

NO 106 OCTOBER 1980

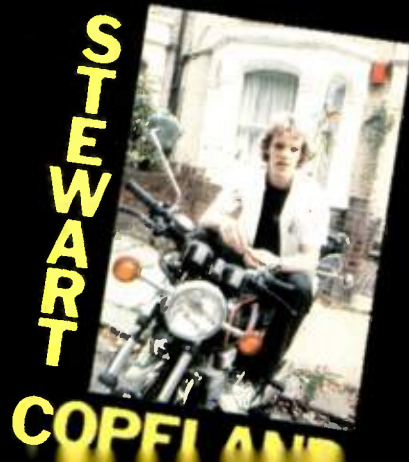
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ZIGZAG

MUSIC - NEWS



BAUHAUS
HONEY BANE
ORANGE JUICE
PSYCHEDELIC FURS
ROKY ERICKSON & THE ALIENS
PUBLIC ENEMY NO 1 - McVICAR
PUBLIC PASTICHE NO 1 - DALTREY



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19th-Leeds Fan Club

ZIGZAG/106

ZIGZAG MAGAZINE
118 TALBOT ROAD
LONDON W.11.
TEL: 01-221 7422

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ZIGZAG is published monthly by Mentorbridge Ltd. Director O. Kimber.

TYPESETTING BY SAPPHIRE SET AND LUTON TYPESETTERS

ZIGZAG is printed by Goodhead Press Ltd.
U.K. National Distributors
Surridge Dawson, 136 New Kent Road, London S.E.1.
U.S. Canada, European Dist.
Hatchette Gotch Ltd, 437, North Woolwich Road, Silvertown, London E.16.
Australia, N.Z., S. Africa
Gordon Gotch Ltd., 30 St. Bride Street, London E.C.4.
Japan
ZIGZAG East, 2-23-6 Gotokuji, Setagayaku, 154 Tokyo, JAPAN



THE ZIGZAG STAFF STEP OUT

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Dear Zig Zag
Dear Bag Zig
Dig Baz Zag
Dear Kris

UPCOMING CRITIC?
NOT AN EXPENSIVE PEN?
TONGUE TIED?
TIRED OF THE SAME
OLD ROUTINE?
WRITE TO ZIG ZAG

Mr. Needs Zigzag,
Do you like Saxaphones in the dark? Have you heard the pulse of the night? Got pissed to it's rhythms? Do you know? Do you, can you, see the difference between one who knows and one that does not? Do you get high on fear? Do you live in a commune? Can you feel the explosive vibrations coming from the depths of this country? Sweeping across Europe, it's been there since 1976, it'll be there till the Generals and Piggy-Politicians destroy what's left, this carcass of a planet. Do you agree? Linton Kwesi Johnson is what Jimbo Morrison could not be — he was the wrong pigmentation. Do you agree? What happened to you when you first heard 'The End'? Have you ever fucked to the rhythms of the Blazing Shames? Do you know who the Blazing Shames are? Do you believe in reggae, echoeeee, melody, harmony, rhythm, discord, notes dropped from great heights? Where is the romantic side of depression? Do you really think he's dead? I do. I will never wear leather, yer I quote and improvise my crude poems of sex upon stages to the manic, unlevel, music of rhythms. Will I kill myself for the honour of rock 'n' roll reality?

Yours Tim

Dear Zigzag,

I would like to inform you about our musician's co-operative. We are non-profit-making (like EMI) and require bands for a budget album, all monies, etc; to the artists concerned. Interested people, pets, etc, should contact me at my UK Kennel — Metronome Records, c/o Ernst Rohm, 3 Atherton Close, Cambridge.

Dear Kris,

I'm a Z.Z. reader in Japan. Z.Z. is my teacher, for I join a group to publish a small magazine, "D-MUSIK". Z.Z.'s layout, contents is interesting to me. I live in Japan now, so it's difficult to know too much.

Dear Zigzag,

Virgin Records should change their name because they are fucked. The head people (?) at Virgin received an album, but didn't see it's virtues, wanted it re-done.

The PR people though liked it, tempers flared.

Mental as anything were forced to resign from this label.

Young Britons go forth to your Import shops, the album is "Express O Bongo". It is the new Mental As Anything album on Australia's Regular record label, it is wonderful. It is stronger than their much praised debut and the single "Come Around" every bit as catchy as "Nips".

Nah boo sucks to Virgin they know not what they do. P.S. — Did you know that Martin Plaza is something akin to calling yourself Buckingham Palace?

Yours faithful Australian
Correspondent
Mike Maloney
29 Nottingham Street
Berkeley NSW 2506
AUSTRALIA

Dear Zig Zag

What the hell is wrong wit you.

Why so little about groups like SLF, Cockney Rejects, Angelic Upstarts, the Pack, Zounds and more of that stuff. (Damned) (Pop Rivets)

Why not something about the new group of Polly Styrene Where is Iggy Pop?

What have you got against the UK Subs, there coming to Rotter damned on Oktober, and I looke forward to see them again.

There enough new punk groups why don't write about them? I read enough shit like Human League, Passions and more of that shit.

—Shannon, Isolation Row

By the way, I'm looking for kids who publish a small magazine, too and co-operate with our one. Anyway I — we can't satisfy major rock magazine in Japan — like photo-books!

I'm going to go to London next March, so I can buy Z.Z. only 50p. In Japan, it's about ¥700! — too expensive for poor kids like me!

Anyway I expect Z.Z.'s progress!

Auf Wiedersehen!
Jill Dian xx

Dear Zigbag,

I am 19, an alcoholic nymphomaniac, and live in South London, where I work as a topless go-go dancer. My problem is that I can't say no. If a bloke starts chatting me up it always leads to sexual intercourse.

I spend most of my time, when I'm not reading Zigzag or being laid, thinking about unusual places to do it. I prefer public places such as bus shelters, cinemas, railway station waiting rooms, shop doorways, taxi cabs, and telephone kiosks!

I'd love to do it in a crowded Sainsbury supermarket, or on the topdeck of a Number 88 bus travelling slowly along Battersea High Street — anywhere that's public.

By the way, would you publish a photo of the Polecats for me? If so, I promise to take my bra and panties off and pop them in the post to you while they're still warm — or, if you prefer, I can bring them in next week.

Finally, I have a 450 page Stanley Gibbons stamp album filled with used whatchamacallits. Each one is washed and powdered and stuck in with a blob of glue. The owner's names are written underneath.

Bye now, Zigbag; see y'awl next month,

Debbie

Any more readers got hobbies? —Ed

Dear Zigzag, I love your June issue, even if it was about 2—3 months late (In the USA we don't get UK publications till some months later, y'see).

I must've read your Cramps article about 5 or 6 times. I don't want the Cramps to stay in Britain, I want them here. Y'see, here in the USA, with groups like the Cars, Billy Joel and Linda Ronstadt trying to pass themselves off as New Wave Rockers and with the media literally showing the 'Urban Cowboy' soundtrack down our throats — things can get pretty dull and stagnant. The US needs groups like X and the Cramps to break the monotony, England's got enough great bands as it is.

Hope this picture doesn't get to you too late. Not bad for a quickie effort. As you can see, it's Lux Interior at a graveyard.

yours Judith Graham,

Dear Zigbag,

A major topic of conversation amongst teenage rockabilly record collectors is the whereabouts in London of Nervous Records — the small rockabilly label run by the Wild Wax Roadshow?

Guesses include: above a dirty bookshop in Brewer Street, the old World War 2 street shelter opposite the Chalk Farm Roundhouse, the gypsy caravan parked in the backyard of a pub in Hammer-smith, or the nightwatchman's hut on the McAlpine building site opposite Charing Cross station?

Come on, Zig Zag, tell us where we can find them?

I remain an ardent Nervous record collector, greatly infuriated by not knowing where they operate from.

Dave "Crazy Legs" Baker

P.S. I've checked and they are not listed in ZZ's New labels catalogue published in July (sob!)

Hang on ...

Dear Sir,

The letter by Maurice Gould in your September 1980 issue No. 105 has been drawn to my attention. I take issue with the content thereof. An independent distributor was engaged by me and, as matters stand at present, I have not received any statements or accounts from this distributor, nor indeed have I received any payment. Once monies are to hand from the distributor I will see that the Ripchords get their contractual entitlement. Meanwhile my solicitors are being instructed to resolve the situation with the distribution concerned.

Yours faithfully

Geoff Mann

Lux Interior
of The Cramps



Hi ZIGZAGGERS!

IT'S FOUR IN THE MORNING AND NOW I'VE GOT TO WRITE THIS. NEVER MIND, AS GARY GLITTER SAYS, IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK, I HAVEN'T DONE MY LETTER FOR A FEW ISSUES, FOR VARIOUS REASONS - SPACE, LAST MONTH'S CARNIVAL AND THE IRISH PUB OVER THE ROAD, AMONG 'EM.

THE FACE OF ZIGZAG SEEMS TO CHANGE EACH ISH. THIS MONTH WE'VE TAKEN A RADICAL STEP AWAY FROM WHAT'S EXPECTED AND STUCK KATE BUSH ON DE COVER. AND WHY NOT? SHE'S UNIQUE AND DESERVES A BIT OF FAIR, IN-DEPTH COVERAGE.

WE'VE GONE BERSERK AND DONE THE POLICE AS WELL, AND ROGER DALTREY, AND



JOHN McVICAR (!). SO WE'RE WIDENING OUT A BIT BUT YOU'LL FIND PLENTY OF NEW GROUPS (ORANGE JUICE ARE GREAT!) AND THE OLD FAVES.

OH, SAY HELLO TO PETE ERSKINE, OUR NEW ASS. ED, WHO RETURNS TO JOURNAUSM AFTER A LENGTHY 'HOLIDAY'.

THAT'S WHAT WE NEED, NEW BLOOD! (AND LESS WORK FOR ME COS I'VE JUST STARTED MANAGING BASEMENT FIVE: HEARD THEIR NEW LP AND JUST COULDN'T REFUSE - IT'S DYNAMITE!)

WHAT ELSE? K. JOKE LP SOON, BEEFHEART (THIS TIME?), DOLL BY DOLL ON MAGNET (SEEN A LOT OF THEIR GIGS RECENTLY - A NEW SONG EVERY TIME), MOTORHEAD, AN EVEN MORE DIVERSE CLASH, BOWIE'S - WHOOPEEE!! ONUM BUMMER IS THE DECLINE OF TISWAS ('CEPT FOR LENNY HENRY).

I'M GOING, SEE YOU.

NEXT MONTH,

love & kisses,

KRIS xxx

ON TOUR

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Victoria's streets are used to crowds, from football to Away Day, and the huge gathering outside the Venue one night last June was no exception. These were the night trippers, and Mink DeVille not Blackpool was their particular buzz. It was like the first day at Harrods sale. I pretended I was one of those Japanese trees that bend with the wind (I would have had my legs snapped off if I hadn't). Willy DeVille you've never had it so good! I wanted OUT. But several hundred bodies forbade it. "Oh Christ get your stupid elbow out of my ear'ole."

"Yeah alright mate. 'Ow yer doin'?" Jimmy Pursey grinned down at me, patted the offended organ and pushed a pretty, but crumpled little girl at me. "This is Honey Bane, I'm 'er producer and she's gonna be a fuckin' star." If she survives this lot. The doors opened and changing into a surfboard I was swept inside leaving Jim and his protegee hopefully about to ride the next crest.

When I next met Honey she had just signed a five year contract with Zonophone records. She looked completely different. Taller than I remembered with a Marilyn Monroe body. She assured me she was the same person, "But I was only sixteen then." Of course, the ravages of time.

With Honey was her glamorous mother who could easily have been mistaken for another of Zonophone's bright hopes for '81. (After all Debbie Harry is old enough to be Honey's mother). Or a croupier, I thought. "My mum lives in Cornwall (obviously not a croupier), and it's taken about five hours to get here, so I'm very tired and I must look a mess." She didn't. In fact British Rail grime ought to be marketed. "I haven't had more than about six hours sleep in three nights. But we're staying at Jimmy's (Pursey) this weekend."

Oh that's alright then.

The last time I went to Jimmy's, the swimming pool was still full at 5.00 a.m., Sham could be heard in Guildford and the only person sleeping was some bird pissed out of

her brain in the back of Dave Parsons sound proofed Roller.

And what were the plans following their quiet weekend in the country? Honey: "We go straight into the studio and start laying down tracks for the first single and possibly an album. It was so exciting today signing the contract. We all sat around this table in the lawyers office, it was like Knights of the Round Table."

Did you drink mead then? Or was it just boring old champagne?

"Coffee."

Zonophone's A&R man jumped in quickly. "We like to put it into effort instead." He then added limply "But if you like I'll go and get you some champagne." Oh god, decision time. Champagne or effort Honey? Orange juice in cracked cup seemed to be the compromise, the buck without the fizz. Record companies heady days are over — and that's not a bad thing. An awful lot of bubbly has flowed into parasitic and talentless guts. Nevertheless, orange juice in a cracked cup . . .

Honey Bane was discovered by Jimmy Pursey about a year and half ago, although discovered is disputable. "He wouldn't like that" said Honey giggling. "When I was about fourteen I started writing songs. I'd written a couple and I went to the Marquee and I saw this bloke and thought that's Jimmy Pursey. I used to follow Sham at the time and I walked up to him and said 'excuse me are you Jimmy Pursey? He sort of looked at me and went 'yeah', and I gave

him these two songs. Then it was kind of 'hello' and that was it at a couple of gigs. Then about a year and a half ago I went to Hersham and he was playing football with some kids on the Green, and he came over. I started going to studios and things with him. He helped me a lot with things. Like getting myself together in the first place. Become a better me. Present myself in a better way than what I was. At one time I walked around thinking I looked fantastic with (giggle, giggle) great black eyes and different coloured spiky hair and everything. Swearing, carrying on and causing trouble and he said you can still be outrageous but you don't need to make such a thing out of it. I wasn't being myself, I was being what I thought people wanted me to be.

He helped me with the predicament I was in at the time. He's a wonderful bloke, he really is."

Honey's 'predicament' was picked up by the media, naturally, and she doesn't care to talk about it much now. "It's not important anymore. I ran away from home at fourteen and was put in care. I wrote this song called 'Girl On The Run' which I recorded and a small label put it out. Nothing happened except that the press picked it up and did a big thing on it. Then that's when I met Jimmy."

Honey's mother smiled carefully, obviously delighted to have her daughter back and temporarily helping run the small, but exotic, hotel she looked as though she might have. Honey mooted that if, and when things started to happen, they would have to move, but not to London. "I don't like London to live in. It's too kind of rushed. You can't think straight you know. But then again I don't like to be too secluded. I enjoy being at home but at the same time I don't like being out of the way too much. So ideally for me, if I have to be in London, I'd like to be sort of outside of London."

Hershamish? Why not? Everyone else seems to live there. Jimmy, the Upstarts, the Rejects, Kidz Next Door, Jimmy Edwards, Sham, er . . . Mike Read.

Honey agreed. "Yeah, I really like Surrey. I could also live in Birmingham. That's a lovely place." I would have thought Brixton was just as lovely — and nearer. We sipped our orange juice and swapped cigarettes. I noticed Honey's

mother's beautiful nails. She had to be a manicurist. I wondered if there was more calling for that sort of thing in Birmingham.

Honey — real name Donna — is practical about her career, she is aware of the pitfalls and false values, thanks no doubt to Mr. Pursey, and is certain she will never change, however successful she may become. "I couldn't just drop my friends 'cos I was famous. Most of my friends are in the business anyway. I can't seem to relate to other people, they want to know all about what you're doin', then knock you."

Did your school friends envy you?

"Yeah really. I was always writing poetry even when I was very young and I suppose they didn't understand."

Do you find these experiences have helped your writing or can you write to order?

Honey was emphatic. "I have to be inspired by something. My music's changing, getting better. I'm learning how to get across my ideas more. I'm not as punk as I used to be."

Simon wanted to take pictures, Honey stood up, tightened her belt and said she didn't want anything too sexy as that wasn't her image. Perhaps he should photograph just her shoes in that case. Actually even they were quite sexy. Red suede affairs on thin heels, clinging seductively to her black stockinged curvaceous foot. Oh fuck it, photograph her spot. She must have a spot, everyone has a spot haven't they?

"You can come to the studio if you like on Monday I've invited all my friends." Honey said to me before going out into the square to find a suitable tree for her spot. (Juxtaposition is a key-word in photography). It might be fun. Jimmy's sessions are always tres amusant. We spend a good deal of the time throwing toilet rolls at each other and spilling coffee over the engineer and desk. The Tape Op. brings in fish and chips, a few of us drink Guinness and Pursey impervious to it all churns out the hits.

The tape ground to a clanging halt and Honey's mother looked visibly relieved, reminding me of an air hostess whose plan had safely landed and who could now tell the passengers that a wing had dropped off earlier and it had been touch and go.

Joan Komlosy



HONEY BANE

ORANGE JUICE

Now this is a band to reckon with! A Glasgow outfit of mammoth potential. Look at the distance 'twixt their twin 45s! Not afraid to stick in any favourite influence from the Velvets to Chic they're forging a great way so far.

The most recent single is 'Lovesick'/'Blue Boy', on Glasgow's important Postcard label. Last month I was pretty excited and wrote:

"Another single by the Glasgow four-piece, this time produced by ex-ATV man, Alex Fergusson. Another group who, though they're still keeping to Song Structures, manage to inject the old verse/chorus routine with new style, freshness and ideas. There's some odd things going on in these pounding stop-start teen-anthems, notably in the ringing, twining guitars."

I couldn't agree more. The two sides are stunning little creations — punchy, crafted, catchy and new. 'Lovesick' pounds along on Northern Soul stomp, leaps into a delicate Byrdsy guitar section then springs back into the beat assuming repetitive Velvets urgency. 'Blueboy' has a winning vocal hook and some chiming bridging guitar which also recalls Reed. Now it's empty to compare things but the thing with Orange Juice is they've drank up 25 years of great music and, combined with their own ideas, it's highballed out with love and individuality.

They haven't yet gigged down here but hope to soon. That'd be good.

Rarely, having just played a new single, am I propelled from my chair to phone the record company concerned and yell "tell me more!" in quivering goat-like tones into the receiver. But I did when I first got 'Lovesick' and Postcard boss Alan Horne promised to get in touch when he came down our end of the UK.

One day Alan and OJ's guitar-singer Edwyn Collins did make the trek down South and, amidst the blare of the Irish pub across the road from the office, we pondered the whys and wherefores of Orange Juice and their place in the much-touted Scottish boom-scene.

The day before, I'd read Dave McCullough's piece on Postcard in *Sounds*. He'd raved optimistically about it, OJ and their stablemates the serious Josef K, and I tell you, it made a great change to read some genuine enthusiasm with no catches or sycophants. It went well with what I felt already (it's not just me, see).

I'd also read some pretty hot live reviews. God I hope I'm not part of some huge Stray Cats-style burgeoning buzz which could hoist then envelop our heroes into the pains of lashed backs. And I said so to Edwyn over a pint of lager (mine, his was cider).

He's tall with droopy hair at the front and a horse-embossed bootlace tie.

"Getting attention now? No, it's just because it's long overdue and we're ready for it. We've been planning it all for a year, getting all ready."

They have a licensing deal with Rough Trade.



PHOTO ROBERT SHARP

Alan pitches in with a rapid-Glaswegian "We wanna get in the charts and we've got to get someone who can give us the means, get on the playlist. To get in the charts, that's the main thing."

Orange Juice obviously don't mean they would Dooleyate themselves to reach the Top Ten, but isn't this desire for hits at odds with the RT free artistry non-commercial ethic?

Edwyn: "We didn't think they'd be interested in the chart market but now it's really professional, really great, they want to go for the charts."

Alan: "They've got the set-up, if they just aim it in the right direction. Those records are so bad. The production on the Delta 5 last single was so bad. It's wasted potential."

Edwyn: "Our first single ('Falling and Laughing'/'moscow Olympics'/'Moscow',

plus flexi of 'I Wish I Was A', the last two live) fell down on the production. That single was almost to make a mark, to get some attention, to say that we're up in Glasgow making records and this is what we sound like. This sounds pre-meditated, but it's not going to be like that with our next single. We're going to concentrate all our energies into making

it... I feel it's a really strong song. We think it's chart-orientated. I'm making an effort to have better diction for that single so people can hear the words!"

The Orange Juice theory is, you've got on one side the Serious Bands, like Simple Minds and Echo And The Bunnymen, on the other the chart contenders like Blondie and the Pretenders. Few bowl about in between and combine the best of both worlds. They cite the Buzzcocks as one of the few that combined pop with progress.

"Credible hit singles. Every one a progression. There's all that middle ground just waiting. If you can do it independently you can do what you want with the records. Factory and Joy Division showed how it could be done."

What about the Jam?

Edwyn: "I like The Jam myself but they're like regurgitated Beatles. Alan's talking

eclectic and having lots of influences, not just concentrating on, say, the 60s. Like I listen to Disco and 50s rock 'n' roll. There's so much popular music, there's been 50 years of popular music, and if we could just use all that music as influence you're going to come up with something

that sounds new."

I mention all the little influences bombing round in the singles, like 'Lovesick's Wigan Casino bedrock. You soak 'em up and push 'em out then?

Edwyn: "That sounds really contrived but it's almost exactly like that. Steve (Daly) the drummer likes Northern Soul. With me it's Disco and the Velvet Underground, but there's so many groups coming up now who just want to emulate the Velvets. Our bass player (David McClymont) likes Eno and Can and that. I hate those groups, but it's good to have that tension and tastes in different things.

"Look back on the really classic groups and really classic albums. I think it's great to listen to Gene Vincent, Buddy Holly or Eddie Cochran, the Beatles, Buffalo Springfield, the Velvet Underground, then go to the '70s — I like George McCrae, Chic, the Buzzcocks . . . all these had something to offer, but there's so many groups now that are almost a pastiche, trying to be a modern group. It's like a Fritz Laing Science fiction movie, or something. It's trying to be futuristic but it's a parody.

"There's never going to be any radical change in pop music. It's always going to be subliminal progressions and tiny steps forward. We're not really bothered about what our contemporaries are doing in Glasgow, getting really petty and having to compete with them. We're more bothered with — it sounds a bit arrogant — doing an album and making it as good as the Velvet Underground's third album. Just good quality."

The undiluted Orange Juice was splashed in the glass (oh stop it!) in '77.

"We were into the Velvets and Bowie, then I started seeing things in the papers about Punk Rock. We were a Punk group in '77. We were called the New Sonics (after Edwyn's guitar of the same name)."

Seeing The Clash's 'White Riot' tour had a profound effect on the New Sonics. "The groups that inspired us most were the Slits and Subway Sect, they were so loose. We were on the same level.

"We were a Punk group with arty pretensions! But then we decided to be very Punk pretentious. Then we decided just to be a pop group. We wanted to — I don't know the word for it — stand apart from mainstream punk."

So why did you choose the name Orange Juice?

"It's a great name. We thought it would get a lot of people's backs up. We just regard it as a joke."

True. When I told some mates I was off to do Orange Juice they laughed.

Onwards, Edwyn . . .

"It wasn't till '79 when we got a new bass player that we started taking it seriously. Then Alan approached us, he was a longtime fan and aficionado of the group. He wanted to make a single . . ."

"Pathetic," he spits. "They all imitate Wire circa 'Pink Flag!'"

You're an exception then with the silly name and all that?

"I don't really care if our audience is laughing at us or with us. We're pretty silly onstage too. Not flippantly, but it's really important for a lot of groups to laugh at themselves. Things are pretty

bad. It's important to laugh."

So you don't go a lot on what's happening up there?

Alan: "There's too many blueprint groups."

Edwyn: "The groups in Scotland are barely adequate. There are some really great ones though, like Scars. A new one called the Fire Engines, that'll just blow you. They're a bit like the Voidoids. Josef K are great at times. I think they'll be great next year."

Could we have some song titles?

"'The Old Eccentric', 'Intuition told me so', 'The Devil Went Down To Texas', 'Satellite City' (the name of a Glasgow Disco bar), 'Upwards and Onwards' (the next 45).

"A lot of the songs are about relationships, because I think when you're starting off in a group you can't lay on the heavy philosophy, y'know. You write songs any age group can relate to. Love's a pretty obvious thing to go far, but I don't think that's a copout, because there's still lots of different ways of writing about love. There's one new

song, the chorus goes, 'I know these melodramatic chords don't make things alright, nor do they make me see things in a different light.' It's a classic love-song melody . . . wry humour, it's really good to send yourself up, it shows more respect for yourself, rather than being arrogant and conceited."

The human group!

Kris Needs

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THE FURS

Richard Butler (AKA Butler Rep) talking on behalf of the Psychedelic Furs. I went along to talk to the band recently in the studio where they were recording demos for their second album due later this year.

Richard and sax player Duncan Kilburn are the two main spokesmen with John Ashton (guitarist) and Vince Ely (drummer) adding their views, while Roger Morris (guitarist) and Tim Butler (bassist) hardly said anything.

Getting back to the Furs obvious influence upon the current scene, Richard continued, "We did all that kind of thing on our first album. With the new album we're going to try and give some answers to the questions raised on that album. The first album gave us a point of view to work from but we're no longer going to be slagging people off. We're no longer going to be quite so negative in our approach."

