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ZIGZAG

MUSIC ● NEWS

**KEITH
RICHARDS**

EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW

**THIS HEAT
THE SOUND
RAMONES
GANG OF FOUR
DRUGS: PART II
DEAD KENNEDYS
T. V. EXPLORERS**

ILPS 9646

U2

THE ALBUM
BOY

PRODUCED BY STEVE LILLYWHITE



ZIGZAG/107

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ALL THAT NEWS THAT FIGURES

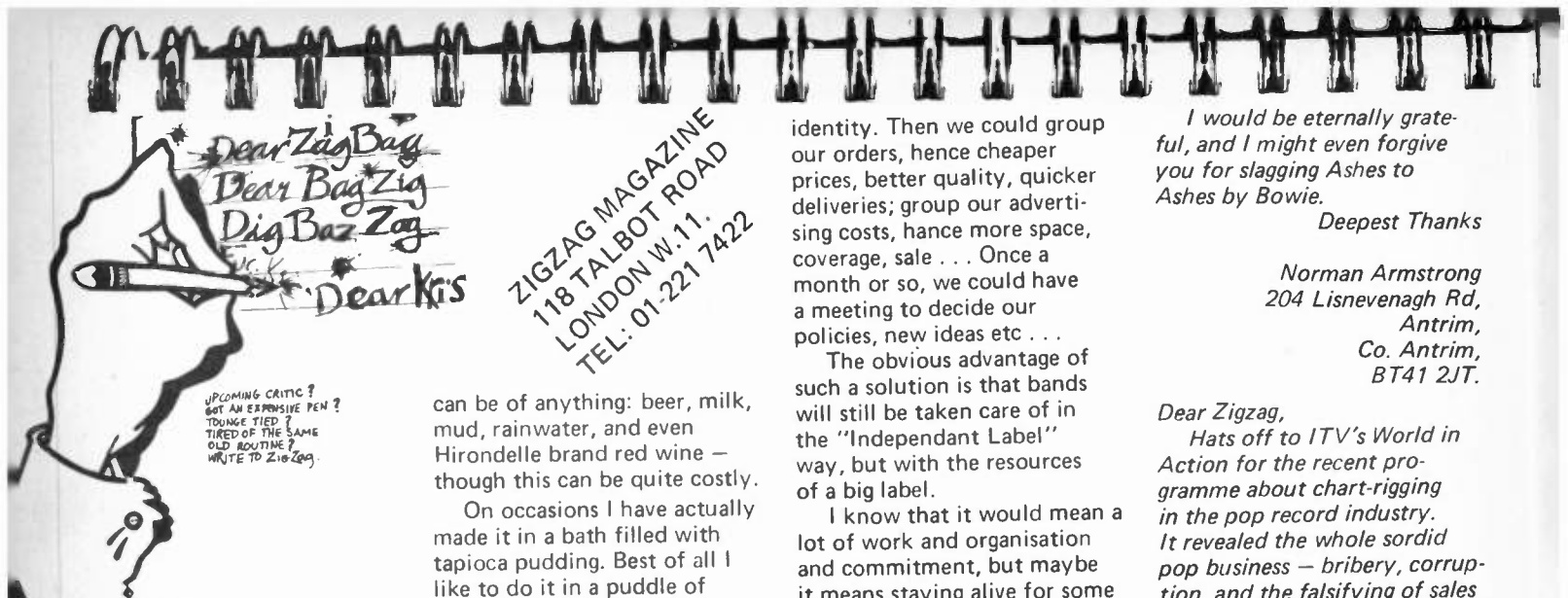
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Zigzag is continually looking for keen new young writers. To help facilitate the process we propose to train a select number of promising newcomers with a view to forming a stylish team of half a dozen regular freelancers.

Pete Erskine, assistant editor, will personally supervise this course, the basic requirements of which are literacy, a cliché-free vocabulary and the importance of objectivity and in-depth interviewing in the art of reportage. An encyclopaedic knowledge of rock music is not essential; enthusiasm is.

Details of terms/fees etc may be had from:
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Dear Zig Zag
Dear Bag Zig
Dig Baz Zag
Dear Kris

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

UPCOMING CRITIC?
BUT AN EXPENSIVE PEN?
TOUNGE TIED?
TIRED OF THE SAME
OLD ROUTINE?
WRITE TO ZIGZAG.

Dear ZigZaggers,
What the fuck has happened to ZigZag. A short while back Kris said that ZigZag would concentrate on the smaller bands in future and only mention the name bands when they had something different to say. Your articles on The Police, Roger Daltrey and McVicar were straight out of the daily papers and to put Kate Bush on the cover and make feeble excuses was more than a bad joke. What next for ZigZag? A 2 tone cover or maybe even Queen on the cover?

Come off it Kris, the only articles worth reading in the new ZigZag were on Bauhaus and the Psychedelic Furs. Don't follow the rest of the muzak papers. You've had articles on Killing Joke, Wasted Youth, Martian Dance and other neglected worthwhile bands printed in the mag before. Stick with it and bollocks to the fashionable bands (Police/Madness/etc).

Leave them to the likes of Sounds & R.M.

Irene Angelini

EACH TO THEIR OWN,
IRENE. SEE PAGE 5 →
-K

HI!

I'm Weird Wendy — Wendy Martin really, but I have been called Weird Wendy since my boyfriend nearly drowned in a barrel of Holstein lager two years ago.

I am 18 years old, dark hair and eyes, with a very neat, well-proportioned figure, by that I mean big firm knockers, small waist and flaring hips with long, slender legs. I have been into rockabilly off and on, for the past two years; you've probably seen me at the Royalty.

My problem is this: I have plenty of boyfriends but none of them think it is fun to do it in wet puddles. The puddles

can be of anything: beer, milk, mud, rainwater, and even Hirondelle brand red wine — though this can be quite costly.

On occasions I have actually made it in a bath filled with tapioca pudding. Best of all I like to do it in a puddle of engine oil or malt vinegar! If only one of the Polecats would dump me in an old tin bath filled with mustard pickle and make it with me I would be in a real rockabilly heaven. I think bits of flower and pickled gherkin on naked bodies is a real turn-on.

How about Zigzag doing something on the Polecast? No hassle, simply publish a photo of the North London group for me, and I will dash round to Talbot Road with a washing-up bowl filled with Cadbury's drinking chocolate — or, if you prefer, a bucket of cold custard!

Keep rockin'

Weird Wendy

P.S. I didn't have a photo to send, but I thought you might like this self portrait.

DOWN THERE -K →

OPEN LETTER TO ALL INDEPENDANT LABELS

As we all know, times are hard. And they'll probably get harder. As an Independent Label we find it hard to survive, competing with giants such as RCA, EMI, CBS etc. etc. . . Running an Independent Label is a day to day fight. Cash flow problems mean less advertising coverage, facilities for recording, pressing etc. . . BUT, it's in the Independent Labels that tomorrow's music and bands are, and despite the money troubles, Independent Label releases easily match up to big record companies in ideas, quality and professionalism. Given the chance we could fill the top 30. So, I thought that the solution could be a co-operative. If we could get as many Indies as possible under one common name (but keeping individual names on labels etc.) with each Label taking care of its own bands and dealing with them, retaining its

identity. Then we could group our orders, hence cheaper prices, better quality, quicker deliveries; group our advertising costs, hence more space, coverage, sale . . . Once a month or so, we could have a meeting to decide our policies, new ideas etc . . .

The obvious advantage of such a solution is that bands will still be taken care of in the "Independent Label" way, but with the resources of a big label.

I know that it would mean a lot of work and organisation and commitment, but maybe it means staying alive for some of us. Being an Independent Label doesn't mean being a mini CBS or RCA. It means doing something new, cutting all the crap you find in big labels that kills musicians and bands and keeping the price of records down.

Now, Independent Labels, if you are interested, if you think you would be better off united, please contact us.

You will be welcome.
Ring us up on (01) 743 9412

Dear Zigbag,

Having spent £1.00 for four music papers at my local news-agent, I was extremely dismayed to find there was nothing about Matchbox in any of them.

Why do they never get any publicity in the papers? They've had 3 hit singles and seldom get a mention. Is it because they don't have a press agent? I'd like to know what the group think about their lack of publicity in the music magazines and papers?

I'm sure you will please thousands of us if, you will answer this question and review their new Midnight Dynamo's LP in Zigzag. If anyone deserves to be splashed all over the rock papers, Matchbox must be top of the list.

Many thanks

Norma Foster (aged 15)

Dear Kris,

I have just read this month's ZIGZAG, congratulations on a great article on Kate Bush. It makes a change to read an article on a female star without all the twaddle about boy-friends and the problems met by female stars in today's high-pressure world.

The article also contained several good photographs, I wonder if it would be possible for you to send me a copy of the photo's used in the article.

I would be eternally grateful, and I might even forgive you for slugging Ashes to Ashes by Bowie.

Deepest Thanks

Norman Armstrong
204 Lisnevenagh Rd,
Antrim,
Co. Antrim,
BT41 2JT.

Dear Zigzag,

Hats off to ITV's World in Action for the recent programme about chart-rigging in the pop record industry. It revealed the whole sordid pop business — bribery, corruption, and the falsifying of sales figures to help promote certain no-hoper records into the charts. No wonder small rockabilly labels like Chick-A-Boom, Billygoat, Nervous, and Roller-coaster never get a look in.

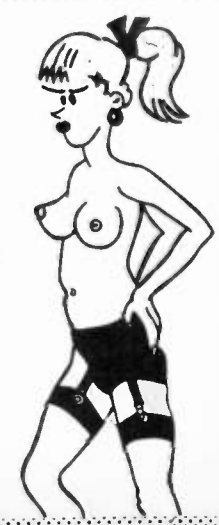
I wanted very much to hear what big companies like A&M, CBS, EMI, and RCA had to say about the allegations of bribery, but they refused to take part in the programme. I assume I am correct in concluding that on the fragile basis of their "no comment" statement, they expect the record-buying public to believe they are completely innocent. Sorry, we are not fools.

If we are going to continue having a weekly pop chart, let it be a genuine one. The managers of shops used by the British Market Research Bureau — BMRB — should be made to take regular lie-detector tests. I also think that trade papers like Music Week and Record Business should print the word "HYPE" against all records they suspect are being cheated into the charts.

If not, let us just not bother with a chart. I wonder what other ZZ readers think

Must split,

Stuart Wester.

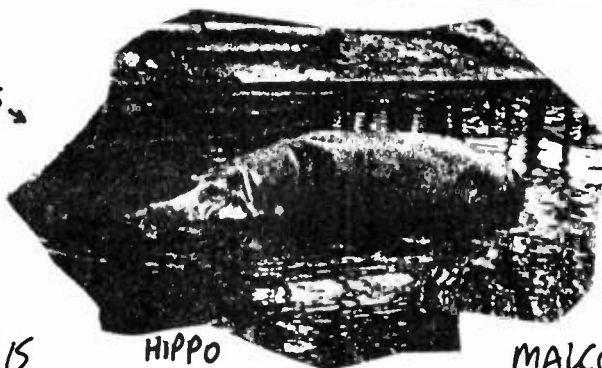


THIS IS ME - WEIRD WENDY



AGGIE

I'VE STARTED
TAKING PHOTOS



HIPPO

THE SOUND, THIS HEAT, TV
EXPLORERS, YOUNG MARBLE
GIANTS, ALL THAT) AND
THE BEST OF THE BIGGIES
(KEEF, RAMONES, ETC).
CAN'T PLEASE ALL YOU
PICKLE BUGGERS.

I'M STILL DOING ME

MALCOLM McLAREN BIT WITH
BASEMENT 5 - DIDN'T KNOW THERE
WAS SO MUCH TO DO! (WE'RE DOING
THE DURY TOUR, SEE YOU THERE).

GO ON THE ROAD WITH MOTORHEAD
NEXT WEEK (RESULTS NEXT MONTH).
THEIR NEW LP IS A STUNNER! I
DIDN'T THINK IT POSSIBLE
BUT THEY'RE FASTER AND
LOUDER THAN EVER! (AS
PROMISED).

RIGHT, OFF I GO!

GO!

LOVE a KISS, GO!

KRISxx



BUNNY

HELLO!

LOOKS LIKE THIS IS
GONNA BE MY PAGE EVERY MONTH (I REALLY
PREFER PAGE 3!). ANYWAY, WELCOME TO ZZ
107. THIS ISH CARRIES ONE OF THE BIGGEST
FEATURES ZIGZAG'S EVER HAD - A WORLD
EXCLOOSIVE INTERVIEW WITH KEITH
RICHARDS, WHICH DEFUSES A LOT OF THE
MYTHS ABOUT THE MAN (EG THE BLOOD
CHANGE), AND SEES HIM OPENING UP ABOUT
A LOT OF THINGS (IF YOU DON'T RATE THE STONES
IT'D BE WORTH AT LEAST, GETTING RID OF ANY
PREJ UDICES AND SEEING WHAT HAPPENS...)

LAST MONTH'S KATE BUSH EPIC DREW
MIXED REACTIONS. KEITH'LL PROBABLY DO THE
SAME. LOOK, WE GOT 48 PAGES, THERE'S ROOM
FOR ALL SORTS. SMALL GROUPS (THIS MONTH)

PYLON

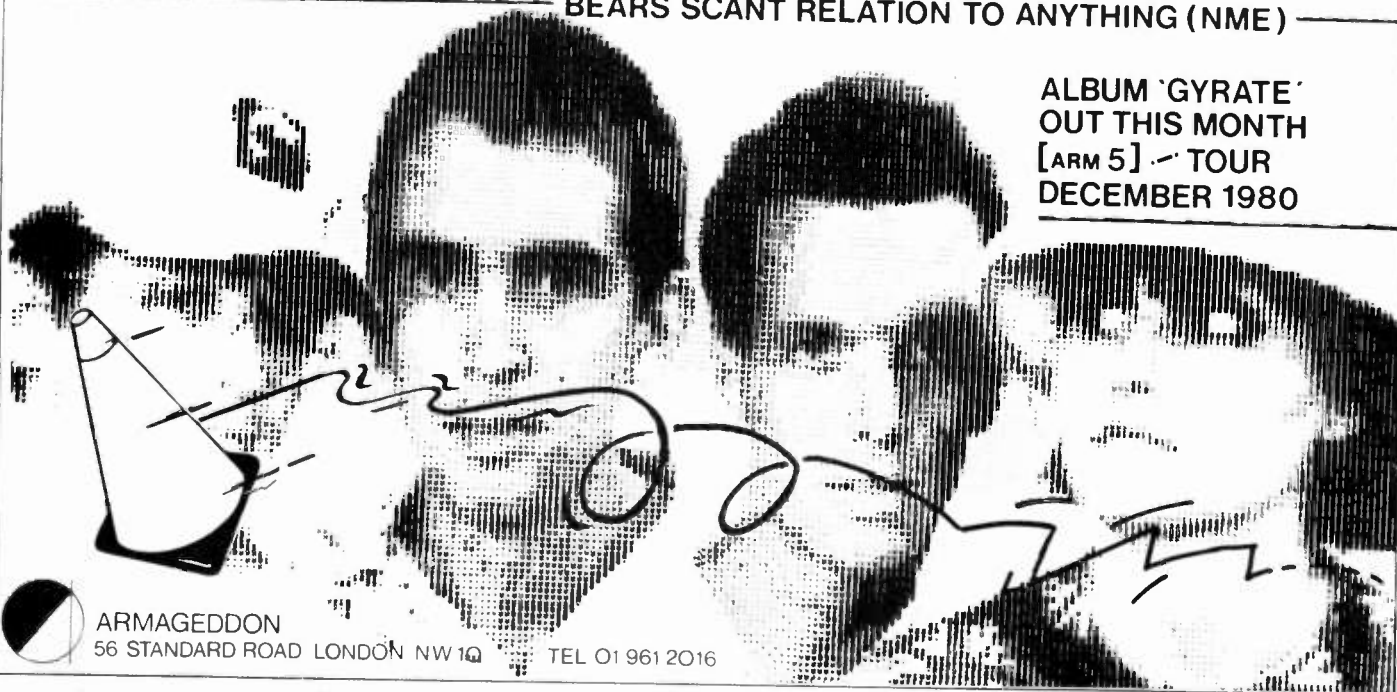
A NEW AMERICAN BAND IN ITS PRIME (New York Rocker)

DENSE & DANCEABLE, RAGGED & RIGHT (Soho Weekly News)

POUNDING RHYTHMS, SINISTER TUNEFULNESS (Trouser Press)

BEARS SCANT RELATION TO ANYTHING (NME)

ALBUM 'GYRATE'
OUT THIS MONTH
[ARM 5] TOUR
DECEMBER 1980



ARMAGEDDON

56 STANDARD ROAD LONDON NW10

TEL 01 961 2016

Hence, the place, or rather certain individuals employed therein, feel it incumbent upon themselves to take certain liberties.

Doubtless you've anecdotes of your own, but it does seem common to find power-obsessed individuals of the type to be found at the "Tuns" at most small suburban venues — guys who delight in throwing their weight around, hassling kids queuing at the door and, in this particular case, even extending their psychoses into the smooth running of the band.

To wit: Myself and The Sound guitarist Adrian Borland are having a quiet chat whilst the rest of the band are setting up; I had been forewarned by some unpleasant individual not to put my feet on a red plastic stool whose surface bore the marks of so many cigarette burns that a blind man might've mistaken it for a joke collander. Having absent-mindedly forgotten this rather brusque warning I replaced my ankles on the aforementioned 'furniture' only to find conversation punctuated by the stool being kicked forcefully away from beneath me (thus causing it far more potential damage than the occasional footmark) to the accompaniment of a string of expletive-laden threats.

Thereafter, this same individual attempted a personal whittling-down of the guest list from five (there are two managers, remember) to one and was subsequently, having lost the battle, heard to comment loudly that the band were "a load of shit", "couldn't play their instruments" and were "too loud".

He concluded surlily, disappearing behind the bar, that "a band as shitty as *that* need two managers, just *one* who isn't a complete wanker."

Finally, prior to them going on — sans sound check "The management" couldn't stand the noise, he said, he took Adrian *very* firmly by the arm, led him out of earshot and explained that unless the band were on and playing within five minutes flat, they were OUT.

You may find all of this irrelevant, but, from personal observation — time and time again — it is the kind of treatment 'small bands' are receiving at the hands of burly yobs throughout the country.

Even as you read this, some musician, some fan, somewhere, is getting a working over, whether verbally, physically, or both — and it's time something

The Three Tuns, Kingston, is a monopoly probably, and knows it.

Quite simply, and rather surprisingly, you might think, for a town of it's size, it is the only place a Rock Band — and a small owe one at that can perform.



Pics by Simon Reeves

THE SOUND

was organised to do something about it... other than simply to veto the offending premises, which would leave one less opportunity for successive up-

and-coming bands to be seen and at the same time gain valuable live experience — especially relevant these days when such gigs have to be

used as virtual rehearsals as few can afford the real thing.

And The Sound, of course, can't. In fact, technically speaking, although they've been extant for some 18 months they've only just turned pro. by slinging in their various puerile day jobs (barring the keyboard player who'd just graduated with a BA in psychology).

Needless to say, the net result of the atmosphere produced by this one ignorant individual (a frustrated musician, perhaps?) seemed to induce awkward brittleness in a suburban audience that seemed unsure how it was supposed to react anyway, the gig, by all accounts, turned out to be a toe-curlingly embarrassing affair. None of which — charity or no — could possibly be laid at the feet of the band.

Inexperienced The Sound may be; maybe even a little gauche at times, but by the time they return from the North to the metropolis (after playing support for Echo And The Bunnymen the chips are down for some very impressive reprises.

The Sound (I've never been crazy about the name, it's too bland and unrepresentative — I wish I'd remembered to bring that up with them) comprise guitarist, vocalist and songwriter (and self-appointed spokesperson) Adrian Borland, bassist Graham Green, Dudley (drums, occasional spectacles) and keyboardist Benita (who decided at press time to revert to plain and simple Bi Marshall). Bi is part-French, part-Mauritian, the rest of the band are English.

Bi reached grade 8 (or equivalent) in piano lessons, but never bothered with exams. Of late she has taken up the saxophone which, on her own admission, she still plays rather badly (although her recorded work with the instrument works to intelligently dramatic effect).

Adrian's heroes are Iggy and the Stooges and Can — and it shows, without being too obvious. He plays left-handed and idolises James Williamson, making a damn good job of it, whilst vocally, if you happen to be looking in the other direction you'd swear you were listening to Iggy in some of his more controlled moments.

The above makes a curious juxtaposition — and a necessary one, in my opinion. Whilst the band obviously have the right tastes in music, here's Adrian doing his feedback/guitar-strangling bit looking a bit like an anorexic Billy

Bunter — all puppyfat, ill-fitting strides, Tuf (the shoe with the vulcanised sole) slippers and terylene shirts.

Whilst Benita — sorry, Bi is most content to talk about the fact that her parents think she's crazy, refusing to listen to her music or attend any of the gigs — Adrian, apparently a devotee of warm lager, loves to talk earnestly and at great length about James Williamson and the hopes and aspirations of The Sound.

"People have asked why I write ALL the material," he volunteers cheerily, "well, that's only because we want to centre ourselves, to create a direction. In time, if we find we have it in us, we'll all be writing or co-writing. The lyrics, however, will probably continue to be mostly mine."

Due mostly to the poor quality of the sound system and Adrian's as-yet-unfulfilled apprenticeship with Enunciation and Dynamics these are mostly unintelligible, although forthcoming album and single material (on the prestigious WEA — sponsored Korova label) reveal preoccupations with psychosis, alienation and nuclear disarmament.

Adrian asks if I'm "A Lyrics' Man". I tell him no — unless they leap out and snatch the



"they can't even play their instruments" — barman.

throat or heart as do, for example, Randy Newman's. He agrees and goes into a dialogue about the way he thinks lyrics should be a dramatic part of the music — not the old 50's progressive thing where the music is made the mule for "The Message."

You have only to take a preview scan down the album title listings to see what he means' "Heartland", "Hour of Need", "Jeopardy" (the title track), "Night Versus Day", "Resistance", "Desire" etc.

As can be seen, it is early Iggy/Williamson inspired, but songs like "Heartland" and "I Can't Escape Myself" are leaders to the future — especially in the vaguely metro-nomic Can-type rhythms of the latter. "The Sound" have a ways to go but they'll make it because they have taste, a certain philosophy that revolves around an unusual amount of self-assurance for such a young band, but, above all — and the one thing that got me off my butt with the aid of a dying Hillman and a rough-mix of the album is this: *PASSION*.

There ain't too much of *that* about.

Messieurs and Mademoiselle ... encore une fois'.

Peter Erskine

CHRIS SPEDDING

THE NEW ALBUM

I'M NOT LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE

SRAK 542

AVAILABLE ON CASSETTE

INCLUDES THE SINGLE

THE CRYING GAME

RAK 323

RAK



Young Marble Giants

Pics by Simon Reeves



By this time, the 4000-plus crowd have had their ears well and truly cauliflowered by subjection to 35 bands in 30 hours. After a while, everyone starts to sound alike and strong men are seen weeping into their empty glue bottles at the thought of more of the same noises. Others rush screaming from the hall, begging for mercy or, at the very least, a copy of the long-awaited Sheena Easton album. It is not a sight for weak stomachs. (A bit like Sheena Easton, in fact).

Then, at last, something a bit different starts to happen up on the stage. After endless groups to whom 'originality' seems to mean overblown theatrics, wimpoid outfits and eyeball-boggling strobe lights (Banshees and Bunnymen excepted, natch(?) come the soothing bedtime rhythms of the Young Marble Giants. The subtlety of their sound comes like a breath of fresh air (or a set of clean underwear to the decaying hordes who will be wearing the same clothes for at least 2 days) and they go down a storm. They are even permitted an encore, a

luxury so far afforded, and even less deserved, by only a handful of the earlier bands. The Young Marble Giants are what is normally described on these occasions as "one of the hits of the festival".

A year ago, if you'd told the Young Marble Giants that they would soon be packing out London venues and playing to 100 people in Leeds, having sold almost 20,000 copies of their album, I should think they might have seriously doubted that your brain cells were multiplying correctly. They had just seen the release of their first vinyl excursion — two tracks on a compilation album called 'Is The War Over?' featuring 8 bands from their Cardiff hometown, and were still playing to an audience of one, fags in mouths, as ever, I expect, whenever they could get gigs in Cardiff, which wasn't very often. But if the 7 other "compiled" bands were to be doomed to anonymity, this was not the fate to befall the Young Marble Giants. Rough Trade were so impressed by the Giants' ability to be at once musically simple and original that they contracted the

Z-Block label which issued the album and asked for the band to get in touch immediately. The upshot of all this saw the light of day in the Spring with the release of the group's own "Colossal Youth" l.p., followed by the e.p. "Final Day", both earning them enough critical plaudits to increase heads to watermelon proportions. But, as in all the best stories, their hatsizes have stayed firmly at 6½ and a doctor assures us there is definitely no sign of any swelling or inflammation . . .

Stuart and Philip Moxham and Philip's girlfriend Allison Statton have been the Young Marble Giants for almost 2 years now, their name, like that of their album, coming from a book on Greek sculpture that Stuart managed to dig up. (Geddit?)

