesting to see...Do you have any plans to work with anybody else, like the Astronettes or anybody?

DB: No, there's one band that I can mention. I like them very much indeed. They're an unrecorded band in America called Devo. I've been listening to them for a long time since they sent me their tapes and I hope if I have the time at the end of this year to record them. Its sort of like 3 Enos and a couple of Edgar Froeses in one band. Most peculiar. That's very nut-shelling of what they're like.

ZZ: Right. We should ask about this new film that you are doing.

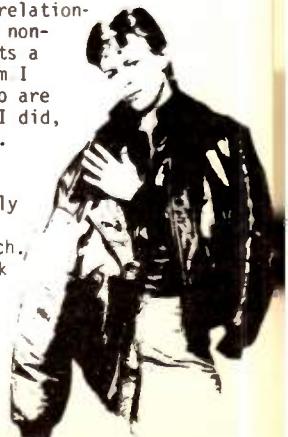
DB: Its a partial life story/biography of Egon Schieler, an expressionist painter of early 19th Century and its sort of a fairly quiet, intimate study of his relationship with his model and its a non-sensationalist film. Again its a reaction against the last film I made. Most of the things I do are reactions to the last things I did, rather than just for the sake.

ZZ: You turned down a young Goebbels film didn't you?

DB: Yes (laughs) that's fairly predictable.

ZZ: Great OK. Thanks very much. Its good to see you, come back soon.

DB: Thanks. - John Tobler



ZZ: The last couple of albums, which is really what you're here to talk about, have been, to some people, somewhat inaccessible. I think you said at some point that you were determined not to be predictable. Is that what its about?

DB: Well no. There's a predictable answer. What it really is is that I'd got tired of writing in the traditional manner that I was writing in America, and coming back to Europe I took a look at what I was writing and the environments that I was writing about and decided I had to start writing in terms of trying to find a new musical language for myself to write in. I needed somebody to help with that 'cos I was a bit lost and too subjective about it all, so I asked Bryan Eno if he would help me and that's really how the whole thing started. It was really a process of trying out new methods and new processes of writing rather than for the more obvious line of being unpredictable, and 'cos I've brought out two now of the same nature, and that's not predictable with me. I've gone against myself you see, can't even predict myself!

ZZ: I hear that um Eno was really very impressed when he first met you and Iggy, and you seemed able to hum "no pussyfooting"...

DB: (Laughs) Yeah, I know his work quite well.

ZZ: Do you in fact have a tendency to try and investigate the more 'off the wall' happenings in music?

DB: They're the ones I tend to gravitate towards. I've got a particular code of working, which is if it works its out of date so I generally apply that to every given situation, in music or on tour or whatever and especially music. I hardly ever listen to anything that's currently in vogue or popular. I tend to buy rather obscure kind of things.

ZZ: Such as?

DB: Well, let's see, the last things really that I bought were Steve Reich and Philip Glass things which I've been listening to for quite some time, but, again when it comes to music my influences tend to come more from observation of the environment that I'm in, which is fairly obvious when you look at the albums and where they were made, they tend to very much mirror where I was, you can tell more or less which street in the city I was in. 'Young Americans' you know is Philadelphia and 'Diamond Dogs' is definitely

L.A. and New York.

ZZ: Its funny you should talk about 'Diamond Dogs' cos you also said you made that as a plastic soul album which you...

DB: No 'Young Americans'.

ZZ: Yeah, sorry Young Americans, that it was just a joke record.

DB: No it was not a joke record. It was seriously a plastic soul album. It was definitely me, portraying as a white Englishman, my view of American Black Music, somebody who watches more from outside than actually getting involved with it inside.

ZZ: Do you in fact prefer the current disco type sound to the soul music of



the 60s which I'm sure you are more familiar with.

DB: Er no, I'm not a big fan of disco at all. I loathe it. I really get so embarrassed that my records do so well in discos, I've had two enormous disco hits now, can't hold my head up when I go into arty clubs, yes of course I was a big fan of the soul sound of the 60s. That was part of a somewhat sketchy musical education that I had, a quite diversified one as well to boot.

ZZ: Indeed. I gather you're embarking on a tour very soon.

DB: Next year I'm planning to do a world tour, yes.

ZZ: Who are you gonna use backing

you?

DB: That's very difficult to say at the moment. One would like to work with Eno and Fripp on stage but of course to get Bryan out of his apartment takes about a week so to get him on the road is an impossibility, but I think he'll do selected cities with me. If he's never been there before he'll probably come and play. He tends to work in that fashion.

Fripp is a bit more easy to accommodate I mean, he can go on the road and it's no great pain, but I don't know whether he'd want to do a very long tour. He seems to be about a 4-week man. (laughs) Neither of them are crazy about touring, so I'm gonna have to look for other guys as well.

ZZ: Mmmmm. Were you a great fan of either King Crimson or Roxy Music?

DB: Roxy I liked their first album very much indeed. I thought that was very exciting. The whole concept was very new and lovely juxtapositions that I hadn't heard before. King Crimson. I was always, funny enough Fripp was one of the only virtuosos that I liked, I'm not a big fan of virtuosity, but Fripp always appealed to me, his playing.

ZZ: It was said when you were doing "Low" that your poetic muse at one time had deserted you momentarily, and that was why many of the songs were short lyrically, as opposed to the somewhat lengthier stuff you had done before. Is that still...

DB: I guess there was some truth in that, I mean it can be applied to what I said earlier that it was strictly a question of experimentation and discovery. I had no statement to make on "Low". It was low in profile in its own way and it was a very indulgent album for me to find out what I wanted to do musically. The strange thing that came out of Low is that in my meanderings in new processes and new methods of writing, when Eno and I listened back to it we realised we had created new information without even realising it and that by not trying to write about anything we had written more about something or other that one couldn't quite put one one's finger on than we could have had we actually gone out and said, 'let's do a concept album'. It was quite remarkable so we thought, great fine, let's do that again, it's quite exciting, so we did that with "Heroes". We used an immense amount of imagery and juxtaposed one against the other

secret secret never
seen secret secret
ever green secret sec
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12 MINUTES WITH
DAVID BOWIE



gabba gabba hey?

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Incidentally, if you're still wondering about "gabba gabba hey"*, check out 'Pinhead' from the album "The Ramones Leave Home".