The band have over an albums worth of new material. "Two albums worth", says Vince in case CBS read it. Songs like 'Look around you', 'Mr. Jones' and a new one by John that's as yet untitled echo Richard's optimism without getting too far away from the original Furs sound. They also have four songs ready, which they recorded earlier this year with Martin Hannet - 'Soap Commercial', 'Susan's Strange', 'Dumb Waiters' and 'So run down' - all of which may be included on the album. "We're not really sure which numbers will be used", says Duncan, "Because everything will be put together and the best numbers will obviously be the ones we'll choose for the album. We're going to the States soon and we'll have a lot of time to finish writing even more material over there. We want as wide a choice of material as possible to choose from".

Before the Furs visit the USA, they are planning to play a London date (probably the Lyceum) and a gig at the Leeds sci-fi festival. I wondered if any of this newer material would be tried out live on any of these dates.

Duncan: "We hope to do most of the new songs. It would be great not to have to touch the old material apart from the obvious favourites like 'India' and 'Sister Europe'. We're in a better position to play new material live now that we no longer have to promote our first album any more."

The trip to the States in mid-September will be their second visit. They went over earlier this year and played two dates at New York's Mudd Club as a taster. The promoters were so keen to be the first to provide the New Yorkers with their first sight of the Furs that they paid all expenses for a

week and flew the band in and out of the country. "I think the idea was to revitalize the Mudd Club", says Duncan. "Otherwise I just can't see the economy of it all". Richard: "The promoters lost so much money even though we packed out his club for two nights. It was a terrible gig, though. It was like 'Studio 21' and was really snooty with people wearing luxuriant clothes and spaceboots. They were the only crowd being allowed in. If some poor bloke dressed up like us in jeans and a shirt wanted to get in, he'd get turned away. We should be doing 'Hurrahs' next time, which I hope is a bit better. I also went to CBGB's whilst I was over there last time and that's a real pit!"

The band are obviously looking forward to their trip to the States and I believe that they'll do very well over there. Their only other journeys beyond the Isle of Wight were gigs in Brussels and Paris. They are planning to visit Holland for five dates as soon as they return from America, but no long European tours are planned.

Seeing six minds and bodies try and emerge as a unit is always interesting and when the Furs say that they try and be as democratic as possible, they mean it. They all contribute towards the music and the latest experiment that they've tried on the new demos is Duncan playing keyboards. "It's unlikely that I'll be playing keyboards live on stage. I'm only really trying it out for one number to see if it works; the sax is still very important within our music and if I move across to the keyboards or synthesiser then there's a danger that I might start neglecting the sax."

I wondered how the band felt about adding other instruments on record, but still retaining the more raw sound on stage. The band agreed that they had to do it this way because on record it's always the sound that is the main importance, but live it's the whole visual thing as well. "They have to be treated as two completely different things", says Duncan. "It's never actually bothered us live as we never play the same show twice".

Richard: "When we first started we played so loud and distorted that you couldn't tell if there was a tune in there or not. This was because we couldn't play very well."

Vince: "We still can't. We like to get away from the predictable pattern of songs which have to have a chorus, etc."

Richard: "We do aim for a 'Wall of noise' in as far as we don't go in for solos. We try and build up a texture with everybody perhaps doing something different within the same number. We used to have a vacuum cleaner on stage and I

Roger: "That was in our 'Art days' of course."

Talking of 'Arty' and experimentation brings me onto the subject of the Psychedelic Revival which certain members of the media are currently trying to create. "They're all arseholes", says Richard about the press/media involved. "We're not trying to wake up the past, so how can we be psychedelic". The name was thought up to oppose the many punk bands with too obvious names that were around when we first formed."

John: "There can't ever be a psychedelic revival because it's always been with us, really. I used to trip out to the Banshees so I suppose some people would call them psychedelic."

Duncan: "It's like there are some reviewers in the press that have gone to great lengths to try and describe why we're not psychedelic, even though we've never ever said we were psychedelic in the first place."

Richard: "All we've ever wanted to do was create enjoyable music for people. If anyone tries to look too deeply into our music then they won't find any hidden meanings there at all. We aren't trying to wake up the world or anything! These bands who play political music just get into a fashion of being political and they're just saying things without actually doing anything. We just try and put across points of view. We try and adjust people's vision a bit into seeing our points of view."

John: "It's people like Julian Temple who really piss me off the most. How can he stand up to a whole nation like he does in 'Rock 'n' roll swindle' and tell everybody not to put their energy into music. What's he done? Only made a film, that's all!"

You were saying that it was because of a lot of the new bands playing rather 'Doomy' music that has made you change direction slightly and become more optimistic in the future.

Richard: "Yes, but it wasn't so much a conscious thing at first. When we arrived on the scene everyone was into punk and we tried to be different. Now everyone is playing depressing music and we want to change again. It's more of a natural progression for us really. I'd never say that the new bands are bad, because they're not. It's just that now that the whole country's in a very depressed state it can't be very nice to be constantly reminded by depressing music."

Duncan: "You've got to be more realistic about things. You can't be depressed forever."

Richard: "The people who formed bands after seeing us are good

used to run around the back of the drum kit and stick a mic inside it. It used to sound more like a gorilla farting than any avant-garde experimentation."

because they haven't actually copied us."

Duncan: "I don't think we're that easily identifiable so we don't get copyists so much. It's like at, say a Bauhaus gig you know what sort of clothes they'll all be wearing and we never get that kind of thing at all."

Roger: "I think things are changing with us and we're getting a very varied audience nowadays. Not just punks or whatever."

Richard: "I'd feel a bit worried if we ever did get the same type of audience at our gigs, because it would prove that they were very unimaginative audiences, but luckily they're not."

You do have a stage image that comes across as a band, though.

John: "We've never gone too much on building up the image, but if we had lots of money and were self sufficient then we could do so many things on stage."

Duncan: "We're at a very difficult stage where everybody expects us to provide great backdrops and stuff on stage, whereas the truth is that we can't afford it, yet. I know everybody says it, but we don't want to have to do seated venues if we can help it, either. We did a few on the Iggy tour and hated it. This of course, narrows down our choice of venues. It's okay in London where there's the Music Machine or the Lyceum, but outside London it gets more difficult."

Richard: "I don't think we need to try and boost our egos by playing much larger venues, anyway. We'll be playing the Rainbow when we get back from the States - possibly with Suicide - and the seats will probably be taken out."

We finally discussed the plans for a producer for the next album, as yet untitled, but Duncan is jokingly referring to it as 'The atom bomb split my brain' at present. The producer that all the band want to use is Ian Taylor, a former engineer who produced three tracks from the Furs first album - 'Flowers', 'We love you' and 'Pulse'. At present, Taylor is furthering his experience as a producer in America, but should he become available then he seems quite a logical choice.

Alan Anger



THE PSYCHEDELIC-FURS

"I think the whole band has got a lot more optimistic.

We're consciously trying not to be so doomy anymore,

because there are so many doomy bands around nowadays."

I don't know about you, but visualising was never one of my hottest points. In fact, when it comes to Things Prophetic I'm about as bright as a Toc H lamp.

See if you can get a handle on this one then: we have before us the familiar video fuzztones of what appears to be a Pink Floyd cinematic outtake directed by Walt Disney's mother.

To the accompaniment of a chorus of electronic Rhinemaidens we have a mute full-facial of Sting with what appear to be the Saturday afternoon football results rolling across his clock.

The piece is called "Speech Behind Speech", by a German avant-fireguard composer called Eberhard Schoerner (who was recently commissioned by B.M.W. to redesign their Munich car showrooms).

Subsequently we see Sting perform an interesting scene juxtaposing a mime of rock-climbing against a black and white movie backdrop of a rush-hour traffic jam.

I happened upon this mixed-media melee some months back at EMI when the company had a drive on to promote Schoerner's "Video-Flashback" compilation album. A rival publication had asked me to go along and check it out as it seemed promising material for their avowed skeletons-in-the-cupboard policy accorded their former proteges once they'd 'got big' and didn't 'need the paper anymore'. (Or, as one of their journalists once put it, on answering the office 'phone, "Hello, — You Grab 'Em, W'll Slab 'Em!")

Anyway, to return to the video. Apart from the initial shock of seeing Sting involved with this dated electronic noodling, boredom descended like quick-setting cement — a sentiment that seemed to be shared by the movie's participants: the closing sequences catches Sting offguard with his finger up his nose causing the film crew to execute a lightning switch across to Stewart Copeland — who obliges with an extremely credit-worthy v-sign — for an American.

Stewart Copeland

ZZ: Er, Stewart, could you perhaps explain the band's involvement with "Video Flashback"?

SC: Well, The Police, contrary to what Eberhardt told you, had actually been together as a working group for about a year when we did that...

ZZ: What exactly was it?

SC: Oh years ago — '77, '78. He (Schoerner) had a concept for some cultural thing in Munich. We'd just dropped our first guitarist, Henry Padovani (who went on to join Wayne County's Electric Chairs), and taken on Andy Summers. When Andy joined he dropped all his other commitments — including his retainer with Kevin Ayers — but he told us that he did have one commitment he felt he ought to fulfil with this guy in Germany who needed him to play these guitar sessions. He then said that he thought he'd maybe be able to take us along too, although the German guy didn't need a bass player.

I went over to find that the 'percussion' consisted of me rattling something with a lot of echo, then wait fifteen minutes and shake something.

ZZ: Sounds interesting.

SC: It turned out that he (Schoerner) was going to need a bass player after all so we brought Sting over...

Here the stories of Messrs Copeland and Schoerner diverge a little. Schoerner told me that until he'd met him, Sting hadn't sung a note in his life. Untrue according to Copeland — he'd been the band's main

vocalist and bassplayer since they'd first formed.

SC: Eberhard was using this jazz vocalist for the recordings. She was standing there going (here he emits an extended decanter-shattering wail akin to a hyena's death-rattle) so Sting started singing — just to make fun of her and before long Sting just kind of moved in on her and took over.

ZZ: What did Schoerner intend to do with this stuff?

SC: Use it as incidental film music. He said to us, 'I want a kind of jazz-rock-jazz rhythm.' We looked at each other, said okay and laid down a whole series of jams. It was very easy and we made an incredible amount of money. Although none of it meant a light here, it virtually financed The Police for our first two years.

ZZ: Eberhard suggested to me that, through his classical training and influence, he helped develop Sting's vocal expertise.

SC: No. That simply isn't true; the reverse might be closer to the truth. All the music we did with Eberhardt WE wrote.

For Eberhard's own purpose, yeah, he brought out a different side of Sting — because in those days we were used to playing very fast very direct rock and roll down at the Roxy or The Vortex.

Anyway, Eberhard began to make more and more demands on us and The Police were beginning to take off over here and in the States, so we had to pull out leaving the show such a success that it was booked for an entire German tour. It

then became a bone of contention between him and us — I feel we were ripped off publishing-wise because, although, Eberhard added strings and so on for the album, the basis of the music was ours."

Enough of this obscurity; though it is hoped that readers will not be induced to search out Schoerner's album simply on the strength of Police presence.

ZZ: Could you elaborate on the current state of The Police?

SC: Well, there is a new album — 'Kenyaatta Mondatta' — due for October 4th release, we have a lot of material in the can, a lot of material that works well enough in itself but isn't 'suitable' if you know what I mean?

ZZ: You're feeling restricted by success already?

SC: Yeah. In a way. Right now it isn't easy to write at all. I've used up my three chords and I wanna go study flamenco music or something...

"It's like we're stuck in an ebony tower. I know I don't lead the life our audience leads..."

ZZ: And you feel guilty about it?

SC: Not LITERALLY... there's an old maxim that runs: 'you have the whole of your life to write your first album and six months for the second...'.

"I feel cushioned off, too comfortable... I believe happiness is a chemical thing. Things used to be hard. The heartaches then used to be how we'd afford the groceries... I get the same feelings now. Exactly the same feelings but nothing to focus them on

"What I really need is a whole new reason for struggling. Which is why I want to get involved in films — not acting in them making them. I bought a super 8 in the US and I haven't stopped shooting since.

Reflecting on the above, as I write this, I think maybe part of the trouble lies with the music — a case of 'where do we go from here'?

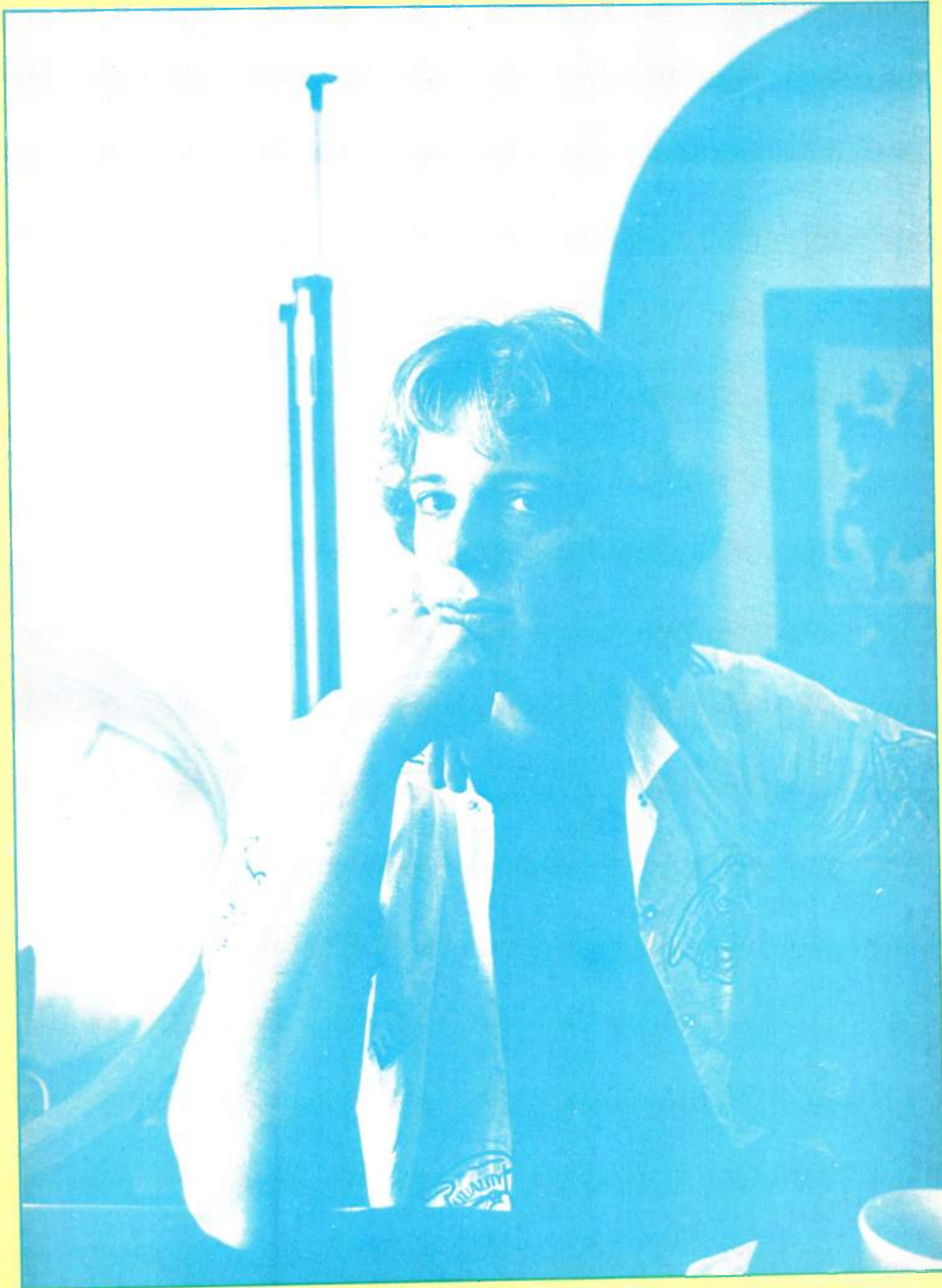
Stewart played me a few excerpts from the album and it's good. Really good. But despite the fact that he's happy enough with it to play it at least twice a day, he's pessimistic about the reaction it'll receive — despite advance orders in excess of 200 000.

SC: "I can sense that it's going to get slammed by the critics — the single already had done. In any case I can feel that it's our turn next to get universally slammed."

Not that I think that, in itself, bothers him... more that I feel he sees it as a reflection of his own uncertainties as to the purpose behind what he's doing. The Police have reached a stage of self questioning and self-doubt in an eighth of the time it takes to reach most bands. But then, both in the quality of their music, their combined and individual intelligence and the length of time it's taken for them to make it — on their terms, no-money-down, it's all kind of inevitable.

The album is beautifully devious and sophisticated, and wide open to attack.

Pete Erskine



"The British music press has had very little effect on Record Sales of our product, AFTER All both our First and Second albums were SLAGGED OFF, yet they both went to NUMBER ONE".

Generally speaking, interviewing groups can be a bit of a pain in the arse. I mean, it's not so bad if you already happen to be friendly with the group you're talking to, but if you're just meeting them for the first time, it can be quite an embarrassing experience.

VEILED THREAT

FIRST of all, you have to try to establish some kind of workable rapport with as many as four or five total strangers. Then you have to try to get them to answer your occasionally dumb, and (hopefully) occasionally intelligent questions with a reasonable degree of truthfulness. If you take along a tape recorder, it can often inhibit genuine communication, but if you try to copy things down by hand, problems of a different nature arise. A kind of awkward silence falls every time you pause to feverishly scribble something down, and at the end of the interview, you tend to find that the pages of your notebook or whatever are filled with a spidery, indecipherable scrawl.

ALL of these ideas were running in my head when I decided to interview Veiled Threat, a young and aspiring five-piece outfit from the Workop area. Having seen them play live a couple of times, I went along to meet 'em at the Romeo and Juliet's Club in Doncaster, where they were appearing with local groups Richard and the Taxmen and the BTP Folders.

VEILED Threat are an interesting group. The line-up consists of Elaine Mcleod on vocals, Les Heath on guitar and backing vocals, Pete Ridley on keyboards, Derek Taylor on bass and Nigel Fitzpatrick on drums. Their manager, Julie Hughes, describes their music simply as 'new wave pop', which is fair enough. It does in fact fuse various decidedly moderne musical/lyrical trends with a hefty dollop of pop sensibilities, hence 'new wave pop' is an accurate, if fairly simplistic, definition. Elaine sings in a strong, vibrant voice. If you're into comparisons, she sounds a lot like Sonja Kristina to me. The group's songs include 'Embassy', 'Joe Public', 'I'm A Boy', 'Black Box' (a bit duff, that one appearance on vinyl, on the regional compilation album 'Bouquet of Steel', but they have a single coming out soon on Doncaster's independent Future Earth label, and they claim that A & R men from DJM and CBS are "interested"). Things are definitely starting to happen for them.

AT Romeo and Juliet's, I watched them perform a strong, confident set (it was spoiled only by a few twats who kept chucking ice cubes and spitting), and then went backstage to meet them. Despite my misgivings about the whole interview procedure, I was pleased to find that they're a nice bunch of people, and very easy to talk to. The questions and answers presented here are mostly very simple and to the point, so think of this as a basic introduction to Veiled Threat. OK?

First

First of all, how long have you been together?

Derek: "We've all been together since February 1979 except for Nigel. Nigel joined around Christmas time."

And what musical influences would you admit to, if any? (Bit of a corny one, that).

Derek: "Well, Pete likes the Velvet Underground, and with the rest of us, it's groups like the Talking Heads, Joy Division, the Gang of Four. There're not really influences, though. That's just what we like."

Who writes all the material?

Les: "Pete and I. He does the lyrics and I tend to do most of the music."

And when you write your lyrics, are you trying to say anything in particular? I mean, are you pushing a certain point of view, or are they just entertainment?

Pete: "I try to make them work on more than one level. Obviously I try to make them work on both levels at once..."

Some of the subjects I write about are political and some are sexual. Elaine's a very sexual performer anyway..."

What political line are you pushing?

Pete (jokingly): "Well, I'm a bit of a red..."

Unidentified voice: — "He's a Shop Steward."

Pete: "I'm a Shop Steward, yeah... 'Embassy', that's one of the political ones — it's about the thing in Iran, obviously; the hostage thing. 'Joe Public' is another one — it's anti-Maggie."

Elaine, you sound a lot like Sonja Kristina to me — is that deliberate, or...?

Elaine: "No, never heard her, but I've been compared to every girl singer at one time or another. I like Siouxsie; I think she's good. But I try not to listen to any other girl singers, 'cos I don't want to pick any influences up; I want it all to come from me."

What about the 'Bouquet of Steel' album — how did you get on that? And what's the deal with Future Earth like?

Julie: "Marcus Fetherby approached us about 'Bouquet of Steel'. He saw the group at a place called the Saddle pub in Sheffield, and he approached us. The deal with Future Earth is just a one-off thing. We really need to get a single out, but we can't afford to put one out ourselves, so Dave (Dave Moffitt of Future Earth) is going to do it for us. But we'll still keep all the rights and everything, and in six months that single becomes ours. Dave's been really good to us..."

THE interview ended in confusion when Richard and the Taxmen suddenly



burst into the dressing room, all covered in blood and babbling excitedly that there was a riot going on outside. As far as I could gather from what they were saying, they went onstage and began to play, and for a little while things went OK. Then some idiots began to spit at them, and the Taxmen's wiry vocalist rather unwisely retaliated by fetching one of the offenders a hefty whack over the head with his mike stand, at which point all hell broke loose.

AT the first mention of any aggro, all the members of Veiled Threat except Derek disappeared with a rapidity that was little short of miraculous. Obviously they are all firm believers in the old line about discretion being the better part of valour. I slipped out of the dressing room and into the concert area, where there were loads of 'bad vibes' in the air. It was left to a young guy called Mike Jackson to restore order. Stripped to the waist and strumming on an electric guitar, he delivered a series of humorous songs and monologues, including a mildly filthy version of 'I Can't Stand Losing You', and various original compositions, replete with such deliberately boneheaded lyrics as "I ate puffs," and "When I gi' a lass a poke, I make 'er choke/I'm one o' t' lads." It was one of the funniest performances I've seen for ages. I enjoyed it so much that I didn't even mind when I got a pint of lager tipped over me shortly before I left.

AS for Veiled Threat, I'll leave the last word to local punk Gary Mann, who accosted me shortly before their set ended. "There fuckin' shit-ot, this band," he bellowed in my ear. "There the best thing that's ever gunna come out of this area." He's got a way with words, our Gary.

Pete Scott

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This episode forms the core of his book *McVicar By Himself*, which also contains fragments about McVicar's East End background. He also takes the opportunity to theorise about the psychology of the criminal, the legal system and the uselessness of the so-called reformatory role of penal institutions.

It was the Great Escape, though, and McVicar's recapture in 1970 after someone had grassed him up, which induced Roger Daltrey and Who manager Bill Curbishley to sink just over £1m in a biographical film, 'McVicar', the appearance of which has brought the legend full circle.

In the late Sixties, McVicar's face was exaggeratedly splashed over all the newspapers as Public Enemy Number One. Now, characterised by Roger Daltrey, it adorns film posters. In order to separate myth from reality, I spoke to McVicar himself, hoping he'd shed some light on his transformation, from villain to hero—well, anti-hero... YOU were paroled in 1978 and went to Leicester University for six months where you finished the sociology degree which you'd started in prison. Since then, you've done journalistic work, especially investigative pieces about police "fit-ups"—what else have you been doing?

"I'm writing a book called 'Crooked London'; it'll be profiles of people who are in crime full-time—how they work and get their money, their attitudes to life in general. It'll be novel-ish, not academic. Mainly, since the film started last year, I've been poncing off that—writing articles about it. Anything from the *Sunday Times* to *Men Only*. It's the 'I knew Roger Daltrey' type thing. Terrible, really; but it's the money. I need it; I go out a lot. I like mixing with criminals, and they spend like crazy."

You're credited as the technical adviser on 'McVicar', but how much work did you do on the script itself?

"Tom Clegg, the director, had cobbled together a script from the fucking rubbish a scriptwriter had already written; but I took over and Clegg basically subbed what I wrote. He took a credit, but gave me first billing. I'm not moaning. The actual dialogue and plot, even where it differs from the book, is mine."

McVICAR

MEET John McVicar. His 40-year old body is all muscle and his mind a network of live wires He's a bit of an egocentric but that's okay, because he says plenty that's useful, instructive. You can practically see the mental currents at work: it's as if there's static in his greying, cropped hair.

McVicar's no stranger to another sort of wire: high

security fences around prisons. In 1967, after a history of borstal and several stretches, he was sentenced to 23 years for armed robbery and related charges. McVicar wasn't having any and the following year he escaped. He'd done that before, but not in the spectacular way he got out of Durham's Maximum Security Wing.



Why doesn't the film deal with the more personal, reflective sections of the book?

"Only the escape part was written for publication, the rest was really written for a barrister when I was going to trial again in 1970. He was a distinguished counsel; I knew that if I got his nut, I'd get the judge's nut. Like so many things in this country, court is the old pals act: 'Hello, hello, let's have dinner,' and all that grapevine thing."

"When I came to write the film script, I had arguments with Daltrey who wanted more personal stuff and tried pulling his little bit of muscle. But I knew the personal thing was beyond him, so the script was written with his limitations in mind. Anyway, Clegg, who'd worked on 'The Sweeney', wouldn't have been able to tell a psychological story: he hasn't got that type of mind. He's a mechanic, though: he can make a technically sound film. Besides, I just didn't want to make a personal film."