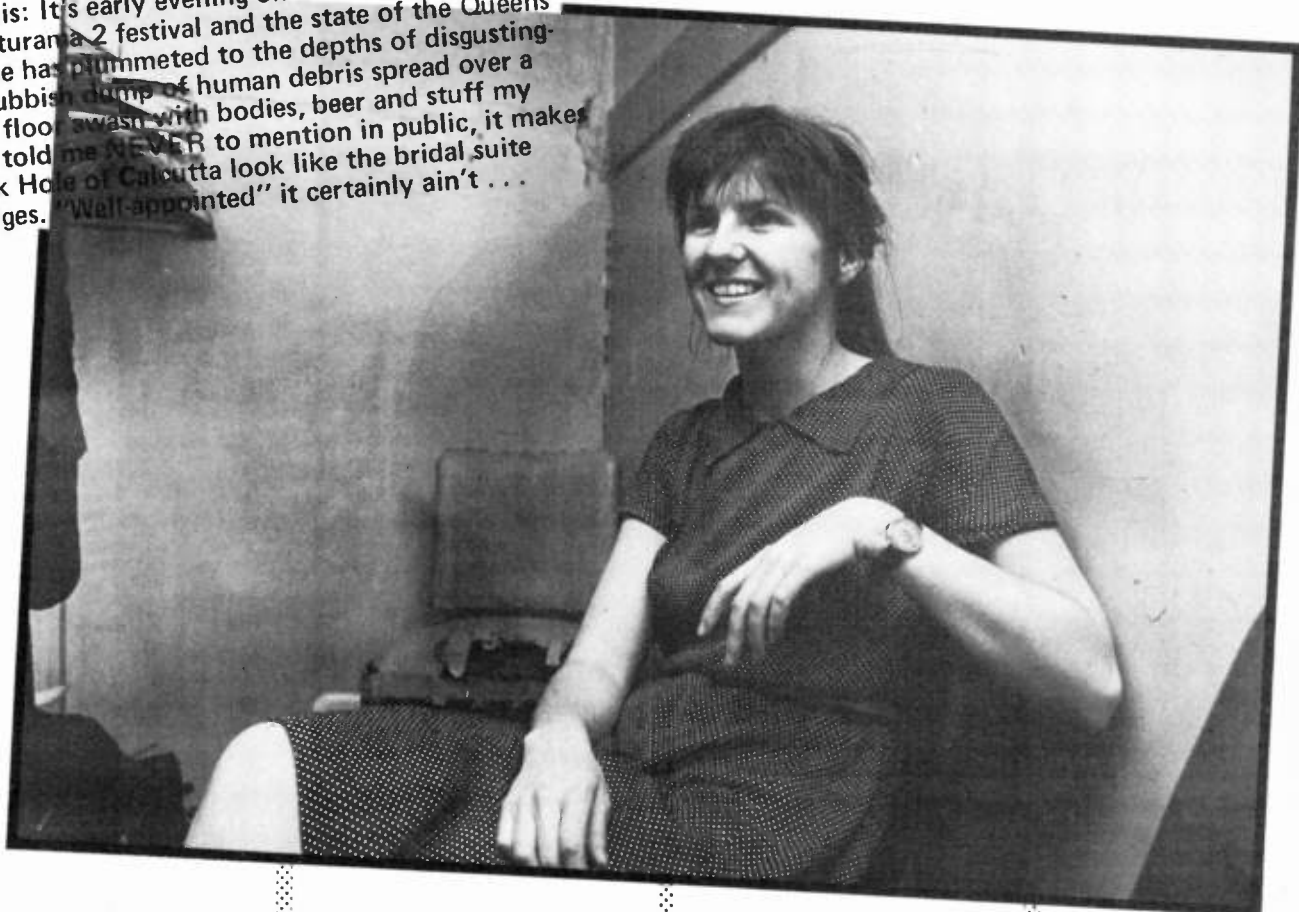
Before changing their name, they were together for 6 months in a band called True Wheel, playing Lou Reed and Rolling Stones covers, a period they now see as "a bit embarrassing". The success of their album came as rather a shock to all concerned although from the outside, it's easy to see

why it caused a stir. By deploying the most basic musical sounds — drum machine, Philip's jerky bass guitar as lead, Stuart on ropey old organ or supplying the backbeat on rhythm guitar, with Allison's breathy vocals wafting over the gentle melodies, smoothing the cracks in the more musically fractured songs — the Young Marble Giants have managed to come up with something that's different without sounding contrived, pretty without sounding twee. Whilst everyone around them seems to want to introduce as many strange noises and instruments as possible, the Giants have achieved much more by using considerably less. They are, in two words, truly wonderful.

The passive nature of their music, coupled with the popular notion that last product of musical worth to come out of Wales was Harry Secombe seems to have led some people — writers and punters alike — to believe the Young Marble Giants are the original 'hicks from the sticks' living on a commune or something, with Alison as a real homely girl-next-door type,

Marble Giants

Picture this: It's early evening on the second day of the Leeds Futurama 2 festival and the state of the Queens Hall venue has plummeted to the depths of disgustingness. A rubbish dump of human debris spread over a concrete floor awash with bodies, beer and stuff my mummy told me NEVER to mention in public, it makes the Black Hole of Calcutta look like the bridal suite at Claridges. "Well-appointed" it certainly ain't . . .



chewing on a piece of straw as she bakes home-made bread in her little kitchen. This is, of course, quite a long way removed from reality. As Stuart, composer of almost all the songs explained, they made a conscious decision to write something unusual to confuse everyone: "We wanted to be as original as possible — that was one of the major things and I think we took some drastic measures in order to make sure that we were. Like we totally debunked the whole idea of having choruses and verses and introductions as they weren't necessary really. We got rid of the whole idea of building up a sound. We just wanted the minimum that you actually need and in a way, it is very hard to be original, so we had to take these fairly drastic measures to achieve that."

When I mentioned the group seem to have pared their sound down to the basic requirements needed to make an acceptable musical noise, Stuart disagreed: "I don't think we pare it down, we start off with an empty canvas, if you know what I mean, and then

we never put too much in to begin with, rather than write it and have to take things out. I think the whole thing is we've come to terms with a drum machine as well. We've never played with a drummer in this group and we wouldn't have written this stuff if we'd had a drummer, that's the whole point. I think we play the drums on our guitars to a degree. If you listen to what the guitar is doing on, say, "Wurlitzer Jukebox", it's neither rhythm nor lead, really. It's just there."

As with almost everything else, what seems simple is usually the hardest to create, a premise which seems to apply to the Young Marble Giants' music too:

Stuart: I try and write nursery rhyme melodies, which is the hardest thing to do because you have to be able to sing the melody to someone in total silence so it's pleasant and very simple.

Philip: The melodies are the main part of our music. The actual playing is just divorced from it; it's totally different. If you listen to them separately, they'd

be totally different.

Stuart: What we do is I start off — I'll play a riff and Philip will think of the opposite thing. And then I'll think of the opposite thing again to those two for a melody — you just work on backbeats . . . The trouble with the whole structure of our plan was that it created that music, which was really, good, but because it was such a tight plan, the actual way I can play the instruments is really limited. I have to play to an abstraction, to an idea, or I had to when I was writing things, and you can only go so far with that. There are only so many riffs that will actually bear up under all that strain. It's amazingly difficult brief to write that music really. It's a very good exercise but not terribly practical. It wears you out. It may have worn you out, Stuart, but I can assure you it was worth it . . .

The Giants are now taking a short break before their tour of America so that everyone can go and do what they want for a while

There will be a new Young Marble Giants' record soon, the "Test-card" ep of instrumentals and, hopefully, British dates on their return from the U.S. In Stuart's case, doing what he wants means recording an album with his other venture, the Gist, where he actually gets to sing his own songs:

Stuart: It's kind of an emotional release to sing the stuff I write about and having Alison, or anyone else, singing it makes it pointless for me to write really. One of the main things is to be able to sing the stuff cost the idea wasn't: "Oh, I think I'll write a song, we'll have a group" — this is kind of the only thing I can do. Maybe I'd be happier being a labourer, working in an office or something, but I can't. I've tried so many things and this is really the only thing I want to do."

And I sure as hell hope he doesn't change his mind because so far, he's made a pretty good attempt at his chosen career.

Jane Garcia

Ry Cooder



Borderline

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PRESENTED BY ASGARD

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October 28 Birmingham Odeon
October 29 Manchester Apollo

A DIGITAL RECORDING

wea  K56864. Also available on cassette.

PLUS EXTRA SHOW -

October 30 London Hammersmith Odeon

THIS HEAT

In 1980 This Heat have played about 50 gigs in Britain and Europe. That's more than they've done in all the previous 3 years of their existence. They've also recently added to their recorded output — so far an album and a John Peel session — with a 12 in 45.

The band feel that they are going through changes and relish the momentum which all the gigging has brought in its wake. Charles Bullen (guitar) puts it this way: "I sweat now, I don't remember that before". Charles Hayward (drums and vocals) expresses himself in a similarly clipped manner: "I relaxed at one gig. The drum kit is a very strange thing to sit behind. There's always the same environment around you and you can live in it if you choose".

But Hayward has crossed the boundary: he's come out of his shell and is hitting the drums harder. In fact, if you go to a This Heat gig expecting doodling experimentation, forget it. You'll find plenty that's unconventional there, but it'll be ferociously mixed in with some good old rock 'n' roll dynamics.

Gareth Williams (keyboards and bass) won't say much about TH's performances, as we sit over beer and chips in the band's rehearsal space, a disused meat store in South London. Finally he does join in, while Bullen is detailing his growing politicisation and interest in the nuclear issue, by mentioning that while the band were in Germany Operation Squalor was underway and "Nato were playing their game". Hayward thinks that TH's

more public face and greater openness isn't so much the result of a change of direction as a re-emphasis of what was already there: "One or two songs have changed the focus and taste of the rest. They now have wider implications, more of a social context".

The single HEALTH AND EFFICIENCY is certainly one of TH's more accessible pieces, though typically it's against the grain — in its own words, "a song about sunshine" trying to forge another side of the coin to the current fashionable obsession with modernity and psychosis. This doesn't mean that the song is a throwback to hippy sunworship and the body beautiful. There may be the sound of children's voices in the mechanical middle dub section, but any optimism is tempered by the song's strident opening and plaintive close.

There are other possible interpretations of the song, and, like a lot of TH's music, that's its attraction: in spite of the clarity and concreteness of the sound, meaning and structure drift, move sideways, and in this way it's a bit daft to think of TH's work in terms of beginnings and endings. That doesn't mean that a song like HEALTH AND EFFICIENCY is artily saying a

big nothing. Hayward has his own thoughts about its oblique messages: "I know this guy, totally wasted on junk and he thinks it's some ultimate rock 'n' roll lifestyle. But really, he's just caught in some horrendous consumer trap, playing his role in a sick society. The song is an antidote to all that".

Unfortunately, the song may not get to as many people as it should because of the band's reputation as avant-garde recluses. Bullen disputes this "image", which they don't have at all over the other side of the Channel. The only to break away from the high-brow tag over here, Bullen says is to play more outside London (Grantham is the only place they've managed so far!) and "maybe play support on a tour, something we wouldn't have considered 2 years ago".

Bullen does point out that one reason for the band's meagre gigging was the parlous state of their equipment, often held together with sellotape. Although the band are still in pretty desperate state financially, they've been able to acquire better gear thanks to backing from Flying Lizard David Cunningham, whose Piano label they are signed to. However, Cunningham is not as involved with the band as much as he used to be: now it's mainly their friend Phil Clarke and Rough Trade who look after their affairs.

Critics have consistently compared TH's work to film music. However, their music seems far

too powerful to be considered as performing a secondary, background function, just as it's too cogent and disturbing to be avant-garde wallpaper, ie ambient music. Bullen: "I don't dislike the idea of having an Eno album playing in an airport, but it's something I'd spend my energy doing".

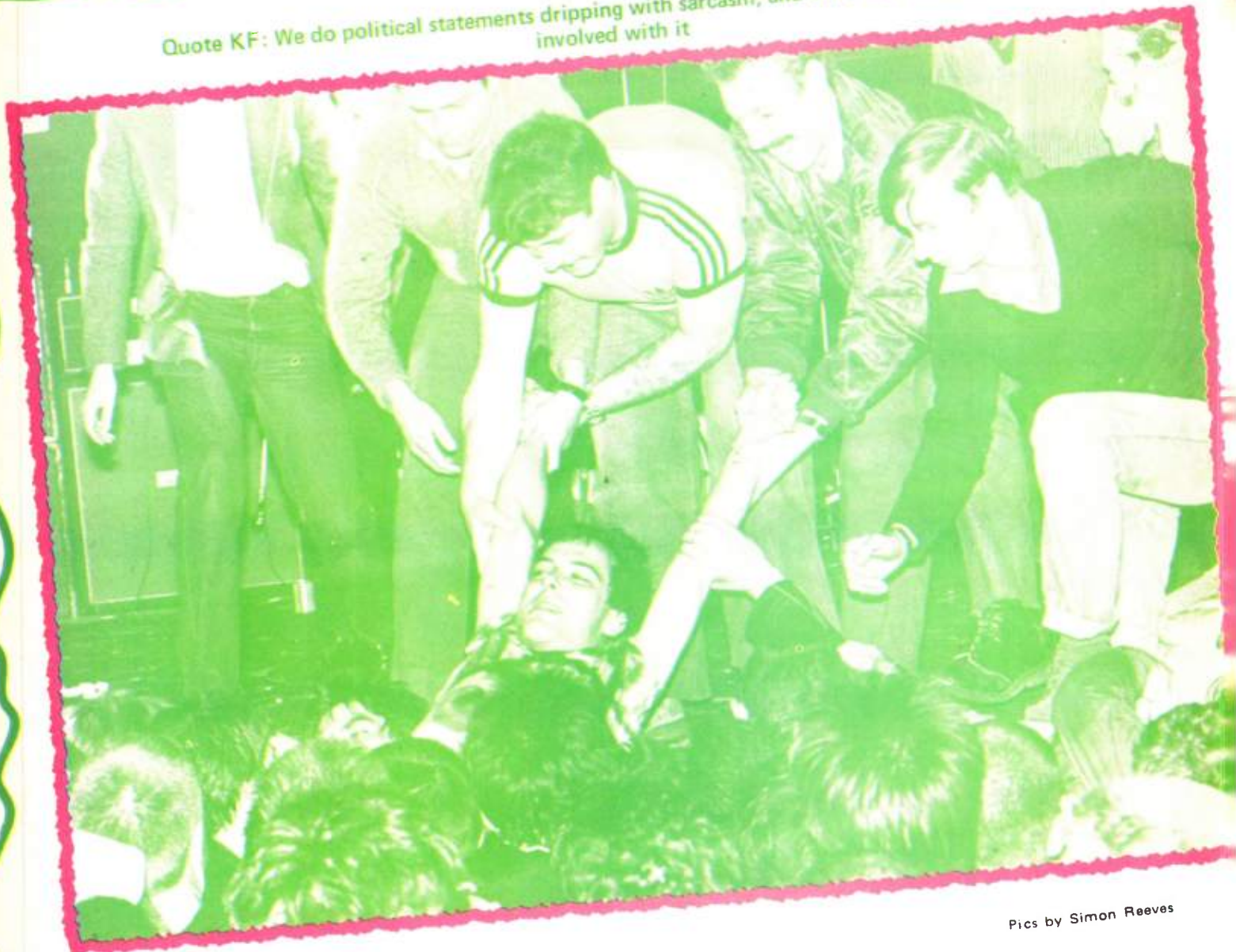
Bullen is also quick to point out that TH aren't an electronics or a synth band; after all it's drums, bass, lead and keyboards which produce that distinctive sound. "Because I look at the band from the inside, I don't think we're like anyone else. People think we have some sort of link with Throbbing Gristle which I can't see at all".

Neither can I, though I would hazard that TH have things in common with Dome (ex-Wire members) who also manage to combine innovation with more conventional rock dynamics.

Part of the strength of rock is its use of rhythm and volume, of sheer noise, for its own sake. TH are pushing this dynamic to some interesting conclusions and glimpsing how it shares a common ground with avant-garde musical theory from the early 20s. The end result can be music or incredible tension, slabs of pressure which This Heat, in this their more public (popular?) phase, are turning on their audience. You will sweat at their gigs, too.

Paul Tickell

Quote KF: We do political statements dripping with sarcasm, and that way, there's humour involved with it



Pics by Simon Reeves

Dead Kennedys

ZZ: An obvious question must be why the inflammatory name? *The Sex Pistols* had an inflammatory name, but yours seems even more calculated to affront . . .

JB: Well, obviously we're not here to entertain, we're here to annoy. The name's kind of symbolic of the end of the American Dream, and the first Kennedy killing in particular kind of torpedoed the idea that the American Empire was expanding, and ever since, it's begun to shrink, partly because of the so-called 'Me Generation' — I don't know how much you hear about that over here, but Americans are becoming more and more self-centred than they ever were, to the point where their entire empire

that they've built up is slowly crumbling into little pieces. The cracks on the wall have appeared, and we figure one way to bring attention to this is by a name like Dead Kennedys — obviously, it not only symbolises things, but is a very good bait to suck people in so we can beat them over the head with issues we think they should be aware of that they refuse to acknowledge.

ZZ: But has the name ever rebounded on you in any way?

KF: The Dundee gig was cancelled on account of the name. We were supposed to play Dundee, but they wouldn't have us there because they have a sister city in America, in Virginia, called Alexander, or something like that, that they don't want to offend by having us play there.

JB: If we were actually to set foot in Alexander, they probably wouldn't care . . .

KF: It's a non-existent city, it's like Wyoming — nobody actually comes from there.

ZZ: But wasn't there something about death threats?

JB: That was a long time ago.

KF: When we played on the fifteenth anniversary of Kennedy's death, it got in the local San Francisco paper, and people were calling up Mabuhay Gardens, where we were supposed to be playing,

with these death threats and bomb threats, and there was a fire truck parked outside — consequently, many more people showed up.

JB: It happens occasionally to this day. I remember one thing that kind of ruffled my feathers a bit was when somebody gave me a snapshot they'd taken at one of our gigs, and there was a guy standing five feet away from me, pointing a toy gun at my head, and shooting little plastic discs at my eyes — I never noticed him during the gig, but there he was in the photo with a real weird smile on his face. And there's been other things like that . . .

ZZ: Another question which springs to mind concerns whether or not you're a joke band. Is there some definite aim to all this — you've gained some fame or notoriety, but are you serious about what you're doing?

JB: Anybody who took the time to listen to our records and read more than a line or two of our lyrics would know right away that we don't consider ourselves a joke band. If we were to like put the faces of the Kennedys themselves on our record sleeves, and write about dumb hump-the-secretary jokes and things like that, obviously we'd be a joke band, but we're not.

KF: We do political statements dripping with sarcasm, and that way, there's humour involved with it.

JB: We have a sense of humour, but we also have points we want to get across with it, kind of balancing each other out.

ZZ: What were you doing before you became Dead Kennedys?

KF: I worked in the sewers.

ZZ: As what?

KF: I served breakfast to alligators down there, and things. No, I used to run a pirate radio station, actually, in the United States, in Boston and Detroit . . . well, in Canada, because Detroit kicked us out, and the FCC were trying to bust us, so we went over to Canada, and put out a thousand watts.

JB: The way I got the money to move out to San Francisco was washing dirty laundry, or shall I say soiled laundry, in a nursing home. That was a real horrifying and fascinating experience — people were treated not as patients there, they were treated as inmates at a concentration camp. Their grateful sons and daughters would dump them there in the hope that they could hasten their quick demise, and run off with their estates and things. The food was inedible, and a lot of them were given like twenty dollars a week to

live on, and a lot of the orderlies would go and steal their radios and their watches and things, and they had a little swapping back and forth to decide who wanted what. It was a real, real unhealthy situation, and a fascinating voyage into hell.

Further questioning uncovered the fact that of the DKs, Klaus (who plays bass) had briefly been a musician prior to the current group, as had guitar man East Bay Ray Vallum, but neither Jello (singer and main lyricist) nor drummer Ted (aka Bruce Schlesinger — they're one and the same, according to Jello) had ever been in a performing band previously. So we got on to the songs — first off, 'California Uber Alles', a song which mentions California Governor Jerry Brown, better known perhaps to a Zigzag audience as the latest gent to be recipient of the affections of Linda Ronstadt.

ZZ: *What requires explanation is the fact that you've picked on Jerry Brown — here he's regarded as a fairly good guy, especially compared to Ronald Reagan.*

JB: Jerry Brown and Ronald Reagan are the same thing. One's packaged in different clothing, but they think completely alike. KF: Jerry Brown has better control of the media than Reagan does. Reagan's a little ignorant — what with all his involvement in the past, he still comes across as a rather ding-y image.

JB: Reagan's kind of 'California Uber Alles' come back from the previous generation, that I'd hoped would have shrivelled up and gone out of commission by this time, but evidently not. Both Brown and Reagan are very pro large corporations, very anti poor people. They both are into shutting off all means of support, such as welfare systems and hospitals and things, in order to save money, but they never tell you where the money's going to go. As in Jerry Brown — the way he gets his so called liberal followers is he'll make sure in the press he comes out for something like gay rights, or anti-nuclear power, but you read further into the same speech, and it's like 'We must loosen all restraints on free enterprise, we must give less money to colleges and universities', and he's just generally a very dangerous man. He's very much like Richard Nixon in that he sees power as kind of the ultimate aphrodisiac, but unlike Nixon, he doesn't screw up as often, which makes him more dangerous. I'd much prefer Jimmy Carter to Ronald Reagan, simple because Carter is so stupid — I'd rather have a closet Nazi who's dumb and can't get anything done at the helm of America than somebody who can actually get things done like Ronald Reagan. That makes him far more dangerous, and Brown more dangerous still, because he doesn't screw up as often. Also, the generation that came out of the '60s in America, a lot of them have tried to mould their own lifestyle, blah, la-de-dah, '68 through '72. Now they're thirty to thirty five, but very dogmatic, thinking they actually carved

out something new, and have become the new conservative backbone of America. They're very intolerant — they're intolerant of films they don't like, press they don't like, music they don't like and people that don't like the way they look, just like their parents were . . . plus a lot of them — granted, they may have forged their own way, but they're still looking for some kind of a man on a white horse to tell them what to do. Some of them will turn towards religious groups, and what ever, just some kind of little cult, all to make their lives more comfortable. Americans are taught to be obsessed with comfort from a very early age, and the one person working his way through the American political system itself, rather than through religious cults, who not only has this lust for power, but also a handle on how religious cults suck people in, to use to his advantage, is Jerry Brown. America's very much like, I'd say, Germany in the 1920s, and of course, Hitler took over in the '30s. . . we have a disco culture very similar to 'Cabaret' culture, we have the same kind of 'I don't want to get involved in anything because it might hurt, I'm just interested in myself, I don't care who runs what how. . . it's very dangerous in a lot of

ways.

ZZ: *Another of the songs on your album, 'Fresh Fruit For Rotting Vegetables' (available at your friendly local disc emporium — tell 'em it's on the Cherry Red label, who are distributed via Spartan), is 'Kill The Poor', which seems to be about the neutron bomb. Isn't that the thing which kills life, but leaves buildings standing?*

JB: That's why I think it's being readied for use on the enemy, say for example, the Russians or whatever. It's being used to wipe out large ghetto areas and large cities so that the population goes down, the eco system is more balanced, and the people who finance the bombs can go and build new hotels.

ZZ: *It's really bizarre that you've chosen to cover an Elvis Presley song on the album. What made you decide to do that?*

JB: Bruce, our drummer, walked in one day and said 'Oh, I've just heard this great song on the radio, we've got to cover this', so we decided to do 'Viva Las Vegas'. It immediately caught on with crowds, and I think it's a perfect way of rubbing unpleasant salt in the wound created by 'Holiday In Cambodia', which closes out side two on the album. You'll notice that

'Holiday In Cambodia' is followed immediately by 'Viva Las Vegas', to rub in the point of the former song.

KF: A song which, by the way, has not been banned in London, as the Dundee papers would have us believe — that's what they said. They had this big article explaining why we couldn't play there, and saying it was obvious that we couldn't get any gigs in the United States, and that was why we had to come to England, and saying that the reason 'Holiday In Cambodia' has been banned in London, ZZ: *Talking of bans, what was the problem which held you up from coming here until a few hours ago, Jello?*

JB: I got stabbed in the back by the Passport Office in San Francisco. I had to correct some irregularities with it, and they kept telling me 'We'll have it by this time, we'll have it an hour later', and they didn't have it by the end of the day. It was just 'Well, tee hee on you. Come back tomorrow'. It's interesting that they didn't have it when they closed and carefully locked the door on me, then the next day, half an hour after they open, they have it.

ZZ: *Do you think there's any chance that this was the system trying to get back at you?*



JB: Either that, or they're pretty stupid. I think maybe it's a combination of the two.

ZZ: Jello, you ran for Mayor of San Francisco — looking at it from this side of the Atlantic it seems that that must have been a big guaranteed publicity stunt, but was there more to it than that?