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Look out for the Beat Boom. Well, why not? If the Sex Pistols are the Stones of today and the Jam are the Who, then why not have a band to replace the Beatles? The band would need to write nice harmonies into good pop songs as well as rock on stage. Well, Steve, Nick, Bo and Dave do just that. The Pleasers have arrived!

These four moptops have been together since last Christmas. The main songwriters; Bo Benham and Steve McNerney, have been trying to get the right band together for the past two years. Now they feel the blend is right and have been packing 'em in at small colleges and pubs recently. They also have an excellent three track EP out on Arista.

I went down to meet the two songwriters in a pub in Covent Garden and here are the results:

ZZ: How come the band took so long to get going?
Steve McNerney: We've taken so long because it's been really difficult to find the right people for the band. When we first started we were immediately labelled as a revivalist band. Now we've slung out all the non-originals, except two (Money and Think It Over). With the whole New Wave thing taking it back to around '66, we've gone back a little further and are only just being accepted for what we do.

ZZ: Were you in any bands before the Pleasers?

Bo Benham: Yeah, we had a band called 'The Leaves' and we did slightly softer material compared to what we are doing at the moment. We did a couple of gigs. One was at Wembley High School and the other was somewhere in Stanford LeHope. That was two completely different bands from this one.

Steve: It was a joke. We used to play 'stuff' like 'Long Train Running' and 'I Shot The Sheriff'. Anything to get gigs at the time.

Bo: It was pretty good stuff, some of it. We finally got rid of the rest of the band, though.

Steve: Yeah, we killed them off. MURDERED THEM. We invented Snuff Rock. No, seriously, one of our bass players fell off a roof of a cinema where we were playing.

ZZ: You played a gig on a roof of a cinema?

Bo: Yeah, it was just for fun, but it ended quite tragic. I admit we weren't too good in those days, but we've come on immensely since last Christmas. We got caught up in this record company called 'Solid Gold' and then we found another guitarist and Dave, who's still our drummer.

ZZ: How did you find Dave?

Steve: Well, Dave was playing in the Red Cow with the Rockets and they started to get into the punk thing. Dave didn't like it, so he left to join our band.

Bo: We only found Mick a few months ago. He'd seen us at Guildford University, beforehand.

ZZ: You're obviously compared to the Beatles all the time, did you ever play anybody else's songs from the sixties?

Bo: We used to do quite a few of the Searchers' songs. We also did 'Do you love me' by the Tremeloes. But all that became old hat. We would get loads of encores in pubs and then go home thinking that we only got such a good reception because of the old



MEET THE PLEASERS

songs that we did.

Steve: Now we get encores for playing our own material and that makes us contemporary. The two non-originals we do were not written by the Beatles, either. They're two classics that we like to play. We sometimes throw in 'Slow Down' for an encore as well.

ZZ: The Jam have always hated comparisons between them and the Who. What do you feel about comparisons?

Steve: Yeah, you do get tired of it all. Anything that you get too much of you get pissed off with in the end. To be honest, the Jam don't get it half as much as us. The Beatles were THE BAND and you find people enjoying your music for the wrong reasons. That's why we chucked out all the sixties stuff from our set.

ZZ: You write songs in a sixties style. Is that done on purpose?

Steve: No, we don't sit down to do it like that at all. Anyway, what is a sixties style? The only thing that makes us like a sixties band is our three part harmonies and our lyrics. We don't sing about being on the dole or being down in a sewer, so we get labelled a sixties band. I don't think what we play is dated at all. It's got more energy than any of the sixties bands and as much as any punk band. Whether people like to admit it or not; the sixties bands never had any balls on stage.

ZZ: So what kind of audience are you trying to appeal to?

Bo: Anyone, Mums, Dads, kids...

Steve: We get some punks at our gigs now and they pogo to our music, which is really great.

ZZ: Do you think there will be a big beat boom?

Bo: Yeah, and we'll be there at the top of the tree.

Steve: It won't be so much a beat boom. There's room for both the Pistols and us, just as there was for the Stones and Beatles. It's just that people like to label everything nowadays. I read an old review from the Who biography which said, "The Who have arrived playing New Wave R & B". That review must be about fourteen years old, so where's the new wave? What's so new about it?

ZZ: What do you think of the Beatles today?

Bo: I'd buy anything by John Lennon but only because it's interesting to see what he's into today.

Steve: There's too much to read into it all today. You have to know everyone's lifestyle before you listen to their songs. That's what annoys me about some of the new wave bands. The Jam sing about being off the street and they've never had to live off the street. We used to get a lot of stick over our lyrics. People say we write all lovey-dovey, but I think you should enjoy music and not have to sit back and analyse it and get all depressed about it.

ZZ: Would you say you were more a singles band than album band?

Bo: We always try to write hit songs. Steve: You see, that's all changed now as well. Groups like the Pistols sell both singles and albums and that must be a good thing. The Jam album is full of three minute songs. We're that kind of band.

ZZ: The Pleasers seem to be liked by a lot of other musicians at the moment.

Steve: Yeah, that amazes me. The Boys class us as their fave band at the moment. Glen Matlock likes us. Ray Davies wanted us for his Christmas show. I think it's because we can compromise. We can cover such a wide range without selling out or changing our style. We can play raunchy live gigs as well as making commercial records, without having to be obscene or anything like that.

ZZ: Have you played many gigs outside London?

Bo: We've played a couple in Southampton and Weymouth. We've yet to play up North. We were supposed to play in Middlesbrough, but we had trouble with our throats.

Steve: Yeah, you see we sing higher than most bands, when we do our harmonies and it affects our voices. At the moment we can only drink beer - no spirits - and we've had to pack up smoking. We don't play more than four gigs on the trot, either. Mind you, I don't see why bands play six nights in a row, anyway. After two nights running, it becomes like a job and you lose interest. We change our set pretty regularly.

ZZ: Are you looking forward to playing in Liverpool?

Bo: No, we're really dreading it. I hope we don't get bottles thrown at us.

Steve: If we come out of the new Cavern alive, then we'll be prepared to play anywhere.

Alan Anger

THE PLEASERS ARE (IN PIC):-
(l-r):-STEVE McNERNEY, NICK POWELL, BO BENHAM, DAVE ROTCHELL



announcing their shows are incredibly eye-grabbing. The band itself, as you can tell from the pictures, tries hard to get across a dynamic visual image on stage and off. In fact, for the setting of this interview Crime chose one of their favourite hangouts, a gymnasium sized pool hall which caters to serious pool players (the pros), and where I'm told thousands of dollars change hands nightly. The patrons didn't appear to mind the presence of four young men wearing black police uniforms - the street gear Crime feels "comfortable in".