"I'll tell you what really emasculated 'McVicar'. Because it's a true story, there was always the threat of libel. Steve Berkoff, who plays Harrison, is really Charlie Richardson; but we had to change the name. Now Charlie's on the run; but how could we have predicted that?"

HOW did you get on with Daltrey?

"Pretty fair. I quite like Roger. I don't want to play the old pals act, but I'm friendlier with him than what comes over. He's not embarrassing in the film, that's the main thing. It's not a great movie, but it's one-and-a-half hours' entertainment. It's not bad: I know *that* much. It's not a formula film."

"Libel action on a film is far more disastrous than on a book. People are terrified of a film being held up, the lawyers are incredibly touchy. I can't tell you all the ins and outs of how we managed to get the police corruption thing in."

"That's the film world for you—the conditions under which you make a film. The key to the industry for me is that it's such an expensive industry. I decry capitalism in lots of ways but if you live in a capitalist country and want to make a feature film, you've got to accept the conditions of the market."

You must have had some control, however little?

"I'm not griping. When the idea for the film was first mooted I thought: 'Daltrey and all that—it's gonna be dreadful—take the money and run.' I needed the dough."

"I regret that attitude now. It meant that I never did enough donkey work on the script. I just played it by ear, trial and error, bouncing ideas off. Out every night, late every morning. I regret it, because I could've made it a better film. Most scriptwriters deliver their script and it's: 'Goodbye, George, on your way.' But not only did I write the script, it was also *about* me. This meant that everyone was deferential towards me, and particularly deferential because I'm a criminal and physical: they don't want me coming around cuffing them. Daltrey would come up to me and say: 'What about this? I don't like such and such a line.' I was pretty flexible. At least they consulted me."

Don't you find the music in McVICAR a bit pompous and inflated because of Jeff Wayne's semi-classical arrangements?

It would've benefitted from Townshend getting involved, but he wouldn't. The Who are always at each other's throats: that's probably the reason they stay together. If Daltrey had bombed out with McVICAR, Townshend's attitude would've been: If it's not the Who and you're doing a little number, don't expect me to give you a leg up. That's why Daltrey has film ambitions—to show that he can do his own thing and isn't just riding on the vehicle that Townshend is driving.

Daltrey wrote music for the film; do you think the soundtrack would have been more effective if it had used Who songs from the period in which the film is set—1968-1970?

"I'm not a good judge of that. I don't particularly like the Who's music. I like jazz."

Anything else?

"Not really. Super-tramp..."

You must have liked rock'n'roll once, though, because in *McVicar By Himself* you say you used to be a Teddy Boy?

"I loved it. Don't forget it was the first wave of music that was anti-adult and anti-authoritarian. That's one of the reasons I never got on with the film world: I don't fit into fucking organisations. I won't accept authority, and I treat underlings the same as me. The film world is very hierarchical. It's just like a fucking factory because there's so much money involved."

"I can't stand authority—that's why rock'n'roll appealed to me. Jazz has some of those connotations, too."

What do you think of the youth movements which have happened since the Teds?

"All a pose. I see punk kids running around, and probably they're not weekend punks, but it's a fucking pose. It's dressing up, playing. I quickly got out of Teddy boys. I played it for real: I was in crime at 16. Quite heavy in my own little way, and I was getting a living. I've never worked for anyone ever in my life. Mind, I was quickly put away: I wasn't too clever.

"The period when youth culture was taken most seriously in the late Sixties, with drugs and free love and 'We're gonna change the world'—I thought it was a fucking joke. Of course, you're never that sure when something that big is around you, but it didn't seem right to me. Now you look back and it's so funny and alien. Perhaps it's tragic: it kidded a lot more people than any other cultural trend.

"Ultimately, what determines most people's life chances is the economic system. Okay, this economic system throws up some direct reflections in the cultural sphere, but they don't have any lasting effect. In the long run, it's who owns things that counts.

"It's fascinating to see big stars from the Sixties, like Daltrey. All those people were influenced by the cultural leftist movement that was associated with drugs and pop music. They only paid lipservice to the youth scene and equality at that period, though, because they kept their money. They had a lot to lose: equality's not very nice if you're rich.

"But now—in the late Seventies, with a Conservative government and 'Smash the unions: capitalism is good, and socialism no good' (though we've never fucking tried it)—now, they're starting to feel that they don't have to pay lipservice anymore. It's funny to hear it from them: 'Thatcher's a marvellous woman.' I got that time and time again at Cannes [*Film Festival*]. From the lot of them. Talk to any rock star now—they're all the same."

IT'S interesting in the book where you write about your first crimes being committed on benzedrine?

"Drugs just seemed part of that generation who were just about forgetting their vague memories of the war

fertilised by America and Presley. The economy picked up even more in the Sixties, things seemed to be getting better. The end of that era and way of thinking was signalled with punk. I liked the clothing, adapting old stuff in a time of rising unemployment. In the Seventies/Eighties—with diminishing resources, rising population and the Bomb—people no longer accept the idea of progress: they think the world is going to get worse, not better. Punk is the cultural effervescence of that, the first generation to feel the repercussions."

How do you reconcile your anti-authoritarianism with your liking for criminals, many of whom are ultra-conservative?

"Politically conservative, yes. What you've got to recognise with thieves who live in London (working-class thieves, not the slippery guys in the Stock Exchange) is that they live in a city which isn't dominated by a big monolithic industry like shipbuilding or steel; instead, it's small engineering and clothing industries, markets and the port. Working-class guys in that kind of world see more, see wealth around them and lots of little entrepreneurial openings that are half-crooked. There's more service crime in London because there are more rich people: porn, prostitution, gambling, it's lower class people supplying these, mainly for the rich.

"Criminals know they're at the bottom of the pile and don't like it. I'm not saying they put it that way, but the feeling is there when you talk to them. There's no questioning of society: it's just that they don't like their position at the back of the queue.

"I'm a little bit different, I suppose, because although I like *them* I don't like their conservatism. They're anti-black; they like royalty, and I fucking hate it. The Queen Mother's birthday made me vomit.

I thought it was good the way 'Performance' didn't present the usual romanticised picture of gangsters: they were violent and conservative businessmen.

"I don't know... I didn't like the film much, but I think 'Bad Timing' is brilliant. I like some of the music in it as well—Keith Jarrett's piano, very stark.

'McVicar' shows the camaraderie between prisoners rather than what must be the utter drudgery of their existence, something which comes over strongly in the book.

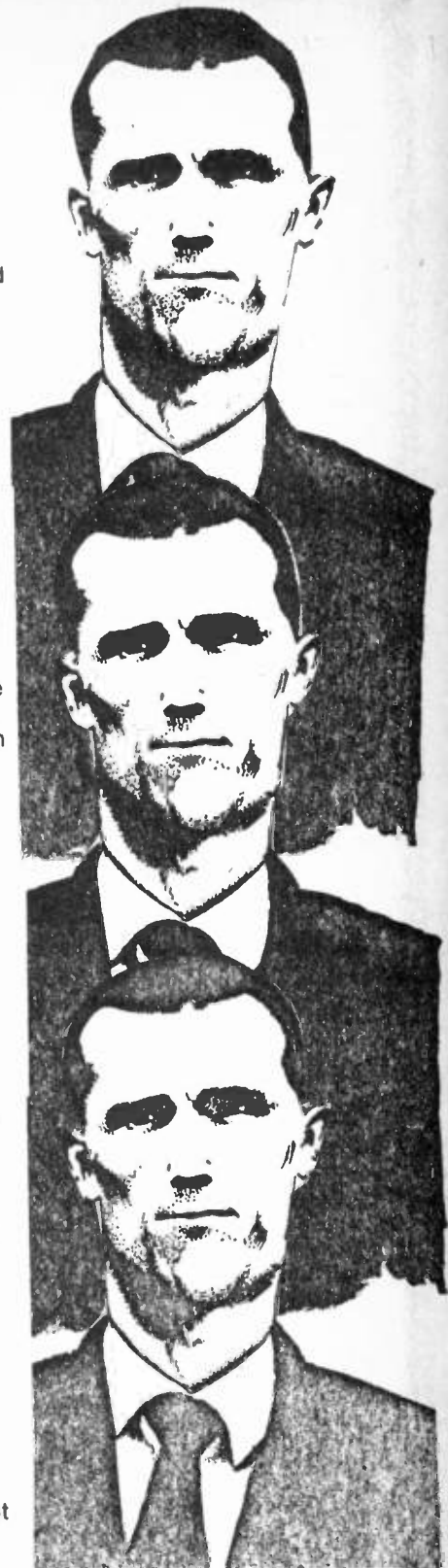
"Unfortunately, when you do films, you pick out the good bits. Therefore the real flavour of prison was lost: that demanding thing of time passing you by. You have the equipment to live but can't exercise it: the frustration and hopelessness takes over.

"Certain things in the film I *do* like. You aren't keyed up to the robbery and there's nobody throwing banknotes up in the air and cars turning over. It's slick and cute. The only bit of drama is with the guy coming down the rope. That's there for the Wallies who've seen too much 'Starsky & Hutch' and can't look at the real world anymore. Our minds are so shaped by entertainment: there's no longer a feel for reality.

That's why on the set you got Daltrey wanting to do a John Wayne and fight six warders. I said to him: Come off it: you can't fight six men. You'd just be smothered and carted off to the cells.

"I did try to have some realism where I could. Apart from the robbery, I like the seediness and sordidness of the informant, I suppose because I've been a victim of betrayal. It's an interesting theme. I was interviewing a guy the other day for this book I'm working on. He'd done a robbery, a long time ago, a terrible tear-up, nicking squad cars, taking policemen out, the whole business except killing. He got captured on the job: the uniformed Wallies caught a real live bankrobber! He got beaten. They stuck his head down the toilet, kicked him in the bollocks. They were doing it anyway, but they wanted names. He held on, thinking: 'Just one more punch, one more kick to go.' I said: 'What would you have done if you'd informed?' He said: 'It would've destroyed me.' He meant it.

"Betrayal: I like the psychological area. Mostly there's no scope for betrayal: the pattern of life doesn't allow it, except for people involved in espionage and crime. That kind of loyalty is far more worthy as a human quality than, say, sexual fidelity."



AFTER the interview, giving me a lift into central London, McVicar continues on the theme of economic demands—globally. His analysis is Marxist, though he says that he doesn't like most Marxists because they seem more like blind religious believers than people who work things out for them-

This sets him off laughing at Dylan and his new found faith: "I knew it, I knew it all along..."

Paul Tickell



DALTREY



Briefly, the film 'McVicar' has its detractors. I'm not one of them, in fact I found it occasionally stunning, often moving, and nearly always totally convincing. It successfully combines tension, humour and realism. Roping in McVicar as technical adviser adds a tangible credibility that would otherwise have been impossible, and Daltrey in the title role gives his best screen performance yet.

"I took the part basically because I felt it was a demanding role and, compared to 'Tommy' that was exactly what I needed. Film acting's very strange. It's the art of doing nothing. The camera kind of photographs your mind working, and when you're really concentrating and getting it right, it feels like you're doing nothing at all! (Laughter). It's very disconcerting." Stage acting is just totally different. Say if you do a month's run on the stage, so many actors will tell you that in the end you're just mouthing the words. You could be thinking about what you're gonna eat for dinner or what you're gonna do after the show! If you did that on film it would be a fuckin' disaster, because that camera seems to photograph through your eyes and onto your brain."

The role is as physically demanding as it must have been emotionally. How did he get himself into shape?

"Well, contrary to belief, I'd never pumped iron before last year. (Laughs) No, I did try and build myself up a little for the part... push-ups, pull-ups, lots of running and stuff. I mean I did work in an iron factory for five years, and I've got big shoulders and a pretty good physique anyway. There was no way I could go in and play McVicar looking like a skinny little weed! After all, John's a very broad fellow."

The carpets in the Montcalm hotel massage your ankles and immediately absorb cigarette ash like some up-market vacuum cleaner. While Iranian businessmen discuss their next financial coup over dry Martini's, the barman fines me ninety pence for a bottle of Lowenbrau. The refined chatter of the clientele, coupled with the air-conditioned, wall to wall opulence, doesn't do much to make me feel at home, and when the barman calls me Sir, I'm already looking over my shoulder.

How did he find working with McVicar?



"I must admit that I found it a bit disconcerting having him around on the set. In retrospect I'd have preferred it if he hadn't have been there so much! He was a help obviously, but psychologically it was a big disadvantage for me, because I'm being scrutinised by the real thing!"

The movie took eight weeks to shoot, and was shot on a comparatively low budget. In the film industry, a million pounds is no big deal.

Unlike most films that purport to be realistic representations of the penal system and criminology in general, 'McVicar' features little, if any, gratuitous violence.

"What I disliked about most films that have come out about prison life, like 'Scum', for instance, is that they are so fucking over the top that it all becomes unbelievable. I find the threat of violence much more sinister than violence itself, you know. That underlying hatred that's there all the time. Actually, what I find most disgusting about the whole prison system is that they pretend it's rehabilitation, when in fact it's not. It's there purely and simply as punishment. I just wish they would own up to what it is, and not pretend it's something else. If I've got any banners to wave about prison reform that's it. The hypocrisy of the fuckin' thing. And then there's another big game they play, you know, the Parole Game."

Upstairs in the Penthouse suite is Roger Daltrey, his minder, whose name I can't recall, and a charming lady from Keith Altham's office, Altham being The Who's publicist. Having been a Who fan for longer than I care to remember, I's as nervous as a stoat, but Daltrey is affable, patient, and eager to talk. His hair is closely shorn, as it is in the movie he's there to plug. He looks much younger than he's entitled to. The angular features are tanned, and he laughs a lot — especially at his own jokes!

Look at Charlie Richardson, I mean, he's been up for parole seven times. Seven times! And they never tell you why you've been turned down. Why do they even bother to have a parole system at all? Richardson got sent down for torturing people, and that's exactly what they've been doing to him!"

The riot sequence in the film, which due to McVicar's advice, becomes a virtual documentary of what actually took place in Durham's top security 'B' wing, contains some of the most harrowing and disturbing footage in the picture. The cons occupy the Record Office, and once they've barricaded themselves in, take the time out to read through the stilted and superficial Home Office jargon that masquerades as an appraisal of their lives. The amateur psychology would be funny if it wasn't for the fact that these 'records' determine the future of anyone detained at Her Majesty's pleasure and leisure. Worst of all, one of the cons stumbles across a transcript of what in reality are the Brady/Hindley tapes, but which, for obvious reasons, are referred to in the film by another name. Daltrey feels strongly about such matters.

"The fact that somebody inside for say, a bank job, should have to associate with any of those fucking nonce cases is just disgusting. I think those kind of people should be rubbed out. I mean it. If they let Brady out tomorrow he'd be dead in three hours, without a doubt... But that was a very extreme case, as you know."

What scenes were the hardest for him to do?



"The riot scene was very difficult. Very difficult. All the prison stuff got very depressing. I was glad to break out! (Laughs). But I enjoyed all the scenes I did with Adam Faith and Cheryl Campbell."

Adam Faith plays the role of Walter 'Angel Face' Probyn, and Cheryl Campbell is Daltrey's screen wife. Both turn in impeccable performances.

As Daltrey is basically a rock singer making the dodgy transition into the acting world, I wondered how he fared with that notoriously incestuous clique that are in the movie business, darling?

"It's a horrible feeling when you can see that film people are thinking, 'Um, here's another fucking rock 'n' roll star who thinks he can act!' (Laughs). No, I got on with most of them alright I suppose. Someone like Adam is great to work with — I cast him as Probyn as soon as I'd read the book, and I think we really do make a very good team — I'd like to work with him again in a kind of duo situation. Maybe that'll come off in the future. There's a real chemistry between us."

Steven Barkoff was very good as Ronnie Harrison?

"Yeah, wasn't he great? He was in 'Clockwork Orange' you know. And he wrote that stage play 'East'. A very talented bloke — he's just finished playing Hamlet at the Roundhouse."

What was it like working with Tom Clegg (who directed), as opposed to Ken Russell?

"Russell isn't an actor's director whereas Tom is. Tom was a knockout to work with . . . brilliant. I found it a really good experience. All I wish is that I'd worked with a few more people before I'd worked with Russell. I was very, very naive when I did 'Tommy' with him, and if I'd just had a bit more experience I could have given so much more. I'd love to go back and work with him again, I mean, even his bad films are as good as most peoples good films! The more people like him in the movie industry the better it will be."

As one who finds Russell's movies generally pretentious and boring to the extreme ('The Devils excluded'), I hurriedly move on to ask about the soundtrack album for *McVicar*. The single, "Free Me", freely illustrates just what an amazing vocalist Jaltrey can be, but didn't we feel that some of the other stuff loses out when removed from the context of the film?

"Uh, yeah, but then it is a soundtrack album. To be quite honest I don't think the film needed a soundtrack . . . but it was a contractual thing with the people who put the money up for the movie — Polydor. The arrangement was that if they put the money up, we had to supply a soundtrack and The Who had to play on it. It was either that or we didn't get the film made. I do think we made the most of what we could do with it. Like we got off Wayne in to produce and arrange it because he gets that sort of clinical sound — just a bit cold — which I think helped it. It certainly works with the film."

You once said that if you hadn't become a rock 'n' roll star, you could easily have turned to crime yourself. How do you think you'd have coped with a sentence like *McVicar*'s?

"Well, I think people often misunderstand what I meant when I said that (Laughs). No, I would never have been a bank robber, nor a *McVicar*. I like to think I would have been more successful than him and not that violent. (Laughs) What I meant was that I can understand why people do it, you know.

Sixteen years old — that sort of time — some people just have more ego . . . they need money, birds, and cars. Luckily for me I had it with the band. You know. Bunsen in my pocket, all the birds I wanted, and a van to shag 'em in. (Laughs) I mean one of the reasons for doing this movie was to present an accurate picture of prison that would not only keep people from going down, but hopefully keep the screws out as well! (Laughs). We were determined to make the film a realistic look at the criminal world, not a blown-up, fantasy land version that Hollywood would give you. As for me doing that amount of bird, I think that you've just gotta try and get out, like, they can't give you any longer than that! I'm pretty strong willed, maybe I could have survived. How I would have turned out afterwards I just don't know — John himself — after two years out is still not particularly stable."

Were there any further movie projects in the pipeline?

"There may be this thing with Adam, I'd like to do that. At least I've got myself an agent now, maybe I'll get to do something more international. I just hope that this film closes the door on all that 'pop star trying to act' stuff, 'cos I know that given the chance and the time, I can do anything. I'm completely dedicated and I love film. I want another challenging role . . . I want to play a psychopathic, gay bank manager (Laughs)!"

At this point I felt we'd talked about the film and related subjects quite enough. How are things with the Who?

"Couldn't be better, really. We're going to finish off our new album in October and November and it should be out some time in February. And we're going to play some small gigs in England, universities and things, 3,000 seaters. I mean, if you cut through all the hype and the bullshit, people want to fucking see us! I really believe we're a fucking good rock 'n' roll band . . . but if you pick up a copy of *Sounds* or something, you'd find it hard to believe the Who exist! I fuckin' refuse to talk to them, as far as I'm concerned, and my career with the Who, they're just totally bleedin' redundant.

There's a whole generation of kids out there who hopefully are wise enough not to miss out on us, and I know that we can show them something — and we will."

How was Kenney Jones fitting in. Alright?

"Kenney needs an occasional kick up the arse! (Laughs). No, it's just that he cruises sometimes, it's the old bad habits that come from The Faces. The Who have never cruised on stage. Never. The motivation is always bang on

nobody cruises with the Who — not while I'm with them anyway! (Laughter).

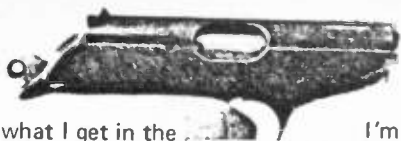
I tell him that I'd been fortunate enough to Townshend join the Clash on stage at Brighton Pavilion. A fusion of musical generations that was as significant as it was astonishing.

"Yah, Pete's just so good, and so under-rated too. What I really love about him is his inventiveness — he never plays the same solo twice. I'm so pleased he's got his solo album out. Although there are certain melody lines there that turn me off a little, generally the whole thing knocks me out. Me, I find it hard to identify with the kids in the new wave bands . . . I have to kind of put myself back to when I was that age. I do like the music, though. Jimmy Pursey played me some Cockney Rejects stuff ages ago and I thought it was absolutely terrible! Then about a year after, I was sitting in some hotel room in Vienna — of all places — and I had fuck all to do so I was fiddling about with the radio when suddenly the Cockney Rejects came on . . . and I thought they were great! You can't just dismiss it all, you know. We were abysmal when we first started some people would say we still are! (Laughter). I think that the Sex Pistols are sadly missed, but if they were around now, they'd probably be boring old farts like us (Guffaw)!"

It was about here that our conversation so far very amicably — turned slightly sour. Spotting a copy of that morning's *Daily Mail* on a table, I innocently ask if that's what he reads?

"I read all the papers the *Mail*, the *Express*, the *Sun* and the *Mirror*. That's the only way you can get any real perspective about what's going on.





I don't believe what I get in the *Mail* anymore than I believe what the *Mirror* says."

How did he feel things were "going on", then?

"I'm very optimistic about Britain. There's a whole new future in front of Britain, we're facing a new industrial revolution and I don't think we should be negative about it by keeping people in old jobs that nobody wants... Britain can be so creative, let's use that creativity, we could clean up! It ain't gonna change when you've got unions peddling nineteenth century ideas. I mean the unions are very rich people, and what do they invest their money in? Works of art and fucking pension funds. I just don't believe that the Labour party represents the working man any more than any other fucking party. At least Thatcher's up there doing it! After all, she's the only radical we've got, no one else is gonna take it on. I'm sounding like a fuckin' Tory now, but I ain't. I'm a working class boy that was born and bred to work in their factories.

I'm a misfit, I escaped. But I'm not left wing either. I used to be, but they've proved to me that they're as devious as anybody else."

But surely there are nearly two million people out of work as a direct result of Thatcher's policies?

"Were things any better under the Labour party? I really feel for the unemployed, and I mean that. It's not so much the money, it's that feeling of having no fucking purpose. But I also feel for the people who have to do boring factory work all their lives. With new technology we can get people out of doing that — out of the old steel mills — and teach them something else. Something more creative. Like when the computer came along, people said there would be massive redundancies. There weren't, there were X million jobs created inside the computer industry!"

I felt that working with Silicon Chips would hardly be "a more creative" way of spending one's time, but Daltrey pressed on.

DALTREY

"Don't get me wrong, I couldn't go out and join the Conservative party anymore than I could join the fucking National Front. It's like, working in a factory for five years... and then being a rock and roll star. (Laughter). I just think I'm extremely lucky to have seen both sides of the fence."

For anyone that's interested, I liked Roger Daltrey. I couldn't help it really, despite our political differences. After nearly 17 years as a rock idol, he seemed surprisingly unaffected, and what's more important, totally honest. He's retained his cockney accent, an endearing ability to laugh at himself, and he avoids all the bullshit that usually goes hand in hand with stardom. It's up to you to decide whether he's a regular geezer or just a good actor... I think he's both.