JB: There was quite a bit more to it than that — as I say, one of the ways to get points across that you want people to understand is to get under their skin until they can't ignore it any more, and gradually, as my campaign became a legal entity, when I got all the documents signed and everything, and borrowed a whole bunch of money to plunk down the filing fee and got on the ballot... I was officially on the ballot, on every little pamphlet that went out to all the registered voters in San Francisco had my views on issues of the city. My campaign was based on banning cars from the city of San Francisco, making the police run for election every four years, voted on by the people they patrol — that was the most popular element of my platform. There was also 'legalising squatting in vacant buildings used by their owners as tax write-offs. There's a large number of very well tall office buildings and things in San Francisco, just used as tax write offs, while at the same time, there's a severe housing shortage. And another idea — since the same people that put Jerry Brown and Ronald Reagan in office have voted to not pay more taxes to finance the State of California... it's called Proposition 13, which you may or may not have heard of, and it reduced the property taxes for businesses and the upper middle class, and increased them for people below that, and so consequently a lot of government employees, government and state employees, got laid off. So another part of the mayoral campaign was to hire all seven thousand city employees of San Francisco who were laid off on a 50% commission as city pan-handlers, and have them concentrate on wealthy neighbourhoods and the entrances to schools. When the parents bring their little kiddy to the prep school or whatever it is, here comes the city employee asking them for spare change — it's going to make them think. I became kind of a magnet for people who were disgusted with voting between two very right wing, pro real estate candidates for mayor, and then the so called alternative candidate was a third real estate broker, whose slogan was 'Vote for me — I'm gay, therefore I'm an alternative'. Which he wasn't, and I pretty much showed that through my campaign. In a field of ten for the election, I came in fourth. Some people below me had spent tens of thousands of dollars on their campaigns. I spent about, I'd say, two thousand, most of which was raised at benefits. So

the big three came in above me, but I was right below with 3½% of the vote — prompting the campaign manager of the current mayor to say 'If Jello Biafra gets that many votes, something is very very wrong with this city'. But it was amazing how many people from all kinds of walks of life sympathised with what I was saying.

KF: It wasn't the punk population of San Francisco that voted for him — not that many people, for one thing, age-wise could get out and vote, and it was more of a cross section of people, outside of people who just come to our gigs.

JB: I'd run into people, like a guy at the Post Office, who'd say, I'm voting for you, I'll mail your packages', and I'd even run into people on the bus who said they liked what I was saying, and they'd vote for me. A vote for me was designed to kick the top two candidates in the rear end where it hurts, and I did a very good job of that.

ZZ: What would you have done if you'd won the election?

JB: Locked myself in a closet and torn my hair out. But once I emerged, I would have tried to surround myself with people with a little more administrative experience, who shared my same ideas on how to dispose of government.

ZZ: There's a track on the album called 'Let's Lynch The Landlord'

JB: I think that's fairly self-explanatory, a song we can all relate to. I was recently evicted from my own house because the landlord wouldn't fix the plumbing, so we fixed it ourselves, billed her, and she evicted us, and brought a guy who was about six feet four, a football player type, who got me against a wall, and said 'We don't want you playing any games' and things. So we got out, and I left her a few mice in the basement... and other things. Now I have a Nicaraguan woman for a landlord, who talks to me all the time about how I should join the army and fight to put Anastasia Samosa (?) back in power in Nicaragua. She gets a bit tiresome...

ZZ: Rumour has it that the single of 'Holiday In Cambodia' has been in the top hundred of the British charts for some three months, without it ever getting into the magic top 75. If this is so, it must mean either that people are buying the record at the wrong shops, or that somebody's preventing you getting any higher...

JB: Since most of the British charts, it's widely known, are rigged by bribes from major record companies, just like any record chart anywhere in the world... It's just like a complete lie, it's just like when you take polls and say a poll reflects that people want this, this, this and this. You can never believe that, because everybody'll have their own poll, but the fact that they leave us in there hovering just outside the seventy

five makes my heart throb and go pitty pat — gee whiz, soon we can play 'Holiday In Cambodia' on 'Top Of The Pops', and all our dreams will come true. (Note: the printed word is incapable of suggesting the venomous sarcasm with which this last was delivered).

ZZ: I suppose you know about 'Top Of The Pops', because you've been here before, haven't you?

JB: I was here sort of on holiday back in the summer of '77. I saved up all my money while I was driving around delivering pizzas and a seat popped up on a plane to go to England. So I thought 'Why not? I've nothing else to do', and one night I was waiting for a train, and I watched the Sex Pistols and the Saints and Dave Edmunds all on 'Top Of The Pops'. The host was so funny — he was like false. He was such a wind up robot, he was real funny — he couldn't be real. If you lit a match to him, he'd melt!

ZZ: Was the burgeoning English punk scene of that time what influenced you to start a band?

JB: There was one starting up where I lived in Colorado in America at the time, though obviously it wasn't as intense. The final decision was made when I was living near San Francisco, going to college, which lasted all of two and a half months because I kept finding ways to bring myself to San Francisco. I was seeing some of the early bands there, which was a little behind the English scene, therefore I could see where it was starting, with people who'd never played anything before just picking up instruments and saying 'Hey, I've got something to say', rather than showing off, like 'Hey, I've been playing guitar for ten years and I'm boring'.

KF: 'I'm very proficient at it, and I get lots of studio work'.

JB: One thing I should say is we're very thankful to be finally one of the American bands to actually get an album out after several years of trying to do this kind of thing, but it's kind of a sick joke that a lot of bands that preceded us never got anything like that, even though their material was on a par with anybody's in the world. No Screamers album, no Df's album, no Sleepers album — the list goes on and on.

ZZ: So how easy was it for you to get a deal in America?

JB: The album hasn't come out in America at all. It's sold as an import. The American record companies say 'We won't sign them unless they change their name' — again, a complete lie. What they really want us to do is water down our music, slow it down, turn the guitars down in the mix, put on skinny ties, smile in the pictures and go 'Hey, we just wanna make love and make money and get laid, buy our record, la-de-dah'. If somebody like Jim Morrison or even Bob Dylan were to crawl out of the woodwork in America today,

they'd be completely ignored by the major record companies there. And unlike here, there's only beginning to be small labels starting up over there, because the only people who ever wanted to start small labels didn't have any money. The people with money in America choose to spend it on real estate, or beer distribution firms of whatever.

ZZ: How do you react to being called the Country Joe of the '80s?

JB: I haven't heard that one yet. I just hope I don't wind up like he has — his last record I heard about was a disco single called 'Bring Back the '60s', and if that isn't 'California Uber Alles' rearing its ugly orge deco head, I don't know what is... but he did have some interesting things to say in his time — I just hope I don't wind up with five kids and a wife, saying 'Bring back the '70s, man', or something absurd like that.

ZZ: Talking again about 'Holiday In Cambodia', I'm fascinated by the reference to 'star bellied sneeches', which seems to come from Dr. Seuss...

JB: If you open up the book and see what a star bellied sneech is, you'll notice that there are star bellied sneeches all around you. It describes a particular type of status conscious person, of which there are too many in the world — 'The star bellied sneeches on their bellies had stars, the plain bellied sneeches had none upon theirs (thars), so the plain bellied sneeches got all the bad jobs, lived in the bad neighbourhoods' etcetera, while the star bellied sneeches put up their noses, and paraded their little stars. And then, in came a guy with a great machine that only Dr. Seuss could draw. His name was Sylvester McMonkey McBean, and he put stars on all the plain bellied sneeches — it's kind of like that grease that blacks used to process their hair in the '40s, same concept. So then all the plain bellied sneeches just came out 'Hey, now we can go to your parties! Wow, aren't we cool!', and they said 'No you can't. We're going to have ours removed', and it goes on and on... and I figured it also rhymed with leech.

You should be in no doubt after the above that Dead Kennedys are amusing chaps to spend a little time with. Where else could you learn about the relative merits of the American Presidential candidates and discover the ultimate songwriting secret patented by Dr. Seuss? The album, by the way, is excellent, and should not only appeal to those with the date '1977' tattooed inside their eyelids, but also to those who require a little more subtlety in their lyrics. Investigate immediately or even sooner...

John Tobler

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FOUR

The gang of two before me explained that Andy and Dave were stuck in Leeds finishing off some songs, and would they do? I said they were more than enough (we had met before), and anyway after a few glasses of wine they could well become the Gang Of Four.

GANG OF

4



Sitting on the floor of a filthy corridor in the Rainbow eating peanuts, is not as chic as a candle lit dinner for two at Maunkberrys. But the two in question, unaware of a cocktail dress' aversion to spiders and dustballs and impervious to Harvey Wallbangers or beautiful people, squatted happily. Well anything to save a hundred quid I suppose. I wouldn't mind meeting more of these 'brass tacks' bands (or should that be brass bands perhaps?). I must own up, I've always been a beer and skittles (wo)man myself. I can never hold a champagne glass without managing to tip it down someone's

vacuous haute couture front. There must be a knack to it.

O.K. gang, are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin. Why are you still living in Leeds? Is it more conducive to writing than say Shepherds Bush or Camden Town? Hugo and John together "NoYes."

John: "Well it used to be, but not as much now. We ARE thinking about moving."

Hugo: "It's just that we all went to university there — apart from Dave — and stayed on. It's O.K. at the moment, but yes we probably will move."

We don't see much of you, does that mean you play more in the north?

John: "We did at one time. But we don't just want to gig endlessly. We're going to America again and will do a few dates here, but we're trying to get a new album together as it's been over a year since Entertainment. Also we have just got incredibly pissed off playing in England and do more dates abroad now. We've got quite a big following in America. The audiences there are not as fickle as here. Don't get me wrong, we do have some loyal supporters here, but the masses want something new all the time — and it's not just us that this is applicable to."

Hugo: "We can't sustain the expense of it basically."

That's something I want to ask you about. You gave up your studies to form this group, which three years on is struggling — financially anyway. How do you feel about this, any regrets? What else would you have done incidentally?

John: "I didn't have any idea, I don't think anyone did."

Hugo: "Well John and Andy were both doing Fine Art."

John: "Yeah but that doesn't mean anything."

Hugo: "Which doesn't mean anything. I knew what I was going to do if it wasn't music, I was going to act, it was as simple as that."



So if you get disillusioned with this scene . . .

John interrupted "One is down often. I don't think we're disillusioned. One is disillusioned say, with the situation in this country. For example when we did a tour of Europe and went to Germany, and we sold eight or nine thousand albums on import and the record company categorically refuse to release your records over there. You think, well why the hell are we coming over here?

Well, why do they categorically refuse to release your records over there?

John: "I don't know. They haven't released Dexy's Midnight Runners. EMI Germany, don't release English records. Well they do, but it's mainly MOR. They'll release a lot of German new music but not English new music. It's very strange."

Hugo: "I just think it's a very obvious situation, it happens to so many people and there are different ways of coping with it. You have your ex amount of months or years when you're trekking around forging your identity as a band, getting your songs together, then the record contract comes along and then you get the first album together which is like — for us — a culmination of two and a half years work. Then you're suddenly right in it. You've got your tours to promote and then you find yourself with less than half that time to do a second album. With us the first album was such a strong statement about what we were about that we found ourselves thinking 'Christ what can we write about next! because we don't want to fall into the inevitable. There are a few inevitable things to do. You either do the same thing but it won't be as strong because you've had very little time to get it together, or you become wilfully more obscure, for want of another word, or arty, whatever . . ."

Which alienates you even more?

Hugo: "Right — and gets boring. Look at the number of bands at Leeds Futurama festival. Probably every band in England is trying to be arty and obscure, and consequently, boring. That gets one nowhere. Or we could do a sort of Clash trip and go more towards the rock side of what we are about. I mean it's terrible 'cos we don't want to do any of these things. We really want to come up with a very strong album so that people can't say 'oh they've had it, they've said their bit'."

John: "The point is we could get slagged off anyway as far as what I was saying, but I wouldn't give a fuck. As long as it's something I'm proud of. We do have that great escape valve, the fact that people do actually like what we're doing."

But don't you think you'll naturally evolve anyway? Your perspectives shift and whilst the premise may stay the same, the angle from which you make your observations on say nuclear war, is different.

Variations on the theme, which to both you and your fans should be inexhaustible.

John: "I don't think that's necessarily . . . because you've got to have a common aim. Within the band you've got to agree. You're writing something, you've all to agree that this is something you really feel."

And do you all agree?

Hugo & John agreed in unison. 'NO'.

John: "We never agree on anything."

Hugo: "But in many ways that's been the strength of the band."

John: "Really Gang Of Four is a descriptive name, it's four people working together. Some people think of us as a bunch of Maoists or other sort of twaddle."

But how do you decide when it's right then? Because there's always going to be a dissent I would have thought somewhere along the line.

Hugo: "Well it's hard work basically, and very soul destroying at times. But I wouldn't leave the Gang Of Four for anything."

John disagrees with the last statement: "Yes you would if you got run over. Of if Mick Jagger asked you to join him". Hugo smiles for the first time, and I take the opportunity to dodge an advancing beetle. God I wonder how many I've missed? Perhaps whilst I've been deep in conversation an army of them have set up ranks on the plains of my green tulle. Eeeeeeeeek. Hugo and John are not worried about my Beatlemania I try not to be.

John: "It is difficult. Because we manage ourselves the business machinations in the background are difficult to cope with. These are the things that get you down." Yes but everyone has that to contend with, you're not alone."

John agreed. Hugo disagreed. "Everybody doesn't. Most people in fact have somebody to cope with it for them."

So why don't you get a manager?

Hugo: "We have a manager . . ."

You've just said you manage yourselves.

Hugo: "Yeah we manage ourselves, but we have a manager. Linda does not have authority. She has authority to initiate."

John: "She's an employee, she does what we say."

The Female Eunuch?

You can't delegate and then want control. She's got a non job then.

Hugo: "Yeah"

John: "Yeah I often think that."

Either you trust her to . . .

Hugo: "It's not a matter of not trusting her. It's a matter of us assuming and taking responsibility for our band."

Alright then why don't you get a manager who could take responsibility?

John: "We don't want one."

Hugo: "You've got to find essentially a fifth member of Gang Of Four. Well I don't think the ideal mixture comes. The manager we had before Linda — he was extremely good but he wanted total control and we weren't prepared to do that. We made a lot of problems for ourselves, but that's the way we want to do it. Linda doesn't really have a non job, she is an extremely good and capable administrator." (Thanks to

semantics you now have a job Linda).

Hugo: "We could have made a lot of money if we behaved in a conformist way. If we'd put out Essence Rare, the nice classic little rocker off the album, as a single, like EMI went on and on at us to do — yeah we'd have had a hit single, we'd have sold more albums — but it's not what we wanted."

But if it's on your album what's wrong with that?

Hugo: "Because at that time it would have been the third single off the album . . ."

John: "There's nothing wrong with that."

Hugo: "It's also the least representative song, it's not what the Gang Of Four's about — straight rockers. So there are problems, but I don't think the band would continue if there weren't. If it was all sort of lovely and easy, and everything was done for you, and your asses wiped, and 'oh you're off on tour then, then you've got to go and do the album, then you have a little holiday'. If it was all that simple it would be terrible."

It could get like that.

John: "Only if we allowed it to."

Yes, you could still make it difficult for yourselves if you wanted to.

John: "Yeah we do. We're cantankerous bastards really. But then again we feel EMI have fallen down appallingly in certain areas. Like T.V. for example. You get complete nobodys doing O.G.W.T. and all that. The guy at EMI responsible for T.V. likes Olivia Newton-John and The Carpenters. We got signed up in a flurry of this, that n' the other."

Hugo: "Yes, it was 'oh at last we've

signed a good sound new wave band, this is the resurgence of EMI, we fucked up with the Pistols and Rich Kids lets get going with the Gang Of Four, they'll sell lots! When they suddenly realised we weren't going to sell hand over first it's 'let's move on to the Barracudas, Dexy's' — I mean I'm not condemning those bands — I'm condemning their attitude. There's no-one at EMI I can look upon with any amount of respect. John: "They've all left."

Hugo: "Other than Warner, our old manager. The people we went there with have all fucked off. People will read this and say 'I should have told them that. They should have signed with Rough Trade. It's not true, we did achieve quite a lot by signing with EMI.'"

John: "Conversely, the single has been released in Israel, Portugal, Spain, Holland, Belgium . . ."

That's all very well, having it released, but what are they doing about it?

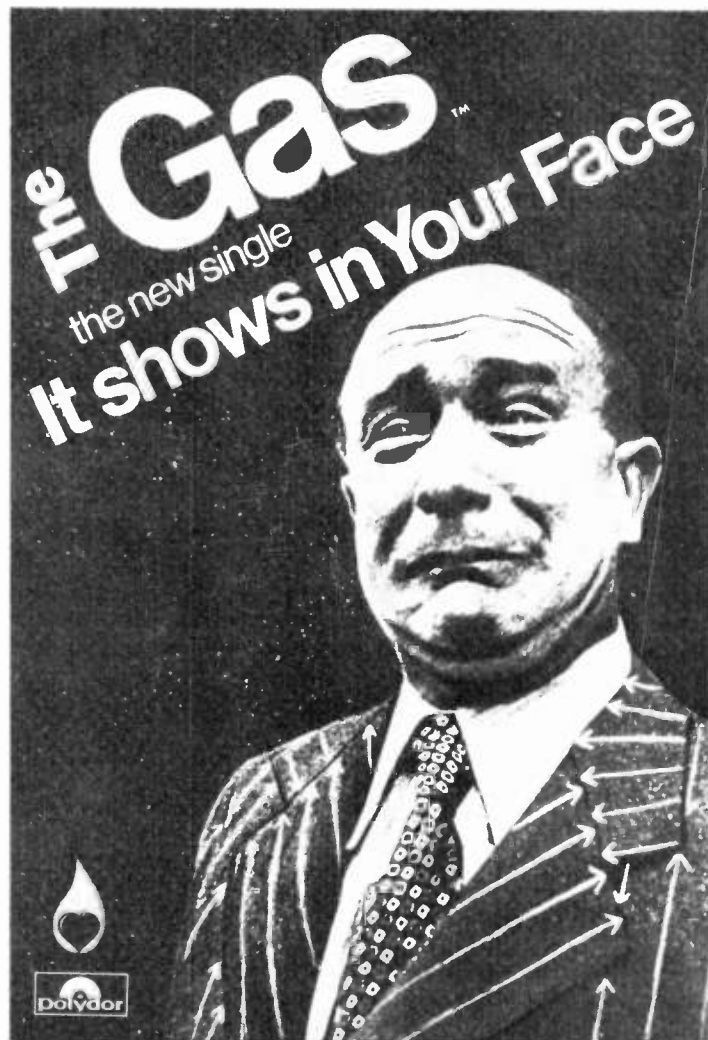
Hugo: "Not much."

John: "EMI Japan have been alright. There's no real gripe about the company" he said relenting a little. "I think we have been bloody minded from the word go. It's a give and take situation, and I don't think we have given anything."

Hugo: "But what they haven't got since the good people left is enough personality to know how to deal with us."

And personality's something the Gang Of Four are not short of. They may not know what they want to do next, but they are resolute in what they don't want to do. They've got their feet firmly on the dirty ground.

Joan Komlosy



THE BOYS ARE MUSCLING IN ON MODELLING



The Adverts. Remember them? Yeah? Ever notice the peculiarly thin-legged one moving around like an enlightened mormon? T.V. Smith was his name, classic songs the game. A talent of highly rich proportion that millions fell to their knees and wept when the Adverts plunged into obscurity on the twenty seventh of October last year at Slough college. As he introduced the encore of 'One Chord Wonders' with the words "This is the first number we ever played and its the last" you could hear the tears dropping to the floor.

Actually, illusions shattered, all you could hear was morons wailing 'Bored Teenagers' but that's life.

It was a hundred and sixty eight days before he cranked his legs up and lubricated the senses for a reslaught on public tastes in the form of T.V. Explorers to prove conclusively that his abilities lay beyond eating the occasional toilet roll.

The gig was an unqualified success with pristine material offered and taken respectively, and hear this, not one call for 'Bored Teenagers'

The new songs were naturally more involved, mature and intriguing, with one classic reaching out of the masses, "Tomahawk Cruises" which for all Smithian addicts is a culmination of his art to date.

More of that later.

The original idea was to interview Teev in the hallowed confines of the John Bull, Chiswick but with a Butlins style band hugging the stage this became impossible, so we chatted effusively with Mr. Smith taking one break to applaud (with raptuous sarcasm) a guitar solo from the silken guitarist therein.

Hack at Chez Smithy with homemade lager infesting intestines and Vincent Price's scariest efforts on the screen we built up to the 'official interview'.

Tension in the air, fingers through the hair, the tape goes on and we immediately became morose and detached.

ZZ: You've got to encapsulate your whole current position.

TV: This, "the general rap" ... be formal.

ZZ: (NME Voice) Mister Smith, since the demise of the er... Adverts... you've had a problem getting your new band to the er... public.

TV (Pause) ... I have.

ZZ: Where do you think the problems lie?

TV: Stupid record companies. Simple. They don't wanna know, all worried about their jobs and losing money. I don't expect them to be beacons of public taste, they've got no idea on the whole. They're like bankers. I know when something's good so let the record companies catch up, that's what they always have to do. They catch up when they realise they're on to a good thing. They let other people take the risk.

So we'll take the risk ourselves if necessary.

ZZ: How do you feel about your current stuff. Do you consider it stronger?

TV: Stronger for now. Everything changes. It's absolutely right for now.

ZZ: Are you still writing?

TV: Yeah, that's something I can do whatever happens, so I'm stuck here with hundreds of songs to do. Songs I think are good. As I write I know they'll never come out. The longer we wait for a record

company the more songs are gonna get wasted as new songs come along. I've got a band anxious to learn new stuff and all the time I'm writing new stuff. It's good, stops it stagnating. I feel sad about certain songs drifting off with only a few people having heard em at a gig.

ZZ: So you're more prolific than in the Adverts, who always seemed to have the same set.

TV: The Adverts were my first attempt. They became a set thing. We were expected to do Bored Teenagers, One Chord Wonders, Safety In Numbers ... before you knew it there's a whole set you thought you had to do. We haven't got that now partly because we haven't got any expectations from the audience because there's nothing on record.

ZZ: You must've been pleased with the initial reaction at the marquee gig.

TV: Yeah, I was surprised people were so open-minded. I've got a pretty cynical view of what audiences are gonna expect based on past experience but it's kind of opened my eyes to see people do new things and I'm gonna bank on that in the future.





ZZ: *Your songwriting . . . do things suddenly spring upon you.*

TV: No, it's hard work. You don't consciously set out thinking "that's not been done before". It's a process of elimination whereby you're anxious to write something exciting and interesting and not just covering old ground. People repeat themselves because they're too narrow and they lose their perspective. That's a formula. It's natural to open up.

ZZ: *There's too few doing it.*

TV: Yeah, 90% are shit. It's irrelevant to me. I'm here without a deal, writing what I want. Like when we joined RCA a lot of people said "It's gonna go bad" but to the writer it wasn't. I'm here with my guitar writing the songs I want to, and the inspiration is totally apart from money.

ZZ: *What about your image.*

TV: Image. ? ? ?

ZZ: *You never put over a strong image or if you did, it was 'nice'.*

TV: Er . . . so this is where we went wrong. (Pause) I think we're up a blind alley. — we are, so I reverse and begin discussing Smith the songwriter.

TV: I've got a strong sense of personal morals. I mean I'm

lucky enough to start off by writing poetry when I was at school, that sort of thing . . . and being able to look back and say This poetry I wrote is absolute rubbish and should never be seen by anyone except me because it's so pathetic and self-indulgent and by that having a gauge to know that if I'm going to have a career that's gonna be looked on by an audience that I'll have to do something which is acceptable by other people.

ZZ: *What do you think of the adverts records when you look back?*

TV: I look back and what's been on record is good.

ZZ: *Do you ever write for yourself or the band?*

TV: No, that's what I'm trying to say, if it was just for me I'd still write poetry and sort of wallow around self-indulgently and not care less whether anyone else liked it, but it's a very important dual standard that you write your things and try to relate it to what everyone else is going to think of it.

ZZ: *The position you're in is pretty bad.*

TV: The worst yet. The Adverts started in a position when Record Companies were anxious to sign bands. Now the opposite is true.

ZZ: *What do they (the various companies he's tried) say about "Tomahawk Cruise"?*

TV: They don't even notice it. They're blind to it.

ZZ: *Point it out.*

TV: I do, but they don't think like that.

ZZ: *You got to think of your position.*

TV: I do. I'll get out of it, but I'll get out of it honestly.

ZZ: *Will you still put singles on the albums?*

TV: I like singles. They're disposable, and when they're all scratched you've still got them on the album but in the future I won't do it so much, I've got more material. In the Adverts we were always struggling for material.

ZZ: *Is there bigger contribution from the band now?*

TV: In the sense that they play better. I still present a finished song then we work on the song together. The whole charm of the Adverts was we ended up with a very naive song. Very simple . . . basic. Now it gets transformed along the way.

ZZ: *Do you just present them a song . . . if they have any ideas do you talk them out of it?*

TV: No. I always listen but I feel my position in being the songwriter is I can say No

when I really don't like any thing . . . serious this innit?

ZZ: *Yeah bloody horrible.*

A search for 'Quoteable quotes'.