"See, we got our own trend", explains Frankie. "Most of the bands, they all look the same. We don't want to be like them."

Johnny adds, "Or they're ripping off the British in their look. We were trying to get bands together when the English punks were, too. We were just here and they were there. But we don't - we set trends rather than follow them."

The time has come to ask the inevitable question. By being so flash in your packaging and appearance, don't you risk being called posers?

Johnny: "See, that word means something different to us."

Frankie: "It means something different to everybody. I think everybody poses whether they realize it or not."

Johnny: "It's like when we played the Whiskey (in Los Angeles) and everybody was doing the strangulation and the, uh..."

Hank and Morris: "The pogo."

Johnny: "Yeah, and we told them to do the poseur. We told them just stand there and get your best pose, and that's it. Everybody does it, right, at some time or another. And it's nothing to be ashamed of. We aren't consciously posing all the

time, but we do pose occasionally, sure."

We agree that in Britain the word 'poser' has more to do with jumping on the punk bandwagon than seeking to express original visual images, as seems the case with Crime. (Also, in terms of credentials, Frankie and Johnny say they've "been into this music for a long time.") Still, the distinction could easily get lost between San Francisco and London, as it has between San Francisco and New York...

"All they have to do is listen", insists Hand, the newest member of Crime. "Because no matter what we do or what we look like or what we say, they'll just hear the music and it'll be obvious. The material always comes through."

"I think it all comes down to the fact that we live what we do", says Johnny. "It's not a hobby with us. We live rock and roll and we live Crime. We eat, breathe and sleep it. And it comes out in the posters and our packaging and our music."

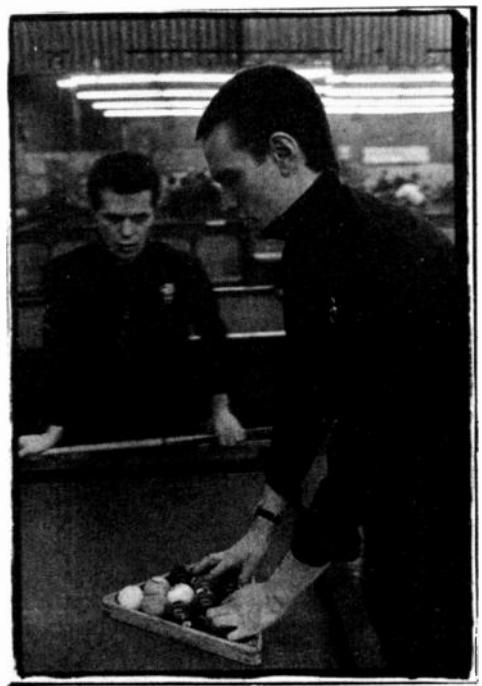
At the risk of being unfashionable, Frankie Fix expresses Crime's economical viewpoint. "You were talking about people posing, and stuff like that. Something else we find is that most bands and most people who go 'we're punks', they're really against any band having any money, or driving a nice car, or having nice clothes and stuff, which to us is real dumb. It's not that we want all the money in the world, it's just that we're really into nice things. People who try to put that down, I think it's phoney...like, in the hippie days everybody didn't want anybody to have any money - you were all supposed to go around in ripped clothes and wear long hair and just live on the street and be a slob. That's real tired. We're modern people."

"Yeah, we're not anti-hippie just to go overboard the other way," injects Hank, "or because we want to spend flashy money. It's just that nice things are better than not nice things. They're stupid if they think otherwise."

Well, now that they have estranged the doctrine-preaching faction of punkdom, does the band which has been called the Bay Area's Number One Problem (mostly by other local bands) have any message it wishes to direct to British rock and roll fans? Of course they do.

"When we come over, can we sleep on somebody's floor?"

Teri Morris



CRIME

When I'm hangin' around
I got a gun - Yeah I'm dumb
I shoot it just for fun

'Cause I stupid (anyway)

We're dropouts from high school
We rock'n'roll
And shoot pool

And we're stupid - Stupid all the way

We are the modern boys
We're the ones with the stupid noise
Devils laughin' at the UK
I stupid (anyway)

"I Stupid (Anyway)"
© 1977 Frankie Fix

Though they consider themselves the "other wave", Crime is probably the most underheard and over talked about new wave band in America. To be sure, in Britain they're even more of a mystery. There's a chance that their two independently made 45s - "Hot Wire My Heart" b/w "Baby You're So Repulsive" (released in December 1976) and "Murder By Guitar" b/w "Frustration" (August 1977) - will be released in Britain by Rough Trade, with a third to follow. Right now, though they're both "obscure and real hard

to get", which Johnny Strike blames on California's outdated musical tastes. The truth is, Crime's music/attitude/presentation methods are enough to challenge anybody's notions of radical 1980s rock and roll.

Frankie Fix (guitar, vocals, songs): "Most bands around here are rock bands. We play rock and roll, and there's a difference."

Johnny Strike (guitar, vocals, songs): "It's like the progressive thing - like progressive rock, which we're totally against. We'll get better, but we'll never lose the rawness. We'll just come up with different songs and different ideas."

Ron the Ripper (bass): "They're too hung up on progressive rock, all these bands. We work on simplicity, and that gives us more ideas to work in the overall sound and style of this band. It's that simple."

Hank Rank (drums): "If you listen to the progression of the material, there's definite stylistic changes. We can't say we're gonna add a pipe organ next week, or a change like that, but the changes have occurred and will continue."

As notorious as their live set is, until recently Crime has averaged only one performance a month at San Francisco's Mabuhay Gardens, where the audience regularly defies

California's laid back reputation by pogging away their punk fantasies to 30 minutes of Crime's brutally fast and noisy rock and roll. "We tried playing other clubs", says Johnny, "but we were too loud for them."

Loud is only half of it: Crime's records are two of the most daringly uncommercial I've ever heard, and in concert they seem even more frantic and less melodic, though technically tight as hell. Johnny and Frankie terrorize their guitars - there's no other way to describe it. The first time you seem them you may come away wondering if they played the same song over and over, but completely convinced that the sameness of the songs has a lot to do with the lasting impact of seeing Crime live. (Don't think their defiantly anti-musical stance hasn't helped them win over San Francisco: the backlash against mellow rock was bound to occur sooner or later.)