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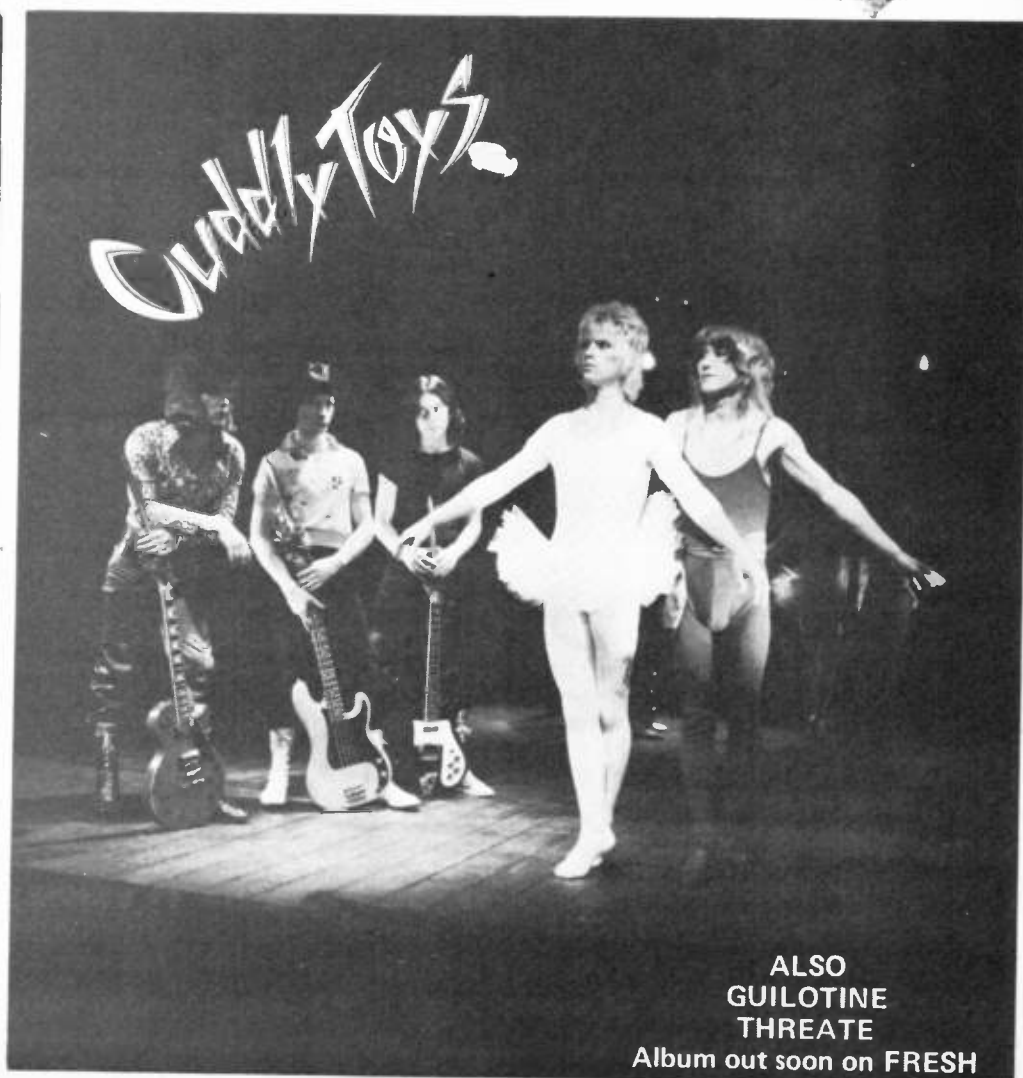
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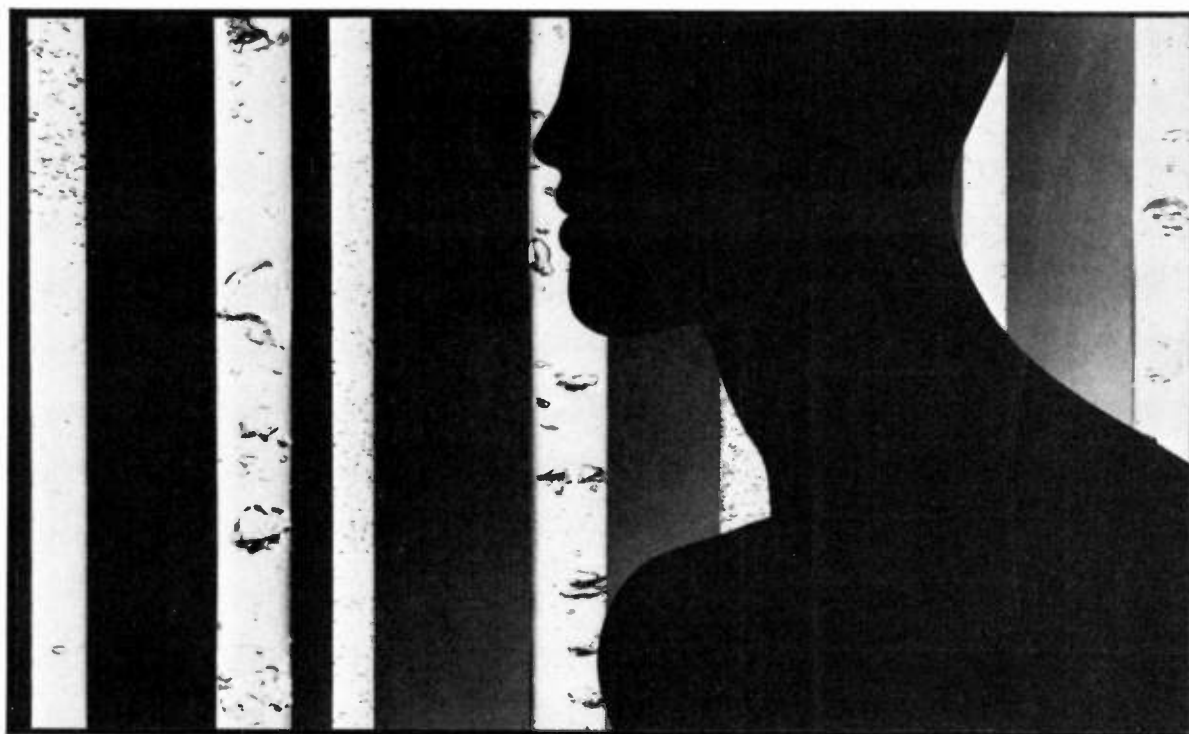
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ISLAND

FIRE IN THE BUSH

What's Kate Bush doing in *ZigZag*? It's a fair chance that's the thought flitting through your noggin as you espy our rather tasteful cover. Well I thought it would be interesting, a laugh and definitely on for you lot to get a peek at the lady without all the 'oo's yer boyfriend, then?' or 'drop 'em' techniques so favoured when she's in the media sights. Also, because she seems to get roundly slagged, pissed on or sycophanted over every time she pops up in the Music Weeklies. These sort of injustices and the prejudices they foster could've kept you from giving Kate Bush a fair listen.

Kate's been boxed and packaged in shiny paper with a little ribbon on top, it seems. Safe but 'odd' enough to let the purchaser feel outrageous displaying it on the coffee table.

Well let's see. If you profess to like Modern music which is breaking down the fences and capturing true emotion, Kate Bush has just as much right to be there with A Teardrop Explodes, Bowie or whoever you care to name. A different field, yeah, but she's capable of moments of heart-stopping passion, breath-taking drama and beauty. She's also very honest. The characters might be put on but that's it.

I'm not gonna trot out Kate's history, just that by her mid-teens she'd already reached a staggering level of creativity and success. Number one with 'Wuthering Heights', followed by the haunting 'Man With No Arse In His Trousers', 'Wow' and the immaculate 'Breathing'.

There've been three albums — 'The Kick Inside', 'Lionheart' and the new 'Never Forever', which sees Kate starker, stretched out and covering a wider range of subjects, including the eerily anti-nuclear war 'Breathing' and Mother's torment of 'Army Dreamers'.

Kate had to be persuaded to do this interview. She didn't believe we wanted to talk to her! Thought we'd come in and stitch her up, I s'pose. However, once she'd perused a stack of old ZigZags, a meeting with a still-rather-puzzled Kate, took place on a Friday afternoon at EMI.

Kate Bush has just done the *Daily Express*. Now it's me... but, no way does she just press her nose and gush out the conveyor-belt niceties. We talk for over 90 minutes touching all manner of subjects in an enthusiastic flow. Quite deep at times — "it's like two

psychiatrists talking," she said after. I left impressed with her honesty and sense of awe, which, in the wrong hands, could be the reasons detractors have a field day. She don't deserve it, even if you can't stick her music. And I'm warning you, don't just take my word on Kate Bush then say I wasted your fiver — it is down to taste, but if you've got any feelings or just like music, have a go. It's about the only music I like that I can't dance to!

So, Kate, do you think your audience is restricted by these prejudices against you?

"Yeah, I think I'm conscious of people doing that in certain areas because of the way they've seen me and I think that's inevitable. I don't blame them. It's really good for me to speak to other magazines."

It'd be good if people could see that you're doing stuff that's pretty new too. You could never mistake Kate Bush, for anyone else.

"Oh great, I'd like to think that but it's not for me to say. When you first come out people say you're the new thing. Then when you've been around for two or three years you become old hat and they want to sweep you under the carpet as being MOR, which I don't feel I am from the artistic point of view. It doesn't feel like MORE to me at all, although I wouldn't call it Punk! Sometimes it's not even rock... I don't know, I think it's wrong to put labels on music. Even Punk, that's really just a label for convenience — it covers so many areas. I think sometimes it can actually kill people being put under labels. I think it's something that shouldn't be encouraged. If people could just accept Music as Music and people as people, not having to compare them to other things. That's

something we naturally try to do."

The way you're presented in the Press could alienate some people, I s'pose.

"Don't you think any form of publicity alienates the person who is not involved in it? I think that's part of the whole process. That's why I feel that the thing about albums and gigs and even radio, is that you are directly communicating with your audience, and with papers and appearances on TV you're not really relating directly."

Does the bad criticism hurt you?

"No, I don't get hurt. I've read a few reviews of the album and some of them really couldn't stand me, probably much more than the album. In fact, one guy didn't like me so much he had to write four columns of 'I can't stand Bush!' That's cool. Sometimes I find it very funny. I think a bad review is a good omen in some papers."

At least it's a positive reaction...

"Yeah, if they really hate you it's just as good as really liking you, you're really getting under their skin so much that they've got to speak about it. It's great!"

And the album still came in at number one.

"I can't believe it, still. Every time I tell someone I feel like I'm lying. I couldn't have asked more for such an important step in what I'm doing, because I feel this album is a new step for me. The other two albums are so far away it's not true. They really aren't me anymore. I think this is something if the public could try and open up about. When you stereotype artists you always expect a certain kind of sound."

"I'd really like to be able to leave myself open to any form of music, so if I wanted to I could do funk tracks on the next album, I could do classical, I could do Bossa Novas. I think it's best to stay as open as you can. As a person

I'm changing all the time, and the first album is very much like a diary of me at that time — I was into a very high range. The same with the second album, and I feel this is perhaps why this one is like starting again. It's like the first album on a new level. It's much more under control."

You took a long time doing it.

"Yeah, it did, it took a lot of work, but it was very beautiful work because it's so involving and it's so like emotions. It's totally unpredictable and you can fall in love with it or you can hate it or if you want to you can ignore it. You know, all the things that you can do with people." That's one of the main things I like about the music — the emotions running around.

"I think everyone is emotional and I think a lot of people are afraid of being so. They feel that it's vulnerable. Myself I feel it's the key to everything and that the more you can find out about your emotions the better. Some of the things that come into your head can be a surprise when you're thinking."

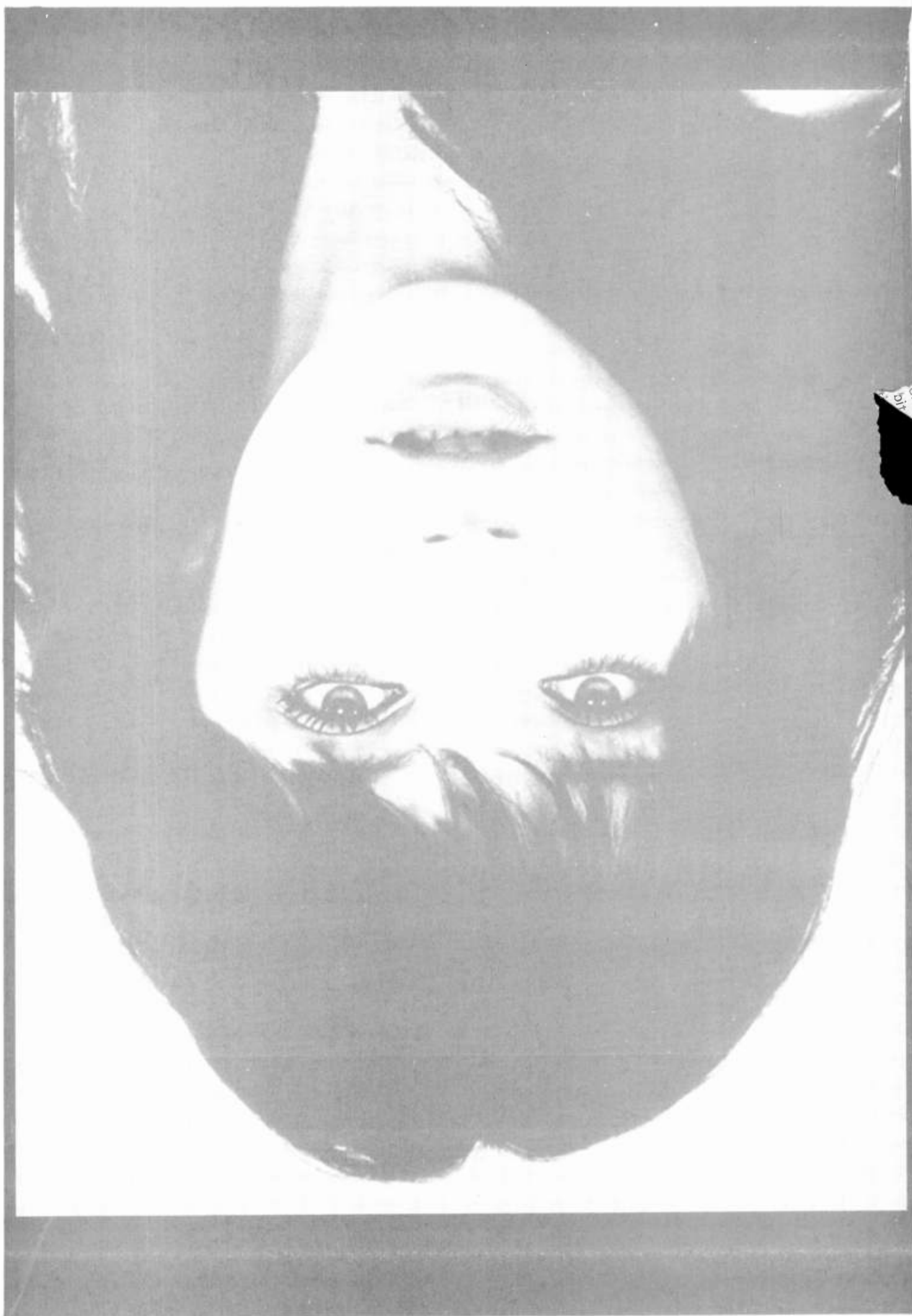
The next single is 'Army Dreamers', which sounds a wistful little waltz-time on first hearing, though a sombre. Kate adopts a lilting Irish accent — all very nice, but listen to the words and she's mourning her dead son, killed in the army.

*Mourning in the aerodrome
The weather warmer, he is colder*

*Four men in uniform to carry home
My little soldier.*

Heavy one for a Top Tenner, eh? (What a nice little tune, will think Radio One) I thought Kate was singing about Northern Ireland, but not necessarily...

"It's not actually directed at Ireland. It's included, but it's much more embracing the whole European thing, that's why it says BFPO in the first chorus, to try and broaden it away from Ireland."



like
ditty
g

What about the Irish accent?

"The Irish accent was important because the treatment of the song is very traditional, and the Irish would always use their songs to tell stories, it's the traditional way. There's something about an Irish accent that's very vulnerable, very poetic, and so by singing it in an Irish accent it comes across in a different way. But the song was meant to cover areas like Germany, especially with the kids that get killed in manoeuvres, not even in action. It doesn't get brought out much but it happens a lot. I'm not slagging off the Army, it's just so sad that there are kids who have no O'levels and nothing to do become soldiers and it's not really what they want. That's what frightens me."

A track that's been picked up on by slavering perverso-moralists and them who don't bother to listen is 'The Infant Kiss', a gentle item about a woman disturbed by the feelings a little boy draws out of her. A taboo subject but handled in a lullaby refrain with incisive but tender non-gross lyrics.

*I cannot see and let,
Something happen I'll
regret*

*Ooh, he scares me,
There's a man behind
those eyes
I catch him when I'm
beriding,
Ooh, how he frightens me,
When they whisper
privately*

"The thing that worries me is the way people have started interpreting that song. They love the long word — paedophilia? It's not about that at all. It's not the woman actually fancying the young kid. It's the woman being attracted by a man inside the child. It just worries me that there were some people catching on to the idea of there being paedophilia rather than just a distortion of a situation where there's a perfectly normal innocent boy with the spirit of a man inside, who's extremely experienced and lusty. The woman can't cope with the distortion. She can see there's some energy in the child that's not normal and she can't place it yet she has a very pure maternal love for the child and it's only little things like when she goes to give him a kiss at night that she realises there is a distortion and it's really freaking her out. She doesn't far little

boys, she's got a normal straight sexual life, yet this thing is happening to her. I really like the distortion of the situation."

Nice touch having such a gentle, un lusty backing to put this over in ...

"I like the idea of making the musical and subject matter at odds. Like in 'Army Dreamers' the obvious thing to do is write a very slow, heavy song, but if you do that it always becomes too obvious, less easy for people to accept. When it is something so heavy, if you disguise it in a light tune or something happy, it will be accepted and then when it's actually realised it will probably hit home a lot harder."

Lots of possibilities for the stage show on this LP.

"Yeah, I'm trying to do another tour. The problem is money and time and I have to make a decision very soon, what I'm doing next, whether it's another album or a tour. I want to do them both so much."

Which ever one, it'll be the next year of your life.

"That's exactly it, and I think people find that hard to see. It's just the more I do things the longer they take, specially if they're gonna be right, and I know that's a whole 'nother thing. That's one of the reasons I'm not so quick on deciding."

I asked Kate what she listened to at home: Stevie Wonder, reggae, Bowie, early Roxy, Steely Dan, rock-jazz ... and our old hero Captain Beefheart!

"He's so new. I'm really surprised that the English market at the moment won't let him in, cos he's brilliant. He's not mad at all, it's perfectly real. I'm sure he's in touch with Mars or something."

I asked Kate if she was into the occult or Astrology or anything cos the words and bat-demon visuals sometimes suggest a bit of a fascination with all that, but drew a blank.

However, "I do believe in spirits, and I also believe that people communicate by more than word of mouth. There are people like headons sitting on top of hills. You must have some friends that you can just feel calling you some days. They're just saying 'help!' and you pick it up."

She's well into the individual, "stating your presence", citing Punk as an example. But everyone's got the same insecurities and fears. "It's so bloody easy to be forgotten."

It's so easy to go under unless you fight. Everyone has to fight and there are different ways of fighting."

This is why Kate's chosen to bare herself in the public marketplace (shuddup back there) where they often hurl rotten eggs and she has to come up with regular unit-shifting Product, rather than just fulfil herself artistically in a little dance troupe or whatever.

"I'm definitely trying to state my presence. I must be. It's important for me to do things on a one-man basis. I seem to work, produce, create, better as one entity, and then involve others for feedback. That seems to be the ideal way for me to work. You see, musically 'nuff, I feel I've only just begun. I'm not doing what I want to do musically yet. I'm getting there but it's not where near what I actually want. I'd love to play you some of the new stuff I'm doing."

What are the new songs like, then?

"They're much more up. I'm getting to work much more easily with rhythm boxes and synthesizers at home and I've got some time. That's what I need and this year is the first I've really had any time to breathe, to experimenting all the time and finding new things. It's great, all the toys that are around to play with — digital delay, chorus pedal, you could write a song purely round the sound."

Do you ever feel the pressures of success (that old one)?

"Sometimes. It really depends on the areas I go in. When I'm in the studios I'm not aware of my success. It's only really when you do the rounds (Green Man, Sex, Grapes, Harrow, Barclay, Noy's Oily Inn ... I sorry of promotions, things like this. But the pressures of success I think are something that come from the inside. Probably more than outside in, and that's got a great deal to do with the kind of person. The big trap for a lot of artists is because they're normally very sensitive people, maybe slightly neurotic. That's why they write, because there's things they've got to get out. Normally what goes along with that makeup in a person is this neurosis, this insecurity, and it's inevitable that someone who is like that, when they're put in a situation where there's pressures things they can't

actually see as reality, are gonna crack. They find the pressures too much. They lose themselves and everything they have and that's very sad. I don't intend to let pressures of success make me go under and lose everything I have. Pressures of life, yes, I think that's something that can happen to anyone. There's nothing that can happen to anyone. There's nothing you can do about it except to try and be as strong as you can. Pressures of success are something so meaningless anyway. Success is a label other people like to put on you so they can go (points) 'success!'. I don't feel successful. There's so much more that I have to do to feel that I've really done what I want to."

Yeah, but you have shifted a lot of the old units, Kate.

"Yeah, which don't mean anything to me. My success is in terms of fulfilment of my art, perfection. That's something I'll never reach, I never will, and I have to accept that."

Talk gets on to "Breathing". It's a bleeding masterpiece that one. She sings from the viewpoint of a baby who hasn't yet popped out and doesn't really want to cos that's the point of making all that effort and then getting blown up.

*Outside gets in, through
her skin*

*I've been out before
But this time it's much safer
in*

*Last night, in the dark
Just a bright light
My radar sent me danger
But my instincts tell me to
Keep Breathing*

The backing is perfect. Resigned and mournful with deep atomic rumblings and a understated impact. Kate sings straight, no trills or trills just deep foreboding despair. Her best yet.

It's great to hear you say that. From my own viewpoint that's the best thing I've ever written. It's the best thing I've ever produced. I call the 'my little symphony', cos I think every writer, whether they admit it or not, loves the idea of writing their symphony. The song says something for me, whereas many of my others haven't. I've got to level that I would like them to be, though they're trying to. Often it's because the song won't allow it, and that song allowed everything that I wanted to be done to it.

"That track was easy to build up. Although it had to be huge it was just speaking, say-

ing what had to be put on it. In many ways, I think the most exciting thing was making the backing track. The session men, their lines, they understood what the song was about, but at first there was no emotion, and that track was demanding so much emotion. It wasn't until they actually played with feeling that the whole thing took off. When we went and listened I wanted to cry, because of what they put into it. It was so tender. It meant a lot to me that they'd put in as much as they could, because it must get hard for session guys. They get paid by the hour and so many people don't want to hear the emotion. They want clear, perfect tuning, a Good Sound but often the out-of-tuneness, the uncleanness, doesn't matter as much as the emotional content that's in there. I think that's much more important than the technicalities."

The NME review said the album was all glossy dressing and little else.

"Well the other two albums were what I would call glossy and I could understand them saying that. I feel this one is the rawest it's been, it's raw in its own context. I feel perhaps the guy just wouldn't let me in and that was the problem. He saw me as this chocolate box, Sweetie little thing who has no reality in there, no meaning of life. That's cool, I really understand that, but I like to think people will let me in and I'm lucky to have so many that do.

"I think it's good for you to read reviews like that about yourself, because they don't matter, and although people are going to read them and believe them, it's good for you to realise in some ways that people can say anything they want about you. It shouldn't matter what they say. I think the public are starting to realise the hype in media manipulation, the propaganda. I pick up papers and read something about someone and I start believing it, and I realise, 'God I'm doing just what other people are doing to me!' I think journalism could be such an art and some people treat it as such, others use it as an extension of their egos. You get nothing out of reading it other than this thick blanket of meeee!"

"Breathing' and 'Army Dreamers' are social comment songs, which you ain't really done before, have you?"

"No. I've thought a lot

about that, the political aspect — this is when people label them as Political Songs. But it's only because the political motivations move me emotionally. If they hadn't it wouldn't have got to me. It went through the Emotional Centre, when I thought, 'ah... OW!' And that made me write.

"The nuclear thing is such a real danger, the fact buttons have been pushed and planes have gone into action. It's something to be scared of, it's real. Lots of us don't think it's going to happen. We're the moments saying something about it. But the heart is not gonna change the world or anything, but at least people can think more about it."

It's good that you've got a big following amongst very young kids and are doing this cos they'll have to know more than just Janet and John books and TISWAS soon...

"So many of them knew, you know. They hear a lot more than the Media generally give. They really understand the song and I don't think it frightens them but really upsets a lot of them. That's good — it's not nice but it's good that that actually got through to them."

"When I wrote the song it was from such a personal viewpoint, it was just through having heard a thing for years and it had never really got through to me, till the moment it hit me I hadn't really been moved. Then I suddenly realised the whole devastation and disgusting arrogance of it all. Something that we've not created

— the earth — trying to destroy. The only thing we are is a breathing mechanism, everything is breathing, without it we're just nothing. All we've got is our lives and I was worried that when people heard it, they were going to think, 'she's exploiting commercially this terrible real thing?' I was very worried that people weren't going to take me from my emotional standpoint rather than the commercial one. But they did, which is great. I was worried that people wouldn't want to worry about it cos it's so real. I was also worried that it was too negative, but I do feel that there is hope in the whole thing, just for the fact that it's a message from the future. It's not from now, it's from a spirit that may exist in the future, a non-existing spiritual embryo who sees all and who's been round time and time again so they know what the world's all

about. This time they don't wanna come out because they know they're not gonna live. It's almost like the mother's stomach is a big window that's like a cinema screen, and they're seeing all this terrible chaos."

Another track on the album, 'Egypt', paints a convincing picture of a country that ain't all sun and sphinxes. Kate, who hasn't been there, clashes the romantic view against the reality of starving and disease. I remember that TV show she did round Christmas when several 'Never Forgets' tracks got previewed. 'Egypt' was one, illustrated by a faded Kate fronting a backdrop of both sides of Egypt, when getting set upon by two Phantom Flan Flinger demons as the eerie music built up.

The song's very much someone who's not gone there thinking about Egypt, going on Egypt, it's so romantic, 'the pyramids!' Then in the tracks there's meant to be the reality of Egypt, the conflict. It's meant to be how blindly we're something — 'oh, what a beautiful world,' you know, and there's shit and sewers all around you."

Coo, this is turning into a marathon, have I've got not enough room... I know I'm feeling totally at ease with Kate. I dunno what I was expecting, the afore-mentioned standards answers, a bevy of "anagnors", the space hippy or that comprehensible new blog that's just emerged... got more of that, just a highly flexible girl totally into what she's up to. Her little-girl South London voice, bubbling enthusiasm and turn of phrase could be construed as naive or happy gushing, as I said, bait for the detractors. But it's obvious her head's screwed well on. She's an Artist and all that comes with 'em, not to mention the real EMI-manipulated? Ballo...

Next we talk about another track, 'The Wedding List', and its theme of revenge... "the fertility..."

The song sees Kate blasting a hole in the geezer who shot her husband-to-be as they get to the chuppah. She has revenge as something that takes you up like green bile and as dangerous as a gun, but admits she's never been that screwed up by it beyond the usual playground twist.