So the tape machine went off and the force field disappeared. And there you have it. I shall not bore you with my thoughts on his new band and their material as it basically echoes his own thoughts and besides, sincerity always looks strangely embarrassing and unconvincing in print. He got a lot going for him including superlative material, the ever wonderful Michael Dempsey as manager (a true believer if ever there was one) and all his own teeth. All we can do now is wait.

TO BE CONTINUED?

MICK MERCER
with help from **NICK BISHOP**



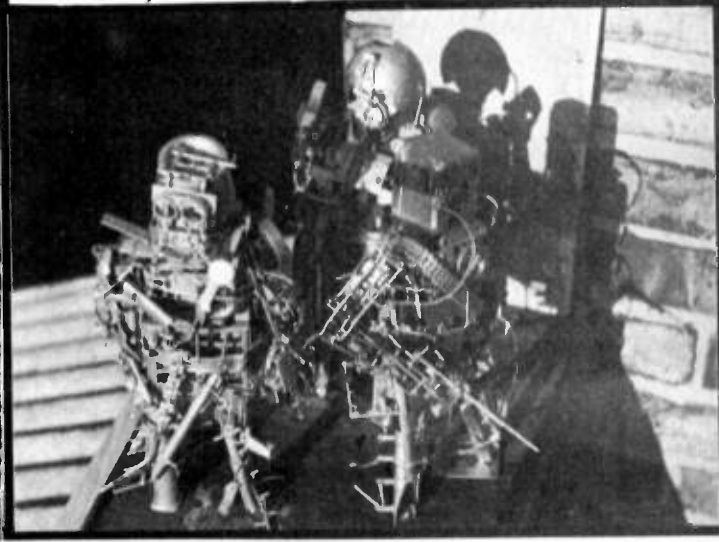
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DAVE ATHERTON

NO-ONE SHOT K.R.

KEITH RICHARDS 1980

BY
KRIS
NEEDS



One Saturday evening in 1963 an eight-year-old perched on a chair, peepers glued to a small wooden telly. Wheezing out of the tube was 'Thank your Lucky Stars', the now-extinct weekly showcase for Pop Stars of the day. The wide-eyed Beatles rubbed Rickenbackers with heart-throbs like Cliff, Dusty and Pat Boone. Safe for kiddies.

This particular Saturday a new sensation came bursting through the cleancut cuties. Five shaggy unknowns called the Rolling Stones, ill-fitting suits a reluctant compromise, bowled on and savaged the nation's blood pressure with raw, wailing blues.

That was it. I was grabbed. Watched every TV appearance, devoured the records and sowed all the seeds of what I still believe as the Stones carved a chaotic swathe through convention and petty values. I didn't wear me cap to school cos I knew Brian Jones wouldn't and revelled in the effect liking the Stones had on Beatles-fan friends. Cheered 'em through the court cases and finally saw me first gig at the 1968 NME Poll-winners concert.

Gradually sheer fan-fixation grew into total addiction to the monumental music they steered us into the 70s with.

The pre-and-early-teen me thought Jagger was The Man. But by 'Beggars Banquet' and 'Let It Bleed' it'd dawned that the entire Stones thing now laid square on the spikey head of Keith Richards. If Charlie Watts was the engine room, Keith was the machine and its inventor, whipping up the body-riffs with that churning guitar.

Amidst all the gloss and pompous irrelevance of the early 70s, here was this geezer who didn't care so long as he could play and live the way he wanted.

I saw him persecuted and prosecuted as they tried to do a Brian Jones and batter him into the ground with litigation.

Doing a Houdini out of all that by cleaning up the bad eggs, Richards then found himself taking the Stones through a flak-barrage of punk (Ironically seeing's a lot of 'em merely took old Stones blueprints and speeded 'em up!)

The Stones were charged with everything — Irrelevance, old age, being jet-setting tax exiles, dinosaurs . . . dirt. But the records still sold, even though some of the recent stuff ain't matched up to Stones-scratch — blame that on pressures and growing apart as Keith Richards fights to get it down fast and out, the feeling intact (with ballups), while Mick Jagger polishes away. Compromise can stifle and it riddled 'Emotional Rescue', but they can still shine (and I know who's on *that* particular case).

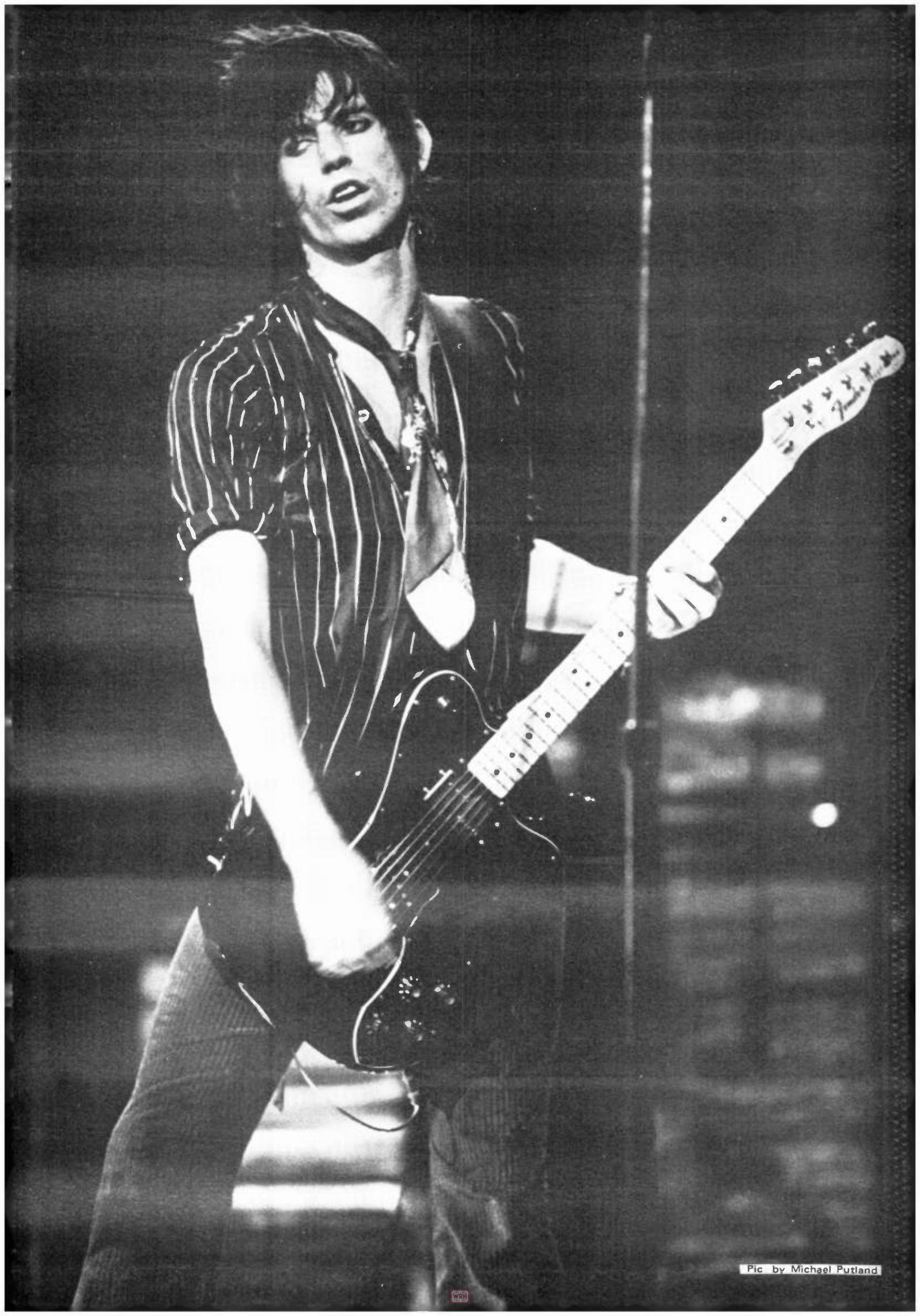
This interview took years to come and was in reach for months before Keith was in the right place and right mind. He's really gone off interviews, you see.

We met at his hotel but had to go to the Stones office in Chelsea — a ten-minute drive . . .

"Oops, I'm going the wrong way," remarks Mr Richards. "I'll have to do a U-turn!" The big blue Rent-A-Merc curves across three lanes and he blows kisses at the surprised motorists going home from work.

We end up talking for nearly three hours. Keith would spout about anything in his slow, deliberate, laugh-peppered croak. He talked a bit like his driving, going where the bourbon-fuelled thought patterns took him.

The 1980 model Keith Richards is devoid of Rock Star flash, maturing like a caring, kindly old blues musician. But he still possesses an indefinable swagger that makes any of the preening idiots that still profess to be R 'n' R stars look the pathetic buffoons they really are. In a grey RAF sweater too!



Pic by Michael Putland

Talk kicks off: Jack Daniels in hands and my fags going fast. The ailing Music Biz and its Major companies provides a jumping off point.

KR: . . . I think they're squealing like fat pigs — there weren't as much in the trough this year as they expected. No way is the record business declining, it just ain't growing as fast as they'd all got used to expecting. You know — 30 per cent more in America almost every year for the last few years. Suddenly they only got 20 per cent more so they start squealing and start axing everybody and giving the artists a hard time. 'Aw, I was going to buy a new Rolls Royce this year and now I can't afford it because we're only 20 per cent up and not 30 per cent up on business,' and they start screaming 'Recession!' use that as an excuse, come down heavy on the musicians.

ZZ: *It hasn't really hit you lot though, has it?*

KR: No, since we have our own label they turn round and think 'oh you've got a label, you're one of us'. Bullshit, man! We're not. We're just gonna do what we do anyway. It don't affect us that much, at least not noticeably. We're still gonna try and get this label off the ground slowly. Apart from just ourselves, Peter Tosh has done real well, much better than anyone expected. . . he's just broken in South America real big. He did these big festivals down there and suddenly we're getting this demand for Peter Tosh records and we ain't got 'em! Factory didn't press enough.

ZZ: *Anyone else coming out?*

KR: Yeah . . . Earl McGrath, who's been running the label for us found this good white kid from New York called Jim Carroll. I did a couple of numbers with him in New York but I was drunk so 'yeah alright!'.

Actually Mick was supposed to join me but he chickened out at the last minute. Cunt. That album should be out soon. We haven't got enough staff to work on more than one album at a time, so they're waiting until they don't have to do as much work on 'Emotional Rescue' or whatever, and when that's over they'll put out Jim Carroll's album. I heard it a couple of times — he's good, and he gets better cos he cut the album once a couple of years ago, and I said you should do some gigs for a year and think about it again. So they recut it after a year of working, and it's a good record.

It's a fairly basic sound, he uses his voice kinda like Lou Reed, almost half-talking. He'd written a couple of books before he started writing songs so there's some good lyrics.

ZZ: *And you've got another Stones album coming from the 'Emotional Rescue' sessions, you said earlier.*

KR: Yeah, they sent me six C90 cassettes full of stuff, not all finished, but ideas for songs, a few demos, here and there and a surprising amount of finished

stuff, a lot of instrumentals. Some of the stuff went back into the Mid-70's, stuff with Billy Preston just jamming, riffs . . . but there's an album there, although we'll probably put a basic album together and see what we need to finish if off. Then we might go in and record for a couple of weeks to cut a couple of new ones, to add.

ZZ: *When 'Emotional Rescue' came out there were a lot of disgruntled 'oh it's taken them two years to do this' — type criticisms.*

KR: They're quite right in a way. Having so much stuff, we've just had songs coming out of our ears lately. Also you do write quite a lot of songs in two years — try 'em out. Some songs actually take a couple of years to get out of the mind and onto tape. You try it three or four different ways over a few months and it doesn't quite work, and then one day later someone says, 'remember that one?' and you remember it slightly differently and you get it in one, things like that.

ZZ: *So were you happy with what eventually came out?*

KR: Yeah, I mean it's almost as bad as not having enough — not quite, that's the worst feeling (laughs) — but having a lot it takes so long cos you've gotta listen to everything you've got and that takes up a load of time because you've got so much stuff. Then you cut that down to a short list, eventually get it down to album length as far as songs go, and then start editing them down, cos some are too long. That album's not by any means the best of the stuff that we did, not like, 'that was the best and this album's the second best of what we've got'. It's just, up to a point, what was ready and what we could finish in time, because it had to be ready by March or April or whatever it was.

Keith's track, 'All About You' was unanimously lambasted when 'Emotional Rescue' came out, but it stands out as one of the moments of real emotion on the record. Unfortunately it seems that Mick Jagger has slipped to trotting out mainly superficial parodies of himself or other artists (the Bee Gees on the title track, boozey punk on 'Where The Boys Go', etc). Meanwhile Keith's contributions can be traced through the years as sources of genuine raw feeling: 'You Got The Silver' (Let It Bleed'), his strained attack on 'Happy' ('Exile'), the pained 'Comin' Down Again' ('Goat's Head Soup'), the stumbling 'Harder They Come', 'Run Rudolph Run', most recently 'All About You'. Though the guitar never falters, the voice cracks, but it's from the heart not the wallet or the ego. 'All About You' is an aching but bitter love song, Keith slurring and whining a putdown. But any stereotyped sexist jibes are dispelled by the last line's, 'how come I'm still in love with you'. A million miles more real than 'she might be the alien'.

ZZ: *All about You is my personal favourite.*

KR: (Seeming a mite taken aback) Ah good . . . hur! (short laugh). I enjoyed doing it. That was another of them songs which must've been around for three years, maybe even a bit more. I wrote it in some soundcheck, Charlie was keeping time. I was convinced myself because it came so easy, the actual basic song — 'this is someone else's song and I can't remember what it is'. For ages I was hawking this tape and saying 'who's is this' and they go, 'uh hold on . . . um . . .'. Nobody could put their fingers on it so after three years I thought, 'well . . . I must have written it!' So I went ahead and finished the lyrics and that.

ZZ: *It sounds like you sat there at the piano when everybody had gone home and plonked it out then added the horns and stuff later . . .*

KR: When we eventually cut the track and put the horns on it last year I still wasn't entirely convinced exactly how it should go, so I had the track and everybody was saying, 'you've got a song to put on it then we should put it on the album'. But I still hadn't written it. Then, as you said, everybody went home and I sat down by the microphone and started it on the spot. I

can't waste time on an album with only ten tracks and instrumentals' . . . instrumentals have got a dirty name. Everyone thinks it's just a filler, but some of the best rock 'n' roll records I can remember are instrumentals — Johnny and the Hurricanes, the Ventures, Bill Black's Combo . . . instrumentals used to be a regular part of your diet. We used to put out instrumentals from the very first album — 'Now I've Got A Witness' — just let a band have a blow once in a while. Sometimes you can screw a track up by putting a vocal on it, you lose some of its impact cos it's neither a song and it's no longer an instrumental.

ZZ: *What tracks did you have most to do with on that album then?*

KR: Er . . . Eventually all of 'em, but I had more to do with . . . obviously 'All About You', 'She's So Cold', 'Let Me Go' . . . Fffff . . . gimme some tracks, what else is on there?

ZZ: *Where The Boys Go'?*

KR: Where The Boys Go', yeah. That was a real band effort, it was Mick's song, and 'Summer Romance', but we'd played 'em a lot. Pretty much everybody was into those. 'Indian Girl' was Mick cos I just played piano on that. I enjoyed doing something different. 'Send It To Me' and 'Emotional Rescue' are both Mick's songs but we all worked on the tracks.

ZZ: *I thought 'Send It To Me' was pretty lightweight when you consider the Stones' deep immersion in reggae (and Keith playing so well on corks like 'Shine Eye').*

KR: There you get on another of my beefs on the making of this

album: alright you got ten tracks, but it's the first one in two years and I thought 'Emotional Rescue' and 'Send It To Me' where just a little too similar — not necessarily musically, just in the sound — that mid-tempo sort of . . . I just thought we were giving a lot of plastic vinyl over to a very similar sound and I was saying, 'You should have one or the other of those two — then you could put a couple of other tracks on, couple of other rockers that we had almost ready. But I gave that one up: 'Cos originally 'Dance' had a whole vocal thing, it was swamped with vocals, Mick had decided he'd got to write this song to this track. He did a lot of work on it and he did a good job, bit it totally nullified the track. I said 'let's make it an instru-

hadn't written anything for it, I just started doing it and after two or three hours started to take shape. I put harmonies on it . . . although when I was doing it I still wasn't thinking necessarily of me singing it, I was just sort of writing it and doing it to keep it for myself to remember how it went, and to play it to Mick if he wanted to do it. But when it was finished everyone said it should stay like that so I said fine, okay. ZZ: *You sound pissed!*

KR: . . . (chuckles) yeah. I didn't try to clean it up, if I'd tried to change it I'd have probably screwed it up. I like it as it is. ZZ: *I read about some conflict between you wanting a raw sound on the album and Mick wanting to clean it all up . . .*

KR: Well . . . I always get a bit obstinate, 'specially towards him when I think 'Christ, we've been working on this thing nearly two years and if I don't watch it it's not gonna come out unless I start kicking the fuckin' walls down and stuff.' But that happens with every album . . . (laughs) You ain't gonna get through two years in the studio without somebody getting shirty.

ZZ: *Also I heard Bill left for a couple of months while it was being done.*

KR: I dunno. He said something about retiring to somebody and then he got a new manager, but Bill, as far back as I can remember, is never there when we finish an album. For a start there's too many people in the control room . . . we play for months and do it, and then he leaves it to us. ZZ: *Do you wanna talk about any of the new songs?*

KR: There's so many. I'm still trying to sort 'em out into tracks that are finished — there's a few that are mixed and done — then there's some which are good songs where the ideas are pretty much there but we need to recut 'em. Some have no lyrics yet, people humming away over the top of the track or the drums come in halfway through cos we started it when Charlie was in the bog, all those sort of things. There's some stuff I've totally forgotten about.

ZZ: *You played an Ian MacLagen's album recently, didn't you?*



KR: Yeah . . . I was on 'Truly' and a recut of a song on Ronnie's first album ('Mystifies Me'). We did it at the end of the Barbarians tour.

ZZ: Another one — that *Black Uhuru* single.

KR: Yeah. 'Shine Eye'. That was those sessions I did with Sly and Robbie. It was just a backing track when I did it, then somebody said it'd come out with *Black Uhuru* singing on it.

That was one of the best things I did, to hang about in Jamaica after we'd done 'Goat's Head Soup'. I stayed there for

nearly a year. I don't get down to Jamaica as much as I'd like to — every time I go down there I have a great time with this little band of Rastas I've played with for years. Just drums and chanting. They really kept me at it.

ZZ: Are you itching to get back on the road again?

KR: Yeah, I am a bit. I thought when we finished this last album that we'd get on the road now, but now I've sort of gotten over that and got used to the idea . . . I'm into finishing this other one, making it as good as we can, at the same time trying to set up

some gigs, not waiting till we finish the album again before we think of what we're gonna do, but try and work it so we've got something to do when we finish the album. I wanna get them on the road because, Mick and me have been playing one way or another — working on this album — but you forget we haven't played together with the other guys since we stopped cutting this time last year. It's a year since we even played together! So, get this one done as efficiently and quickly as possible (laughs) . . .

I know I wanna tour Europe. I can't see that until about March or April cos the weather screws up tours. In the winter you can't ever be sure of making a gig, not every one. There's a lot of places we ain't played for a long time. We want to play here but they just make it very difficult for us, y'know — taxes, there's a lot of red tape for us to play here. On top of that you don't get promoters and tour managers saying you gotta play England' cos you don't make any bread out of it. We don't expect to make any, but if they're not

gonna make any bread they're not gonna push us to play England. We have to say, 'look, we wanna play England, set it up'. Otherwise it just doesn't appear on the list of things to do, which is dumb because there's no reason why we shouldn't play here more often.

ZZ: Yeah, cos I wondered how you still related to the kids here, the people who buy the records and all that.

KR: Well that's why I try and come back here as much as I can, just to see what's going on. Just soak it up and hand around, go and see bands . . .

ZZ: Do you talk much to the fans, geezers who come up to you? (IE: Is he really an untouchable 'cept for the jet set a la Rod Stewart, or — as I suspected anyway — did he still care what the kids thought, if they existed?)

KR: Yeah. All different kinds, that's the whole thing innit? Half the time you find you're surrounded by middle-aged guys — 'I saw you in the California Ballroom, Dunstable'. You get surprising people coming up. Kids too. If I had longer time to spend I'd get into it a lot more.

ZZ: The Stones are often presented as a bit cut off.

KR: Remember who cut us off. It weren't us. We were kicked out. It was that or . . . they tried to put us in the can. They couldn't

do that so they decided to force us out economically, which they did. They just taxed the arse off us so we couldn't afford to keep the operation going unless we got out. Nobody's out through their own choice.

I mean, we can live with it. By now, after travelling all these years, it doesn't really bother me where I am as long as I know I can come back occasionally. If we hadn't been kicked out I've no doubt we'd all still be here. It wasn't a matter of choice it was a matter of no choice. Get out. That was it. I mean, it's understandable — yeah the Stones are rich, tax exiles, blah, blah, blah, but it's only alright if you can live like that. Charlie came to live back in England, has for a year or two. If we hadn't been used to being on the road all the

time I don't s'pose any of us would've wanted to go, wouldn't have gone. But we wouldn't have been able to keep the Stones together and stay in England, so it was a matter of having to get out. Now I've got used to it. No point in moaning, the only thing I wouldn't do is what they've tended to do over the last few years, bugger off to Los Angeles and live in that weird cut off climate out there. That Rod Stewart syndrome. I probably could've have got like that if they hadn't rubbed my nose in the shit so many times so that I never forgot the smell of it (laughs). In a way I don't really mind all the shit I've had to go through. At least it kept me in touch with reality when I could well have gone off the realms of . . . anywhere for a while! Eventually it got to a point where . . . if I was Joe Blow I probably could've stayed on dope forever as long as I could just sit in me little corner and have nothing to do but it had to reach that point in Canada where I thought, 'I don't wanna be busted anymore, I don't wanna go through this shit anymore, knock it on the head,' y'know.

(I'll just butt in 'ere. Before the interview, I made a mental note not to dive into the murky realms of Sunday paper 'shocking Truth about Drug Fiend Keith' obsessions unless he brought this well-dredged skeleton up himself. So much has been written and speculated on the man's private life hobbies it would just seem predictable and brainless to try and prise more juice out of his weary and battered reputation. On the other hand, dope has been close to his heart for years. Now he's brought the subject up as the conversation gains momentum, so that's alright).

ZZ: *You'll always be lumbered with the rock 'n' roll junkie chic number, won'tcha Keith?*

(The man passes a hand over the thatch, which remains standing up in that position, lights another of my fags and the bourbon drawl creaks on).

KR: Yeah . . . I ain't gonna get rid of that one easy am I? (laughs) Maybe if I keep my nose clean as long as I kept it dirty they'll forget about it.

ZZ: *Do you still get hassles about it?*

KR: No . . . no. S'funny. (leans forward and whacks table) Touch wood! It's like they've said, 'oh we've had a go at him he's done his bit, we'll leave him alone, he's kept his end up' . . . which I certainly didn't do for them. I did it for the

Stones and for myself, the kids, whatever . . .

ZZ: *They pry into your private life, put all the dirt in lights . . . then say you're a bad influence on the kids.* KR: Right. Not only would you get done for what you got done for, you get done for setting a bad example. If they hadn't have come smashing through my front door no-one would've known what example I was setting! They made it public, not me. I could understand it if I'd gone round saying, 'oh yeah have a needle and a spoon, go off and have a good time, that's what it's all about'. But I wasn't about to go round advertising it, they advertised it, then I had to pay for it. But fuck it, it happens to lots of people.

I don't know how much the powers that be all work together or communicate with each other but it was like, how many more times would they have done me without it looking really like a bit of, 'let's pick on him', y'know? I was an easy target. They knew I was on the stuff. They could've come round every day! That's why I eventually had to say 'no more'. I don't wanna see 'em anymore. I was seeing more of cops and lawyers than I was of anybody else. To my mind in the business of crime there's two people involved and that's the criminal and the

cops. It's in both their interests to keep crime a business, otherwise they're both out of a job. So they're gonna look for it, they ain't gonna wait for it to 'appen.

ZZ: *I just read Tony Sanchez's book . . .*

KR: Ohh . . . Grimm's fairy stories, yeah! Unbelievable, that. When it got to the blood change bit I thought, 'oh, here we go!' Marvellous. 'Then he sprouted wings'.

(The book, 'Up And Down With The Rolling Stones' — so far published just in the States — consists of the 'memoirs' of Keith's old bodyguard — right-handman Spanish Tony, who really lays on the heavy Dope exploits. Keith emerges as a hard, selfish doper who changes his blood more often than his socks. The gutter press has already serialised bits, Tone makes a packet. Keith dismisses it with a grin and a shrug. What's the point getting steamed up, launching in-junctons and losing sleep. More 'past acquaintances' have made more money out of the Stones than any-one else).