If Crime's approach to music sends the hippies running for the door, it's their highly developed expressions of style that separate them from new wave rockers on both sides of the Atlantic. First off, the packaging of their singles and the posters pasted all over San Francisco



FRANKIE FIX AND JOHNNY STRIKE · (REFLECTED:) RON THE RIPPER, HANK RANK

a Rabbit Gets to a Diamond', and several unrecorded tunes."

Who's on 'Bat Chain Puller'?

"Denny Walley on slide guitar, who was with me last time, then we have.. if that guy (pointing to Harry Duncan who's sitting opposite) would quit thinking about me over there, he's had too much to think, he's just so focussed on me it's incredible."

"Denny and who else?" asks Harry, looking a bit uncomfortable!

"There now he's changed, he broke away...Denny on slide guitar, Jeff Morris Tapir on slide and electric guitar...you're not in a hurry to hear these are you cos of all those things that are coming through (points to his head), I'd hate to say something and have it cut up like before you get to say it (to Harry), you go ahead and say it cos you're on my case man..."

Harry: "John Thomas on keyboards..."

He was with Mallard, wasn't he?

Don: "What? ACK QUACK QUACK QUACK! Mallard is no longer there. Bill came over in Lancaster - I live in a trailer out in the desert - came over and told me that he was quitting Mallard, and he apologised for all this (badmouthing that went down)...and uh, Thomas quit Mallard too. We're going to do some of the songs we've done which you haven't heard yet, then we're going to add with the new group other things. Then we'll probably have to do the whole album over again cos this group's so good, it really is a group."

Harry: "Drumbo (John French, who quit the Magic Band for religious reasons) is on drums on 'Bat Chain Puller'" (Harry is particularly anxious that the 'BCP' situation is made clear).

Don: "...But this guy (Wait For Me Williams) that I have now, he picked the stuff up off the record! Can you believe that in some of the mixes those monsters pulled on me? Like f'rinstance 'Strictly Personal', alka seltzer fizz, they put electric...but he picked it up off the record man! I mean by the time he joined the band it was his thirteenth show in France. Oh, it's ridiculous!"

"Sunnyland Slim was on the tour, which originated in Buffalo, New York. Great blues...one of the starters of everything, 70 years old, fantastic though, he acts like he's 15 years old...best I've heard. We're going to bring him over here when we come. He put Muddy Waters to Chess..."

Are you still painting?

"All the time. I'm doing an exhibition (produces advert). I knew you'd ask me that, I didn't know you'd ask that but I brought it along in case you asked me that."

Do you do a lot of exhibitions?

"Yeah, I exhibit myself all the time!"

Are you writing many songs at the moment?

"Yeah! Written about 40 since I left Los Angeles at the end of October. I'm happier now than I've ever been since I had this group. I can go into way more dimensions than I ever could before."

"I want to make people happy, get smiles on the faces of the people in the audience. Break up all of that catatonic state that you get in - supposed to listen to music! None of these people use poison while they're playing. Perfect, that is to say they are imperfect, but they're perfect."

Don pulls a big drawing book out of the brown bag which never leaves his



side, and shows us Count Basie's autograph and a lot of drawings, which he explains are songs, which the group can play from "but I write it on tape". He then draws a little message for Zig Zag readers. "You know what it's saying? Black people are being thrown out of England. That's Big Ben...Big Ben there too long (oooh!)." Don's the bloke who once said that everyone was coloured - "because if they weren't you wouldn't be able to see them".

After the afore-mentioned vocal demonstration Erica jokingly refers to Don as a punk, which leads to a discussion on that subject. "It's very honest", said Don, "Isn't it more honest than when the Beatles sang 'I wanna hold you by your hand'? Who held their hand?"

He said an interviewer the night before introduced him to John Rotten over the phone cos he was a Beefheart fan, but Don had never heard of him!

"Hey, can I turn this thing off?" he says, pointing to my tape recorder. We go up to Don's hotel room to hear 'Bat Chain Puller' after taking more photographs.

We hear five tracks, each one totally different from each other and what

he's done before, although there are familiar elements of Beefheart, like the brain-twisting words and THAT voice, which has discovered a spine-tingling new pitch on one track. Throughout Don points out particularly good guitar bits or lines and explains lyrics. He's very proud of the album and justifiably so. It's just a shame that it's been recorded about a year and still ain't been released. It seems to incorporate all the best elements of Beefhearts into quite an accessible whole, specially on the irresistible title track, which builds and builds.

So there we are. Beefheart is back, stronger than ever before it seems. With the record coming out quite soon and the promise of some British gigs this could be his year. I hope so cos he deserves it. Beefheart's got the power and originality to far outstrip any current fashion trends, anyway didn't he coin the much-used phrase "Old Fart" on 'Trout Mask Replica'?

Don?

"This group is it, the final glide pattern!" Hold on to your heads!

Kris Needs



Van Viet 116

A MESSAGE TO ZIGZAG READERS....

fact that I was up north painting and writing a book and Mercury just put it out. And they had taken off Winged Eel Fingerling on guitar and changed the drums to the way they wanted it. They took off a whole track of Winged Eel Fingerling on a track called "Party of Special Things", just took it off and didn't even tell me. How ridiculous that is. What could I do, go up to the cement tower and say 'Listen little lawyer, STOP! But they wouldn't do it. I haven't had a royalty statement on

either of those two albums. Nothing. After I got rid of Virgin they should have sent it to me, they knew where I was."

Again on those two albums:

"Against my wishes they recorded that pick-up group I had with me that played when that other group went over the hill, when they fulfilled the engagements I already signed for, and they had signed for."

What numbers does the new band do?
"It's like a greatest hits. We do

everything from 'Abba Zaba' to some of the stuff from 'Trout Mask Replica' like 'Moonlight on Vermont', 'Big Joan' and 'China Pig', and 'Click Clack' from 'Spotlight Kid' and 'Nowadays a Woman's Got to Hit a Man' and 'Sun Zoom Spark' from 'Clear Spot', 'On Tomorrow' from 'Strictly Personal', 'Big Eyed Beans From Venus', and then we do material from 'Bat Chain Puller' such as 'Bat Chain Puller' and 'Floppy Boot Song'. 'Ode t' Alex', a medieval sounding instrumental... 'A Carrot is as Close as

the right band, right management and hopefully the right record company... and Don Van Vliet on top form and as excited as he's ever been.