"Revenge is so powerful and futile in the situation in the song. Instead of just one person being killed it's three.

Her husband, the guy who done it, who was right on top of the wedding list with the silver plates... and her, because when she's done it there's nothing left, all her ambition and purpose has all gone into that one guy, she's dead, there's nothing there."

The conversation drifts into 'Fade Away' — Kate's fantasy of all the dead musicians in heaven. But it's not just a jolly fairy story. The song tries to deflate the awe around dying and act as a comfort for those who don't fancy it to the point of hysteria. She mentions those people who you must've read about in the Sunday papers who have been clinically dead for a few minutes and report walking a corridor to paradise. "None of those people are frightened by death anymore, it's almost something they're looking forward to. All of us have such a deep fear of death. It's the ultimate unknown, at the same time it's their ultimate purpose, that's what we're here for. So I thought this thing about the death fear — I like to think I'm coming to terms with it and other people are too. The song was really written after someone very special died."

"Although the song had been formulated before and had to be written as a comfort to those people who are afraid of dying, it was also this thing of the music and energies in us that aren't physical, art, the love in people — it can't die cos where does it go? It seems really that music could carry on in radio form, radio waves... there are people who swear they pick up symphonies from Chopin, Schubert. We're really transient, everything to do with us is transient, except for these non-physical things that we don't even control..."

And with that we more or less called it a day, me to float to the Green Man, Kate to booze up her number one.

I find this rather amusing: Here's EMI's execs, grasping champers with hands rubbed raw from glee at their album charts coup. Here's Kate, knocked-out and smiling with delight, saying right things to right people everywhere, but not moving an inch. She's got them got a public, but there's much more to come despite all this.

Fairer hearing and digging beyond popular conceptions are highly recommended. I want this to help. Kate Bush cures sore ears.

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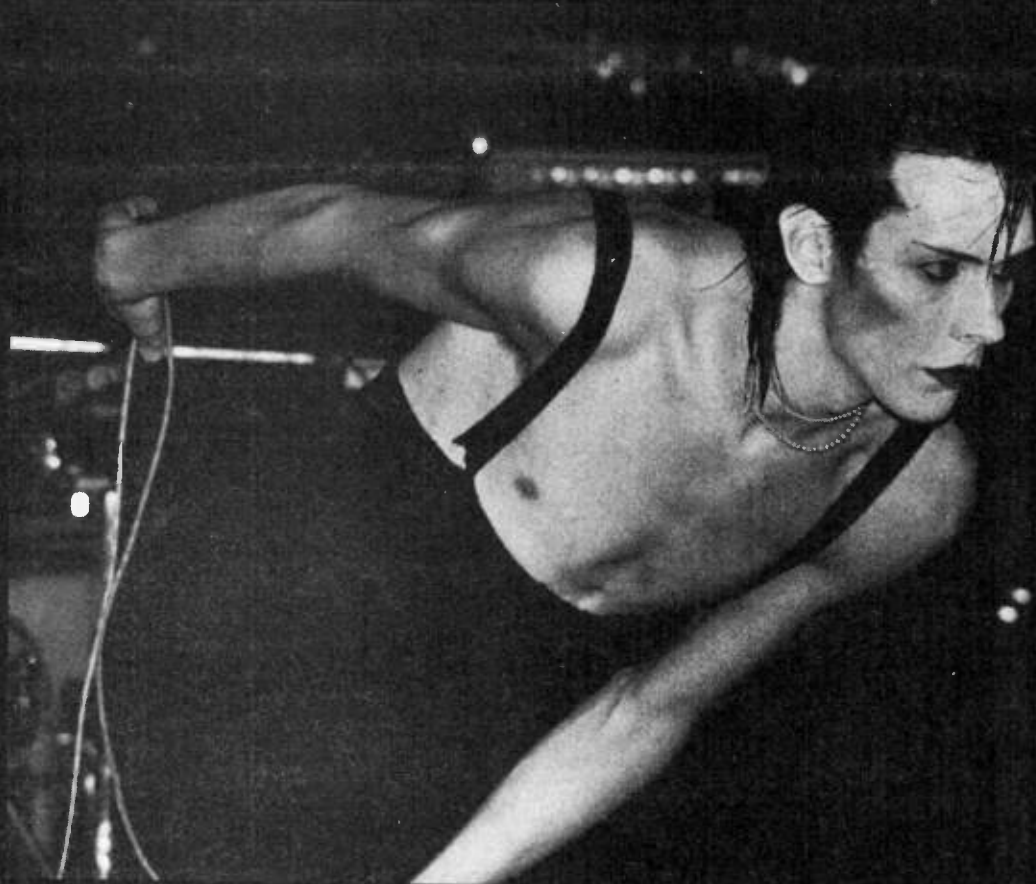
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Glaxo Babies were formed in late 1977 and built up a steady following in their native Bristol area. They signed to Heartbeat Records a year later and released a four track E.P. entitled THIS IS YOUR LIFE in February 1979. The E.P. led to a much repeated John Peel session and a follow-up single CHRISTINE KEELER - and also a track on the highly acclaimed AVON CALLING album. The band then went through several personnel changes before releasing their first album NINE MONTHS TO THE DISCO in March 1980. This album is a selection of unreleased tracks recorded during the band's early days.

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BAUHAUS

PHOTO: DAVID JENNY

PHOTO: SIMON REEVES

BAUHAUS

Witnessing Bauhaus live for the first time can be an unsettling experience for any God fearin' suburban boy. I didn't know which way to turn, as long as I didn't let that man with the microphone out of my sight...

That was ten months ago, as support at a barely attended Doll by Doll gig. Nothing, but nothing could detract from Peter Murphy's presence as he writhed and wrestled with a strobe light. Like the early Furs gigs I remember people hardly dared turn their backs. Bauhaus seemed to be playing almost anywhere and everywhere at the time. Obviously such frenzied gigging was bound to do them good and a stint at Billy's helped secure them a dedicated, almost fanatical following. The air reeked of fashionable perversity and the band teased the audience. Pete Murphy's peek-a-boo games seemed more intimidating every time.

The 'Bela Lugosi Dead' single had already been around for a while and their first for 4AD (along with Mute, London's only worthwhile indie) 'Dark Entries' appeared early this year. I must admit I found it a bit of a miscarriage, though any qualities the thrash of 'Dark Entries' lacked were made up on the atmospheric mumbblings of the untitled B-side.

Bauhaus seem to have grown with remarkable speed during the last few months, their gigs and audience getting bigger by the week, although perhaps what's important is they've kept their original ideas in mind and had the guts to see them executed. Without a

doubt they are one of the best things around live, the charge from seeing them is perhaps only rivalled by Killing Joke.

I wasn't really sure what to expect when it came to an interview with them, indeed several times on my journey up to Northampton I wished I had brought my hip-flask!

Confident and passionate though they about the band, Bauhaus are also friendly and intelligent. Their willingness to try and also talk about their ideas really is a breath of fresh air, not pretentiousness and naivety.

OK I'm not agreeing with everything Bauhaus say and anyone can make mistakes but

because a band doesn't meet expected preconceptions or prerequisites...

Pete: "I'm always conscious of that moment the tape recorder is switched on, the person you're just talking to is going to have to go over everything you've been saying."

Just like the instigators of the Bauhaus movement in Germany in the 20's the band have an unending determination to do away with convention at all levels. I can't help but wonder if they're letting themselves in for more than they bargain for, not least of all a good whipping from the weekies. The Ant's attempts at breaking down barriers were only met with superficial cries of cheap SM chic. Whether Bauhaus avoid the pitfalls of the cynical old biz or not, the tribal nature of their following is hardly likely to forsake them if they're not in favour with the music press. The impression of decadence, particularly sexual, they give will win them fans. People's fascination with pornography must be one of the biggest markets.

I said I found much of Pete's onstage piss-taking very funny when it comes to the hecklers they sometimes seem to get, and overall they are a good deal more amusing than

credited. After all you don't need to come out with the old Piranahs type bollocks to crack a joke.

Pete: "I'm glad you mentioned that, people are often too busy trying to read something into a band that isn't there to remember that there are human beings involved."

Do you feel your onstage personalities taking over at times?

Pete: I think it's too easy for the onstage creature to creep into your everyday existence. It's sometimes almost like being schizophrenic anyway, but you can let it get out of hand."

When would be the stage you gave up the band?

Danny: "I think you must lose that buzz you get from working at some point, and it's then that you must change or get out."

Pete: "Speaking for myself I don't see this as the final goal but just the opening of further possibilities."

Pete: "Now we are at a relatively successful stage I feel I've got a responsibility to the others to keep the band going."

Dave: "Are you sure that's the right reason, I don't feel like that at all. I asked them how they felt about the



industry that could make and also destroy them."

It's only a luxury notepad but I know exactly what he meant. Fortunately we'd al-

ready spoken a few times before and settling down in the sparsely furnished front room for a chinwag wasn't too difficult. Present with myself and Pete Murphy was a drummer Kevin Haskins, guitarist Danny Ash and bass player David Jay. I had been talking about the fact they seem so well in control of what they are doing...

Pete: "People seem to think we have some grand scheme of things but it's not like that at all."

Kevin: "It comes from the fact some bands care about where they're going and some don't." Danny: "We do sit and think about things before we do them, but really it's just us four being ourselves, we're conscious of trying to be a bit different, if only to break out of normal routines."

Pete: "When we started rehearsing we were very deliberate in trying not to sound like anyone else at all."

You're obviously very aware of the possible visuals open to a band.

Pete: "The show stands out because of the lights and the way we look, but I really think that making yourself look good is nothing to be ashamed of. The white light thing is simple

and undeniably effective, it's our own gear, us presenting ourselves the way we want to."

Half the excuses for what is meant to be fresh, young and exciting music can be forgotten here and now, when was the last time you were really knocked by a gig? Bauhaus simply use white light for their gigs, they stalk the shadows occasionally revealing half-lit faces, Pete paces the stage in a charged up manner to suggest he could make it up the wall, across the ceiling and down the other side with no trouble.

Pete again: "I'm always expecting people to throw obvious influences at us, someone said we were the greatest thing they'd seen since Bowie and then apologised for saying it, but what's wrong with that if we're that good and we give a feeling like that then that's marvellous. If we can just stimulate people in some way... what use is bland acceptance? Actually so someone wrote to us and said after seeing us he left the gig with a stimulation in his legs!" Danny: "Well a lot of the mechanics of the business have to exist, if only to get stuff out, Small Wonder were great and we're really happy with 4AD although we know there

are record companies who are a lot more imposing on their hence the people we work with, I think at the moment we are using the industry rather than vice versa."

Our hour or so of conversation whizzed by. These are, after all, just personal impressions. What can you get to know about people after only a couple of hours? Further comment is probably worthless. Watch, listen and sort them out in your own minds.

Their attitude of questioning and debating before concluding the points I put to them is surely one of the most important factors of all, an attitude I can't describe as anything less than invigorating.

Their first album should be around soon, it's contents chilling, classic Bauhaus as 'Spy in the Cab' and 'God in an Alcove' as well as newbies yet to be unleashed.

I already feel Bauhaus are to be around for a while and be extremely popular with it. They join a small bunch of bands such as KJ out to observe and entertain without demanding your attention but by earning it. Quite simply they are special.

Tiny Montgomery



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TIGER LILY
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B-MOVIE
Sinking Ships

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This delectable photograph of Emma Peel is brought to you courtesy of . . .

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INTRODUCING... Marty Thau

Marty Thau is a pioneer. After serving his time in the 60's American Music Biz machine he threw up (barooogh!!) a highly lucrative executive position with a biggie, donned Davy Crockett outfit and set out looking for fresh new talent.

The time was 1972. The Music Scene was in a terrible state — all dull HM power-trios and keyboard extravaganzas 'cept for odd Bowie-shaped diamonds. Marty Thau found his first band, The perfect antidote to the ponderous doldrums. The New York Dolls.

Their street-mawled raunch mystique still lingers today, it certainly fueled much of punk here. After his years with the Dolls, Marty went on uncovering and working with other new groups during their formative stages. Ramones and Blondie to name two.

Then he started Red Star Records, an early American independent. This provided a temporary home for another notch on his telescope — the amazing Suicide. Red Star didn't live beyond its initial releases (more later), but Marty didn't give up fighting 'gators. He continued looking for new talent and recently masterminded a compilation album of five of New York's current budding hot properties on Criminal Records.

'2 x 5' features the Fleshtones, Revelons, Bloodless Pharaohs, Comateens and Student Teachers. Produced by Blondie's Jimmy Destri, it's a clean-sounding showcase, take it if you wanna fresh taste of New York now, bollocks if ya don't.

Standouts are the Revelons' (who already had a 45 called '97 Tears' out on the Ork label) hilarious one-chord rock 'n' roll pisstake 'Red Hot Woman', and the Bloodless Pharaohs... this lineup is now defunct cos the guitarist upped and left for these shores (brought over by Two-Tone says Thau). His name was Brian Setzer and he's currently carving up London in the Stray Cats! Quite a different side of Brian to the rampant rockabilly is exhibited on the Pharaohs' two tracks, 'Nowhere Fast' and 'Bloodless Pharaoh'. They are haunting and weird with mysterious organ and obscure words.

(When I spoke to Marty the Cats hadn't yet purred into Britain. "He's the sort of guitarist you'll hear about in years to come", quoth he).

The rest of the bands play abrasive, catchy New York rock, which gets a bit samey on side two. They are not earth-shattering new arrivals but very healthy.

When Marty was in town to launch the album we had a chat, kicking off on the album, then drifting into his illustrious past. We talked for ages and got well into the old fascinating reminiscences. So, this month the LP and a bit more. Next ish, the rest!

ZZ: First of all, Marty, tell us how this album came together?

MT: I've been working with new talent for the most part of the last eight years or so. There had been a CBGB's collection and the 'No New

a sort of backlash that's beginning to surface in the city, because all these English bands would come to America and play the leading venues and get the best days and the most money, come in with record deals, and American groups would have to deal with this industry... so many new groups are just incapable of getting together the thousands of bucks it takes to cross the Atlantic and get seen. I thought this would be a very timely project to do.

ZZ: How did Jimmy Destri come to get involved as producer?

MT: I hired Jimmy. I thought Jimmy would be cast real well to do it. Everytime I ran into him he would tell about this studio setup that he had.

We tried to play it straight with the bands and it's a method of recording which, I guess, dates back to the primal approach of the early Ramones. Which is the reaction against the technology, the abuse of it, and the masturbation that took place all the years before what became known as the New Wave. The reality also was about budgets. This was not a very costly affair. We tried to get a very real sound,



York' album, and I just felt that, once again, New York City should offer to the world some new artists, in an anthology collection. There was a lot of confusion as to what exactly was going down in New York. In a sense there's

ZZ: You saw these groups in the clubs first, did you?

MT: Yeah, well I knew a lot of them personally and saw them develop over the months, had a chance to study them cos. I was being enter-

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADRIAN BOOT



tained at the same time. So when I finally concluded to do it with Criminal, I was familiar with most of their material and knew what I wanted.

ZZ: *Quite a wide spectrum of music on the album, ain't there?*

MT: Yeah, they have their individual styles but its basically saying the same thing — different

factors about being a teenager today.

ZZ: *What's all this about Bowie going to do the cover?*

MT: Bowie was going to do the cover. In fact he did the cover. It was a similarity of Jimmy, Kind of a Picassoesque painting. It was very good but by the time we got it we had waited months — he was doing an album in-between. I couldn't really push him, didn't know where to contact him — he was back and forth to Switzerland. By the time it arrived in New York I'd delayed as much as possible and I went with Peter Zarella's, which I'm very pleased with.

ZZ: *I'm pretty intrigued by the Bloodless Pharaohs.*

MT: Three of them are from Long Island. Two of them are brothers — the guitar-player and the drummer. The keyboard-player and lead singer is from outside the city — the Westchester area. A lot of it is his material. The guitar-player, Brian Setzer, just left the group — he's here in England now. He was brought over by the Two-Tone people.

The Pharaohs have replaced him and taken yet another direction, with some horns as well. They just played at a 2 x 5 show I held in New York. We put all the groups on at the Irving Plaza. It was a sellout, great show.

ZZ: *Got any plans to bring these bands over to Britain?*

MT: Yeah, sure. It depends on the economics. We'd love to get all five over here. A number will be over here — the Fleshtones will be here. The Comateens . . . they'll all be over here individually or collectively. This has like opened up their careers. Now they've been heard of in England. I think this record is going to put a lot of people to thinking about the music, because, without putting anybody down, The Fleshtones, who've been around for three years, have held ground in their style and offering of the music. It's going more to what they've been doing than them going to what other people have been doing. Everybody watches everybody and picks out and extracts a little bit here and there, fits it in in their own fashion. For example, The Clash. The Clash have moved closer to the Fleshtones than the Fleshtones have to The Clash.

ZZ: *Are the groups on that LP the tip of the iceberg for a lot of creative activity going on in New York?*

MT: There's a lot of creative activity but its far more ranging in style. There's the Minimalists and funk groups.

ZZ: *The Contortions crowd?*

MT: Yeah, but what I think America is purely and simply about is, anything you can dance to. Whatever the heading, if you can dance to it, or an adaptation of it, it happens in America, is happening in America. The whole James Black-White-Chance movement is really interesting, great stuff.

The clubs: there's a new place called Dance-teria, which I would rate as being the most exciting new place in the city. Hurrah's goes on, the Mudd Club occasionally, there's a little place called the Ritz, CBGB's stumbles on, Max's . . .

ZZ: *Before our punk thing really happened everyone here looked over to New York to see what was happening. That first wave of bands (Ramones, Television, Talking Heads, etc) were all lumped together . . .*

MT: (pointing to album) *This is the New Wave. But these kids are the baton carriers of that early wave, they're in that line. I cast this album with that in mind.*

ZZ: *What happened to your Red Star label after those first two releases? (LPs by the Real Kids and Suicide's classic debut)*

MT: You have to understand that we were like strangers in a strange land. It wasn't like I was there in the midst of twelve other peers. I didn't have 12 other labels that were attempting to do what I was doing. It was maybe me in New York and perhaps Ralph Records in San Francisco and one label somewhere else trying to record the newer groups in a modern sense. The country is so big that to tackle it as an independent is next to impossible, unless some major company is financing you or some major financier is throwing in hundreds of thousands of dollars. I suppose my musical interests were always more European than American to begin with so it was a very difficult task to keep Red Star going. I just went through 8 months of barely hanging in there by my fingertips and come out of it alive. And now I've made a distribution arrangement with Gem Records so, whatever we were or are, we're here, still alive.

ZZ: *It was quite a daring move to put out a Suicide album back in '77. Now even my rabbit has a drum-machine but back then they were out on their own completely (and still are even now, I might add).*

MT: It was, and the partners that I had looked at me like I was off the wall. I just figured that if this was the case it was inevitable that they shouldn't be my partners. So I had to face that, knowing the inconvenience it was going to cause me, because of the finances.

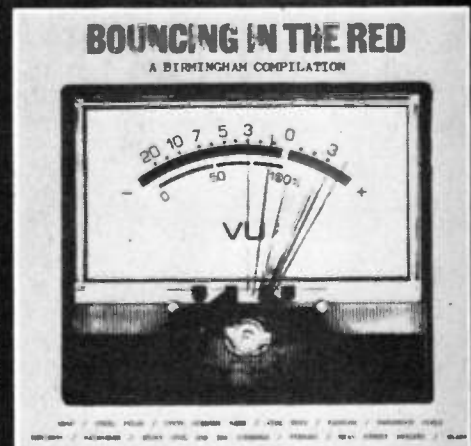
I came back from Europe with Suicide, who opened for the Clash and Elvis Costello doing two months of phenomenal dates, to be greeted by partners who said, 'as far as we're concerned we only think that Disco is the music of today. The New Wave is dead and we don't want to be partners with you anymore'. I could've told them how wrong they were, but I figure: anybody who is so ridiculous, so opposite in their temperament to me, I don't want to be partners with 'em. So I guess I just had to take the pain I was about to face. Anybody else might just've closed the doors and said, 'fuck it'. I figured I was working with great people and things really had to result from this, so I'll take my chances in the deep water. I gave everybody release at the label. I didn't wanna hold up anybody's careers. I just figures I'd get out the records that I had, take on a project or two, hang loose, see what's out there, pay attention to the music once again, get right back down to the nitty gritty and come up with another three or four great acts.

I always felt confident I could do that and I'm sure I will.

And next month we get down to the nitty gritty as Marty changes gear and tells his fascinating story.

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ABSURD

The independent record label. Hip hooray for vitality, idealism, originality, integrity . . . it would be nice to think so, anyway. Regrettably many independents are just scaled-down versions of CBS; one of the small number of exceptions is Absurd Records. Thrill as the veil of obscurity is lifted to reveal the personalities, the dramas, the ambitions, the funny noises, the failures, the warmth and the Vimto that comprise this Just Another Offbeat Indie.

Absurd rose phoenix-like from the ashes of Rabid Records in early 1979. The latter comprised Martin Hannett, Tosh Ryan and Lawrence Beedle, who got together in early '77 to release Slaughter & The Dogs' Cranked Really High. Rob Gretton, now Joy Division's manager, was in charge of the Slaughter fan-club. After two years and 13 singles of good quality, Rabid reached its logical conclusion, lost its direction, and did the decent thing. Hannett became a director of Factory Records and the said Beedle formed Absurd.

Until this September, Absurd was based in Withington, south Manchester, just past St. Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Infants School; Lawrence lives in a flat above the Absurd shop/office. On his wall is pinned a recipe for preparing an artichoke so that it may be eaten whole, and a Jilted John silver disc.

"I've always been interested in records, collect em, and none of the big record companies are gonna give us jobs. I'm fascinated by record labels — that's why I do all this. A record is just a thing that's made in a factory, and it's melted down if it's not solid; like a plastic comb or something, an industrial process, and there's factories up and down this country and all over the world who press out these bits of plastic like they're churning out dinner-plates. I find it fascinating, the industrial side of it. Imagine the whole thing that goes into getting thousands of records out into the shops. It's an amazing business."

As you can see from the disco-graphy, Absurd product so far has been of two types — either produced by a small nexus of local friends/musicians, or one-off stabs by isolated people from further afield, all of it with a fun, low-key/low budget atmosphere.

"The first 8 or 10 records was just putting records out to see how well they did to see what you could get away with, really. You can't get away with a lot! They were just things that came along that just happened to catch attention — just slam it out and see what happens."

But now . . .

"We've found a direction to go in, we've always lacked direction, but now we're sort of hitting out in a direction, an image, a style . . ." A graphic artist is being recruited, they're moving into the centre of Manchester and converting an old warehouse into a small studio, adding new artistes to the Absurd roster (so start sending your demo-tapes in) "cos you can only go so far if you've got a little introverted group, we need ideas from outside", concentrating greater efforts on a smaller number of people, and generally aiming for higher efficiency.

The people who are involved in this new chapter of The Absurd Story are Chris Gill, John Scott, Tony Roberts, and The Mothmen — Mancunian and musically incestuous all.

Chris Gill is Cairo, "he's got hundreds of tunes" some of which will appear on a Cairo LP next year, and others will be sung by some mystery girl. He has also been playing live with The Mothmen whilst guitarist/vocalist Dave Rowbotham has been ill.

John Scott is 48 Chairs, Bet Lynch's Legs and Gerry & The Holograms. "He's brilliant, John, absolute genius, plays bass, guitar, sac, keyboards . . . he's on loads of old Rabid records — Jilted John, John Cooper Clarke, and John Cooper Clarke's first LP." He sometimes plays with the Albertos,

The Smirks, Charlie Parkas and John Dowie. A 48 Chairs LP is scheduled for next year, including guest plays such as Lol Coxhill —

"he's a total crackpot" — and "other people like (Pete) Shelley and that have offered to play." When Frank Zappa appeared on Radio One's Star Choice, he played two John Scott compositions — Gerry & The Holograms and Psyche Sluts. A recommendation.

Tony Roberts is a drummer and producer who works with Cairo and John Scott.

The Mothmen (Dave Rowbotham — guitar, vocals, Tony Bowers — bass, guitar, vocals, Chinese sax, Bob Harding — keyboards, bass, guitar, vocals, Chinese sax, Chris Joyce — percussion) have an LP "Pay Attention" out on the Four D Rhythms label. Tony Bowers and Dave Rowbotham were in the version of The Durutti Column on the first Factory Sample and Tony Bowers and Bob Harding produced Pink Military's Do Animals Believe In God? LP. Dave Rowbotham played on the John Cooper Clarke LP. "They're really good people to work with, quite amusing, very easy to get on with." Another Absurd single is planned, and Dave is doing something by himself at the moment. This group will go further.

Releasing albums as well as singles is part of the new policy — "everyone takes em seriously — and they're more profitable. If you make singles no-one takes you seriously." Imminent is the Absurd Takeaway LP, a compilation including some previously released material but mostly new stuff by everyone who will be involved in the future.

"Also wanna do some cassettes, stealing the idea off Pickwick actually, they've got some in Woolworths, they have a card and a plastic surface to it, you can have a presentation about the band or something. Also wanna do a boot-leg album — if anyone (from Absurd) started getting famous, people can send for one for a couple of quid."