KR: It wasn't him who wrote it, just some hack from Fleet Street. I'm the nasty, dirty, yellow schuide — oh nice, Tony, thanks,

you're my friend! Actually it's quite clever. The actual incidents all happened, but then halfway through each chapter the description takes off into fantasy. This guy says Mick and I buried Brian, we made sure that nobody would ever see him again . . . the guy's gotta make an angle or how ya gonna sell the book? The Fleet Street hack thinks in terms of headlines. Spanish Tony had been with us for a long time, and a lot of the incidents in broad outline happened, but some of the details . . . I just gave up on the blood changel! It's surprising the number of people believe all that. No doubt some people do it.

That one came about like this: I'd been in a clinic in Switzerland. Spanish Tony came to help us move into a house — I was still in the clinic. Tony: 'What did they do to you up there?' Since I could hardly remember anyway and I'd only been in there about a week — I'd just crashed out virtually, went around puking in the ashtrays, ripping down the furniture and fittings for a couple of days and then I'd sort of got better, as usual. So I couldn't explain all this to Tony so I said, 'ohh, they took all my blood out and gave me some fresh blood, all cleaned up'. And slowly over the years that one sentence has become one huge . . . 'oh the blood-change man', y'know? It's funny, one remark because you can't be bothered to explain and before you know it that's what you are. They probably wouldn't have sold any books without that.

ZZ: *What about Brian though? (In the book the hapless original Stones guitarist who died mysteriously in a swimming pool in 1969 is depicted as a drugged shall beaten into the ground by police oppression and paranoia fostered by heartless colleagues stealing his thunder. No-one will ever know the true circumstances of his death but it remains one of rock's*

biggest tragedies — and most ironic, seeing as he was on the way back up with a new band and healthier outlook).

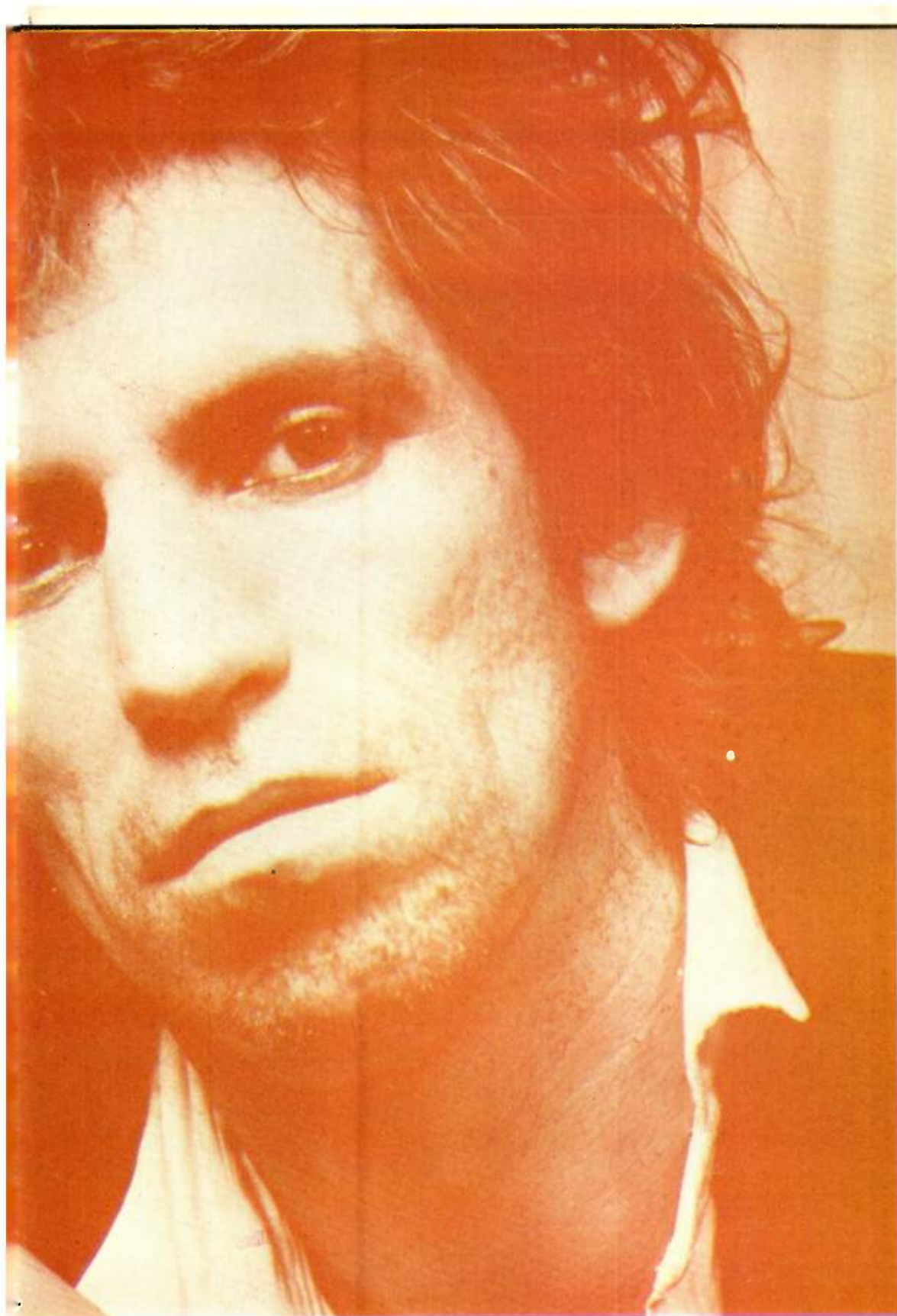
KR: He was getting in a real state towards the end. That was the main reason he eventually left the band. He was just no longer in touch with anything. Although he was real strong in lots of ways, he just found his weakness that night, whatever happened. I still take all the stories from that night with a pinch of salt. I've no doubt it's the same with anybody when those things happen. There's a crowd of people, then

suddenly there's nobody there. Instead of trying to help the guy, they think of their own skins and run. It's the same as what happened to Gram Parsons — someone gave him a turn-on, he passed out and they all got chicken and ran without even calling the ambulance or anything.

ZZ: *Anyway from the morbid subjects . . .*

KR: Industrial accidents . . . I dunno, either. In my own head I think about it and reach the same conclusion as last time, or I start to think about it again and get another idea on it. If you're not actually there when those





We've been playing reggae between ourselves and into reggae for over ten years, just about since it really started to emerge as its own form. So that kept us in touch with a lot of what's happening in England just by coincidence in a way. We just happened to be in Jamaica. And at that time soul music had taken a dive cos Disco had taken over. That was about the only black music we could find that was still fresh. They gave us something we used to get out of American black music. So it was just a natural substitute, in a way. At the same time a progression. But when we started listening to reggae nobody wanted to know, 'specially rock 'n' roll musicians — they couldn't understand it cos the beat's turned round. Now a lot of kids have grown up with it, on the street, there's a lot of Jamaicans here and they've brought their music with 'em. Now it's mixing up and you've got black guys coming out and playing supercharged rock. That's what's interesting, that's what keeps music going. If it just stayed the same as the three or four reviewers people read wanted it to stay, or just because it isn't like their pet favourite of the moment . . . people say the public's fickle but critics are ten times more fickle than the public!

ZZ: 'Some Girls' got a favourable reception compared to 'Emotional Rescue'.

KR: Yeah, 'Some Girls' . . . just because of the time it came out, etc etc, and the circumstances — very favourable reaction there, but you know that the next one's gonna get slagged, 'oh they're just marking time again'. But we've just done what we've always done, we'll go in and make a record. We'll go in and make it as good as we can in the period of time that we've got to make it in — which is a long time sometimes, but the bigger a band gets and the bigger its organisation gets, the longer everything takes. This is one thing I'm always fighting against, saying 'it shouldn't be like that', but it's just a fact of life. The more people involved, the bigger the size of the record company, the bigger the importance . . . it just takes longer. I mean we made the first one in ten days, and several of the others too. But now it's A Rolling Stones Album and you feel you've gotta work and work on it, polish it up . . . and eventually you give in to that pressure a lot of the time, then afterwards you wish you'd just slammed it out like this rough mix on a cassette. I always try and push it. For instance 'Dance' on 'Emotional Rescue', I wanted to keep instrumental. The track's dynamite by itself. Putting the vocal on it I felt — and I still feel in a way cos I've got the instrumental track at home — just detracted enough from the track for nobody to really listen to the vocals either. To me it was a kind of compromise. I'd have much rather kept the track as it was.

OVER →

ings go down you can never
y . . . I don't know what really
ent on that night at Brian's
ace. I know there was a lot
people there and suddenly
ere wasn't and that's about it.
eah off that subject, right?

Z: Okay. Back to the album.
o you think people didn't
other to listen to 'Emotional
escue' properly before slagging
away?

R: I dunno. I remember 'Exile
n Main Street' being slagged all
er the place when it came out
nd then the SAME guys six

years later holding it up and
saying, 'oh this new album's not
as good as 'EXILE ON MAIN
STREET', I read about two or
three reviews when they come out
and that's it.

It's a number one
record, and it sold well. We've
done what we intended to do —
put out a record; after all, it's
popular music. Unpopular music
is about the worst thing you can
make. I'd rather it be popular.
So I'd rather use that criteria
than two or three writers slagging
it off.

ZZ: . . . They say the Stones
don't stand up to the groups

around today (you know who).

KR: (With a tinge of cold irrita-
tion) Well that's the bands they
like. A lot of the bands they
like don't mean fuckall anywhere
to anybody. Whether they might
in the future, I ain't slagging the
bands. It all depends where you
live. No doubt if we'd all stayed
in England we'd be playing and
doing things differently than the
fact that we had to move out
. . . you start picking up music
from wherever you start to
live or where you start to move
around, y'know. A lot of it didn't
turn out to be that different,
whether I was in England or not.

It became a compromise — do the vocals again but rewrite it. You win some, you give a little, you take a little, and I wanted 'All About You' on there. But if I wanna listen to 'Dance' I play the cassette of the track!

(I'm steadily building up this picture of the Stones At Work. Keith with his bits bartering with Jagger over what goes on "well if I can 'ave 'All About You' and you take those ridiculous vocals off 'Dance' you can keep 'Emotional Rescue' AND 'Send It To Me' on the album, 'ow's about that, Mick?" There's the nagging irritation that 'Emotional Rescue' would've been a KILLER if Keith'd had his way more.

KR: But it's always a compromise, because it's for a specific reason. You're saying this is it, but we all know there's lots of stuff left on the floor which a lot of people like as well. The trouble is you just can't please everybody with one album, it's not possible. Everybody wants to hear their idea of what the Stones is. There's the old-timers who remember from the year dot, then you've got the ones who believe we popped out of the ground with 'Satisfaction', then there's the lot who joined us with 'Beggars Banquet', the 'Brown Sugar' lot. There's people who didn't get into us till the 70's. Everybody's got their own idea of what the Stones are about, which I suppose gets more and more confusing the longer you exist. ZZ: It gets impossible to live up to all that.

KR: Well it gets impossible if you try and live up to it. We just do what we do and hope they like it. I mean usually you find more and more that people come up with interesting ideas on an album a year later. Me too. It'll take that long to get a little perspective on the last album. I'm too close to it right now. I've only just healed up from the last sessions! (laughs). Beat me own record — nine days on a stretch! Once you get in the Studio it doesn't really matter. It's timeless, like hibernation (giggle)! One tape op drops, you wake another one up!

ZZ: How dya keep awake then?

KR: I dunno, I can only do it when I'm working really. I've got a cycle of it by now, I get up and I'll be up for two or three days, but when you're working — I mean, Ronnie and I, when we were doing the '75 tour in the States at Madison Square Gardens — six nights in a row — we didn't sleep from the first gig till the end of the sixth one. I guess it was because we were stuck in the same place suddenly — same hotel, same theatre — and you feel like you're a record that's just got stuck! You don't think of sleeping. I don't remember the last three gigs. We'd just go off somewhere and turn up at the Garden for the next gig. God knows what we did, we just wandered about! We were well out of it I know that! It gets down to the point where you

go round and bug people — you don't just go and visit someone, it's 'let's find someone we really don't like and go round and bug 'em!' It's just so rare we find ourselves at the same place for a week in a tour. It's like a summer season at Great Yarmouth pier. (Keith goes on to bemoan the lack of decent venues in Britain, 'specially London. Obviously Hammersmith's a bit small and he don't wanna do the monstrous makeshift Earls Court. "London's eleven million people, you'd think they could rake up enough for a decent stadium, five thousand seater or something." He mentions the buzz he got when the Stones did some three thousand seaters in the States. "Kept us on our toes. It's a totally different way of playing."

"Put an ad in — anybody wanna bug a lotus-shaped stage. That's as far as I want to take that one!"

He's still with Anita Pallenberg — "she's in good spirits nowadays, she's been through a lot of shit too." Son Marlon's at school — "he's too fuckin' bright, I'm trying to retard him" — and the Richards are on the move again cos their lease has run out.

ZZ: Thought any more about doing a solo album? What's happened to all these tracks you laid down in Canada?

KR: People always ask me cos they know I did those tracks. I mean I do 'em because the opportunities there in the studio. For some reason nobody else has turned up . . . at the time I do them I just do 'em. I'm still in the same state of mind as always, like Mick. I'm not interested in splitting myself up to the point where I'm going 'I'm going to keep this for me, that's a nice song I won't give it to the Stones': put yourself in that position it's stupid. One thing at a time — if I'm in the Stones I'm in the Stones and I make Stones records. If I'm not in the Stones, I'll think about doing my own record. I don't wanna split my loyalties.

ZZ: What about your solo single, 'Run — Rudolph Run'?

KR: Oh yeah. I put that out, I just wanted to put out a Christmas record, why not? I had it around for a while — stick it out. And the other side 'Harder They Come' is an even bigger jumble. It was like a quick snatch of tape we'd done between two other songs — did it during a break. But there's nothing on the actual record that was on the tape. Eventually we overdubbed it and wiped everything that was on there off. There's nothing left of the original tape. Ronnie ended up doing most of the drums on it. There's a couple of mistakes in it, I don't care. Some of the records I like best have got mistakes all over 'em. So we put it on the 'B' side of 'Rudolph'.

ZZ: You've been involved with Ron Wood's solo projects.

KR: Yeah, he doesn't have the

pressure like me 'n' Mick of having to write for the Stones. I mean, if he's got a good song we do it, some of his ideas and riffs and stuff we have used, that's fine, the pressure isn't on him to come up with stuff for the Stones and at the same time I know he enjoyed doing the first one and I enjoyed doing it with him ('I've Got My Own Album To Do.'). But after that it's really been, 'you owe the record company an album'. And that's what he's still doing. He's doing it cos he's got to now, not cos he wants to. It's ultimately his own fault in a way, he let himself get in that position, but Ronnie's not the sort of bloke to understand what they're all doing behind the scenes until they've got him tied up in a nice neat parcel and he's got to cough up with the songs and an album, which he'll enjoy doing while he's doing it but it's not something he would've done unless he'd had to do it. There's nothing worse than making an album just to fulfil a contract. That's like work! You stop playing and start working. I mean, we call it work but to meself, working . . . that's something I've tried to avoid all my life! (laughs) I've always tried to avoid feeling like I'm working anyway.

ZZ: You must be quite pleased how it turned out. There's lots of kids start playing the guitar for fun.

KR: Yeah right, that's what I thought when we had two gigs a week — oh great! No more schlepping around this artwork trying to get a job in an advertising agency and I chucked it. 'I'm making a tenner a week, eh 'I? I'm alright! As long as I don't break strings or a valve goes in the amplifier I'll come out with a fiver at the end of the week. Be alright!' So it was always like that, they just added more zeroes on the end as it went on, but as far as I'm concerned it's the same attitude since we got our first gig — 'fine, great, wow, I'm doing what I really wanna do, and they're paying me to do it!'

ZZ: What's your favourite thing that you've done? Is there any one thing you can pick out?

KR: Ohh wow . . . umm . . . that was easy to answer years ago when there wasn't so much to choose from or remember! Fairly broadly speaking, without picking out particular songs or anything, going backwards as albums go. I was very happy with the last one. I like it, and 'Some Girls'. More and more now I've been listening to 'Black And Blue'. Quite like some of that, considering especially that I know the ins 'n' outs of how it was made — that album was put together while auditioning guitar players, trying to find a new guy (to replace Mick Taylor). It's interesting for me to listen to 'Black And Blue' because there's a different guitar player on virtually every track. Wayne Perkins, Harvey Mandel, other people came round and played with us — even Jeff Beck, who I get on

with now but at that time we were sort of glowering over the guitars.

ZZ: Another classic from 'round then was 'Time Waits For No One' (more under-rated Stones emotion — this time on the passing of time — they ain't just a rock 'n' roll boogie squad, y'know. Mick Taylor's solo is a classic).

KR: That was the last thing Mick Taylor did with us. Why don't Mick Taylor kick himself in the arse and realise what he is? He's a fuckin' great guitar player. If he'd stop pissing about trying to be a songwriter, a producer, a bandleader. At the time it was probably the right thing for him to do (leave the group), for him and us. But he hasn't done a thing since he left which he couldn't have done with us. It was his decision to leave. If he'd decided to stay he could still be with us now probably. What's he come up with? One album and a couple of gigs with Jack Bruce. ZZ: His album was pure crap.

KR: That's what I mean. If only he'd realise what he is, a damn good guitar player. He should find somebody to play with. He's a bit lazy and while he's still got our royalties coming in he'll just indulge himself — produce, write, be the drummer . . . he's not a guy to make quick decisions and if you produce a record you've gotta be able to say even if you're wrong, 'rub that out'. That's why albums take so long these days. That's the other side of recording — the technology. Every time you do four more tracks you put another two months on the album. When we started if the record didn't sound right at the playback, tough shit because that was it! There was nothing else you could, do!

ZZ: When you play live that's it too.

KR: Yeah, you've still gotta be able to do it, but it's the other way round. You write the song and record it then work out a way of doing it live. That's not the natural way to do it is play it live until you've got it honed down real good and THEN record it. But then nobody wants to hear you play material they don't know. That's the other thing with being in a band like the Stones — you've always got 'em down the front going 'Satisfaction!', 'Play With Fire!' Everybody's got their old favourites, they don't wanna hear the new stuff — until it's out on the record and they've bought it and got it at home, then they wanna hear it. Wanna shot of this?

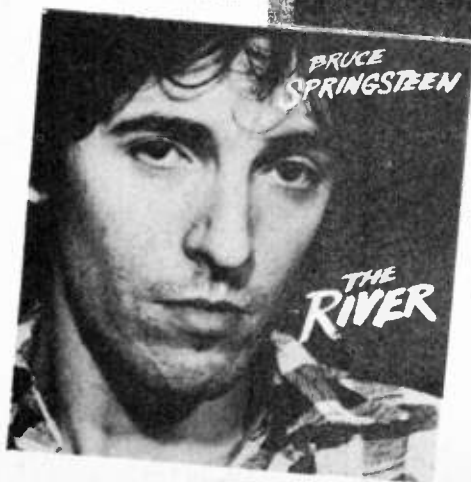
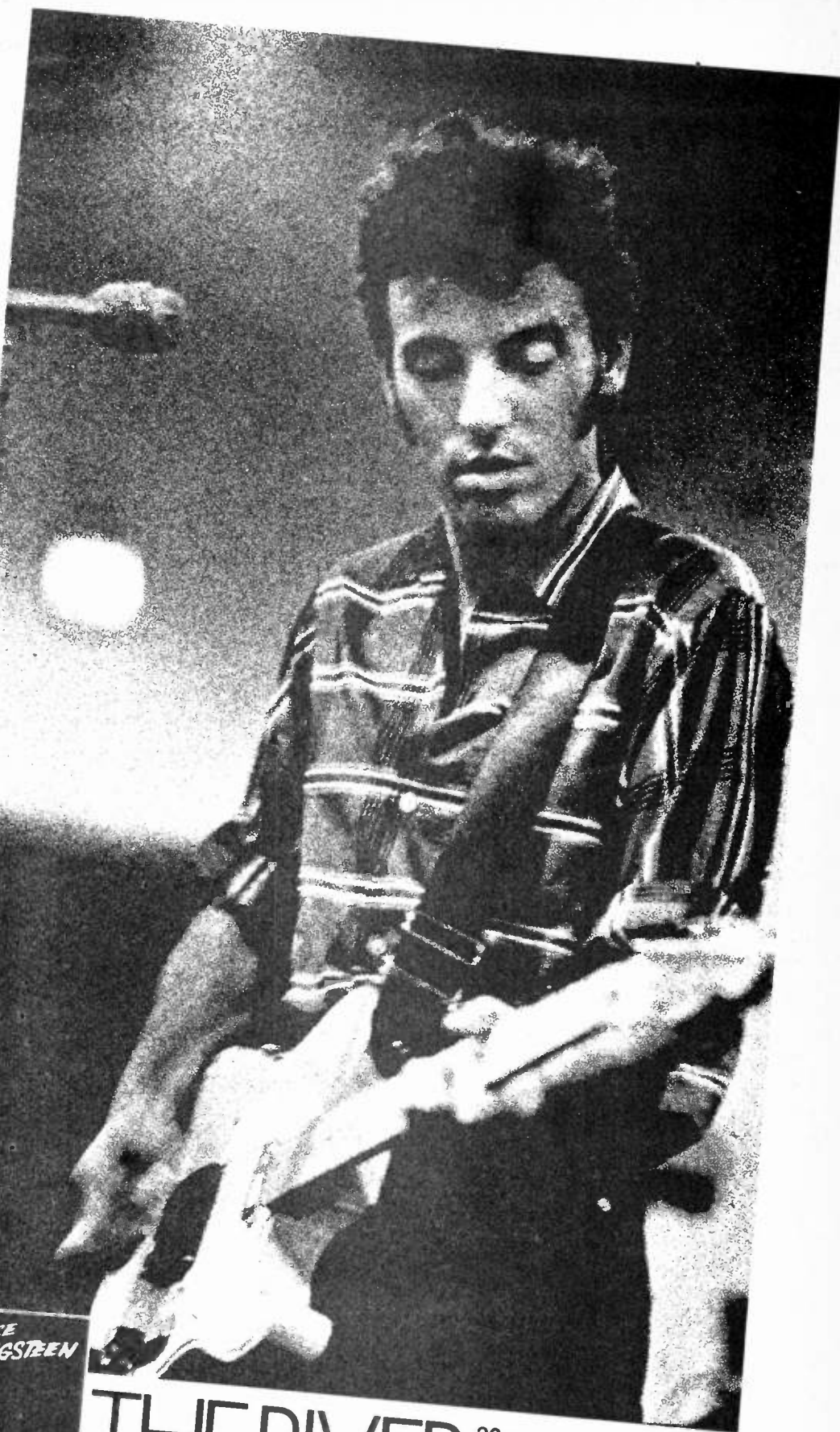
Keith offers his bottle, realises what he just said and adds into my recorder, 'when I say shot of this, it's a drink. . . !' We take a break to find a light switch.

ZZ: How's your guitar style going — still pretty much sticking to rhythm?

KR: Me 'n' Ronnie should play more together, but finishing the

(CONT. ON P. 26)

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KEITH (CONT. FROM P. 26)

record has put the mockers on it recently. I enjoy playing with Ronnie a lot because . . . I think the main thing about making records is to produce a sound. I've never been that interested in being a guitar-player as such on my own, by myself. Sometimes I surprise myself, sometimes I disappoint myself. I'm more interested in what sound you can produce. This is why I've never really been interested in bands with only one guitar player, unless they've got something else going. Bass, drums 'n' guitar just ain't enough for me, there ain't enough to make a sound. Ronnie knows that and we can get into that a lot, especially if we play a lot together. But we're gonna have to do a bit of swotting up cos we ain't played lately!

ZZ: He mainly takes the lead lines, doesn't he?

KR: A lot of the time. Mainly, I guess, cos if I'd written the song then I'll get into knocking out the chords with Charlie so everyone can learn it, so by the time we've got it together the roles are pretty much fixed cos of that. Usually there's a lot more than two guitars on any of our records. I overdub, and usually you can't distinguish the overdub, you might only hear it as a distinctive sound once or twice in the record - I'll just mesh it in with the other guitars and pull it out here and there. We're more interested in the sound - that's

being made rather than who's playing what.

ZZ: Still got that guitar with the daggers and devils on it?

KR: That went up in flames. We had a fire in my house. Ronnie had that made for me, I used to use it a lot. It was a custom job, Zematis. There was a fire - I didn't even get me trousers on, just jumped out the window! There were all these neighbours worried about the flames catching their houses. I was standing there - 'wadya want me to do, pee on it? Forget it!'

Keith leafs through a recent *Zigzag* and notices the embarrassing American Heroin Scene over-view, which I'd tried to keep out cos I thought it cheap, superficial and irresponsible (I was over-ruled) The first line went, 'Heroin is not chic' and a quote about Stones drug references in songs is blown up as a headline. As Keith scans this gutter-scraping I cringe and foresee an abrupt termination of our conversation. He reads, grim and tight-lipped. Looks up . . .