I went along to the hotel with Erica Echenberg, who was gonna take some pictures, with the intention of interviewing Don - it was the first time I'd had the chance and was pretty excited cos there was lots I wanted to ask. 'Course I should have known better cos doing a straight interview with Don is about as easy as a non-swimmer doing Cape Horn in a rubber ring, and much less fun than Beefheart's own course, which is basically answering a question but letting whatever comes through to him at the time come out - observations, jokes, stories, and he likes showing you his possessions, like his new gloves or drawing books. Anyway we all got on great and I came away with five pieces of autographed Beefheart paraphernalia (how uncool!)

First person we encountered at the hotel was Beefheart's new manager Harry Duncan, who also plays harp and sings 'The Blimp' with the new band. He went up to fetch the Captain. Minutes later the lift bell went, doors opened and out stepped this familiar-looking figure clad in casual work clothes and boasting a bushy walrus moustache. He shuffled over and suggested we go and sit in the tea lounge. We sit down and immediately Captain Beefheart is away...

"They're releasing 'Strictly Personal' and 'Safe As Milk' again. I've never received a penny from any of my albums. Never... free music! Just touring makes me money."

Don adds that a record deal is being fixed up at the moment after he left Virgin in not-so-friendly circumstances. He's got a long history of record company hassles, which have either been reflected in the way his records eventually emerge after meddling by other people or just shitty deals. More later.

Erica asks if she can photograph Don while he talks...

"Oh I should have told you, I'm just a piece of meat", he adds, "I run six miles a night. Have done for a long time. Have to, in order to keep gravity away. Got to. It's been difficult to find a running place here, but I have a trampoline kind of thing which you can jog on, but it's a lot better for you because it doesn't jerk your brain or your back. It's dangerous to run on the ground or cement."

Don produces a book written by a friend of his - a Dr Langerwenner, "my biographer, he dedicated a lot of it to me. He's a political scientist at MIT, and we're trying to do something to stop this automation, so dangerous."

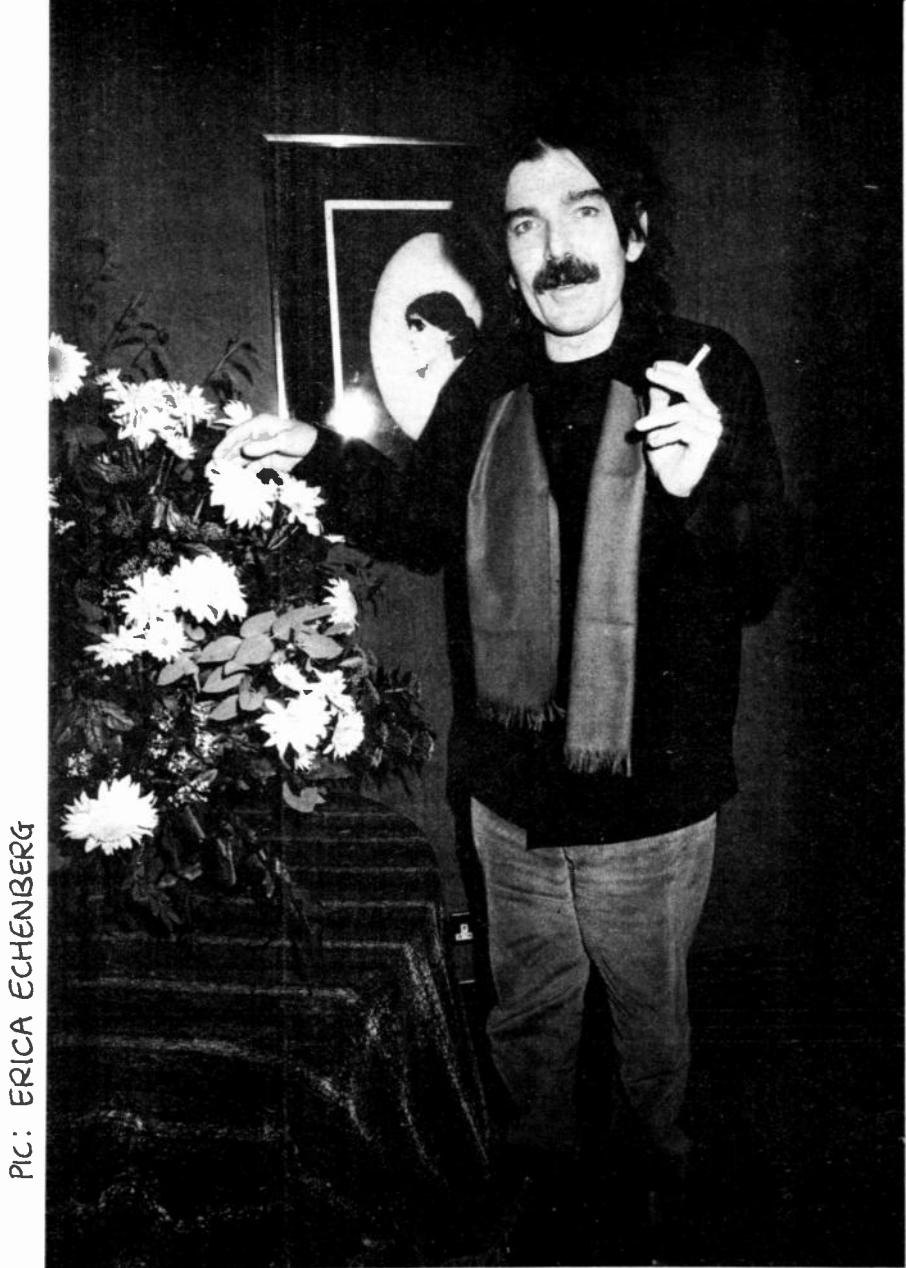
What have you done?

"Project Jonah. One time I came over here and talked about Wales. Ever since I was born I've been talking about stopping killing of animals. First me alone, you know, 'get back, get back', now they've done it to almost every animal. Not very many animals left."

Don wanted me to print the title of the book, I wrote it down but have lost the bit of paper. I'll try and find it!

He brings out a pair of knitted gloves made for him by a woman in Newfoundland and proudly passes them around. All the fingers are the same length!

I asked Don what he'd been doing



PIC: ERICA ECHENBERG

THE CAPTAIN

since his last visit over two years ago.