There will also be more gigs — "it's very essential actually, people take you seriously then — 'oh, a proper group, yeah', not a person with an idea going into a studio, that can be dismissed as trivia. That's where we've gone wrong in the past. People want to see groups." He bemoans the fact that whole columns are given over to reviewing gigs whilst the large amount of care which goes into making a single is dismissed in less than a sentence in the music papers.

The yearnings to reach beyond the narrow confines of gramophone records, apparent in the sheet music and unplayable record, have matured into some excellent ideas for further exploration into other media, and they're much more than just wacky.

"If I tell you these things someone else is gonna read it and think 'Ay what a great idea' and do it before I do it, cos we're so slow at doing things." He produces a folder of adverts for slimming products and methods.

"Outrageous — 'reduce while you sleep' . . . 'Monday morning I woke up a size 12, Monday night I went to bed a size 9' — totally impossible things, whole magazines about special foods, machines, pills . . . slimming is the ultimate in decadent consumerism — you

A1 BLAH BLAH BLAH: in the army/why diddle? — an amusing dig at the modern warrior, accompanied by electronic squonks and bips. From Clacton, "they're a total mystery". Record taken straight from a cassette sent to Absurd.

A2 EDDIE FICTION: ufo (pt. 1)/ufo (pt. 2) — a silly ballad about people from Pluto. "We won't talk about Eddie Fiction."

A3 48 CHAIRS: snap it around/psyche sluts — excellent; smooth, almost jazzy, guitarpop, backed by a version of the tune written for the John Clarke poem. John Scott. An instrumental version of Snap It Around, with Lol Coxhill on sax, will be on the Absurd Takeaway LP.

A4 GERRY & THE HOLOGRAMS: Gerry and the holograms/increased resistance — very good; a warm, catchy electronic pop tune, with a calmly sinister B-side. From Paranoid Plastics, Bruce Mitchell's label. John Scott again.

A5 GERRY & THE HOLOGRAMS: the emperor's new music — the infamous unplayable record; it took the best part of a week to paint and glue them into the bags. "I thought it was outrageous, but people have bought it." Sounds single of the week, Melody Maker missed the point. "A & R men in big record companies were saying 'oh what a great idea (feigns awe and amazement), wish we'd thought of that one'".

A6 THE MOTHMEN: does it matter Irene?/please let go — excellent; very Barratt-era Floyd, sinister, full of ideas.

A7 CAIRO: I like bluebeat/version — the most professional and most commercial Absurd single (he said with hindsight); a lush, lazy bluebeat song, about the West's attitude to the Chinese threat. Chris Gill, Tony Roberts. The biggest seller, "would've sold more if we hadn't've leased it — we're never gonna lease a record again."

A8 NAAFI SANDWICH: slice 1/slice 2 — from Warrington, they "just churn out these tapes, that are part of the tapes they'd done."

A9 THE FRESHIES: the "octopus" song — the sheet music for a song from The Freshies' third EP on Razz Records, the label owned by Freshie Chris Sievey, who used to help at Absurd; his records are still sold through Absurd sometimes.

A10 BET LYNCH'S LEGS: riders in the sky/high noon — Ennio Morricone meets the Curious Yellows; entertaining low-budget once-overs of two Western themes. Fun. John Scott again.

A11 BET LYNCH'S LEGS: some like it hot/some don't — out now!

A15 CAIRO: movie stars/cuthbert's birthday treat — Radio One playlist material; light, smooth, catchy, professional. Chris Gill.

consume too much to get fat, then you go and buy *more* stuff to get thin. The sickness about it is there's millions of pounds spent, and there's all those poor people who are dying in Ethiopia." We die of too much food, they die of too little food. "They're saying 'the more you eat of this food the slimmer you'll be', when the only way to get slim is by eating less. I'm not condemning people who are fat or big cos that's up to them, the fault is with advertising making people feel inadequate; and all fashion's geared to it."

"You can't really express things in words, but you can do it in pictures and images and songs", so The Absurd Book Of Slimming is planned. ◆◆◆◆

We both express admiration for the Fast/Sexex visual packages, John Heartfield (the photomontage artist) and Jon Savage's and Linder's The Secret Public (a photomontage 'magazine').

He delves into a notebook full of ideas he has jotted down, and finds another subject of absurdity which he's contemplating poking with a book/record package. "The myth of money. There are cars that cost more than houses, and camera-lenses which cost more than the cars. And gold — it's dug deep out of the ground in South Africa and the Soviet Union, they purify it and all that, when they go and re-bury it in deep vaults in the middle of America and Paris and London. I've got to expand this one a lot more." ◆◆◆◆

"Another thing we're doing is the Lucky Bag, like the old lucky bags — a couple of toffees, a little toy and a badge, perhaps a sticker, a record that we've not sold that's stuck on the shelves, and a brand new record. It's a way of getting rid of all the old records. You get it for nothing anyway, so you can't complain really." ●●●●

"The absurd things aren't making jokes and that, the absurd is what's going on around us, the world you live in." He describes how the Government are considering how much to spend on replacing Polaris, and have agreed to the siting of Cruise missiles pointing at Russia, and yet British butter is sold to Russia for 5p per lb. and British beef for 30p per lb., or the story that there is an American base on Cuba, and that every year Castro refuses to cash the rent-cheque sent by the U.S. government; and then there's the Common Market farming policy with its subsidies and obscene food surpluses.

"What is going on? Can you think of anything more absurd than that? Can you think of anything more absurd than slimming food? A third of the world starving and you've got people over here eating food that won't make them fat."

So how do you say all these things? How do you reach people's attitudes?

"I don't believe in that method of protest songs. You don't seem to get anywhere, you seem to be preaching to the converted; so you try a more subtle approach and it goes over people's heads. I don't know where the balance is... the balance is definitely with imagery and that, you can't do it with political sloganising. You can do it with films a lot better than records, and that's why films get banned a lot, and that's why the whole of the British cinema's controlled. You say there's no control in this country, but if you start looking closely there is definitely a ruling class who run this country, who still shoot grouse on August 12th.

They're unaffected by it and they control it all, no matter what Government gets in, Labour or Conservative, and they control what you see and read. Films are very powerful. But getting your stuff shown is very difficult, but records and books and cassettes, you can virtually make em yourself. Video, this'll be the next thing. You can start getting a lot of ideas across to people. You've got to present stuff in a quite entertaining way... video's the difficult one, cost of the expense and all that."

"There's new technology all the time, making it possible. People worry about Big Brother and their phones being tapped, but you can use that technology yourself. All the time you've got to do a lot of rebelling against things, you can't sit back and watch what goes on. It is very futile in a way, you think you're never going to change all this, and what you gonna change it to anyway? Everyone's going to be rowing about how it's going to be. But you can have the crack, can't you? Why should you let them bastards have it all the time?" ◆◆◆◆

"You can tell I follow world politics. I follow it carefully. Whether you can make it with pop music I don't know. Spose you can't in a way cos you're up against this thing where people want to go to concerts, want the band to do all those numbers they've heard on the album, want to buy the T-shirt, the scarf. And why not? If that's what they want they should be allowed to do all that. I'm not really opposed to them actually, I'm opposed to people who go and shoot grouse on August 12th."

"I want to do a lot of things. I spose a lot of it's idealism, but I've no illusions about it. Nobody changes the world with a pop record, but you can have the crack, can't you? And that's basically what we're gonna do."

"There's things we want to say and certain images we want to get over to people, and we want to be taken quite seriously. We're not the absurdists really, the absurd things are like the slimming industry when a third of the world's starving to death, and in a world where missiles are aimed at a country you're selling cheap butter and beef to."

"We're condemning things in a satirical way, it's mostly anti-consumerism; the irony is that we are in the singles market, the ultimate in consumerism." That's one big irony. It means this is all hypocrisy. Lawrence knows where he stands. "It's never been healthy, has it, pop music? Decadent, innit? People trying to make easy quids, people trying to satisfy their own egos, cult worship... far from healthy." There's too much truth in that. ◆◆◆◆

Moving back onto safer ground, the experience of running Rabid and then Absurd has left Lawrence with a realistic view of the business which fascinates him so.

"It's actually a shrinking market in a way. When we started at Rabid you could sell 5,000 of anything, picture cover and that, then of course everyone found out you could put a single out and hundreds of tin-pot groups are putting tin-pot singles out and of course it makes people who are out in the shops more discerning, which is a good thing, you shouldn't be allowed to get away with rubbish."

His dealings with major record companies, especially the mismatched leasing deal for Cairo with Ariola/Hansa, have left him somewhat cynical. ◆◆◆◆

"They are basically run by accountants, public school boys, they've all got very plummy accents. There's no way you can deal with those people (Ariola/Hansa) if you come from up here with our attitude; I don't think those people should be allowed to sell records really, they just haven't got a clue of this end of the market, they think of everything in terms of Sky, MOR acts, this is the shitty end of the business, the Zigzag end of the business, I admit it, it's all for the crack, but big glossy companies, they don't understand it. I understand one thing, you're selling records, and when people buy your records you can make some more records, you can live off it, but if no-one buys your records, you've got to try and make some more which people will buy."

He has definite opinions on the relationship between producer and consumer. ◆◆◆◆

"When you're in a group you're really working for the people who want to come and see you — they pay that money to see you, you should give them a good show. To me, the only people that count are the people that buy records and go to concerts, it's the fans that are more important than the musicians.

The audiences are too soft on people, they should be harder and criticise and be more discerning. If it's crap or the band expect you to do this, you shouldn't do it — not this mass adoration. Mind you, I spose there's no point going against the grain, people want heroes, it's the only thing they understand, it's a pity really." ◆◆◆◆

Hopeless, pointless, futile, hypocritical even. I think maybe when you realise that's what Changing-The-World-Through-Pop is, then it's not quite as hopeless, pointless, futile or hypocritical as it was. Not quite. And whether it is or not, Absurd Records seem to be providing we consumers with some diverting and worthwhile merchandise.

"Have the crack. That's basically what it's about." □□□□

So there the Absurdists are, poking at the huge beached whales of real absurdity with their little pointed sticks, seeing the joke.

Laugh. ●●●● Worried, Preston

◆◆◆◆
◆◆◆◆
"Someone was telling me Absurd singles sell quite well in Japan."
◆◆◆◆

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END OF PART ONE SALE

THE

NIGHTINGALES

THE NIGHTINGALES. FROM BIRMINGHAM. USED TO BE THE PREFECTS. There — another unknown name for note-taking music lovers to drop, another bunch of babes in arms for Rough Trade to nanny and earnest journalists to ooh and aah over. More uncompromising / powerful / disturbing / committed / noble than . . . (take your pick). And so on and so forth.

You probably recall the name of the Prefects — they're somewhat of a cult group, with the sort of admirers who'll tell you how wonderful they were then admit that, no, they never actually saw them. And so most *Zigzag* readers seem to be the starry-eyed type who regularly whip out their tatty back issues for a reverent pore through the pages, you might remember Johnny Waller doing an article on them explaining how far out he was for being their only fan (*It was Andrew Hobbs, actually — Ed*).

It's true that hardly anybody else went raving mad over them at the time, in fact most people confronted with this uncouth crew playing bottom of the bill at some forgotten gig reacted by showing all the hallmarks of the most dogged apathy. Well now you'll know better won't you eh, cos I'm here to give you the griff on the 'Gales (as we buffs know them) — testify, testify, brothers and sisters . . .

It was, I need hardly say, due to the aforementioned apathy that the Prefects bit the dust in Feb. of '79, with nothing to show for their labours of the previous 2 years but a couple of (surprise surprise) John Peel sessions — they'd never got round to making any records, "cos everyone makes them", but in actual fact a piece of product has just surfaced: to wit, a single on Vindaloo Records comprising 2 of the Peel numbers: "Things in General" and the funereal piece-of-resistance "Going through the Motions", recorded in early '78 with a varied troop of personnel. The original fledgeling Prefects can also be heard on the live version of "Sister Ray" gracing the Slits' Y LP, which dates from the last night of the Clash's White Riot tour, when the Slits, Subway Sect and Prefects had a farewell freak-out jam (man) — definitely the musical high-spot of that May!

The Prefects having kicked it, it was naturally assumed that their main man Robert Lloyd would come zooming back into public consciousness having formulated a new improved model with which to astound and amaze all and sundry, and fuck me if he didn't do exactly that.

The Nightingales, comprising Rob vocals, Eamonn Duffy guitar, mystery female Joan bass and Paul 'Bad Man' Apperley drums, bowed into the world in Nov. '79 and made their live debut a few months later at the Star Club in Birmingham, playing with the Motiva-

tors, whose leader Joe Motivator (his real name's much better but he doesn't like it so I won't embarrass him), being an ex-Prefect, was soon dragged back into the fold on lead guitar while Duffy replaced Joan, who had proven unsuitable, on the bass, and thus the current world-beating combo came into being and were soon blowing up a storm (well they've done a few gigs anyway, including Friars Aylesbury supporting the Slits).

The Prefects were sometimes made out to be "a joke group", like a punk version of the Wurzels or something. But whilst they were fond of a laugh, they



were also possessed of the dismal vision that produced such songs as "The Bristol Road leads to Dachau" and Angry Young Man stuff like "Birmingham's A Shithole". That's the bittersweet Birmingham character for you — a mixture of cynicism, gloom and silliness (does that qualify me for Pseuds Corner?)

In the Nightingales the accent's more on abrasiveness than amusement however. Rob stomps around the stage like a grizzly with a grudge, baying and hollering, while the other 3 rattle away intensely for all they're worth. Powerful isn't the word!

At times Rob may come on a bit gormless, but he's more bumptious than bumpkin — a clever lad and knows just what he's doing. He's certainly the dominant force at work, and while he ducks at the description "megalomaniac", he'll admit to being a bit of a bossy-boots.

He's set up his own record label, Vindaloo — natch distributed by Rough Trade (Geoff Travis pronounced himself "really into what you're saying" recently), first release of which is a less than earth-shattering 45 by Legs Akimbo and second the Prefects single.

"Rob used to sing baritone till he had all his teeth out — now he sings falsetto", says Bad Man Apperley helpfully, but it is Rob's strident tones which linger longest in the memory after their live performances, which is why I am unable to babble enthusiastically about throbbing bass lines, finely honed guitar work or insidious drum patterns (sorry boys).

I am also unable to dot this article with new song titles and penetrating quotes to show how knowledgeable I am, because despite having witnessed the 'Gales on numerous occasions of late and been force-fed reams of live tapes, I'm too daft to be able to come up with any such mundane little details — some other bore will no doubt do it for you ere long.

I can tell the eager world, however, that Joe likes PiL, wears a silver death's-head in his lapel, glowers on stage and has a wife called Deb. Rob (a.k.a. 'Bob Floyd') goes for zydeco and anything ethnic nobody else has ever heard of, plus all those weirdos Virgin used to push before they discovered the delights of Money Making, and exists on curries and Guinness, while Bad Man, an ex-borstal boy, has a fondness for the Pink Fairies, Alice Cooper, Lou Reed and the Ramones — he also tried to top himself the other month, but the Nightingales aren't THAT awful — anyway, he should wait till they're famous before he tries that one again, then some sensitive little soul will be sure to sob "he died for us!"

So there you are. There's more to life than standing around picking your nose and swilling pints, you know, so if ever you come across the Nightingales, prick up your ears and dig their tortured outpourings. Think of all the atrocious muck that makes it these days and why should you deny Birmingham's best a little corner in your hearts? (And the next person that yells "Piss off!" will pay for it on the Day of Judgement, I can tell you!)

Molly Gilligan



PHOTOS: SIMON REEVES



The Big pitch. Ski Patrol are the most exciting new band of 1980, even better than Martian Dance, and that's saying something. And yet despite recognising their difference from the other bands around town they were planning to jack it in, because they weren't getting anywhere, and that after a measly ten gigs! Perhaps behind their serious onstage facials there lurk imbecilic minds. Who can say, yet at least for the time being they'll plod wearily on, after a good reaction from their last Rock Garden soiree.

But we must leave the current day dislocations and discussions and head back into the mists of time. Before they formed this pulsating unit they were from lesser known covers. Ian Lowery, the miserable singer hailed from the Wall and has a band in the three singles available from the band to date. Pete Balmer the bassist graced the Stranded with his dulcet presence, Nick Clift on paranoid guitar was in the Debutantes and Al the drummer came from the famous bands 'not worth mentioning'. In December '79 they became Ski Patrol but with a different drummer, called Archibald. He cleared off in January and Al silently stepped into the breach. End of lesson.

So what do you want to hear? That they're the most distinctive sounding band in the UK this side of The Ants. That Al and Pete form the most impeccable modern sounding rhythm section around and that Nick has few peers for spindly shards (who remembers the Gang of Four anyway?) or that Lowery makes a compelling, if slightly unnerving, frontman as he struts and fumes his hour upon the stage. All these exciting prospects and more for the lucky investigator at a ski patrol gig.

Their first single "Everything is Temporary/Silent Scream" on Clever Metal Records, courtesy of Rough Trade, got slagged by the unimaginative slugs of the big four but has become a firm favourite in the White House by all accounts and got national radio play in Belgium. Once heard never forgotten. Only a few (thousand) copies remain.

There were other factors in the prospective split too. Nick and Ian quietly loathe each other it would appear, a fact which doesn't exactly further their

chances of staying together I thought until Ian explained the social background of this bunch. There isn't one. They never mix socially, drawing together only for musical purposes. It's just as well for in the interview everything Ian says Nick disagrees with, and vice versa. If they did 'hand out on the scene' together they'd never get anywhere. This way at least they have one common objective but it's still rather limiting as there can't be too much time to iron things out and they wonder why their achievements are slight! Lowery's flitting romances with the bottle don't help much either. This turns him into something of a rogue pig charging the stage ever threatening to redesign the architectural features of the building with his head. Occasionally it improves things, lending the songs a pure fury ('Agent Orange' for example) but it gets completely out of hand at times. Why does he do it? 'It's an exorcism' he says with a grin, removing the dark glasses and frightening the entire pub. 'An unsuited head with a subtle eye' murmurs Nick darkly and we cross the road where Nick gets into an argument with Simon the photographer. Al takes on mummified posture and Pete the most affable Patrol or wonders about his fate. When Ski Patrol planned to split Lowery got Pete the job with Fad Gadget who in the face of record company interest arranged a tour for October. With Ski Patrol now back together he will have to be in two places at the same time.

Back to Ian though, who with his suit and generally eloquent manner could easily infiltrate and bring shame to the world of accountancy. He states his case convincingly. He wants to achieve great things and constantly quotes 'The End' by the doors as an example. Striving

being the name of the game. He may not get on with part of the band but he still accepts that it's something worth sticking to. 'I don't think I'll find better musicians to empathise with' at which stage Nick bursts in with a lurid description of his hatred of the 'band' ideal. 'I don't like looking at myself in the mirror saying Market me baby'

Perhaps Nick will cheer up when the next single appears, their magnum opus "Agent Orange" that will have it's release aided by Killing Joke's management who are happily pissing themselves over the prospect. It concerns a herbicide used in Vietnam. Ian... 'It's about me imagining myself in Vietnam. It's unimaginable, but if you're born in the USA... I like a quiet life, and to be plucked away into the Holocaust!... he gets no further as Nick again interrupts "I think you have to question your motives... half arsed ideals" (mutter mutter etc.) Ian... 'I don't have to justify it all'... and they prepare to argue on through the night. (I leave).

Having seen Ian's portrayal of this at the Acklam Hall where he turned psychopathic in the extreme, arguing with some of the smug-faced hippies that had turned up to support the other bands there is no doubt in my mind he believes in the subject and for once I'd say Nick's criticisms were unjustified.

Enough of this bollocks. I grow weary of typing up unnecessary words to tell you that there aren't any band that compare with this lot. In a sense it's hardly surprising Killing Joke are involved as Ski patrol are the treble to Killing Joke's bass.

Their appeal (which they can't see) is their ability to manufacture songs of a terse brooding vitality bordering on implosion; the kind of sound that radiates dynamism. Well worth losing a fingernail over.

Mick Mercer

PHOTOS: SIMON REEVES

ROCKY ERICSON

The man with long lank hair in black stands at the window staring down through the stale sunlight at a grim London slightly shaking. I'm in the open doorway and my path to the man is blocked by a two-headed dog — a pair of burly, trim-bearded Californian nurses/bodyguards/managers who beam at me with a vacant sincerity and grip my hand. "Hi Tom! Pleased to meet you! How ya doing?" They think I'm from the press which up until 48 hours ago I was but the music weekly that I represented, New Music News, is now dead, killed by an unscrupulous publisher. However, I'm not going to tell *them* that and risk blowing an interview with the man at the window. Roky turns, his eyes flicker, I step forward, I shake his hand and his hand shakes. "Hello, Roky. I've got a present for you." I dip into my plastic supermarket bag and bring out the Indian tiger hunter's knife. As Roky sits and glares at the weapon, quivering between his hands, I suddenly feel like I've been set up. I'm doing the first ever interview with Roky Erickson in London — very flattering to be given the opportunity but maybe I've been thrown in first just to see how sharp the jellyfish sting. After all, he really *is* screwy isn't he?

Hey boss, let us in! We never really believed that Roky would get it together sufficiently to produce a whole album but here it is and on a major label too. CBS have taken a remarkably uncharacteristic chance by signing Roky Erickson and the Aliens but the gamble has paid off. The record, marked by five strange calligraphic symbols that spell out ALIEN in some alien script, is undeniably commercial, thanks largely to the efforts of musical arranger and guitarist Duane "Bird" Aslaksen, aka "Dwalien", and yet it's weird enough to keep the mad cult devotees happy. Roky's weird pictures that come out his head: . . . Preposterous creatures roam swamps on this cold night for alligators. It's freezing times for us all and we've been waiting years for the blood to come coursing from the arteries ruby red. At last skinnyman comes running out of the house onto the tracks where the monster stabs him while fatman is up on the roof saying I told you I'd come back remember buchanan I promised to see you die and I will listening to the eyes rolled back white hammering to escape the dead men charged with atom brains that make them impervious to bullets for blood never touches their lips and no suicide clocks the works when pencils bounce twice up and down fangs gnashing at the beauty as in reaches in spirits say boo and paper bursts into fire devils scuff their feet out like jerky ripping off the doll's guts nyet shaking the worlds to bits. . . Roky's images, constructed from half-remembered late night horror films in black and white, blood and terror comics in colour and tales of sci fi demonism on the printed page. None of it makes any sense just like good words shouldn't and these are the best, shaped around the Aliens'



almost heavy metal tri-riff method, spiked with Aslaksen's wiry yet precise guitar and the mysterious Chinese alien guitar (electric autoharp) of Bill Miller. This isn't psychedelic; this isn't trippy like the Elevators, it's tighter, rooted in rock as opposed to rock 'n' roll but with Roky's voice, harsh and white, spitting out the mutant pictures of a disordered mind so sharp, it becomes something quite else again. It works and it's great.

So how's Roky? The CBS press office have assured me that he's in fine 'spirits' (sic) but as I sit contemplating my opening question, I feel him chilly and glum and I get a bit scared. Do aliens suffer from jet lag? Why is my first question so boring?

Tom: What do you think of England so far, Roky?

Roky: It's alright, I guess.

Tom: Are you pleased with the album?

Roky: I like it alright. It's ok.

Tom: I'd heard that you thought it was the best thing you'd ever done.

Roky: You do?

Tom: No, I mean, maybe I do.

Roky: That's a matter of opinion.

Tom: Let's talk about comics. You're still reading comics.

Roky: Not really.

Tom: Oh. Why not?

Roky: I just haven't been doing it that much.

Tom: How much is that much, Roky? I mean, there's still lots of images from those comics in your words.

Roky: Where shall I put this knife? I guess I'll just keep it.

Tom: Who's Buchanan? (A character in "Creature With The Atom Brain", the single, who does rather unpleasant things to people and who seems to be a not very nice chap in general).

Roky: He never changes. He just gets a little rougher every day.

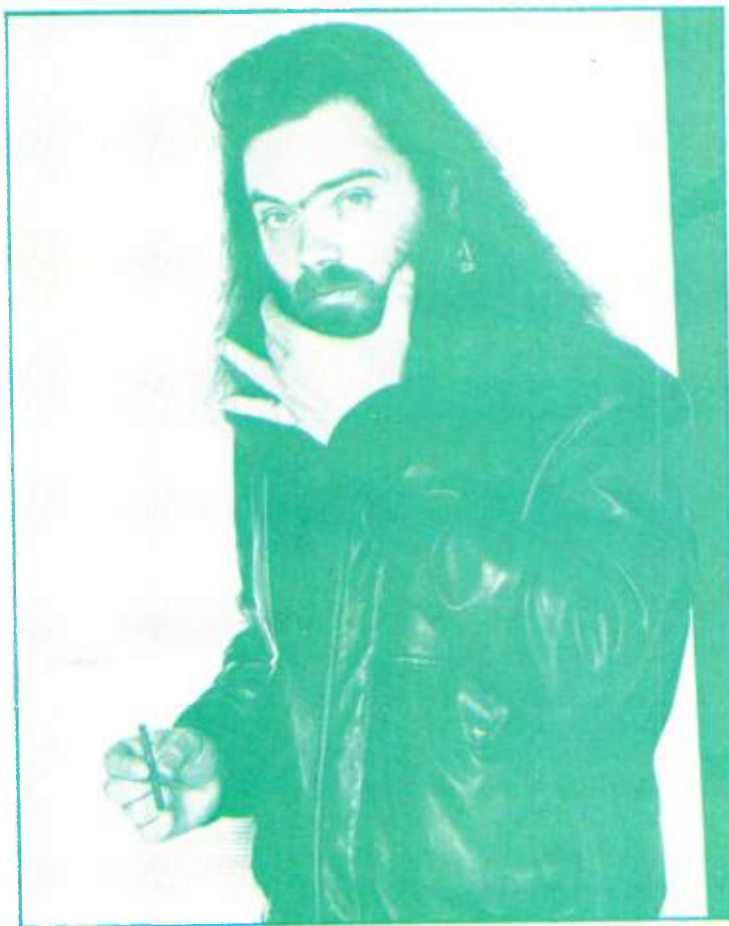
Tom: Who is he?