KR: There's no way of writing about anything like that. It doesn't matter which way you angle it or state your case. Somebody's going to get turned on by it. Saying it's 'not chic', that means it's chic. If you said it was chic . . . there's no way of writing about it because it's such an emotional and sensitive subject. The main thing is, why, especially in this business, do

people go on to it in the first place? What are the pressures? Is it the one guy above you that you dig the way he plays. Charlie Parker has done more to turn lots of horn-players into junkies just because it happened to be known. If people had left him alone and nobody had known he was a junkie, maybe it would've been better. Why go searching out making sensational stories when you know that, just because the cops bust somebody if they're popular musicians or a superstar, there's gonna be somebody, no matter what that guy's going through himself, who's going to try and emulate it in some way? There's no right way of writing about heroin. There's plenty of wrong ways and it's difficult to know. Ever since I kicked it and cleaned up I've been bombarded with requests and offers to make a statement about this, or address judges - I've been asked to do lectures for judges! What would I say in front of 800 judges? The chance I've been waiting for - FUCK YOU! What else am I gonna say to them about dope? I'd just be embroiling myself and keeping myself in the same bag and attaching myself to the same ting that I'm trying to get rid of. Probably the only thing that might have any effect is, once everybody knows you're a junky then yeah, you are an example. They've made you one, whether you wanna be or not. So the only example I can be now is to say,

yeah, I've done it for longer than most people and luckily came out the other end and I'm still here and I'm alright. Even if you're into it already and you need to kick it, at least you know, because I'm still 'ere. If you want to you can kick it and the sooner the better, darlin'. If there's one thing I can talk about more than Music and guitars, I can talk about dope (laughs). It's like guns. There's nothing wrong with the gun, it's the people who're on the trigger. Guns are an inanimate object, a Heroin needle's an inanimate object. It's what's done with it that's important. I think of all these people doing it and not even knowing what they're doing. That to me is the dumbest thing. At least by the time I got on it I knew as much as you can know. The one thing I've realised more than anything since I kicked it is that the criteria you use when you're on it is so distorted from what you'd use normally. I know the angle - waiting for the man, sitting in some goddam basement waiting for some creep to come, with four other guys snivelling, puking and retching around, and you're waiting for something to happen, and it's already been 24 hours and you're going into the worst. How does it feel, baby? You don't feel great. If I was Joe Blow maybe I'd still be on it, I dunno. I wouldn't take any notice of what I was saying if I was listening to it or anybody else, cos when you're on it you

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KEITH (CONT. FROM P. 26)

don't. The only thing I can say is, if you want to, it's no big deal to kick it. Everybody wants to make like, 'oh, I've been to Hell and back'. You've only been halfway, baby. *Nobody's* been there and back. Anyway, here I am. Ten years I did it and then I stopped and I'm still 'ere. I've still got two legs, two arms luckily and a bit of a head left, and that's about it. If examples count at all that's the only statement I can make: I'm still here.

In America it's even worse cos you have doctors coming on TV, discussions about the drug problem. These doctors — the more patients they get on methadone (heroin substitute), the bigger federal grant they get, so it's in their interest. They tell people who've been on it a few months, a year, 'your body can never do without heroin, you'll need methadone forever'. Bullshit. You can kick it in three fucking days. That's as long as it stays in ya. After that it's up to you. I might oversimplify it in saying that, but that's the way it's always hit me. It's a physical thing for me in almost every way. If I can kick those three days...

The other big problem is not cleaning them up, just sending 'em back. The same with me. The times I cleaned up and went back to exactly the same scene I was in before. What else you gonna do? You've been doing it for years. Everybody you know's

doing it, you're kind of locked in. Unless you can break out of that circle afterwards — that's the next step. You're back in that same room as five years before when you were on it and they're still calling you up, some people are coming around. It's a total drug, like total war. It takes over your whole life, every aspect of it eventually.

I used to clean up to do a tour, cos I just didn't want to be on the road and have to be hassled. But physically having to readjust when a tour just stops. (snaps fingers.). 'Now what do I do?' I'm physically readjusting to then going home and living a quiet family life for two months. That'd do me in. Bom-bom, I'd go back on it. But if I had to work I'd clean up. But what a hassle! But when you're on it you'll go through any hassle to get it. 'First get me the dope then I'll do what I have to do'.

ZZ: I bet you had a never-ending stream of fawners who gave you stuff so they could boast they supplied Keith Richard.

KR: Oh sure. It was 'great to see you man, I need it and you got it'. You've got that to deal with as well, people stuffing it at ya. There's no way I could explain that in Aylesbury court. The things that are given to us. But I knew there was no point in trying to explain it to straight jury and a judge, even to my own lawyer. All the time, they think they're doing you a favour and probably

at the time I thought so too. Some kid sends me an envelope with a quarter of an ounce of smack in it, y'know, 'have a good time, Keith, thumbs up, yeah right, whaay'. If you're on it you'll go 'yeah right, whaay' back, cos you need it and you're not gonna say no.

But really nobody's doing anybody a favour.

Once I cleaned up and viewed it all from a bit of perspective... dealers would still be coming up to me. I'd dig just watching their faces. One thing that got me over that second period of cleaning up the environment was seeing these dealers' faces when they realised there was no sale! (laughs) It was a perverse way of going about it but it got me through the period.

The morbid mood lifts again as the talk drifts back, this time to the earliest days of the Stones. Keith's highly amused when I tell him that the Bricklayers' Arms, the pub off Wardour Street where the Stones rehearsed for their earliest gigs, is now a violin shop, and — ('I must've had some influence somewhere') retaliates with a tale about original pianist Ian Stewart forgetting the breaks cos he was eying the Soho strippers out the window. The laminated elbow-grasping Mike Yarwood doing his 'Cor I could shaft that!' impersonation of Stewart is a far cry from the Devil's right-hand man of popular repute.

Keith described how he and Jagger initially developed their prolific songwriting partnership. I'd never heard this one before...

'I can thank Andrew Oldham (their first manager) for many things, but more than anything thank him for forcing me to sit down and write these horrendous songs, cos when you start it's always the worst. We'd farm them off to somebody else cos we didn't wanna know. Gene Pitney, Marianne Faithfull? Sure, have this one. You've gotta get all that shit outta your system before you can really start writing. At the time you write 'em you're even amazed you can write that. 'I'm just the guitar-player'. Hats off to Andrew for that one just for making me find out I could do it.'

ZZ: Your first composition on record was 'Tell Me', right?

KR: Yeah, and that was a demo. Andrew stuck it on the album because we needed another track. It was cut as a demo and Andrew was gonna try and flog it off to somebody. But we bunged it on. In America it was the first thing we did that got pulled out. Then we realised about songwriting. Apart from playing, that's the other thing I enjoy doing more than anything, trying to hammer out a new song.

Keith had to go so I trotted off, well pleased. He's a good geezer and he still cares. Who'll shoot KR? Not me.

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Papaver—the opium poppy

On the one hand I have no desire — and no right — to set myself up as an authority on the subject, but, on the other, unlike most journalists who tackle the subject I have had personal experience of the drug, have been through the National Health mill of 'treatment' during the course of which, since I wasn't receiving much in the way of therapy or guidance towards the kind of self-understanding required to master the problem, took it upon myself to do as much reading and peripheral researching into the subject as I possibly could.

For several years now I have wanted to try and write a book about it — a book containing so many of the aspects omitted by all those that I have read (and I HAVE read all the

When it comes to irresponsibility in journalism, some of the worst offences have taken place in and around the perimeters of drugs reportage — with heroin emerging as the Vincent Price of pharmaceuticals.

Virtually everything ever written about the drug has in some way glamourised or sensationalised it, consciously or subconsciously.

In many ways it is a subject I would rather have left alone — the responsibility of dealing with it without tempting someone, somewhere to experiment with it are enormous. However, I cannot deny the flashes of anger I experience when exposed to yet another re-hashed, ill-informed piece of sensationalism such as the recent US drugs article that appeared in this very paper — without feeling a concurrent disgust with myself for absolving myself of the responsibility of at least *trying* to do something to counter the effects of such endless misrepresentation.

'classics' from Mimms (the GP's catalogue of drugs), to William Burroughs and Alex Trocchi) but each attempt failed because the subject was still too 'close' for the requisite degree of perspective.

So, for the time being (and it certainly *is* timely if, like me, you read the papers and have noticed the recent increase in heroin-related deaths) the best I can do is to attempt an unemotional overview on the current state of the British heroin problem, its causes and effects.

Successive British governments have thundered out denunciations of the underground organisations who manufacture and sell opium and heroin, but, ironically, it was a British government who taught them how. The story of how opiates first made their way into

this country from their countries of origin in the middle and far east begins way back in the early and middle 19th centuries.

Believe it or not, it all started with Robert Clive's consequent and subsequent colonisation of India. Opium the source of heroin had long been manufactured from the sap of the poppies grown in the middle east and India; travellers in those regions had reported that, unlike in Europe, where it was employed primarily as a sedative, it was taken in India as a stimulant, particularly when so-called 'Dutch courage' was required. In the 1670s, one John Fryer, travelling through India noted that wrestlers took it to perform feats far beyond their normal strength and warriors, "to run up on an enterprise with a raging

resolution to die or be victorious."

Despite the fact that Clive himself became powerfully addicted to opium, the British felt no qualms about permitting the East India Company to trade with the Bengalese Moguls who held the Indian monopoly it; nor did they raise objection to the East India Company's ships taking their "merchandise" to the East Indies and China.

Opium had long been used in China for medicinal purposes, on a small scale; small quantities of it were burnt and inhaled over a candle flame, but, as the Emperor began to receive reports of the spread of the new fad — as more and more opium began to arrive courtesy of the British and Portuguese — he decreed, in 1729 that opium must no longer be imported, except under

licence. The British, however, sidestepped this by smuggling the stuff in fast native craft flying the British Ensign.

Traffic grew, despite the resistance of the Emperor, and in direct proportion to Britain's far eastern colonising efforts and double-dealing with various potentates.

In 1817, the Governor General virtuously proclaimed that, "were it possible to prevent the use of the drug altogether, except strictly for the purpose of medicine, we would gladly do it in compassion to mankind".

Meanwhile, dealings were being undertaken with the Indian government. Princes in the Native States, attracted by the rising price of opium, were beginning to encourage production.

Before long, the value of the

opium sold in China amounted to well over two million pounds — half the amount then devoted annually to paying the Crown and the Civil Service in Britain.

This, despite the publication in 1821 of Thomas De Quincey's now-classic "Confessions Of An Opium Eater" — which was beginning to alert the public at large to the agonies of addiction.

A House of Commons Committee was set up to investigate the affairs of the East India Company in 1830, but, predictably concluded that if the Government of India was deprived of the revenue of opium, it would have to be raised from other sources — and the British taxpayer might have to be called upon.

Thus, the East India Company was stripped of its other pri-



Opium den—English Cathedral Town style. From an illustration by S. L. Fildes for *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* by Charles Dickens

vileges, but allowed to retain the hold upon the opium monopoly it had built up over the years.

Up to this point, the assumption that opium was harmful to the health and morals of the Chinese had hardly been questioned. The most commonly cited authority on the subject was a missionary, W.H. Medhurst whose book "China" was published in 1840. By his reckoning, the amount of opium smuggled in at that time was enough to demoralise nearly 3 million people.

The opium habit, Medhurst estimated, reduced life expectation by about ten years, destroyed health while life lasted, and, at the same time ruined millions of families because of the drain on the smoker's resources.

Nevertheless, the merchants — including the now ultra-respectable Hong Kong-based British firm of Jardine Matheson (whose share prices are announced each morning on the radio) — continued to over-rule the faint voices of dissent.

Meanwhile, through the century, pharmacologists had been attempting to ascertain how and why opium produced its varying narcotic effects. Francis Anstie, a physician at Westminster Hospital had therefore been trying to remove the study of the effects of the drug from the metaphysical to the physical level, in his 'Stimulants And Narcotics', published in 1864. This encouraged others in their quest for "certainties of effect" — they simply could not understand why the same amount

of the same drug should — on occasion — have such markedly different effects upon different subjects.

Alkalis were discovered. These, it was assumed, were the representations of the essential drug element of a plant; when extracted they would obviate wastage, and, when refined, impurities would be removed, thus making it easier to measure out the prescribed strength of dosage.

So it came about that morphine, the derivative, began to replace opium and laudanum (tincture of opium suspended in alcohol) as a sedative and painkiller.

Before long, the medical profession was to realise that their new panacea was another pancake: so long as it was taken

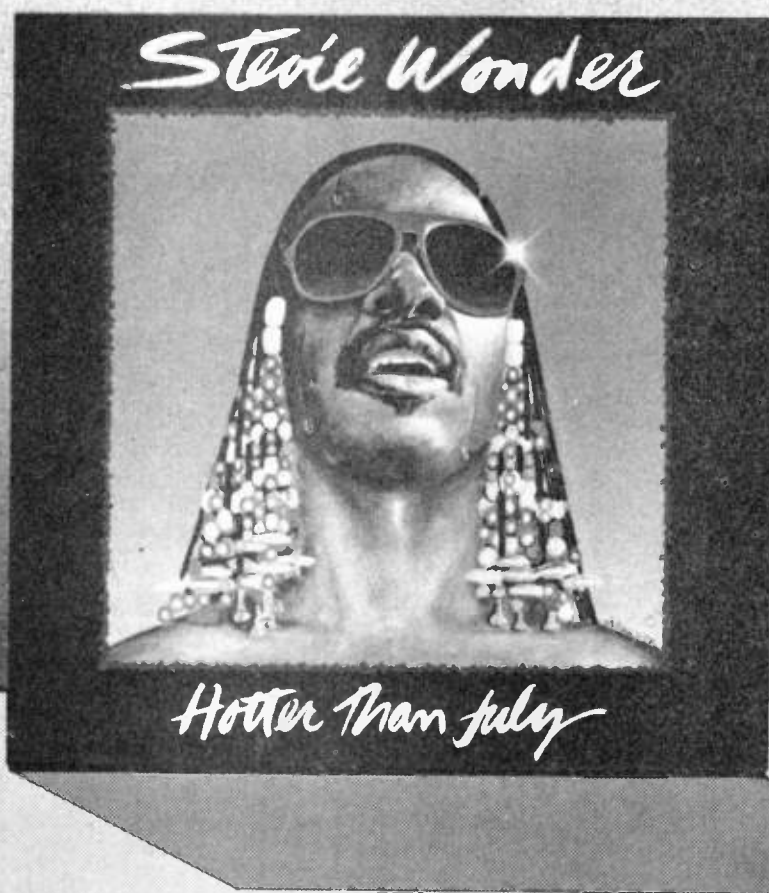
strictly on prescription, for medical purposes it fulfilled expectations — but before long people began to realise that it lacked the same lasting analgesic properties.

The medical profession — barring Sigmund Freud — lost interest. Heroin was synthesised in 1898 and immediately began to be enthusiastically welcomed by doctors as being more effective than its predecessors, and carrying — the assurance was — NO RISK WHATSOEVER OF PROMOTING ADDICTION.

Next Month: The medical profession's answer to heroin, examination of the effects of heroin, its uses and abuses and methods of treatment for addiction to it.

Peter Erskine

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STRENGTH

Lazy Sunday afternoon and the elongated, bendy-toy frame of Joey Ramone sprawls clumsily on and between twin hotel beds. The head part of the cumbersome assembly points towards a TV, watching some grimy, very British 'Buffy's-parachute-is-burnt-to-a-crisp' sub-epic through those pink pebble specs that hang awkwardly around the nose and ear bits. But it's not concentrating, Joey's still bristling over BBC2's showing a few nights earlier, of the 'Rock Heroes' film . . . "They missed out such a lot. They missed out everybody! They left out Slade. They left out T. Rex and Gary Glitter . . .

Once, the Ramones owed a debt to those glitter heroes, those English bubblegummers in spangly duds and silly warpaint who brought a bit of a laugh back to rock at a timewhen it was sinking beneath the pompous waves of those humourless egostars as they straddled the turrets of their ivory country retreats, de'igning occasionally to scatter specks of self-indulgent, conceptual manna muzak for the starving masses below. But that debt's been paid now, for whereas glitter burnt itself out in jig-time, da brudders, now six years old, blaze on regardless. Dumb slum boys doing Sixties trash pop, bubblegum beach gonzo music on the street corner 'cos they get nowhere better to go and nothing better to do 'cos they can't get a job and wouldn't if they could, doing it on 'borrowed' guitars in torn jeans and soiled leathers, a bit too fast and a lot too loud. They seemed to be punk because the look fitted the category, and because they never blew their nose when a sniff'd do, but they transcended the tag because they loved those ancient, instant pop tunes and feelings much too much to throw it all with the negative, defiant thrash of the others. Six years on, the Ramones have become an institution. Some, (like Tony Parsons in a particularly vitriolic attack in the NME a couple of years back) have tried to pull the building down but the foundations of this establishment are too solid for that. The Ramones never change . . . they just get a little rougher every day.

"We can never forget that piece" says Joey of Parsons' article. But what had prompted the poison pen to fly forth with such rage, making the band out to be stupid cretins taking a cynical piss on their fans? "I don't know. He's hip (Joey spits the word, he don't care for no hip elite) He's a fuckin' asshole, a total moron y'know. He wasn't even with us for more than five minutes, then the record company sent a line to pick us up from the hotel. There was like twelve of us stuffed in this limo, y'know, instead of taking a bus or two taxis, and he's saying we always drive around in limousines and all that shit. A lot of writers have that kinda problem y'know, just about all of them . . . except for Zag. Zag! We always like *them*!" Sure, Joey, I bet you say that to all the journalists.

Blighty has always had a fickle heart but although the Ramones may have peaked on the hipo-

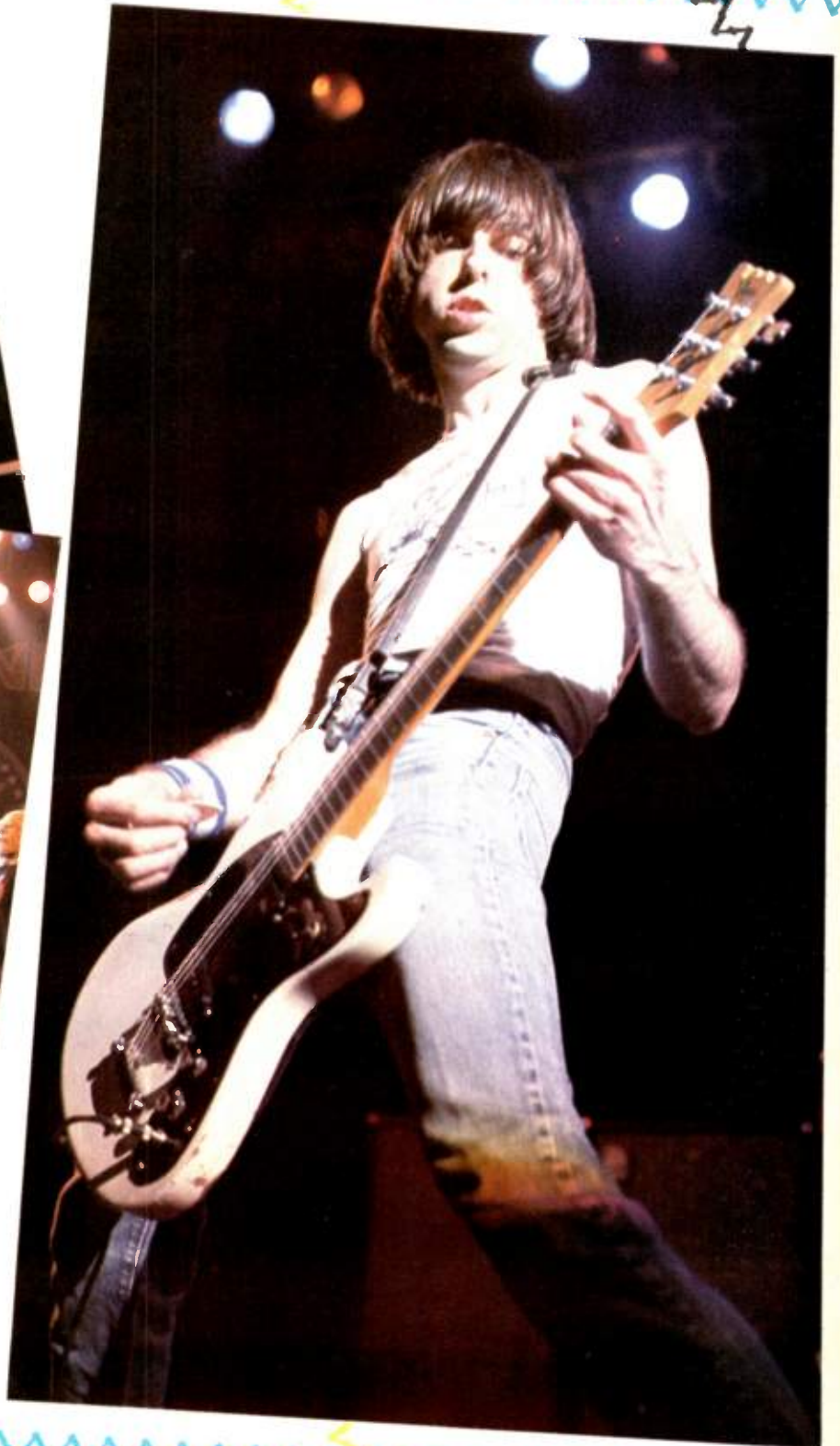
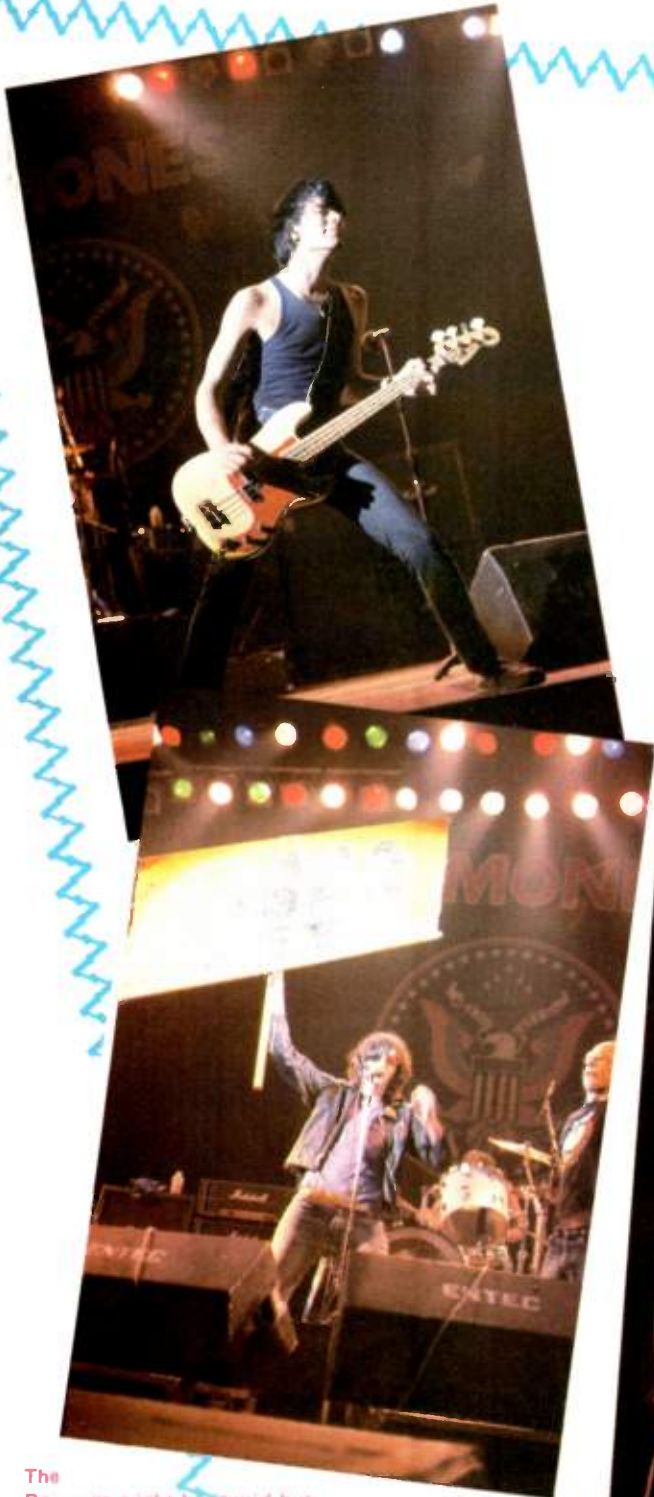
meter, there's still an enormous, and growing, conglomerate of Ramonophile faithfuls 'ver here, whilst ever *there*, though it's been an uphill struggle, the band are beginning to crack it on that greedy, but lazy, market. "They're taking us as a more legitimate band now. The industry and people like Genesis were afraid 'cos they didn't understand what we were doing. Then the Sex Pistols didn't help at all 'cos they were into a negative kind of destruction thing which scared everybody and we were always into a positive thing — trying to save rock 'n' roll and put the excitement and fun back into it instead of drawing it all out like Foreigner and Toto with their dull, boring, mindless, moronic shit music that drags on like qualudes music. We were the extremists but people are starting to see that we're no threat".