"Well, I have a new band that's fantastic. The best band I've ever had. The nicest people I've ever met. I'm real happy now, I mean REAL happy. I played Paris and the people were dancing and everything to this far out music. It's amazing, people dancing to avant garde music, or whatever they call it now."

Who's in the band?

"There's Jeff Morris Tapir on guitar, regular guitar, sometimes bass, Denny Walley on slide guitar and regular guitar, sometimes accordion and sometimes bass, Eric Black Jewel Kittaboo Feldman is on keyboard and synthesiser, and then there's Robert Wait For Me Williams on percussion. He's fantastic. Have you ever seen Ed Marimba, Art Tripp?"

Yeah, at the Albert Hall in '72.

"You saw that? Well, this guy is 21, and he sure doesn't lose. He'll win but he'll lose, there is no win or lose, but he won. I tell you, to me this guy is the freest percussionist I've ever met. He used to watch Artie, he was an appreciator of the music that we'd been doing. He saw Artie and obviously enjoyed the fact that Artie

was ambidextrous, but he's ambidextrous too. I mean, he's very, very, very good.

What sort of music are you doing?

"Uh, I expect you've probably heard that album that's been floating around on tape; you know, 'Bat Chain Puller'. (No I haven't!) Oh, we'll play it for you, you're the first person who hasn't heard it. Somehow Virgin Records, a name I don't like at all because it's against womankind, it's such a pretentious name..."

"I don't agree with that", says Erica

"You don't?" replies the Captain, growing visibly rankled at the mention of his former record company, "Well, I'll tell you what. They took my baby, my tape that we sent them to hear, they took my baby and spread it all over - it's strewn halfway between here and probably Tibet. There's no way they should be doing what they're doing."

Have you said anything about it?

"Just now I don't care to see 'em. I'll see 'em in court."

Do you still hate those two albums you did for Virgin? ('Unconditionally Guaranteed' and 'Blue Jeans and Moon Beams')

"It might have been good but for the

THE RETURN OF...



ERICA ECHENBERG

THE ZIGZAG WANDERER

HAAAARRRM!!! Captain Beefheart's amazing throat lets out a ferociously powerful blues-roar, which in the "relaxed atmosphere" of the Montcalm hotel bar has a resounding effect on the surrounding clientele. Be-suited business-men glance frowning out of their hushed conversations, fur-coated blue rinsed biddies tut at their neighbours and elderly gents choke in their drinks. "Look at that little bit of freedom", chuckles the Captain.

Beefheart's suddenly unleashed noise was one way of releasing the pent-up happiness and joy he is revelling in since his new Magic Band played a storming gig in front of several thousand ecstatic froggies in Paris a couple of days before. He just can't stop

enthusing about the band, can't sleep because he's so excited, and wanted to communicate his pleasure with Zigzag on a one-day stop in this country before flying back to the States for more gigs.

Don Van Vliet has been one of my heroes since I first heard John Peel play 'Electricity' over ten years ago (before it was trendy to have no heroes). And he was the very first Zigzag hero too - the song 'Zig Zag Wanderer' from 'Safe As Milk' gave the mag its name. See, Beefheart is tailor-made for hero/cult or legend status because he ISN'T like the normal bloke on the Street, isn't like anybody. He's unique carving a name for himself by being totally uncompromising (except for one

bleak period of his career) and original. He's called eccentric, a genius and both, whatever, he's got an amazing gift to make the bizarre work and sound compulsive rather than boring or self-indulgent. He's also got that amazing voice, 4½ octaves of raw throat-power which can literally tackle anything. He's just the sort of bloke music needs to inject humour, creativity and unpredictability into its everyday routine. And like other innovators Beefheart's been badly ripped-off, taken advantage of and deprived of his rightful acclaim outside the restricting cult status over the years.

I know it's been said before but this time the ingredients seem OK -

... talk about poon tang

PLAY IT BY EAR



Get Ready For The
Get Ready •
Magicooooeee •
Cincinnati Fatback •
Sweet Mama Kundalini •
Mind Breeding •
Walking In The Heat •
All Aboard •
Water •
Love And The Single Girl •
Sock It To My Pocket •
(If You Don't Like
Smelling It You'd
Better) Stop Selling It •
Change •