Roky: I don't really know.
 Tom: But is his voice taken from the film or...
 Roky: Um... I don't remember that... I don't remember too much about it. (Roky drops the knife on the floor).
 N/B/M: Would you like me to take care of the knife for you, Roky?
 Roky: Huh? ... No, I'll hold onto it.
 Tom: Well, how do you pass the time then?
 Roky: I fight a lot.
 Tom: Who with?
 Roky: Different people.
 Tom: Which people?
 Roky: Huh?
 Tom: Which people do you fight with?
 Roky: Different people.
 Tom: Why?
 Roky: I just like to... I don't think so really... No.
 Tom: Your album's very commercial, I think, and if it sells you might become famous. Would you like that?
 Roky: Well, it's alright. I don't like "Two-Headed Dog" too much. "Creature With The Atom Brain" is about the best one.
 Tom: What's that about?
 Roky: What's it about?
 Tom: Yes.
 Roky: Oh... it's just about... I don't know. It's just about... uh... different things.
 Tom: I thought it had a story from a film.
 Roky: It's just about um... oh, uh... it's not even about anything really interesting, y'know.
 Tom: What's "Mine Mine Mine" about?
 Roky: Oh... it's just about demonism and stuff like that, y'know.
 (Roky places the knife on the floor beside his chair, changes his mind, picks it up and places it on the floor beside his chair, changes his mind, picks it up and places it on the floor beside his chair on the other side).
 Tom: What's "The Interpreter" about?
 Roky: What about it?
 Tom: What's it about? Is it about spies?
 Roky: Huh?... Spies?
 Tom: Spies in Moscow...
 Roky: No, it's not about spies.
 Tom: There's a line in it about Moscow...
 Roky: There's nobody in Moscow.
 Tom: Never?
 Roky: No.
 Tom: Why Not?
 Roky: I don't like anybody in Moscow I like.
 (Roky retrieves the knife and begins to wave again).
 Tom: You wrote a song called

"President Ford Is A Square Queer"

Roky: No, I think you did.
 Tom: I did?
 Roky: Yeah.
 Tom: Did I?
 Roky: Yeah.
 Tom: Oh, well you wrote a song about Bo Diddley...
 Roky: A song about Billy?
 Tom: Bo Diddley.
 Roky: You did?
 Tom: No, you did.
 Roky: Huh?
 Tom: You wrote a song... oh, well. Do you like Bo Diddley?
 Roky: Yeah, sometimes I do. He got eaten up by the piranas. He was in the Amazon or a river or something, y'know.

when you had it notarized that you came from Mars...
 Roky: Uh... no he said he came from Mars.
 Tom: Did he come from Mars?
 Roky: He came from somewhere or he didn't.
 Tom: Do you like him?
 Roky: No.
 Tom: Why?
 Roky: Just don't.
 Tom: Do you like anyone?
 Roky: Myself quite a bit, y'know.
 Tom: Anyone else?
 Roky: No... Shall I put the knife back in the bag for you?
 Tom: No it's yours, Roky. It's a present.
 N/B/M: You should thank Tom for the knife, Roky, it's real nice. Roky is up at the



Tom: What other music do you listen to, these days?
 Roky: It's uh... I don't listen cos I need to uh... I don't, y'know.
 Tom: You just like fighting?
 Roky: Yeah.
 Tom: When's the last fight you had?
 Roky: I ain't never had one ever.
 (Roky drops the knife on the floor).
 Tom: Have you seen Doug Sahm recently?
 Roky: Yesterday.
 Tom: Really?
 Roky: No, I haven't seen him at all.
 Tom: Never?
 Roky: No, I haven't.
 Tom: But he was a witness

window again, slackly holding the knife and staring into space or the city. I feel gloomy to have caught him in sombre frame or maybe he just doesn't like me very much or maybe he misses Holly, his wife, who's out shopping in Oxford Street. He probably didn't know I was there at all, but that's my problem. I knew he was there and I know that for all the blood and savage monsters in his truly befuddled brain, he remains a gentle creature who can make music move with imperishable bravura more than almost anyone else alive. He has the care and the band to remain alive even if he shakes a bit too much

too often. Don't shake him, Lucifer, I swear I never touched that bloody hammer.
 Tom: Why didn't you put "Bloody Hammer" on the album?
 Roky: Oh, I just... I don't print "Bloody Hammer"... I don't know why, I just don't.
 Tom: Don't you like it?
 Roky: Well, it's just my own song.
 Tom: What's it about?
 Roky: What's it about? Well... I don't really know. (Roky retrieves the knife and waves it slowly and gently in the air). I don't really know. I'm not into that kind of a horror, I mean that meat kind of a horror... my own type of horror... I mean more... I'm more into being a kickin' kind of a horror.
 Tom: What type of horror?
 Roky: Kickin'.
 Tom: What do you mean?
 Roky: Kick somebody's head off or something like that y'know.
 Tom: Instead of using instruments?
 Roky: Yeah, I guess so.
 Tom: What do the symbols on the album mean?
 Roky: That's just a bunch of shit that album, I mean he's not... his symbols are a bunch of shit. (Captain) Colourz. His symbols.
 Tom: Don't they mean anything?
 Roky: No they don't.
 Tom: Oh, I thought they did.
 Roky: Huh?... No. That's a matter of opinion.
 Tom: "You're Gonna Miss Me" done by the Thirteenth Floor Elevators has become...
 Roky: I don't like the Elevators.
 Tom: (disbelief) You don't like the Elevators?
 Roky: No.
 Tom: Not at all?
 Roky: No.
 Tom: Nothing?
 Roky: I think people today are a bunch of worms. I think a bunch of chicken shit... bastards at least.
 Tom: Are you talking about the Elevators?
 Roky: You.
 Tom: Why?
 Roky: I don't know. I think they're all scared of something... I don't know what it is. They're scared of feet. I guess.
 Tom: Feet and kickin' horror, maybe?
 Roky: Yeah.
 Tom: What about films? Do you still enjoy scary films?
 Roky: Not really... never.

TOM HIBBERT

Tom Waits

LATEST
HEARTATTACK AND VINE
THE LATEST AND MOST
DISTINCTIVE
TOM WAITS ALBUM

NDAY

FRIDAY, JULY 4th

CC 10 PAGES, DAILY 25c

DOWNTOWN

By AH FONG
From Associated Press

TLE TOKYO—redpans and garman in the temple street, drinkin chevis regal in a four room, just another dead sol-a powder blue night, sugar-ays baby everythins alright, downtown down downtown.

etelaire de havelin doin the st-
fancee, lookin for someone to
the lumber in his pants, how
onna unload all of this ice and
s mink, all the traffic in the
but its so hard to think, goin
town down downtown.
kies wearin lipstick pierre car-
swear to god i seen him holdin
with jimmy bond, sallys high
unk and hungry for some
s, shes tem in the sheets but
utch in the streets, goin down.

Please Turn to Page 3 Col. 4

The Nickle

By CLAREY CHURCH
Los Angeles Staff Writer

S ANGELES—sticks and
cwill break my bones, but i al-
will be true, and when your



Heartattack And Vine

By TRACIE O'HARA
Columnist Writer

HOLLYWOOD—liar liar, th
your pants on fire, white sp-ces
hangin on the telephone wire,
gamblers reevaluate along the dotted
line, youll never recognize yourself
on heartattack and vine.

doctor layer beggar man theif,
philly joe remarkable looks on in
disbelief, if you want a taste of mad-
ness, youll have to wait in line, youll
probably see someone you know on
heartattack and vine.

MR. SEIGAL

By BELMONT RIVERA
Legal Affairs Writer

LAS VEGAS—i spent all my
money in a mexican whorehouse,
across the street from a catholic
church, and then i wiped off my re-
volver, and i buttoned up my bur-
gundy shirt, i shot the morning in
the back, with my red wings on, i

boneys high on china white,
shorty found a punk, dont you know
there aint no devil, theres just god
when hes drunk, well this stuff will
probably kill you, lets do another
line, what you say you meet me
down on heartattack and vine.

better off in iowa against your
scrambled eggs, that crawling down
caluenga on a broken pair of leggs,
youll find your ignorance is blistfull
every goddamn time, your waitin for
the rid on heartattack and vine.

Please Turn to Page 24 Col. 3

wea Album K52252

EMPIRES AND DANCE

BRITISH TOUR STARTS 15th OCTOBER
£3.99 R.R.P. LIMITED EDITION

SIMPLE MINDS

THE NEW ALBUM OUT NOW
SPEAK AT THE TALKING



Still Life

IN A FETAL RESEARCH CENTRE WHERE THE BOUNDRIES OF MEDICINE ARE CONSTANTLY BEING EXTENDED, - SOMETHING STIRS.



VOILA, ANOTHER SCIENTIFIC RABBIT OUT OF THE HAT. REFUSING TO BELIEVE THAT THERE COULD POSSIBLY BE WORSE TO COME, OUR SCAPEGOAT BECOMES ACQUAINTED TO...



© Stephen Topham

Only Rock'n'Roll

Post Bag,
Zig Zag.

5/9/80.

Dear Zig Zag,

If the Stray Cats don't get deported back to the States in the next two weeks, then I'll eat my crash helmet. They lump together new wave, pseudo rockabilly, and bits of nausea-provoking heavy metal into an inadequate and unlistenable musical stew. Mediocrity and lack of imagination characterise everything about the racing guitar music they play.

The unfortunate punter is savagely assaulted by an insane and anti-sardium form of rock that gets bogged down beyond recovery at the first attempt to change tempo. And judging by their recent performance at Dingwalls, whatever success they have achieved is due to a colossal press hype and totally undeserved.

Record contract? I think a death certificate would be more appropriate. I can only recommend the Stray Cats for those rock fans who like to have their eardrums shattered in order to enjoy themselves. Otherwise, don't bother.

Long live Buzz & the Flyers, Matchbox, and the Poilecats - the three bands that are currently blowing the rockabilly scene apart.

Yours, etc., *Alfred Clarke*
Alfred Clarke,
Beaufort Street,
London SE1.

ANADIN

P.S. Better take a couple of these before you go and see the Stray Cats

STOP PRESS! JOHN WALTERS GOES OVER TO 'HONEY'! TURN COAT!



Dear Zig Zag,

By the Filth Hounds of Hades!!! It appears, from what I read in Zigbag in issue 105, that someone has written to you and tried to forge my signature! Fortunately he failed, due to shoddy handwriting, and it turned out as "The Ayatollah Structure". No such a one exists.

But what about the contents of the letter? I have a feeling that I would agree with the sentiments therein, if I could only understand what he is waffling on about.

If I wasn't a natural depressive, I would be very excited about the future prospects around here.

I've just re-read this letter. Tripe, isn't it!

Yours righteously,

The Ayatollah Ska-Face
(The real one, the only one)

CHARTS

1. Kings Lead Hat — Brian Eno
2. Getting Nowhere Fast — Girls At Our Best
3. Kinnel Tommy — Ed Banger
4. The Shoop Shoop Song — Betty Everett
5. Toothache — John the Postman
6. Dalek I Love You — Dalek I
7. Wait Here I'll Be Right Back — Waitresses
8. Kiss Your Man Goodbye — Everley Brothers
9. Barracuda — Standells
10. Bike boys — Fashion
11. Ghetto Child — Detroit Spinners
12. Gospel Zone — Shadows of Night
13. Lester Leaps In — Monochrome Set
14. Heartbreak Hotel ('56 session) — Presley
15. Teasin' — King Curtis
16. Spider In The Bath — Al Roberts Jr.
17. Playing Bogart — 23 Jewels
18. Why Don't Your Do Me Right? — Alternative TV
19. How I Wrote Elastic Man — The Fall
20. Gabrielle — Nips

Another Unprinted Chart from Craven A (ex-Pleasure Drop, bass. Now vocalist in the Zipless Fucks — watch out for The Zipless Fucks Basement Tapes, available next month).

- Fort Augustus — Junior Delgado
 3.38 — Pop Group
 Language School — Tours
 BC — Sparks
 Radio 4 — PiL
 Low Life — PiL
 I Wanna Testify — Roger Taylor
 Crosstown Traffic — J.M. Hendrix
 I Don't Wanna Lose Your Love
 Horrowshow — Scars
 Adultery — Scars
 Theme from 'Streets of San Francisco'.
 Earth Wind and Fire — Paul Blackman
 Slide — Waitresses
 Soul Saga — Quincy Jones
 General Penitentiary — Black Uhuru
 RA7 — Eno and Snatch
 Another Coke — Alternative TV
 Good Good Feelin' — War
 Crisis — Israel Vibration

Terry Smith,
 Halesowen, W. Midlands

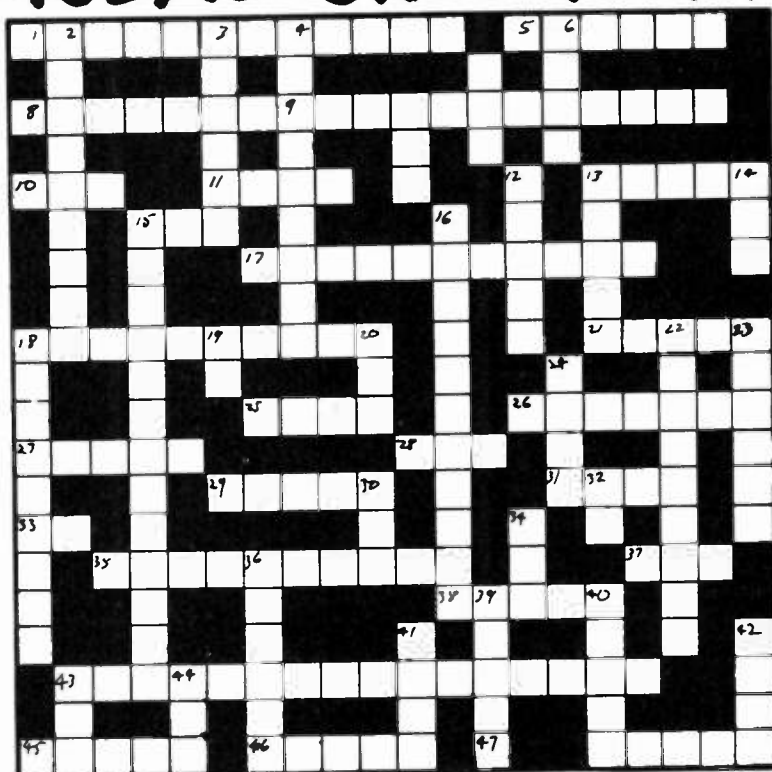
1. Little Ole Wine Drinker Me — Dean Martin
2. Police Car — Larry Wallis
3. Complete Control — Clash
4. First Time — Boys
5. Yesterday's Train — Byrds
6. Get Off The Phone — Heartbreakers
7. Band of Gold — Freda Payne
8. Extracts From Speeches — Martin Luther King
9. Who Am I — Country Joe & The Fish
10. I Don't Mind — Buzzcocks
11. Grievous Angel — Gram Parsons
12. Yankee Dollar — Skids
13. Theme from 'The Odd Couple'
14. Just Can't Help Believin' — Elvis Presley
15. Low Life — PiL
16. Can't Get Used To Losing You — Andy Williams

THE GREEN MAN TOP 20

COMPILED FROM THE NUMBER OF PLAYS ON THE JUKEBOX AT THE GREEN MAN, AYLESBURY. METER MAN-RAY DUTHIE

1. LEADER OF THE GANGE — GARY GLITTER
2. DRUG TRAIN — THE CRAMPS
3. GIVE ME BACK MY MAN — B-52's
4. BANKROBBER — THE CLASH
5. TRANSMISSION — JOY DIVISION
6. HEY HEY MY MY — NEIL YOUNG
7. ASHES TO ASHES — BOWIE
8. CREATURE WITH THE ATOM — BRAIN — ROKY
9. MOTORHEAD — MOTORHEAD
10. PSSYCHE — KILLING JOKE
11. PRESSURE DROP — TOOTS
12. BETTER SCREAM — W!HEAT
13. BETRAYAL — JAH WOBBLE
14. SILICONE CHIP — BASEMENT 5
15. OVERKILL — MOTORHEAD
16. CHANGE — KILLING JOKE
17. EVENTIDE HOME — TRINITY

ZIGZAG CROSSWORD



CLUES ACROSS

- (1) Blondie Drummer (7/5)
- (5) + 46 Across, No Train Bite (Anagram)
- (8) SLF LP (11/8)
- (10) See 33 Across
- (11) And The Bunnymen (4)
- (13) + 3 Down, Stiff Records Wins Prize With Raffle Ticker (5/6)
- (15) Record Label Owned by 2 Down (3)
- (17) Television Man (3/8)
- (18) Public Image Ltd, Single (5/5)
- (21) What Ian Dury Wanter You To Do With Your Rhythm Stick (3/2)
- (25) See 7 Down
- (26) + 47 Across, A Weapon On Fire? (7/5)
- (27) How Many Times A Lady For The Commadores? (5)
- (28) Kate Bush Single (3)
- (29) See 43 Down
- (31) Kate Bush Felt One Inside (4)
- (33) + 10 Across, Iggy Pop Album (2/3)
- (35) Arthur Dog-E (Anagram 2 words)
- (37) Bowie Album (3)
- (38) The Singing Policeman (5)
- (43) Dexy's Midnight Runners Hit (5/5/2/4)
- (45) + 40 Down, Pete Townshend Album (5/5)
- (46) See 5 Across
- (47) See 26 Across

CLUES DOWN

- (2) Link Cromwell (5/4)
- (3) See 13 Across
- (4) Fun Fun Fun Group (5/4)
- (6) + 14 Down, Roxy Hit (4/3)
- (7) + 25 Across, Revillos Girl (3/4)
- (9) Brian Is One Backwards (3)
- (12) Jam Single (5)
- (13) Make A Meal Of Lydia (5)
- (14) See 6 Down
- (15) Let Hot Poem Hot (Anagram 3 words)
- (16) Elvis Costello Album (5/6)
- (18) It's Cod Rat (Anagram)
- (19) + 32 Down, Adam And The Ants Label (2/2)
- (20) + 22 Down, Paul Simon LP (3/5/4)
- (22) See 20 Down
- (23) Day For Hazel O'Connor (6)
- (24) Fleetwood Mac Biggie (4)
- (30) Special Type of Music (3)
- (32) See 19 Down
- (34) Record Label (1.1.1)
- (36) 15 Down's Ian
- (39) Miss Wilcox (5)
- (40) See 45 Across
- (41) They Just Can't Stop It (4)
- (42) Number of Seasons (4)
- (43) + 29 Across, 'Nighthawks At The Diner' Man (3/5)
- (44) Mr. Harper (3)

17. God Save The Queen — Sex Pistols
 18. Let It Roll — Guy Clarke
 19. I Got You Babe — Sonny and Cher
 20. Daydream Believer — Monkees
- Steve Jackson,
Cleethorpes

A TOP 20

by Gary Knight ("0533")

1. SUICIDE — The Observers
2. KODAK GHOSTS EP — Eyeless in Gaza
3. TOTALLY WIRED — The Fall
4. THERE GOES CONCORDE AGAIN — And the Native Hipsters
5. TIME DEVOURS — Trance
6. CAREERING — PIL
7. SILICON CHIP — Basement
8. SWITCH — Siouxsie and Banshees
9. ALL NIGHT PARTY — A Certain Ratio
10. BLACK LEATHER — Nightmares in Wax

ACROSS

1. Lodger 3. Transmission 8. Marquee Moon 9. Come (Together) 12. Midge Ure 13. Nightout 16. Me 17. Everybody's (Happy Nowadays) 20. Born to Run 22. Eric 24. (Bat) Out (of Hell) 25. Angie 26. Sex Pistols 27. News (at Ten) 28. Ego 30. Horses 31. Stop 32. (Bat Out) of Hell 33. Zero 38. Music for Parties 40. (Everybody's) Happy Nowadays

DOWN

2. Dirk 3. Too Much Pressure 4. Annie Lennox 5. Second Edition 6. It's (My Party) 7. Reggae 8. (It's) My (Party) 10. My Guy 11. Bat (Out of Hell) 14. (News) at (Ten) 15. Growing Up 16. Man 18. Sister Morphine 19. Changes 21. (Come) Together 22. Eat to the Beat 23. Cost of Living 29. (News at) Ten 34. ONO 35. Zip 36. (It's My) Party 37. Y.M.C.A. 39. R.C.A.



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| 3. Velvet Underground | 28. The Exploited | 53. Only Ones (Rose) |
| 4. Dexys Midnight Runners | 29. Siouxsie (Head Pic) | 54. Only Ones (Serpent) |
| 5. Monochrome Set | 30. Siouxsie (Leaning Photo) | 55. Only Ones (Baby's Got a Gun) |
| 6. Human League (Travelogue) | 31. Siouxsie (Stage Photo) | 56. Only Ones (Trouble in the World) |
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| 14. Delta 5 | 39. Gang of Four (Photo) | 64. B 52's |
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| 16. The Cure | 41. David Bowie (Low) | 66. Sid Cowboys |
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| 19. Toyah (Bird in Flight) | 44. Iggy (Metallic KO) | 69. Angelic Upstarts |
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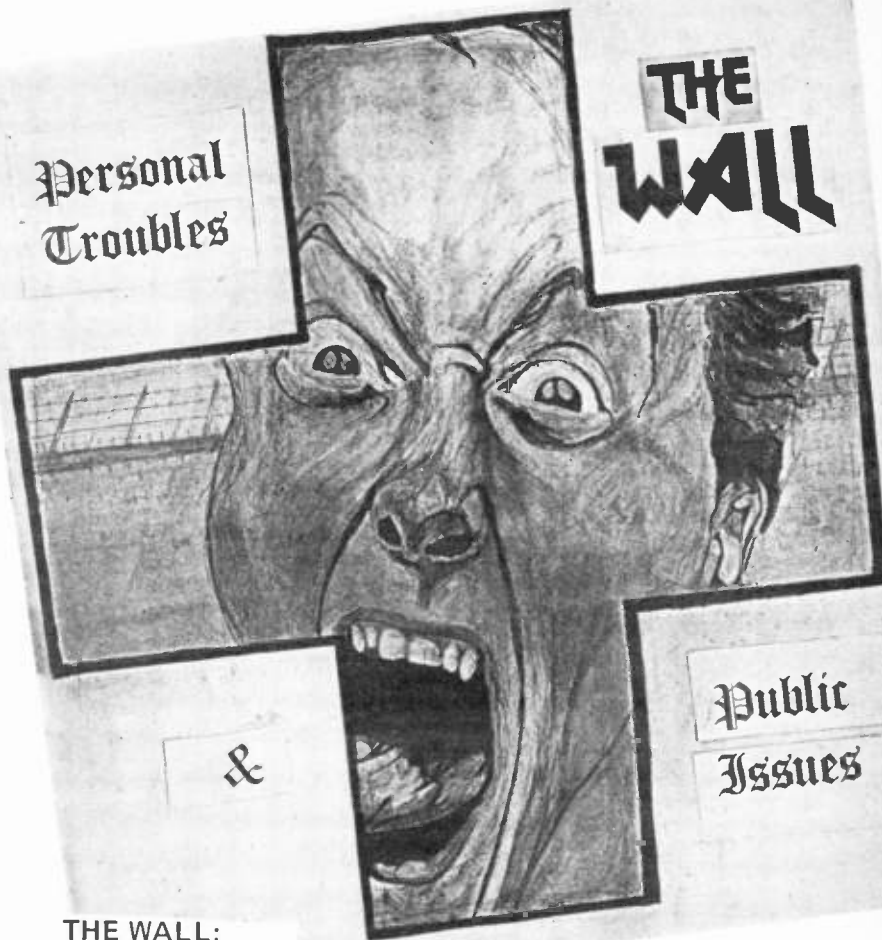
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REVIEWS

45s

This may very well turn out to be a case of spot the deliberate mistake; apart from the fact that I haven't written a singles column for eons there's a hell of a lot of new bands who've sprung up — about whom or which I know next to zilch. This could, however, be an advantage; I do at least have what might euphemistically be called The Ignorant Overview.

One thing that does seem patently apparent (speaking here as a lapsed student of advertising) is that the old maxim of not being able to tell a book by looking at the cover still holds true. In fact, taken a stage further it might almost be said that the cover is often more nutritious than the contents (or "Dark Side Of The Moon" and the Consumers' Association's guide to breakfast cereals).

Hence you may understand the difficulty in resisting the temptation to review the sleeves rather than the vinyl. Instead I have allowed myself the indulgence of wheeling out my peculiar fetish for Great Fade Outs, for example; Just as the majority of bands often play fare more creatively during their sound checks it often seems the case that they really let rip during the last twenty seconds of their recordings. Perhaps it's merely because they foresee a tea break.