It was the last album, — 'End of the Century' that began to break down the walls of rejection, not because of any drastic shift in formula but because, as Joey says, "In America if you don't have a name producer — forget it. Your record company won't even get behind you". The album had the biggest name of all, the legendary and, by all accounts, insanely mad, Phil Spector. Sadly, Joey won't be drawn into specific accounts of over-the-top behaviour from the great man. I love eccentric genius and tales of their untoward doings but though I probe for sensationalism, all I get is: "Uh . . . he's fucked up. He's crazy . . . he's *crazy*!" But how does this craziness take him, Joey, huh, huh? "He's wild y'know. He goes into tantrums and stuff a lot. To begin with he was drinking a lot and we told him we couldn't work this way. We never did any work as long as he was drinking. We'd be there like twelve hours and nothing was accomplished. The Paley Brothers were in the studio around the same time. They were gonna lay down three tracks and Spector just kept them in there for eighteen hours a day for three weeks and they never got the tracks finished! We told him he'd have to stop drinking so he did. Because to work with us was something he'd really been wanting to do. I guess he felt that we'd done a lot for music as much as he had done. Just like he wanted to be the Beatles . . . even though it was their worst album". 'End of the Century' opens with "Do You Remember Rock 'N' Roll Radio?", an elegy for the days

when the transistor was youth's driving force — youths pushing out of a trillion sets, sounding all the better for the tinny reproduction, forming stupid aspirations and forging generation gaps and naive rebellion 'cos the tunes were great. "Lately it all sounds the same to me" goes Joey's singing tongue as it curses how they neutered radio and made it safe in the USA, the land where the bland lead the bland. "The radio sucks. It's terrible — heavily formulated shit, playlist, Top 40, all crap. There's a chain out called the Abraham's chain dictation to maybe 40 to 50 stations what they *have* to play. The Knack and people like that helped to break open the door to middle of the road new wave so the Pretenders are big 'cos they're safe and Gary Numan's big 'cos *he's* safe. It's tough 'cos that's what we're dealing against but we're doing it our way. We didn't go Blondie's route and go disco and we're not gonna become a Ska band and play reggae. We're not gonna sound like the Police, that's for sure. It's kind of a game and eventually you have to conquer it all and win but it's happening. It's coming around 'cos the kids are starting to feel disgusted. If it's not Ted Nugent, it's Olivia Newton-John. . . I just wake up and she makes my day." The mention of Ted Nugent leads me on to the heavy metal. The Ramones sound contains elements of the bash savagery of latter day HM exponents, such as Black Sabbath, Grand Funk and MC5 — this they admit with glee — so what does Joey think of the new metallurgists? "Pathetic. Def Leppard and all that crap. In Australia we hosted a rock show called 'Count Down' and I had to introduce Def Leppard, I was gonna say "Here they are, Led Zeppelin!" but I thought the record company might get mad. With HM bands they play a 20,000 seater every night. They don't care if the kids can hear well or see well. They couldn't care less. They're in it for the money and I think a lot of kids are starting to realise they're just getting ripped off". My suggestion that the Ramones are like the HM bands in their conservative, stolid resistance to change, within themselves and their music, is poo-pooed with a New York, nasal, "Naaa. We're always exploring, experimenting, looking for something new to do. There's no boundaries, there's nothing to say we're stuck". The Ramones as an 'experiemenal' strikes me as a trifle absurd and I ask if this

means that the band are going to follow the path of so many of the Sixties pop groups and 'discover' acid. "We could write a psychedelic, who knows? But it'd just be another part of us". My point exactly, old chap. The Ramones are the Ramones and, by that fact, incapable of evolution. But Joey's on the defensive. He fails to follow my drift, (which is that the Ramones' changeless pop-war is exactly what *makes* them), and suspects a critical attack. "Very few bands are creative but we have a lot of integrity and ideals and we've stuck to them. Like with the movie, since we did that movie everyone's done a movie and most of the movies people are like terrible movies. They're B movies obviously but they're like shit movies, those Meatloaf movies and all that. We were the first new band to come out and we had to set the standards for everybody. If somebody else had come out who sucked, they'd have killed the scene right away. We're not into drugs and alcohol and all that shit. You get high *after* the show, you don't get high before 'cos you can't do a good show if you're fucked up. We're us and we always will be. We'll never give in to them 'cos if you have no pride in yourself . . . well . . . You're you and you always will be is kind of what I was trying to get at so what are we arguing for? I think what's called for here is a change of subject, so with election fever in the air over *there* I grasp at it. Which ticket gets the gabba vote? "John's gonna vote for Reagan but they all suck. Carter's lame and Anderson's just for the hippies. Russia seems to be invading everywhere and you just don't wanna see Russia take over the world. That's our main concern so maybe in some ways Reagan's better 'cos he'd be better as far as defense is concerned, y'know". (I wish I hadn't brought it up, now. I always thought the Ramones as militaristic boys who'd lay down life and limb for Uncle Sam and the free spirit of the Stars and Stripes was part of the *joke*. Doesn't the possibility of a loony of Reagan's calibre taking 'defense' to its ultimate conclusion strike these bonzos as a bit too ghastly for words?) "Yeah. You can't end it *too* fast. You gotta *milk* it for a while! But we're a militaristic band almost in every respect, like a battalion. Dee Dee's really into that. He's into knives and guns but it keeps him out of trouble. Everybody should have a hobby you know".

E GABBA GANG



The Ramones might be stupid but they're not *stupid*. They're just a rattling good pop group in human, cut-out-'n-keep cereal packet cartoon form. Oh-oh. Will you remember Jerry Lee, John Lennon, T. Rex and Ol' Moulty? Will you remember the Ramones? Five shouts of "Hey Ho, Let's Go" gets you far that you will.

Tom Hibbert

SUGAR & SPICE

Nigel Williams at the Royal Court Theatre

With a 'fark a shit', the occasional c*nt and the roaring welcome of Sloane Square wankers the highly talented staff and pupils of St Trinians burst upon the stage to deliver a grass roots lecture.

Never . . . in the history of theatre has so much unmitigated old cobl.ers. (Mate) . . . been the responsibility of so few. If Nigel Williams attempts another piece 'working class' literature we shall discourage him amongst the beeches, thwart him in the canteens, and should it be necessary, requisition his typewriter. Toyah Wilcox exquisite in her undemanding part, and Carole Hayman banter of the seething punk rocker was oh so neatly counterbalanced with the ogreous rantings of their male mod equivalents, bellowing into the night. Like disparing Elephant men.

Despite the appallingly exaggerated dialogue and the illogical situations that evolved the cast, their permanently red faces hidden, performed a minor miracle in salvaging the old toss from the scrapheap it deserved to be assigned to.

A hopelessly cliched event of discussing men and women's views at their respective roles on this planet, moved rapidly into astounding melodrama



PIC: LEE HAZEL GROVE
every bit as gripping as a police video. (A compliment . . . me old china) I mean like 'farking' top hole slumbags John Fowler was the unquestioned star.

Toyah Wilcox exquisite in her undemanding part, and Carole Hayman deserved all due commiseration.

Christ, the script was that bad it should be on the new years honours list. Removal of chrousers (trousers to us commoners) a plenty aggro humour and excitement salvaged from an impossible mission. I mean, fark, fark, fark, . . . (into oblivion). Al right mate, yeah I'm alright.

Mick Mercer

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ZZ: What do you remember as your first piece of writing that ever impressed someone?
JC: It was a thriller called "Meet Jack Madrid" that I wrote at school.

ZZ: How old were you then?
JC: About twelve (chuckle).
ZZ: Did anybody pay any interest to you at that time?

JC: Yeh, for about one term we had an English teacher, a woman from Edinburgh—very Miss Jean Brodie. She was quite encouraging.

ZZ: Do you have any private poems you'd never release?
JC: Yeh, I've got millions, millions.

ZZ: Is any of your private material on a softer theme?
JC: Um . . . Yeh. When I first started writing it was all about girls and Death.

ZZ: Talking about Girls, what are you doing with *The Invisible Girls*?

JC: I'm doing a tour with them next week — a ten day tour.

ZZ: How much do you think your audiences can be involved in your work?

JC: To what extent?

ZZ: How do you get it across to them? You seem to use humour as your medium.

JC: Humour and speed. (laughs). Speed mainly actually.

ZZ: Do you think they stand the test of interpretation?

JC: Into other languages?

ZZ: When you write your poems that people don't understand they tend to give them their own meanings — however I don't think too much of your stuff needs interpretation . . .

JC: The stuff that I've picked out to read at venues is all very obvious. The places I read at — I always assume the audience has a short attention span.

ZZ: How influenced is your work by music?

JC: I listen to a lot of pop music — in fact I probably listen to more pop records than I read poems.

ZZ: Is there anything you'd still like to achieve in writing?

JC: Um . . . I envisage . . . I'd like to write stories.

ZZ: Thrillers?

JC: Yeh, Thrillers, I enjoy doing that . . . What I enjoy . . . I enjoy the idea of kinda checking things out, like how long it takes to get from Marble Arch to Sloane Square by bus.

ZZ: You're interested in detail — the smaller things in life?

JC: I reckon if you're going to write books you've got to pay attention to details.

ZZ: Do you live everyday at a time or do you work towards a future?

JC: I live each day at a time, not because I think that's the best way to live, I just can't manage my life any other way. I'd like to be able to work towards a future but . . .

ZZ: What do you think the future holds then. Have you reached the peak?

JC: Well — I'm going to get married.

ZZ: When's this going to happen?

JC: I don't know.

ZZ: Have you found the woman of your dreams?

JC: No . . . pause Yeh, YEH. I'm engaged at the moment.

ZZ: What's her name?

JC: Liz, she's a reporter.

ZZ: Any messages for Kris and Zigzag?

(even longer pause)
JC: . . . Where are they?????

Mary English

A collection of poems by the competitors and more is available from,
Poetry Olympics,
New Departures,
Piedmont,
Bisley,
Stroud,
Glos.
G16 7BU.
price £1.00 including p&p.
Cheques and P.O.'s to New Departures

PIC: ANDY JOSEPH

Pics by Pennie Smith



THE CLASH: BEFORE AND AFTER

Photographs by Pennie Smith

I'll come straight to the point — this is the best book of rock photography that's ever likely to hit the shelves. For sheer simpatico with and understanding of the subject matter

alone, this hefty tome is untouchable. Nearly 200 previously unpublished pictures of The Clash at work, at rest, and of course, at play. It is well known that Pennie has a special rapport with the band as she seems to achieve with so many of her subjects, and it is this more than anything that has enabled

her to convey The Clash as they really are. She uses her camera intuitively, never intruding, but always there at just the right moment. The truth is that they can relax with her around as they can with no other photographer, and they are also big fans of her work.

The book is beautifully laid out and divided into sections with titles like 'Dead Beat at Dawn', 'Hanging Around', 'Transport and General', 'Breakfasts', and naturally, 'Posing'. Each member of the group took time out to supply their own captions to the shots — these provide a genuine insight into their individual and collective sense of humour, though there is often an underlying current of tough reality. Joe's caption beneath one of him waiting to go through Canadian customs reads: "Nervous? You must be joking!"

Incidentally, though the inspiration for the book is inevitably The Clash, the concept and the whole raison d'être is all down to Pennie. The band had no jurisdiction over the selection of pictures used, and were quite happy to leave it to her. That fact speaks for itself.

What makes this book so stunning is the fact that *everything* is there: the exhaustion of touring, the tedium of travel, the release of the show, the good times and the bad times; the ups and downs of being a member of The Clash are put firmly into perspective/focus.

Published by Pete Townshend's Eel Pie Books at a very reasonable £4.50, I'd say it was a valuable item for anybody interested in good photography, and indispensable if you're a Clash fan.

R.B.



... AN ALBUM
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GIANT SIZE STICKER...
.... IF YOU'RE QUICK!

... A SINGLE
DARK PARK CREEPING/
TWO CAN PLAY

... A TOUR
INCLUDING LONDON.

ZIGZAG WORRIED PRESTON

L.P.s

ROUGH TRADE CHART

1. Fad Gadget — Fireside Favourites — Mute
2. Ranking Dread — Lots of Loving — Freedom Sounds
3. Killing Joke — Killing Joke — Malicious Damage
4. Bruce Springsteen — The River — CBS
5. Johnny Osborne — Truths & Rights — Studio 1.
6. Pere UBU — The Art of Walking — Rough Trade
7. Cabaret Voltaire — The Voice of America — Rough Trade
8. Mark Perry — Snappy Turns — Deptford Fun City
9. Mikey Dread — World War III — Dread at the Controls
10. Swell Maps — Jane from Occupied Europe — Rough Trade
18. Street Level EP — Various Artists — Fuck Off
19. Normal Hawaiians — The Beat Goes On — Dining Out
20. Echo & The Bunnymen — The Puppet — Korova

1. Psyche — Killing Joke (M. Damage)
2. Disorder — Joy Division (Factory)
3. Stars Are Stars — Echo & Bunnymen (Korova)
4. 24 Hours — Joy Division (Factory)
5. Feed The Enemy — Magazine (Virgin)
6. Zeros — Adam & Ants (Do it)
7. Poptones — PIL (Virgin)
8. Born To Kill — Damned (Stiff)
9. Complications — Killing Joke (Peel Session)
10. Terror couple Kill colonel — Bahaus (4AD)
11. Rescue — Echo & Bunnymen (Korova)
12. Change — Killing Joke (M. Damage)
13. Wild Frontier — Adam & Ants (CBS)
14. New Rose — Damned (Stiff)
15. Play for Today — Cure (Fiction)
16. Back to Nature — Magazine (Virgin)
17. Totally Wired — Fall (Rough Trade)
18. Pop Group — Where theres a Will (Y)
19. Better Scream — Wah!-heat (Inevitable)
20. Theme — PIL (Virgin)

In no order

J. Tasker
Hull

SINGLES

1. Orange Juice — Blueboy — Postcard
2. Gen X — Dancing with Myself — Chrysalis
3. Killing Joke — Requiem 12" — Malicious Damage
4. The Fall — Totally Wired — Rough Trade
5. Josef K — Radio Drill Time — Postcard
6. Mikey Dread — Jumping Master — Dread at the Controls
7. Joy Division — Atmosphere 12" — Factory
8. Methodischa Tone — Leisure Time — Eustone
9. Go Between — I Need 2 Heads — Postcard
10. Fad Gadget — Fireside Favourites — Mute
11. This Heat — Health & Efficiency — Piano
12. Gregory Isaacs — Wailing Rosie — PRG
13. The Cramps — Drug Train — Illegal
14. Badod — Rocking of the 5000 — KNG
15. Barracudas — His Last Summer — Wipeout
16. The Diagram Bros — We're all Animals — Construct
17. Missing Scientists — Brightlights Big City — Rough Trade.

THE GREEN MAN

CHART, BASED ON PLAYS ON THE JUKEBOX OF THE AYLESBURY PUB.
(COMPILED BY RAY DUTHIE)



1. STROBE LIGHT-B-52's
2. PASSING STRANGERS -ULTRAVOX
3. GIVE ME BACK MY MAN -B-52's
4. BANK ROBBER-CLASH
5. SPECIAL BREW-B.MANN -ERS
6. EVENTIDE HOME -TRINITY
7. TRANSMISSION-JOY DIV.
8. DRUG TRAIN-CRAMPS
9. PRESSURE DROP-TOOTS
10. MOTORHEAD-MOTORHEAD
11. MR JONES-P. FURS
12. LEADER OF THE GANG-EP -GARY GUTTER
13. PSYCHE-K. JOKE
14. BLUEBOY-O. JUICE
15. BETTER SCREAM-W!HEAT



Just for a refreshing change . . .

The Ayatollah Ska-Face's
BOTTOM 20

Yes, the twenty most hated records of Southport's own megapillock:-

- minus 1 Silver Machine Hawkwind
- minus 2 Stand up for Britain Hughie Green
- minus 3 C Moon Paul McCartney
- minus 4 Whiskey in the jar Thin Lizzy (the rest of their stuff is much better)
- minus 5 Sexy Eyes Dr Hook
- minus 6 Dance yourself dizzy Liquid gold
- minus 7 Insert a Demis Roussos record of your choice in this space
- minus 8 Greatest Cockney Rip Off — Cockney Rejects (exactly!)
- minus 9 Johnny Reggae The Piglets
- minus 10 Toast — Streetband
- minus 11 One for you, one for me Jonathan King
- minus 12 Puppy Love — an osmond
- minus 13 Ruby don't take your love to town Kenny Rodgers (he's got better since)
- minus 14 Insert a Tony Hatch tune of your choice
- minus 15 Al Capone Emperor Rosko (professional jealousy!)
- minus 16 La Paloma Blanca Jonathan King
- minus 17 Wheels of steel Saxon
- minus 18 When you're in love with a beautiful woman Dr Hook
- minus 19 Luton Airport Cats UK
- minus 20 Dance with the Devil Cozy Powell (Hendrix rip-off)

UGH! THE AYATOLLAH

ZIGZAG INDEPENDENT CASSETTE CATALOGUE

Due to the tremendous increase in the number of cassettes being produced, ZIGZAG's WORRIED PRESTON the mysterious mole of the mosos is compiling on behalf of ZIGZAG the definitive.

ZIGZAG INDEPENDENT CASSETTE CATALOGUE

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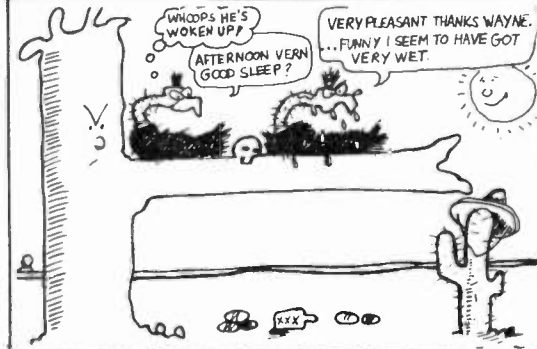
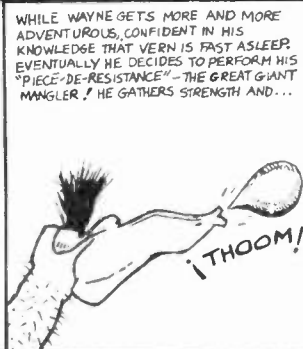
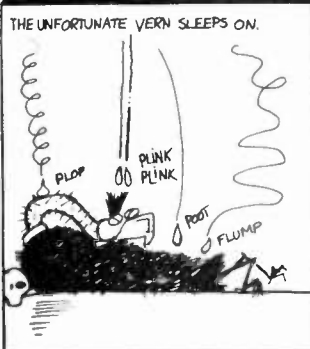
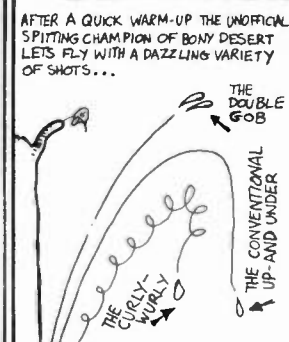
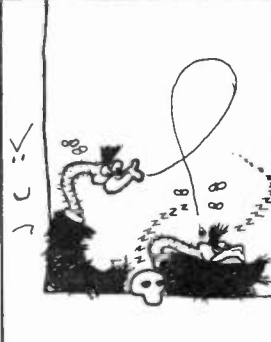
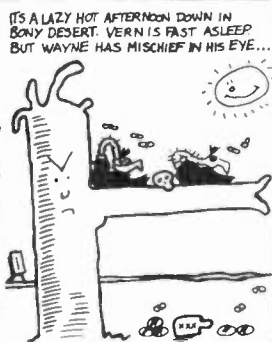
1. Title.
2. Group or individual who's done the thing.
3. Tape length.
4. How to obtain it (price, whether customers can send blank tapes and s.a.e.s., postage, shops, where it's sold).
5. Address.
6. Description of contents (max 25 words).

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BY TIM RHYNS - MARCH 1980



notice

BIN KAREIR AL-HARBI EST.
announced that one of their employees MR. AHMED MOHAMMED SALEH left for Philippines on official company business a long time ago and has since failed to report back.

He was paid a large amount of money before leaving.

This is to notify all, not to deal with him in the company's name.

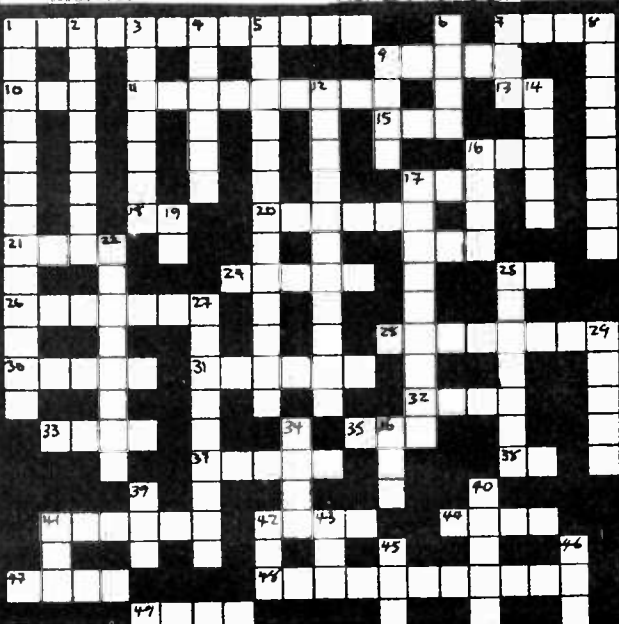
Bin Kareir Al-Harbi Est. dissociate themselves from all his dealings both inside and outside the Kingdom.

CLUES ACROSS

CLUES DOWN

- (1) Penetrating Girl She Was (7/6)
- (2) Johnny Creates such a Storm (8)
- (3) End of the Century Boys (7)
- (4) Flamin' Groovies Shake Some (6)
- (5) Strolls Gone In (Anagram 2 words)
- (6) (+ 33 Across) Even Serpents Sine for the - (4/4)
- (7) See 21 Across
- (8) (+ 20 Across) Siouxsie didn't want an English Country one (4/4/6)
- (9) Never Sleeps for Neil Young (4)
- (12) Where The Jam were going (11)
- (14) 'Stop Your Sobbing' was originally theirs (5)
- (16) Sunday or School (4)
- (17) (+ 45 Down + 13 Across) Pistols Hit (7/2/3/2)
- (14) (+ 7 Across) Roxy Music Hit (2/4)
- (22) See 25 Across
- (25) Split Enz make the Charts (1/3/3)
- (27) Rocket Man - Man (5/4)
- (29) (+ 37 Across) The Pretenders helped her into the Charts (5/5)
- (34) (+ 41 Across) A Stiff Lady (4/6)
- (36) Jackson Five oldie (1.1.1)
- (39) Pretenders Hit (3)
- (40) See 23 Across
- (41) The Godfather of Punk (3)
- (43) Mr Davies (3)
- (45) See 17 Down
- (46) 'How Long' Group (3)

- (1) Girl! Beer Pear (Anagram 2 words)
- (7) See 19 Down
- (9) (+ 24 Across) Famous Drummer and Insect (5/5)
- (10) See 42 Across
- (11) Big Hit for T. Rex (5/4)
- (13) See 17 Down
- (15) (+ 49 Across) Single Release from 34 Down (3/4)
- (16) Baby's Got One (3)
- (17) (+ 38 Across) 1 RA? U?
- (18) (+ 30 Across) 2 Down in Need of Some Company (2/5)
- (20) See 8 Down
- (21) (+ 7 Down) Hit for 5 Down
- (23) (+ 28 Across + 40 Down) Bowie wrote it, Hunter 'N' Co had Big Hit with it (3/3/5/5)
- (24) See 9 Across
- (25) (+ 22 Down) The Saints sang this back in '77 (2/8)
- (26) Specials Single (3/4)
- (28) See 23 Across
- (30) See 18 Across
- (31) Nico Album (3/3)
- (32) (+ 42 Down) The Idiot (4/3)
- (33) See 6 Down
- (35) (+ 44 Across) Du Rainy (Anagram 2 words)
- (37) See 29 Down
- (38) See 17 Across
- (41) See 34 Down
- (42) (+ 10 Across) Final solution group (4/3)
- (44) See 35 Across
- (47) See 48 Across
- (48) (+ 47) 'De Chic Purses Fly?
- (49) See 15 Across



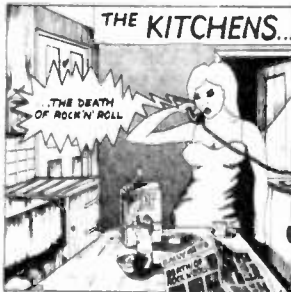
Pic by Simon Reeves

REVIEWS

Back into the vinyl jungle after a brief respite and I'm surrounded by a pile of lovingly-crafted 45s all demanding attention or, at the very least, acknowledgement. It is 4.30 in the a.m. the last of the Sainsbury's German lager and the Beaujolais disappeared around about two, and the silence in between these bursts of typing is eerie.

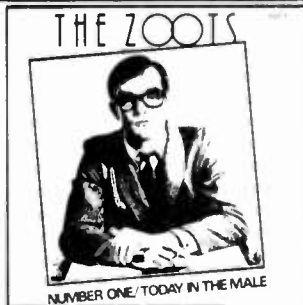
NORMIL HAWAIIANS — The Beat Goes ON/Ventilation (Dining Out TUX 13). A strange but likeable mixture of discordant, staccato guitar playing, vocals that are shouted rather than sung, and a girl chorus. Interesting to hear that the early Gang Of Four/Wire and various others that I can't think of at the moment school of minimalism is alive and well and being employed to good effect. Normil Hawaiians are six in number and although they do sound slightly dated (strange to think that records we were listening to two years ago sound dated!) they've made an above average debut. I'll give it foive.