ROOGALATOR

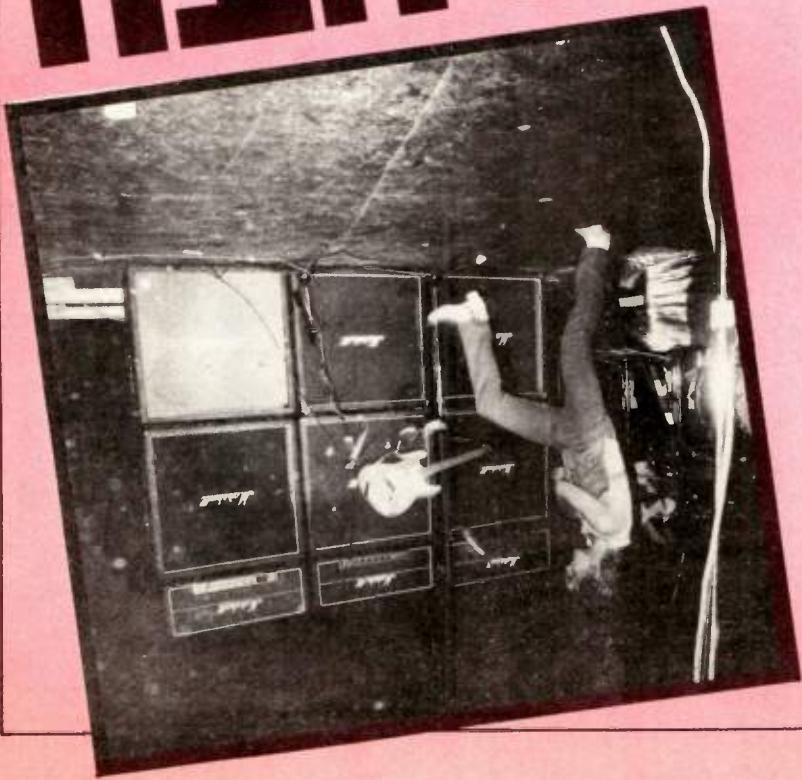
right down to your ying yang

DC IT

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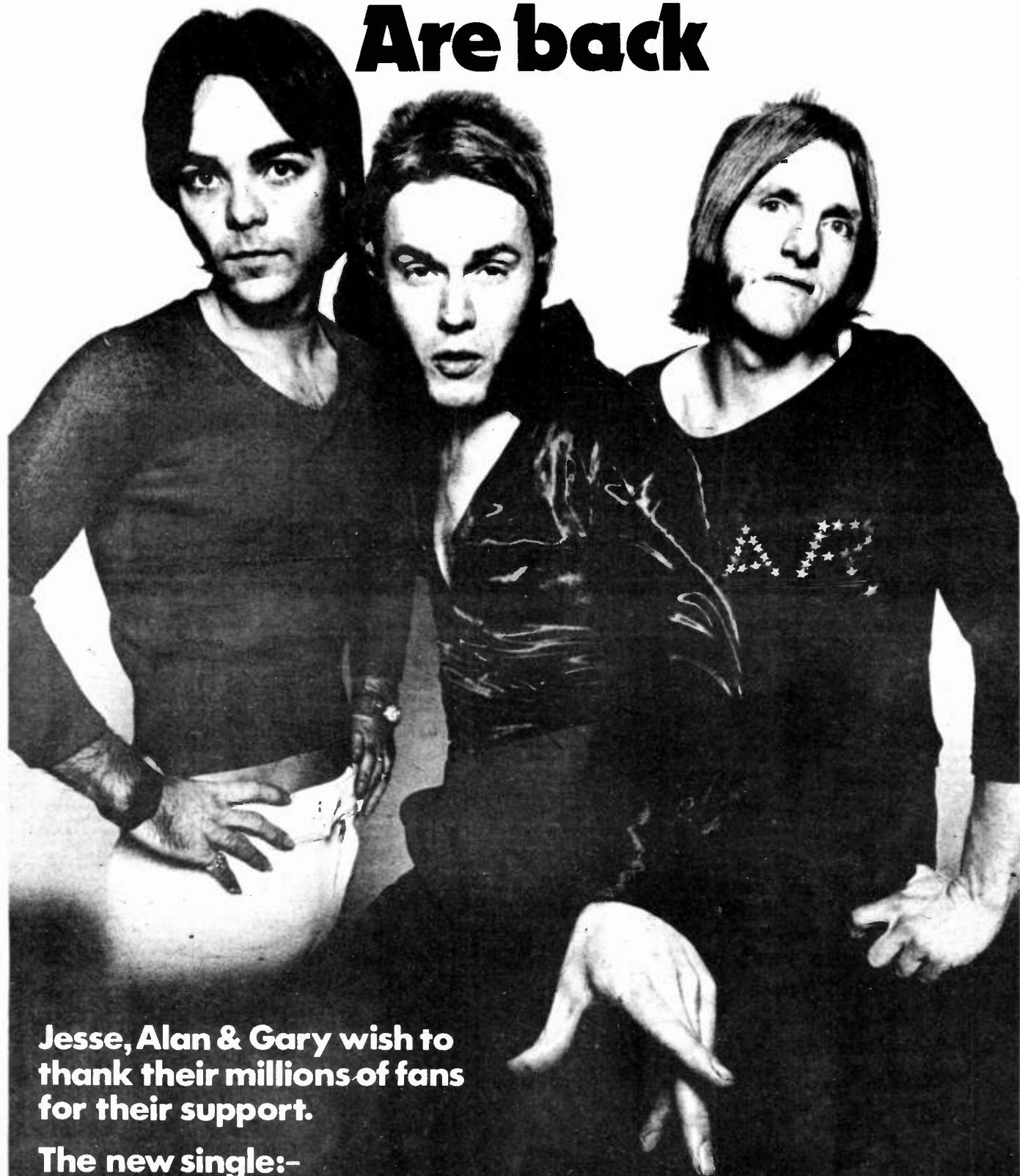


WILD YOUTH



GENERATION X
AT THE ROUNDHOUSE

Hey! Tell the world THE GORILLAS Are back



**Jesse, Alan & Gary wish to
thank their millions of fans
for their support.**

**The new single:-
It's My Life/My Sons Alive. RAW 14. Released Jan 20th 1978.**

**The new album:-
Message To The World. RWLP 103. Released Feb 24th 1978.
Watch for details of forthcoming nationwide tour Feb/March**

THE FRONT BIT

HELEN CHERRY



BELL TRIAL

A man has been charged with manslaughter following the death of Henry Bowles, who died after an incident outside the Bell, King's Cross, last October.

John Godden, a .32-year-old labourer from Berkshire, was charged with manslaughter at Clerkenwell Magistrates Court on December 6th. Frank Flood, 22, from Islington, was charged with causing grievous bodily harm to Henry.

The assault took place outside the Bell, Pentonville Road, on October 22nd. Henry Bowles died in hospital on November 4th.

Both men were committed to a higher court.

NEVER MIND THE TRUTH HERE'S FLEETWOOD MUCK!

When writers on that once pretty good rock mag "Rolling Stone" were asked to say who they thought was

the most significant band of last year from which a chart would be compiled, who should come out on top but our very own Sex Pistols, who at that time hadn't played a note or released a record over there in the States.

Horrors! The editor panicked, how could this pillar of rock journalism retain any credibility in the MOR/politico coffee table stakes with this bunch of foul-mouthed morons voted most significant band of the year.

What to do? Scrub out the Pistols and put in Fleetwood Mac. S'easy!

ATV TODAY

Had a sneak preview of the new ATV single the other day, and it's the best yet from one of the most individual of the new bands. Called "Life After Life" it's out soon on the Deptford Fun City label. It's a hypnotic, slinky reggae with jazzy overtones, mainly due to the nightclub piano! B side is a dub.

Looks like ATV's new guitarist is gonna be Simon from Chelsea, who he's just left.

If such a species exists as a Stranglers completist, he or she will no doubt require a copy of the celebrated 33 rpm EP, just released in America through A&M. It's pressed on coloured vinyl - basically white but with unpleasant pink streaks and a slightly unhealthy tinge, which I suppose some might say was appropriate...what you get for your money is "Grip", "Hangin' Around", "Straighten Out", and "Something Better Change". There's a fairly average pic bag, plus a special label on side one. Plus a warning: "This EP has a special label; viewing the label while the record is revolving may result in slight dizziness (especially if record is rotated at speeds in excess of 78 rpm)". So if the music doesn't make you feel ill, you can watch the label and achieve the same result... Don't delay - feel ill today!