A Great Fade Out Of The Month

RUTS: "West One (Shine On Me)" (Virgin)

Initially rather uninteresting, but largely due to the middle eight/chorus — a reasonable fascimilé of the guitar motif from The Beatles' "Dear Prudence" — the tune becomes increasingly infectious.

However, the piece that really bears endless repetition is the sax solo comprising the last few seconds — the author of some ebing one Gary Barnacle.

The b side "The Crack" — dedicated to the late Malcolm Owen — is a Barrettesque (Syd, that is) dub pastiche which opens with offkey barbershop-style rendition of that awful Sinatra thing that eulogises the loveliness of Paris.

Plaster of Paris?

The Other Great Fade Out Of The Month Combined With Single Of The Month

EYE TO EYE: "Tonight Insomnia" (Automatic Record Co.)

Eye to Eye are a new Anglo-American band comprising an augmented unit based around songwriter/musician Julian Marshall (late of the Flying Lizards and Barbara Dickson sessions) and Californian lyricist and vocalist Deborah Berg. According to an Automatic Spokesperson, Eye to Eye came into being on the initiative of Julian Marshall whilst he was vacationing on the West Coast with his wife. They happened upon Ms Berg whilst she was performing as a member of a San Franciscan dance troupe. Julian was impressed with her



stage presence and asked her if she could sing.

It transpired that she could, and had — with various local club bands. She could also write decent lyrics.

The results are unusually seductive for a largely electronic-based band. Instrumentally both sides have a strong black disco bottom and counterpointed with delicate and unusual synthesiser motifs. Ms. Berg disturbed me initially. Superficially the opening lines of the a side appeared to be delivered in a crossbred vocalese somewhere betwixt Chrissie Hynde and Toyah. This unfortunate first impression drops away immediately, however, leaving a lasting impression of a lady with a strong soul-based style distinguished by an unusual flexibility of range and a nicely unpredictable approach.

OTHERS (In Order of Merit/Sales Potential).

XTC: "Generals And Majors:" (Virgin) Astonishing. This is the second or third single thus far that owes more than a passing acquaintance to the Beatles. This one is circa "Revolver" style. Very kinky-dinky, laden with lightweight hook-lines, whistling etc.

Strange really. It puts me in mind of the time when, as a staff writer on the now-extinct "Disc", I was involved in a ghastly "Search For A Songwriter" competition — this being about 6 years back. Each staff writer had to give up



one evening a week to listen to readers' demo tapes. They all had one thing in common: uniformity. Without exception the sources of musical reference began with fifties rock and roll and ended with the Beatles. It was as if the majority of aspiring musos considered that popular music had concluded with the Beatles. I'm sure that the results would be similar if a contemporary survey were to be conducted.

SONNY FISHER: "Shake That Thing"/"Mathilda" (Ace Records)

Rockabilly. Fair stuff. Proficeint and somewhat heavier than the usual tinpan rockabilly sound — due mainly to a distinct r n' be feel.

"Mathilda" is redolent of Roy C's "Shotgun Wedding".

Unlikely chart material, unfortunately.

INGENUITY CORNER

CHECKMATE: "Only Fools Pretend To Be Happy" (Sweet Harmony)

This arrived sans centre. I therefore had to punch out the centre of the Tea Pots' "Flacid Pot" (sic) and perform a lightning transplant. The results are still somewhat eccentric in the wow and flutter dept. A pity the same cannot be said of the musical contents which are of the straight ahead hopped-up strum-a-longe-Weedon class.

BARGAINS BINS

ROD STEWART: "Little Miss Understood" (Virgin)

A re-release of an early Immediate production. Whilst this isn't a particularly strong ballad I do prefer Rod Stewart's early work — of which this is, unfortunately a typically overblown, over-orchestrated and unconvincingly performed-with the Jeff Beck Group. Zigzag awaits the Matt Munro cover version with bated breath.

RUBY TURNER BAND: "Separate Ways" (Sunflower)

A most impressive band. Saw them 3 weeks ago quite by accident at Dingwalls. Though much of their material — like the late Kokomo's — is derived directly or indirectly from other people's (e.g. the b side is a rather lame cover of Dylan's "I Shall Be Released", that works far better live) they are one of the best pure club acts I've seen in ages. In old fashioned terminology, "they cook" — especially Ruby, her co-vocalist Jackie and an excellent sit-in electric keyboard player.

"Separate Ways" is just strong enough melodically, with highly attractive keyboard underpinning to be a potential chartbuster in the soul vein.

Here's hoping Sunflower's marketing dept. is as strong and tasteful as their a and r folks.

MATERIAL: "Discourse" (Red)

Very little I can concoct about this one

apart from the obvious shades of Human League with half their plugs pulled out/ juxtaposed with a Stanley Clarke-style rhythm section.

A Meccano-built record.

THE LITTLE ROOSTERS: "I Need A Witness"

Produced by Joe Strummer, this is another dischordant piece of ersatz rock n' roll; Chuck Berry on distort-accordion? Vocals are reminiscent of Pete Townshend's, but imaginative use has been made of the bass section.

THE SATELLITES: "Urban Guerilla" (Rewind)

Extremely dated punk — a recent new discovery from the original hieroglyphic pressing found in the ancient 1 track studio beneath the tomb of King Tutankamon.

BAD MANNERS: "Special Brew" (Magnet).

I'm pretty ignorant about this particular area of music — my knowledge begins and ends with Desmond Dekker and Judge Dread — but I loved this. An excellent piece of wit-laden ska. Would like to interview this bunch.

KLARK KENT: "Rich In A Ditch" (A & M): Beautiful apple green translucent pressing — as translucent as the fact that KK are The Police's a rococo alter-ego inspired mainly, I'd guess, by



the somewhat precocious nature of Stewart Copeland's contributions to Police elpees.

Late Arrivals (Forceps Deliveries)

THE SOFT BOYS: "I Wanna Destroy You" (Armageddon)

Ah yes indeed. These boys've been listening to the right music — the Flamin' Groovies perhaps? Great harmony-laden hook-line/chorus. This could be very big if accorded the amount of airplay it so richly justifies. It's simple, catchy, immediate and totally to the point. It snatches at the turn-ups right away and holds on there like the veritable Jack Russell. Love it. Alternative single of the month.

THE TIGERS: "Savage Music" (WEA Test Pressing)

Extremely promising single of great musician prowess and ingenuity. What's more it's extremely danceable. Love it, even though the b side sucks worse than pre-war breezeblock. By way of introduction, The Tigers are Tony Jacks, gtr., lead vocals, Nick Cola, keyboards, vocals, Ross McGeeney, lead guitar and vocals, Nic Potter (sometime Carol Grimes' sideman) on bass and Pete Dobson, drums.

PETE ERSKINE

MORE 45s...

For this young cygnet there's two Singles of the Month — 'Drug Train' by The Cramps (Illegal), and 'Are You Glad To Be In America' by James Blood Ulmer (Rough Trade). 'Drug Train', left off the last album at the last minute, couldn't be anyone else — wildly sham-bolic, it careers along on locomotive drumming and death-rattling guitars. Lux bawls, 'On the drug train, whooo! whooo!.. And he excels himself in demented larynx manoeuvring on the flip's second track, 'I Can't Hardly Stand It'. James Blood Ulmer's excellent single is a hypnotic hybrid of funk, jazz and other-rhythms. Horns are used to great effect throughout. Sounds great on the jukebox.

I had high hopes for 'Buena' by Joe King Carrasco and the Crowns (Stiff) to be likewise compulsive in his touted Different Groove of Tex-Mex music. Once you get over the mild disappointment of its non-sensationalism, 'Buena' grows with every play. By Cariba! The 'B' side is racey New Wave...

It's effect is heightened by 'Magnetic Heart' by VS. (Monkey) and the VKTMS EP (Emergency Room), which show that San Francisco plays faster, rougher, more grating Punk Rock circa '77 Vortex than the rest of the World.

From over here I was pretty grabbed by two debuts: 'This Age' by the rather doomy and sax-dominated Observers (S & T) and 'Nuclear Summer' by our letters page favourites, Liverpool's Nice Men (Mrs Green). Both exhibit nuke-paranoia articulately, but the latter are silly too.

Another delight was 'Rockabilly Guy' by London's premier Polecats (Nervous). The sound is raw and energetic, — the drumming's so primitive maybe it could've used more bottom.

Recommended: the already — controversial 'Heyday' by The Sound (Korova) divided the Press to extremes but stands out from its obvious Joy Div. cloneishness by virtue of some brilliant attacking guitar. Pinpoint take a different step from the roaring punk of their 'Richmond' debut on 'Waking Up To Morning' (Albion). The synth has crept in and it's a bit light, but the other side, 'Floods and Trickles', is sturdier. Poster photo-montage sleeve is nice. Mustn't forget the single by Germany's 39 Clocks, a perverted drum-machine moan of 'Twist And Shout' (renamed 'Twisted And Shouts'), which dissolves under some piercing Black-and-Dekker guitar screeching.

We reviewed the previous Fall 45 last ish out-of-date. Likewise a month out-of-date, the already-semi-slugged 'Totally Wired' (Rough Trade). Mark Smith still packs little melody in his flat Mancunian intoning but on top of the pounding drums, insistent riff and scrappy guitar, which gain momentum, it's still a forceful piece of different dancing.

Striving to be danceable and angry too a la Pop Group are Bristol's Glaxo Babies, who unleash four funky protests. They can certainly whack out funk, but sound self-conscious chanting 'You gotta kick out the funk' in student voices.

HUGH JARSE



A BOWIE-BOLAN SONG AND A CUDDLY TOYS SONG DOUBLE A-SIDE (FRESH 10)

THE FOUR KINGS (A THREE PIECE) b/w DISGRACEFUL VERSION (FRESH 11)



THE DARK 'HAWAII FIVE-O' — FOLLOW UP TO MY FRIENDS/ JOHN WAYNE (FRESH 13)

AS SEEN ON THE DEAD KENNEDYS TOUR AND HEARD ON JOHN PEEL SESSIONS (FRESH 12)



MORE ARCHIVE TAPES FROM MENACE — THE YOUNG ONES EP (FRESH 14)

FAMILY FODDER'S CONTINUED OBSESSION 'DEBBIE HARRY' (NOT ON THEIR 'SUNDAY GIRLS' 12" 45) (FRESH 15)



MANUFACTURED ROMANCE 'THE TIME OF MY LIFE. I'ROOM TO BREATHE' (FRESH 16)

THE WALL 'GHETTO' EP PRODUCED BY JIMMY PURSEY + PETE WILSON (FRESH 17)



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ALBUM OF THE MONTH: DAVID BOWIE - SCARY MONSTERS (RCA)

WHOOOPS! LAST MONTH I REVIEWED 'ASHES TO ASHES' AND WAS A BIT LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC. WITH ALL THE STUFF GOING ON IT SEEMED BOWIE DIDN'T MATTER LIKE HE DID, JUST A CLONES-HORSE. ...WHOOOPS. 'SCARY MONSTERS' IS ONE OF THE BEST ALBUMS BOWIE'S EVER MADE. CERTAINLY THE MOST IMPRESSIVE SINCE MY FAVOURITE YOUNG AMERICANS. IT'S PROBABLY HIS STRONGEST COLLECTION OF SONGS EVER. GLORIOUS STUFF - PASSIONATE, MAJESTIC AND UNBEARABLY MELODIC, STILL FORGING AHEAD. THE WORDS ARE DISTURBING AND PERSONAL. THIS GOES AS DEEP AS YOU WANT AND DANCING IS EASY.

WITH THE CURRENT PUBLIC AFFECTION FOR EMPTY NUMAN BEINGS HUNG UP ON STUPID NOISE, BOWIE COULD'VE COASTED AND DONE A SUB-LOW SELF-PARODY THEY'D LOVE IN STUDIO 21. INSTEAD HE'S HONED EVERY INFLUENCE SOAKED UP AND SPEWED OUT THRU' THE YEARS - ROCK 'N' ROLL, KRAUT, DISCO, SINATRA - IT'S GONE ROUND IN HIS MATURE CRANIUM AND COME OUT THE REAL DAVID BOWIE. HE'S OUT OF DISGUISE AND SHELL, BUT THE NAKED TORTOISE IS STRONGER.

TRACKS ARE BUILT ON DENSE, LUXURIOUS BACKDROPS OF FLICKERING, SOARING GUITARS (FRIPP IS AMAZING), WADS OF BACKING AND COUNTER-VOCALS AND BOOMING DRUMS. HE'S RARELY BEEN IN BETTER VOICE, REACHING FOR ANGER, PAIN, PASSION AND TENDERNESS WITH EASE. ON THE FIRST TRACK, 'IT'S A GAME', A JAP GIRL INTONES AGAINST A CRAZED DAVID. THE SONG CLOSES THE ALBUM AS A SIMPLE 'BALLAD'. 'ASHES TO ASHES' APPEARS IN DIFFERENT MIX, A VERSION OF UNDER-RATED TOM VERLAINE'S 'KINGDOM COME' WITH ITS SUCCULENT RIFF AND THERE'S A NEW BOWIE ANTHEM IN 'TEENAGE WILDLIFE'. MUCH MORE... YOU GOTTA HEAR.

NOTHING FALSE, NOTHING PRETENTIOUS, NOTHING WILDLY EXPERIMENTAL, NOTHING LOST, LOTS GAINED. THIS IS BOWIE ALL THERE, SETTLED AND REAL, BUT STILL TEETERING THROUGH INNOVATION AND SELF-QUESTIONING. HE KNOWS YOU'LL LIKE IT AND IT'LL PROBABLY BE HIS BIGGEST SELLER. WELL, I'M BUGGERED, HE'S GONNA LEAD THE 80s!

KRIS NEEDS

THE BEST OF STEVE HARLEY AND COCKNEY REBEL (EMI)

EMI cashing-in on their ahead-of-their-time back catalogue. Marc, now Harley and his Cockney Rebels, the East End

glitter-rebels. Despite lapses into light novelty, Harley exploded into dull old '73-'74 with a welcome wealth of visuals, passion and neat tunes. The best example was 'Psychomodo', about half

what you get here. The rest consists of his Greatest Hits - 'Make Me Smile', 'Judy Teen' and the grasping early classic, 'Sebastian'. Like many, Harley's most intensely best work was the early stuff.

PETER HAMMILL: The Black Box (S-type)

'Ello, Peter's off Charisma - probably didn't sell enough records... which is a bleedin' shame because for a decade the man has poured out harrowing, beautiful and passionate music from the depths of his tortured, angry psyche. Few will bare soul to such an extent, which is probably why he's received so little of the acclaim he deserves. He frightens people off. But what I wanna know is, how come Peter Gabriel, who like Hammill, is a caring, eccentric Englishman whacking out original, unsettling music, can reap so much reward for his stuff. Is it cos Hammill's even more extreme? Is there only room for one?

Whatever, 'The Black Box' is the latest and a further achievement. Last year I interviewed PH but Zigzag wnet bust and I'm saving it (maybe I'll do another interview, combine the two). Peter mentioned a new piece he was working on in the epic mould of Van der Graaf's devastating 'Plague of Lighthouse Keepers'. Long-time Hammill fans will wet themselves to know it's here. Entitled 'Flight', it's the trauma of a bomber pilot, long, convoluted and heavy-going at first, but classic Hammill.

David Jackson still parps the odd line on Sax but now much of Hammill's accompaniment, apart from his ever-present guitar and piano, is electronic - drum machines and the synths of David Ferguson. The sound is often mangled, distorted and disturbing. Pete's voice is the usual impaled eel twisting through different emotions in the space of seconds. His melodies are strong and the riffs as menacing as ever. Meanwhile the words attack hypocrisy, silly humans and ex rcise Hammill's pain. Particularly effective is 'Fogwalking', about strolling through London after the bomb's been - 'fogwalking through the worm-eaten Night Apple'. It's claustrophobic creepiness is heightened by horrible crawling synth-lines.

I hate quoting words out of context so I won't. I'll only urge you to whip out and get this LP. If you're at all into pushing out the limits and emotions, that is. Not much is easy round here. I don't think anybody's a genius hardly cos the best stuff flows out on its own, but the crafted passions of Hammill deserve no lesser praise. K.N.

HOUSEHOLD SHOCKS (Stark)

Blue vinyl localised sampler of Humber-side talent. Bands feature: 'are Produce of Reason, Thunderboys, One Gang Logic, Sinking Ships, Juveniles, Mystery Girls, Detectors, Fault 151 and Urban-tech. These bands lean towards the Joy Division end of the spectrum rather than punk, though there is the usual smattering of mid-tempo, rather anonymous songs.

THE UNOBTAINABLE T. REX (EMI)

As more and more people wake up to the Marc legend shrewd old EMI hoist out a bunch of old 'B' sides from the now-deleted singles. Some goodies here, ('Lady') but some overdone turkeys too ('To Know Him Is To Love Him').

BURNING SPEAR: Living Dub (Island)

'Tis a great pity Spear moved from Island to EMI, enticed by large wads of buncie, cos, with the sinking major's lack of promo, his last album — the excellent 'Hail H.I.M.' — sank too. Island would've brought Winston Rodney the large audience he deserves for his dark, passionate music. Still, the company have picked up this dub-up of 'Hail H.I.M.'s' predecessor, 'Social Living', and put it out on limited edition. And very good it is too. Complete with Rob Partridge (Island Press Officer) felt-penned sleeve and label, it showcases those mighty ridims which rumble beneath Spear's out pourings, dubbed up by Winston himself. One you turn out the lights for. Very heavy.

LEMON KITTENS: We Buy A Hammer For Daddy (United Dairies)

These two — Danielle Dax and Karl Blake — have been dubbed "the psychotic Nina and Frederik". They also seem to've been almost totally ignored by the media in general. It's not hard to see why, cos the Kittens don't deal in catchy choruses, bright rhythm, comfortable melodies or any easy punter-baits. I'm not going to say I went berserk first hearing and immediately fell for all the 16 bits here, but this music, for all it D.I.Y. non-skill (much of the point), odes to flies eating "two diamond-shaped shits" and moments of skittering, rambling unenjoyment, is totally honest, untouched and direct from them. Also an encouragement to others to do it. They are very serious but at least they're trying something fresh and deserve the chance to reach sympathetic ears. The pair — who are the hard remainder of a 20-strong group family tree so far — try different moods ranging from aggression to ethereal — I prefer the slow ones. I don't wanner spout rubbish like 'not everyone's cup of tea' but I would say listen before you buy. I hope you get a chance.

PRINCE FAR-I: Cry Tuff Dub Encounter Chapter III (Daddy Kool)

The excellent Daddy Kool shop takes another excursion into vinylising their own goodies and the result is a rather whacky offering from old Louis Armstrong himself Prince Far-I. What we have here is basically a bunch of rhythms — several of the 'same old' variety ('Satta Massa Gana' hello!) — Far-I whipped up in Channel One and subjected to a solid dub-up at a London studio with the aid

PRESS GANG FUN AT THE ICA

I regarded it as a big laugh. I never thought for one minute that gathering together a quartet of Seasoned Fleet Street music hacks and two token editors from the 'real' Music Press and putting them in front of a gaggle of 'thoughtful' intellectuals and the odd Interested Party, would result in much more than added confirmation that the established BIZ traditions of Big-(headed) companies and National reviewers shoving out cosy stuff for ea public consumption were on the downward slide to terminal redundancy or stagnancy.

We were at the I.C.A., off Trafalgar Square — me, N.M.E.'s Neil Spencer, Nina Myskow (The Sun's Queen of Pop), Derek Jewell from the *Sunday Times*, the *Guardian's* Robin Denselow and a chairman in the form of Disinterested Richard North from the *Observer*. We were s'posed to discuss the Music Press and it's relationship to developments in the ailing Biz. Did it determine taste, etc, 'cept ponderously worded.

Following an ICA-provided stew, and booze (me), we adjourned to a room upstairs. US experts were stacked in front of the throng, wore badges with our names on and got introduced. It began . . .

Five minutes in and Derek Jewell has already proved himself a pompous, self-righteous fool, citing his primeval man origins in the Biz as the beall and endall qualification for US upstarts. Now how can we disagree that Sky and Yes are the expansive future and the Pistols were of little significance anyway? The man's out of touch. When Robin Banks, heard several times during the 'debate', bellowed 'What about voluntary euthanasia?' Jewell should have taken the hint (career-wise I mean, of course).

Neil Spencer fenced Jewell and voiced his paper's position regarding style and content articulately. I got the impression he'd done this before. Me it was my first time, but I just wanted to voice my opinion that the nationals treat music with either bland academic blinkers ('The Wall' is *PROGRESS*, chaps) or Sun-style rootin'-tootin' rump-and-excess superficiality-for-morons (though you are a nice girl, Nina). These papers all seem to know their place and readers (all 12 million of 'em). It's not for us to say what we want. The *Guardian's* safe reading for the train, the *Observer* a Sunday coast. So this crowd could discuss the independent threat, fanzines (they should've had Mick Mercer from *Panache* or someone for the real voice on that one — we may be the grand-daddy but none of the vital young relatives were represented whatsoever).

Under lack of chairmanship the discussion careered about and took off on tangent without ever really getting to the meat or reaching anything like a conclusion. Most of the time was spent defendin' and fendin' off Jewell. It was over before it began. Everyone said they knew their place — it seemed to be the bar.

I still enjoyed it, though.

Kris Needs

of Slit back-up singers, Flying Lizzard sound effect Merchants and it says 'ere, a PiL or two (Levine's guitar it sounds like, maybe the synth?)

It's solid heavy dub, rich in funny noises, but my favourite track is the opener, 'Plant Up', which features Far-I's rumbling tones doctored with a robotic rumbler with just a bass drum for backing.

JOHNNY & DORSEY BURNETTE: Together Again; THE SHEPPARDS (Both Solid Smoke)

Johnny Burnette and the Rock 'n' Roll Trio have had songs covered by everyone from The Cramps ('Tear It Up') to Motorhead ('Train Kept A-rollin'). Their sparse sound was early rockabilly at its

raw and wild best. This album on an American label features a load of recently uncovered demos — just the Burnette brothers on guitar and bass whacking it down to acetate. The sound is bare, drumless and crackly. Of decided interest to the rockabilly maniac but a little bare for the casual listener.

The Sheppards were a little-known Chicago six-piece who, it says here, bridged the gap between street-corner doo-wop and the 60s soul group sound. This label (thanks for thinking of us) have gathered together 18 tracks of high-class soaring soul harmonies and deep down belly-sighs abound. Great for late or early hours and you don't have to be an expert to get off. Great gate-fold sleeve too.

BILLY BISON



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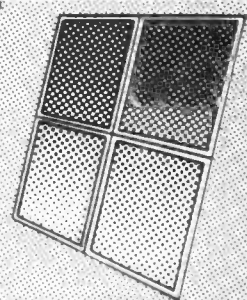
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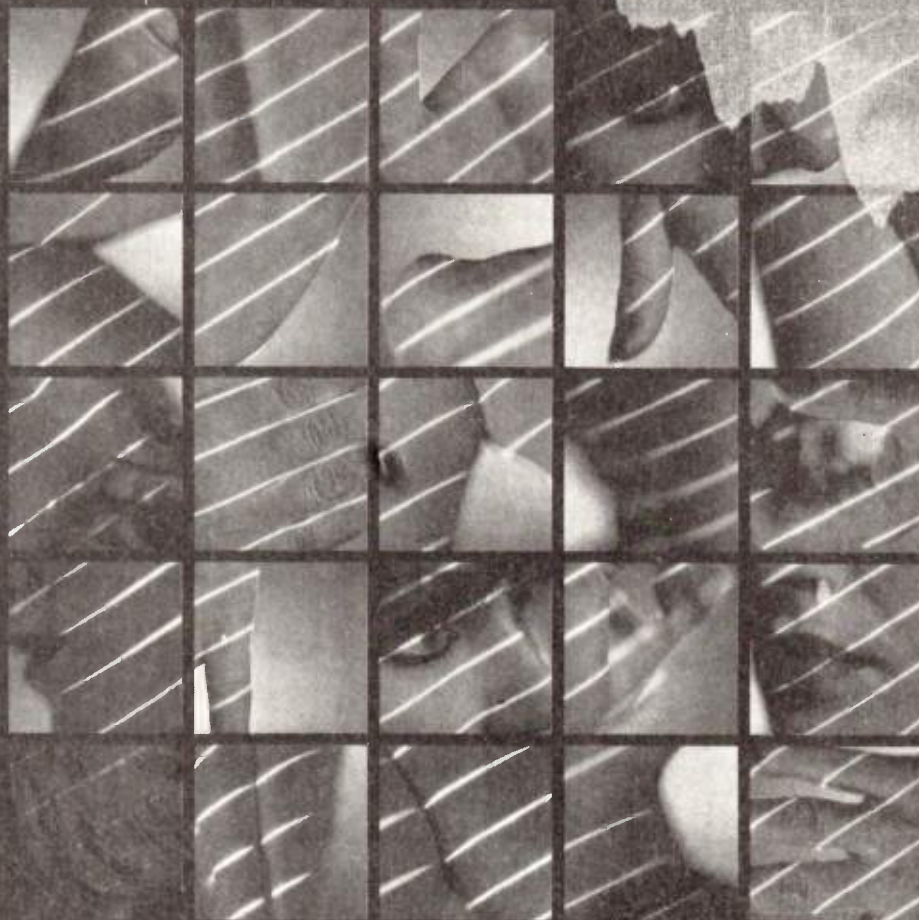
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