THE KITCHENS — The Death Of Rock 'n' Roll/Lies/A Bomb (Red Square) Funeral would, I think, be an apt way to describe this record. It is conducted at a



pace that makes Vanilla Fudge (remember them?) seem almost energetic, and appears to represent, appropriately enough, the exact antithesis of what rock 'n' roll is all about. I've heard so many people bleating and whining about 'the death of rock 'n' roll' before that I can't honestly take this seriously at all. And perhaps I'm not supposed to, who knows? The Kitchens are a competent outfit... the two tracks on the flip side are proof enough of this and much more interesting, but they do sound tired to me.

THE PLANETS — Don't Look Down/I Want To Touch You (Rialto TREB 118). On the surface of it, this is one of the strongest of this month's batch



of singles. But on repeated listenings the novelty of a strong clear production sound and the catchy keyboard riff soon wears off and we're left with a record that very definitely flatters to deceive. I can imagine it getting played to death on the old wireless but with me it's now a case of in one ear and out the other. Their material just isn't strong enough to suggest that they'll be remembered in the years to come.

THE THINGS — Pieces Of You/Lost Love (Imperial IP 4301). If it wasn't for the vocals, good though they are, this could well be an artifact from the great early to mid-sixties punk era in American rock. All of you who have heard and enjoyed anything from the series of 'Pebbles' albums will know what I'm on about, and it certainly is a treat to hear something that recaptures that rough, melodic and slightly naive synthesis that threw up so many great records. I don't want to condemn this record to the realms of nostalgic daydreaming however; let me state quite clearly that it's vibrant, exciting, and totally fresh. I love it, and the b-side is monstrous. Highly recommended.



THE BIRTHDAY PARTY — Friend Catcher/Waving My Arms/Catman (4AD AD 12). Peel has been playing this quite regularly so you might well have heard it and decided for yourself. It's certainly one of the most dynamic records I've heard for a good while, violent even, but it makes about as much sense to me as Martian algebra. The Birthday Party do sound exceptionally angry and pissed off, and a feeling of doom and despondency pervades the whole affair. Not a party record by any stretch of the imagination, and not a particularly enlightening review I'm afraid. Try and hear it (both sides) and make up your own mind.

MISSING SCIENTISTS — Big City Bright Lights/Discotheque X (Rough Trade RT057). Missing Scientists' debut single and a double 'A' side. 'Big City Bright Lights' is a heavily synthesised (meaning in this case there's a lot of synthesiser playing) reggae tune written and previously made nearly famous by Dandy Livingstone. This version I'm afraid plods and sometimes stumbles along rather laboriously without much of the sparkle that seemed to characterize the

original. Maybe I'm mistaken, but I find this an example of reggae at its most boring. The other side, 'Discotheque X', is of course totally different — much more like the usual Rough Trade fare. Sparse, dub backing over which are uttered words of, I suspect, some import; 'a stunning indictment of the Now Set' so the press release says, and I can only add that I seem to have heard all this a couple of hundred times before, highly competent though it is.

BLEAK HOUSE — Rainbow Warrior/Isandhlwana — Inquisition (Buzzard BUZZ 1). Heavy metal is definitely not my cup of meat, so I'm not really qualified to judge how good this is up against Whitesnake, Iron Maiden, Ethel The Frog, Megadeath, or any other of the head bangers' heroes. All I can say is that listening to it wasn't as formidable a task as I'd envisaged — in fact some of it is quite melodic and subtle, but compared to some of the more adventurous records around this month, it plods along with the predictability of a white Christmas in Alaska and is, ultimately, as about as enticing. I am informed that they are very popular indeed which probably says more about my taste than it does about this record.

GEN X — Dancing With Myself/Ugly Rash (Chrysalis CHS 2444). Risen from the dead, Gen X have come up with a sure-fire winner here. It'll undoubtedly be a hit without the aid of all this waffle and you've doubtless heard it and been suitably impressed. I must admit that I've always harboured doubts about their ability to deliver a record of real quality, but I rather feel that this is it. One of the year's most impressive come-backs.

ALEX CHILTON — Hey! Little Child/No More The Moon Shines On Lorena (Aura AUS 117). Alex Chilton will always hold a special niche in pop history as a member of the legendary Big Star, but his subsequent work and especially his most recent album 'Like Flies On Sherbert' is not to be ignored. 'Hey Little Girl', taken from that album, has all the insistent moodiness of vintage Velvet Underground while also displaying a degree of off-the-wall subtlety that makes you want to play it again and again. An investigative and sympathetic interrogation of Alex Chilton is needed in these pages at the earliest possible moment... he is one of rock's most endearing loonies and much under-rated.

THE SINGLES

STOP PRESS! THE CLASH: THE CALL UP

CERTAINLY THE ODDEST THING THE CLASH HAVE DONE AT 45. FROM THE HARSH LIFE OF THE KID ON THE STREET TO THE WIDER CONCERN OF IMMINENT BATTLE/ OBLITERATION. 'IT'S UP TO YOU NOT TO HEED THE CALL UP'. IT'S AN UNFIERY DISCO-SKANK FULL OF MURKY SOUND EFFECTS, HUR2-3-4s AND A DOOMY STRUMMER CHANT-VOCAL. TAKES TIME.

B SIDE IS 'THE END OF THE WORLD' -MORE SUITABLE SOUND EFFECTS OVER THE BITTER, BLUESY PLOD. I AWAIT THE LP WITH INTEREST. K.N.

BY
STACEY
BRIDGES
★



THE DEMONS — Action By Example/Wish I Woz A Dog (Crypt DEM 1). If I was a witty and cynical singles reviewer, which of course I'm not, I'd probably call this "the acceptable face of new-wave heavy-metal" or something equally meaningless. As it is I don't know what to call it... I can't see myself playing it too often although it does have something going for it — a certain untarnished enthusiasm, some kind of demonic vision perhaps? It certainly lacks nothing in the conviction department, but I'm yet to be convinced. Sal Forlenza tells me by the way that this is nothing to do with Demon Records, the F-Beat subsidiary that is about to be unleashed for the benefit of discerning record buyers everywhere. So there.

DAYSHIFT — Living In The U.K./Cedric Wazza, Superstar/Yeah Eh Oh Yeah Oh! (WOT -1). Ronnie Lane meets The Sex Pistols!?! Well not quite, but this is certainly bizarre, and amateurish. More enthusiasm than expertise on display here and while everyone concerned obviously had a good time making it, the end result is a mess and not worth the asking price. Forget it forget it.

THE ZOOTS — Number One/Today In The Male (Hot Property HOT 1) This month's record that grows on you if you give it half a chance. The Zoots are a six-piece with more than a smattering of tenor sax embellishing in all the right places, and their overall sound is I figure not a million miles removed from Dexy's. Try and listen to it, both sides if possible because it's a double 'A' side, and see what you think.

HOT SNAX — Theme From A Movie/Thinking Of You (Zuppa Paresse). Listening to all these records for the third or fourth time it is obvious that this month has produced marginally more



than the small number of good records — much more. This is another double 'A' side although I think 'Theme From A Movie' is by far the stronger of the two tracks; its strong, simple melody, almost perfect arrangement and lilting rhythm make it irresistible and it surely can't fail to attract the attention of some of the more enlightened radio producers who rule the airwaves. A very good record.

LELO AND THE LEVENTS — All I Want/Mad Jack (Club ABC 2). Lelo, for I suppose that that is his picture on the front of the sleeve, looks for all the world like an uncomfortable cross between Elton John and Gary Numan. And if that doesn't put you off, he sounds like he's listened to too many Bryan Ferry records! This is a clever, shallow, leaden irritating 'pop' record and is about as interesting as book full of bus tickets. The 'b' side is even more turgid.

THE BOOKS — Expertise/Fowey Church Clock (Logo Book 3). I seem to remember dismissing The Books first single as piece of gimmicky know-twiddling in an earlier column, their second single passed me by altogether, and now



we have their third which also bears the title of their forthcoming album. Shades of Talking Heads here, but only in that it's a deceptively powerful record driven along by some very crisp and unorthodox drumming, that it's melodically interesting, and of course the vocal similarities are there. 'Expertise' (the album) should be worth hearing if 'Expertise' (the single) is anything to go by. If however the 'b' side is more representative of the band's material, the album should be, shall we say, perplexing?

MODERN MAN — All The Little Idiots/Advance (MAMS 204) A Midge Ure production, this is an impressive record make no mistake. Craftily crafted to make full use of the chorus and dynamically arranged for maximum impact. It rises above similar records through sheer bravado and depth of sound. Taken from the forthcoming album 'Concrete Scheme' which should be worth looking out for.

MUSIC FOR PLEASURE — Human Factor/Madness At The Mission (RAGE 1). This single, or rather the 'A' side, first surfaced on that hideously self-righteous compilation album



'Hicks From The Sticks' — at least the sleeve notes were self-righteous... all that blubbering nonsense about blinkered record company A&R men, not a grain of truth in any of it! Anyway, this was about the best track in a bog of mediocrity, and listening to it again as an isolated single it sounds a good bet for what the Yanks might describe as an "ongoing extensive cross-over airplay situation" (I've actually heard that phrase spew forth from the mouth of a blinkered record company A&R man). The synthesiser provides the hook for what is an energetic and very catchy record despite the depressing lyrics. The 'b' side proves that they're not just a one-number band either.

FURNITURE — 'Take A Walk Down Town/Shaking Story (The Guy From Paraguay PARA 1) A growling bass introduces this solid but ultimately unremarkable record. Simplistic both lyrically and instrumentally, it's played with a lot of commendable energy and conviction without going anywhere or saying anything. Even about a third of the way through when it starts to build momentum, it cuts dead and starts again, or rather doesn't start again if you see what I mean. A non-starter.

ERSATZ — Smile In Shadow/ House of Cards (Leisure Sounds SRS 32). Some information. Leisure Sounds is a Cambridge-based record label and besides this single they have also released a single by The Dogma Cats — Experts/Choke of which I can't tell you much more, but both these records follow cassette releases by the respective bands and all this stuff, like most of the other records mentioned in this column, are available through Rough Trade. Now some opinion. John Peel apparently says that this is "kooky to the nth degree", which is probably another way of saying he doesn't know whether



he likes it or not... and I must say that if that's the case, I agree with him. It's one of those highly competent records that is neither too weird to be unlistenable nor too orthodox to be instantly memorable, yet it nags at you and demands your attention. As with too many records by new bands the vocals are a drag, delivered in a moronic neanderthal whine which renders the lyrics (intentionally perhaps?) unintelligible and almost ruins what is a tightly structured and, despite a pervading sense of aimlessness, an interesting record.

These flaws aside, I think I'll be playing this a few more times and listening out for anything else they do.

BEATPUMP — The Five Month Plan E.P. (Slow Lorries Slow 001). Five tracks of doomy thrashing, doodling and pontificating to no effect. I'm sorry to be so negative about all this but it doesn't really provoke any positive response from me at all. Despite that, may I suggest you try and hear for yourself — if you're intensely maniacal it could be right up your street in which case you can obtain it through Rough Trade or direct from Beatpump c/o Max, 5 Richmond Road, Wakefield, West Yorks, price £1 (incl p&p).



TWELVE-INCH SINGLES A good month. Killing Joke's 'Requiem' (see LP review) and 'Change' (not on LP — a relentless funk-up). Reggae — three from the Dead At The Controls label: Mikey Dread's extended cuts of 'Break Down The Walls' and 'Jumping Master' of the 'WW3' set (indispensable) 'Give Thanks And Praise' by The Ovations (nice) and 'Moonlight Lover' by Edi Fitzroy (also featuring a Mikey toast on 'Free Lancer' There's the 'Son of Stiff' tour package commendably at just over a quid featuring Joe Carrasco, the Equators, Ten-Pole, Any Trouble and Dirty Looks on one record. Again on Malicious Damage is the extended 45 by Red Beat, who sound like a less intense K. Joke tackling reggae. That's not fair really, they have some good ideas, 'specially in the dub department. Last but not least, 'Health And Efficiency', a new one from This Heat (Rough Trade), Watch as they switch gears from a catchy summer song to mesmerising tape-lope chug. Easy and unsettling at the same time. The flip, 'Graphic/varispeed' is a drone you can play at 45 or 33. Oh great.

Dick Scratcher

REVIEWS

ALBUMS...

KILLING JOKE (Malicious Damage)

Well I sort of reviewed this in the *Zigzag* before last but here it is, stark gatefold sleeve 'n' all (first I've seen this year). I know they had problems cutting and all that and the resultant disc could still do with more bass-body. I like KJ best when they're roaring, savaging the music's carcass like dogs IE. 'Wardance', recorded here with a Dalek singing, or funking it up like on 'Bloodsport' or 'Change' (not here but on the 'Requiem' twelve-inch).

The songs from the set that Killing Joke like are here — 'Tomorrow's World' (slow), 'Complication', 'The Wait' (fast). All are raw and live-sounding, unpretty and cutting. 'S.O.36' pounds ponderously over German radio, and 'Primitive' is HM funk. This is very heavy music, designed to attack and disturb. They seem to be latest darlings of the late punks and that's good cos they have the potential to take people way beyond that sort of multi-hued stagnancy.

This album should be longer.

MARVIN GAYE: Early Yeast 1961-1964 (Tamla Motown)

This is a collection of the great soul singer's first singles. He was a seminal influence on black music and 60s UK outfits like the Stones, who covered 'Can I Get A Witness' and 'Hitch Hike' (both here). Also here 'You're A Wonderful One' (Groovies done that), 'Try It Baby' and loads more, from stompers to soul ballads. Now he's gone to a slick shows and ten quid tickets but his achievements are big, over-estimated. Trouble is, this is the first Gaye record I've owned, now there's another 16 years worth to catch up on.

BASEMENT 5 IN DUB (Island)

Yes yes I know, I have a vested interest now but I first heard this before so stick it. We go to press tomorrow and I'm the only member of the ZZ staff who's got a copy. Facts are, this is a cheap-price set of five dubs of tracks which'll appear on the full-blown B5 album in the New Year. They've done it backwards, so what. The tracks — 'Paranoia-claustrophobia Dub', ('No Ball Games'), 'Work Dub' ('Hard Work'), 'Games Dub' ('Union Dub'), 'Immigrant Dub' ('Immigration'), 'Holocaust Dub', ('Omega Man') — are like no other dubs you've heard. The unorthodox danceability of the rhythms is strange but compulsive and topped with tantalisingly doctored shreds of JR's guitar

and Dennis Morris's voice. The drumming — by both the departed Bigga Bounce and stand-in Blockhead Charlie Charles (not Richard Dvanski, he joined after) — is both beat-ridden and wild. The bass is always there, Leo bobbing and looping but never losing it. If you think this is good, wait for the whole lot.



Basement 5 are into doing new things. Well this was the first time a manager reviewed his own band. What a laugh!

ILITCH/10 SUICIDES (Scoopa HRH)

French LP. Pretty enthralling stuff too. Weird on all. From what I gather (sleeves in Frog language), it's two main people — Ruth Ellyeri and Thierry Muller — plus mates, who thrash out harsh, electronic woggles. Rough enough to be human though lyric-and-dirty-pic-booklet too, who can read Frog?)

JOE 'KING' CARRASCO AND THE CROWNS (Stiff)

Another Stiff find — a new character to brighten you up. JKC is Tex-Mex flavoured speedy novelty rock 'n' roll. Each track's powered by reedy? Mark organ and pumps along, while Joe is frenetic... bet he's a laugh live.

CAPTAIN BEEFHEART AND THE MAGIC BAND: Doc At The Radar Station (Virgin)

Oh great, been waiting for this one. Ain't nobody like Beefheart. It gets said a lot but this man was pushing out the barriers in music over 15 years ago, dismembering conventions and shooting all the syncopated chaos in earshot with his golden-hearted stream where nothing is 'mad' or 'eccentric'. This album continues the run started by 'Safe As Milk', through 'Trout Mask', up to the last, 'Shiny

Beast'. Now last time Don Van Vliet put something out on Virgin it weren't too hot, in fact pretty ordinary. And he had strong words against the company. Now here he is again on Virgin... but the result this time is sheer Beefheart magic.

Now how can you tell if Beefheart progresses? Suffice

to say it's the same jumble of stop-start arrangements, roaring multi-octaved vocals and the hilarious but cutting Van Vliet words. Mellotron's crept into the backings too, sitting comfortably among the jutting slide guitars, trombone, bass clarinet, marimbass and all those. My song title of the year — 'A Carrot Is As Close As A Rabbit Gets To A Diamond', which is a delicate instrumental.

Here's some words:
Buy it.

COLIN NEWMAN: A-Z (Beggars Banquet); ADA WILSON: Tattoo Hosts Vision On (Ambergris Music)

Two refugees from extinct groups, now out on their own.

Colin Newman was part of Wire, always one of the most uncompromising outfits to emerge in '77. Through their records they gradually added layers of subtlety and strangeness (the words were always obscure) until they resembled epic landscaped gardens with more than a touch of '67 Pink Floyd kiddie-nightmare fairy-dust.

Now Colin Newman on his own... well not quite cos Wire drummer Robert Gotobed and their producer Mike Thorne are still here, along with a geezer called Desmond Simmons. The music herein I half-expected to go even further into floaty morass experimentation but he's kept the beat, however disjointed or muti-

lated, and melodies abound, throbbing and weaving out of different instrumental devices.

There's Chipmunk voices on 'I've Waited Ages'. The words still seem mainly like random jollocks. Nice effects created here, nice too to see him still about and Gary Numan's profits going to a good cause.

Ada Wilson was in a punky pop band called Strangeways, who we had once in ZZ. Like many, Ada has taken the electronic path, with varying success rate. Some nice stuff here as the Wakefield trio of Ada, Ian Nelson and Dave Whitaker take on instrumentals, synth-rock and the odd tone poem, like the rather embarrassing 'Shattered, Unspoken' ('stranded, like a parachute in a tree, he died alone').

Worth investigating though.

THE RUNAWAYS: Flaming Schoolgirls (Cherry Red)

Stupid title, good idea. The Runaways are building up a sizeable posthumous following now, I hear, and this'll be lapped up by the collector species.

Basically it's a collection of out-takes and, I guess, stuff they did before Cherie Currie left the group. S'easy to see why she left, and why the Runaways later split up — too many different elements at work — Cherie was into cabaret crooning (listen to her honey-tones poured over two Kim Fowley produced Beatle ballads). Meanwhile, Lita Ford thought she was Richie Blackmore and would wail anywhere, while Joan Jett, arguably the only Runaway to survive, wanted to be a down-the-line rocker.

Here you get alternative live versions of earlier album stuff (from the screaming sounds like the old 'Live in Japan' album), a Cherie-led version of 'Don't Abuse Me', which appeared on Joan Jett's recent solo LP, Strawberry Fields Forever' and 'Here Comes The Sun' (nice), studio versions of live faxes ('c'mon') and two oddities — a sugary Currie torch song called 'Hollywood Dream' (no other Runaways in sight) and 'Hollywood Cruisin'', which sees the girls doing like a 'whaddawe gonna do now?' 3 AM street-talkover!

MORGAN FISHER: Miniatures (Cherry Red)

This should be Morgan Fisher and 50 friends. What the ex-Mott pianist and ruthless tape-experimenter has done now is get 50 people to do what they want in the space of 60 seconds. The cast ranges from Bob Fripp, Otway, the Residents, Robert Wyatt, Lol Coxhill, Mark Perry, Dave Vanian and Morg himself to such unlikeliest as Quentin Crisp and

R.D. Laing. It's a 50-minute gamut of people doing unlikely things you have to hear (it'd take a ZZ to describe 'em), Morgan was behind the Hybrid Kids LP too and has their Xmas record lined up next (plus a piece in Zigzag!) Eccentric, healthy stuff and a great laugh.

THE CARPETTES: Fight Amongst Yourselves (Beggars Banquet)
Fight being an operative word for the Carpettes, who have to struggle all the way for gigs, publicity, recognition . . . But here's their second album, an abrasive, hard-hitting collection from the trio with titles like 'Youth Rebellion', 'Nothing Ever Changes', and the title track. Severely recommended for those who like the Jam when they're vicious.

KRIS NEEDS

**BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN/
THE RIVER/CBS
TOM WAITS/HEART-
ATTACK AND VINE/
ASYLUM
MONTHY PYTHON'S
CONTRACTUAL
OBLIGATION ALBUM/
CHARISMA**

Four albums here, one a classic, two a tragedy, and the fourth a facre. Let's get Springsteen over with first.

"The River" is a much

watered-down version of the formula that peaked with "Darkness on the Edge of Town", and although it hurts to admit it, the incontinent whimperings here are senile, self-indulgent, and above all, totally Safe. Of the twenty one cuts on the two album set, three at most illustrate what he is actually capable of. Elsewhere, Springsteen flounders around in territory that he's already fully explored — even exploited. After the often brilliant lyrical accuracy of 'Darkness', the words here stun me with their mediocrity. After two whole years I would have thought he could have directed his observations onto areas that extend beyond driving stolen autos, little dolly's with blue jeans, and working up construction sites.

The music itself is a sorry parody of what has come before, with none of the passion, the compassion, or the real fire evident on former tracks like "Something in the Night", "Factory", "Candy's Room" and "Streets of Fire". Just a hollow, empty shell remains.

Seeing Springsteen on TV the other night brought it all home. The stage was besieged by hordes of well-scrubbed, virginal Mid-American high school girls, doubtless all there with 'Daddies' permission. After all, who could object to the new, disinfected, dissipated good 'ol home town boy, the boy who sings, "Little girl, I wanna marry you" and "Me and Mary we met in high school/

When she was just seventeen", Oh, isn't he just so *cute*? Move over Elton John — let Springsteen take over.

Just check the back of the sleeve and you'll know exactly where he's coming from. Maybe you can live with that; Me, I think the river's run dry.

By some strange synchronicity factor, Tom Waits' album "Heartattack and Vine" is released within a week or so of Springsteen's effort. Strange because both artists possess obvious similarities, not least their mutual obsession with 50's America and all it's paraphernalia. Where they differ is that Waits has the ability to transpose those images and contemporise them without trivialising or romanticising.

This is precisely what he does here, with an honest, simple earthiness that hits the main line. The raw, bleeding, rhythm 'n' sleaze combined with Waits' almost sandpaper delivery style make for an album as hard-hitting as any I've heard this year.

His songs are of liquor, drugs, whores, angels, soda pop and broken shoes, degradation and burglar alarms, and a whole lot more besides.

"Can't you hear the thunder/ someone stole my watch/ I sold a quart of blood/ and bought a half a pint of scotch."

Occasionally he *can* overdo it and sound like Pete Skellern on quaaludes: (check "Saving All My Love For You"), but he more than compensates with tracks

like "Till the Money Runs Out" — which has a bass line very reminiscent of "Shaking All Over" — "Mr Siegal" and the title track itself, a superb chunk of squalor like Genet set to music.

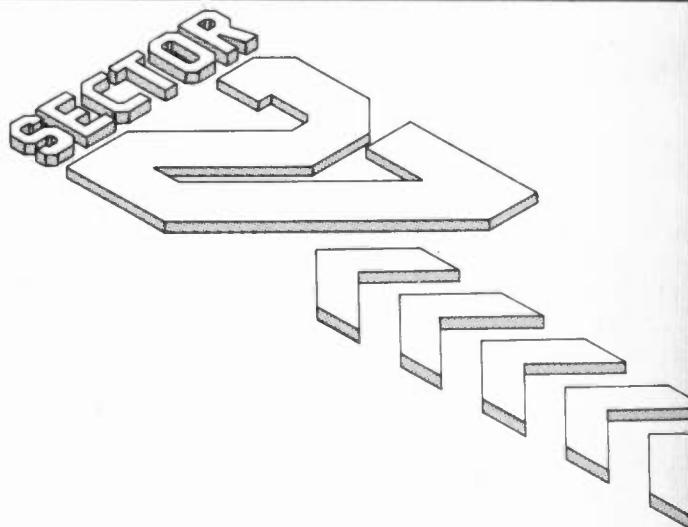
"If you want a taste of madness/you'll have to wait in line/you'll probably see someone you know/on heartattack and vine."

What I find so endearing about Tom Waits is not only his all-embracing vision and understanding, but the fact that he watches life go by like some three dimensional movie — and quite often, he's starring!

Which brings us, via a remarkably strange route, to the Python teams "Contractual Obligation Album" — a whole lot of angst here — but very little to laugh about. The title is self explanatory and no joke . . . they didn't want to do it and it shows; in sleeve notes, the actual packaging, and especially in the material. The track listings on the outer sleeve bear absolutely no relation to the tracks in the grooves — this could be construed as fairly funny — you also receive a holiday brochure for Finlandia, an advisory leaflet on gonorrhoea, and a large photo of our own Gracie Fields! Apart from that, this album has remarkably little to offer, and if you've got the readies to spare you'd do far better to buy a copy of Graham Chapman's new book "A Liars Biography". Plus you won't be able to scratch it.

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