And as we go to press word comes that the fabulous Flamin Groovies are over here and recording their new LP with Dave Edmunds producing again. WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAYYYYYYYYYY!!!!

ZIGZAG —80—

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ADS GO TO:
10 KENNET STREET,
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* ZIGZAG IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY
BY PRESTAGATE LTD. AND
DISTRIBUTED BY SPOTLIGHT.

AD. COPY DATE - 20th OF MONTH
BEFORE PUBLICATION. PHONE
DAVID MARLOW (0865-776015)
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WELCOME TO THE FABULOUS 80's!!

HI ZIGZAGGERS!!

Yes, as we stagger drunkenly into 1978 and ZIGZAG enters its ninth year we also hit issue 80. Blimey! But we're still alive and kicking and things at last seem to be on the up for the mag. We've even started mucking about with colour this month, for a laugh. 1978 shows every sign of being great!

Anyway, hope you had a good, pissed holiday-time. We did (except we only got invited to one two of the record company piss-ups. We don't forget easily! Wish we'd gone to the NME tho' - loved to have seen the Linettes), which is why it's a miracle this is out at all before March. Still, we hope to be back to bumper-size next month with a real cracker. Meanwhile there's

DAVID BOWIE

who Tobler snatched a whole 12 minutes with.

Still, it's good stuff. Hopefully David'll do a bigger one later in the year. It wasn't planned but next, there's

BRYAN ENO

who me and Danny "Lager than life" Baker spoke to for

slightly longer. It was an eye-opener too. Great bloke. It wasn't planned as a "New Music" supplement or anything but a couple of days later Steve Walsh sent in an interview with a new group called **THIS HEAT** who say they play "free music. (It's all explained!)

THE SLETS

did a gig at a London School before Christmas, which was a

good opportunity to do a progress report on them... and they're better than ever! There's also the second part of

THE RUNAWAYS

story. Right! Say hello to TERI

MORRIS, our new West Coast correspondent who's kicks off with an interview with **CRIME**, one of the more interesting new U.S. bands. The original ZIGZAG hero is **CAPTAIN BEEFHEART**. One of the most fascinating and innovative American artists, and THE

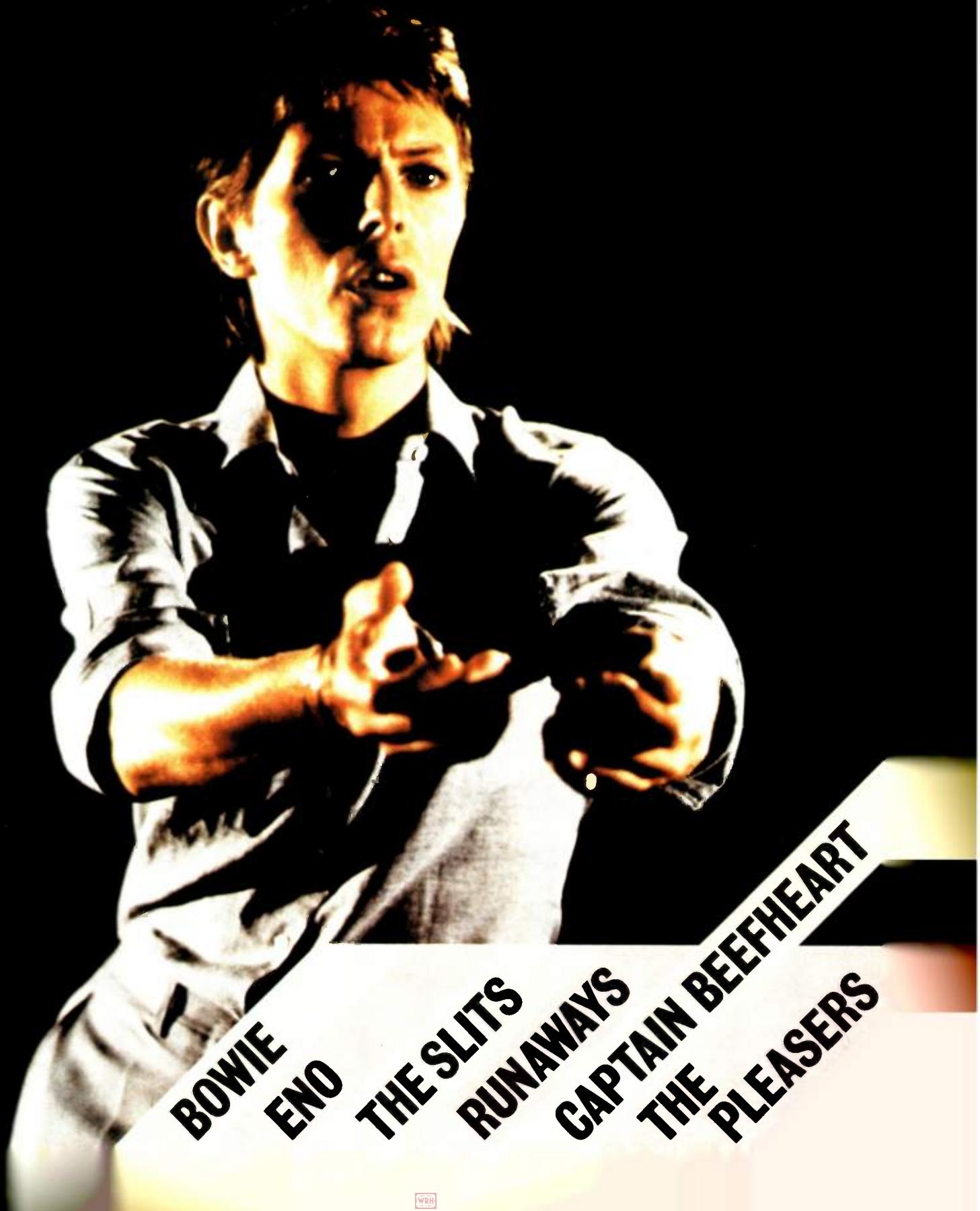
He was recently here for a day. We went and spoke to him. An amazing man. No room left but there's also Loopey's lens on tour, John Walters, **GEN-X**, Livewire's Alan Anger on **THE PLEASERS** and more! Bye bye, Kris Needs XXX

Single

RICK
KIDS

ZIGZAG

30p UK / \$1.50 USA / 70c Australia No. 80 January 1978



BOWIE
ENO
THE SLITS
RUNAWAYS
CAPTAIN BEEFHEART
THE PLEASERS