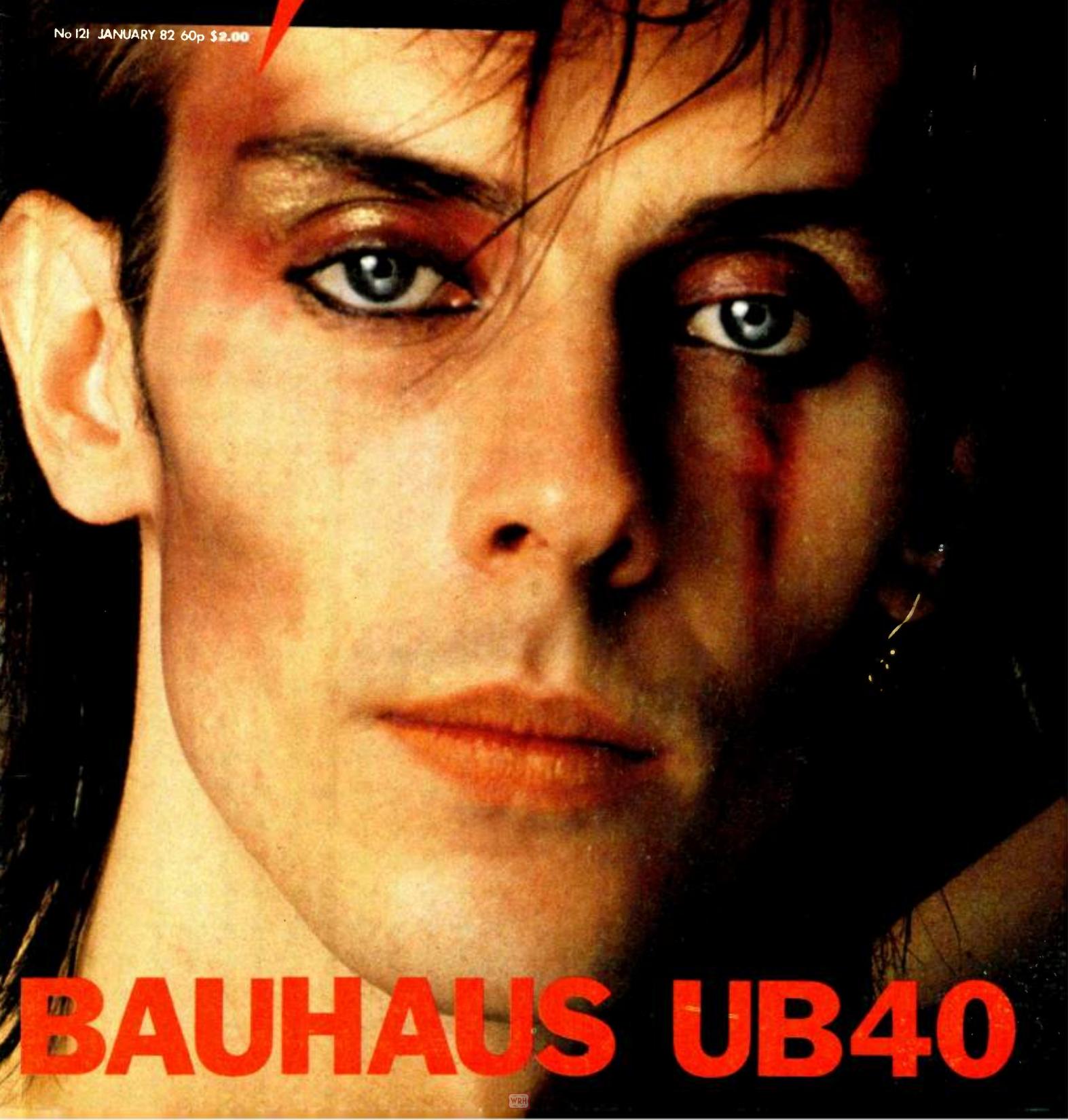


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THOMAS LEER



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Cover BAUHAUS shot: SHEILA ROCK



Mrs Hennessy's Diary

What can I say? Welcome one and all to 1982, a blank page etc.etc. etc. 1981 has been and gone, bringing in its wake multiple surprises, shocks, delights etc. I'm sure you can fill in the rest. It was a year of considerable turmoil in the ZZ offices, including a change of editor, a change in the general direction and motivation of the magazine and, of course, the triumphant opening of the Zigzag Club. Other happenings of note: Mick's tentative sortie into the gay world of Hampstead which, despite frantic disclaimers, appalled him a trifle less than he will admit, Kris's fractured skull, spine and finger sustained on a binge with Wobble in Holland, Robin Banks's broken ankle sustained on a binge with his own front wall, and my efforts to maintain a low profile in the office by changing my hair colour approx. twice a week.

We have been trying to upgrade the quality of ZZ recently, firstly by our change over to glossy paper and secondly by shifting editorial emphasis from gone-but-not-forgotten old fogeys to newer, more exciting newcomers worthy of coverage in our hallowed pages.

This is our first issue completely under the auspices of Mick 'just call me macho' Mercer and we'd love to know what you think of it. He has been to the depths of darkest Worcestershire to interrogate The Dancing Did, the band who caused such a furore at the ZZ Club Opening Party and whose virtue has now been rewarded with a record deal from Stiff, and whilst he was there, he also severely questioned Finish The Story, a sprightly young band with a wealth of musical musings to entertain us all with.

Our cover this month features Peter Murphy of Bauhaus who even as I write is wending his weary snow-bound way towards the Zigzag office to confront The Mercer.

Musical events of interest last month include, The Alarm at The Venue, Placebo Membranes nifty little waxing, new DAF album, new Thomas Leer album, new Dancing Diddicoy single.

Xmas celebrations were no doubt of the usual bloated, gargantuan proportions, however since I'm writing this three weeks before jollifications reach their seasonal peak, I can't really elucidate. I'm sure you don't want to read about what we did for Christmas anyway, it all seems a bit pointless in January, and why should you be interested in Mick's alcoholic excesses, Fiona's nutritional excesses and my verbal excesses. SO... not another word on that subject.

In fact not another word!

Placebo

The modern enigma of 1981 and possibly 1982 as well. Since the last issue, whence raved I about this band's independently produced album, I have received communications about the band, although hardly a great deal. Michelle Wilde, the girlie in the pictures, and Gary Wilde, the none-girlie are seen

above. The details they sent me go here. It's more like a Top Secret report. The band have 'no history' their album being the result of 23 years duo seclusion and their thought put to music. Gary Wilde being born 22.3.58, Michelle on 21.8.58, in Northern England. Neither expelled from school although they experienced difficulties with numbers.

'Influences' started at Bowie and haven't finished yet. They began as Placebo two years ago, nearly 'became failed musicians' but rediscovered 'listening'. Served apprenticeships by way of local and London studios but 'Supposed men in the know failed to come up with a vinyl product'. On the album they were assisted by friends. The album be their serious thoughts and views, 21 years of continual headache and re-assessment. Youth fight on plastic. Good term. Conceived at leisure, recorded in haste, for mutual satisfaction but also as a demo of capabilities. So far the album is available from three outlets in Newcastle (HMV, Windows, and Volume) or from Whizzprint, 423 Durham Road, Low Fell, Tyne and Wear. It's only the album of the year...1981.

Go to it. MM.

THE

Bad things only happen to the good. The Photos as we knew and loved them have ceased to be. Wendy Wu now embarks on a solo career humoring sweet confections and the three lads, Steve, Dave and Ollie (Six, four and no strings respectively) are on their own and sitting around me in the Vauxhall lounge. Mildly down in the mouth invoking past memories and gazing into the future.

They haven't wasted any time either. Already been into studios to record and located a singer named Che, formerly of Kim Fowley's I'm Old Stable, The Orchids.

The Orchids and The Photos. What, how, when I say!

ZZ: Look... where did you find her?

Ollie: It was our tour manager, it was like an arranged marriage. He knew both parties.

Dave: He knew what we wanted and what she wanted and suggested we meet. She's much more a singer than a pop image.

Steve: The sound is more mature.

ZZ: When did the actual split occur?

Dave: It had been building up for some time. It was us three and Wendy basically.

Dave: We ended up doing the Venue and it was great but we decided that we couldn't go on like that. It was quite mutual.

ZZ: Did CBS make any terms of release?

Ollie: Yeah, they said "Fook off".

Steve: There was a date looming up, if they hadn't notified us of renewal then we were free. They didn't notify us.

Dave: We didn't struggle too much either.

ZZ: Did they ever come to gigs? See how you were doing?

Steve: Well they came to the former gigs, the clubs, and they signed us up, then they came two years later to the Venue which turned out to be our very last gig and said 'Hang on! This isn't the band we signed up. What are we gonna do? How are we going to market you?'

Dave: Their plan was to dress us up in silly clothes.

Steve: It's like the second album, they didn't like it. They didn't see any potential hits.

Ollie: Release the bugger!!

Dave: Thing is we didn't come



PHOTOS

SPLIT

across one person at CBS that we thought was forward thinking. They always look to see who is popular at the time, and we had to look like them. In their eyes we would always be a second rate whoever was popular at the time and if we did anything different it wouldn't be commercial because it hadn't been done before. They wouldn't take risks.

ZZ: Songs like 'For Beauties Sake' and 'Final Scene' were great, and commercial!

Steve: They didn't think so.

Ollie: We only had five singles released in two years or something ridiculous.

At this point I get sold a raffle ticket.

ZZ: Was it arguing from the word go?

Steve: More or less. A couple of weeks after we signed we went in to do 'I'm So Attractive' and we did a mix we thought was good. They said 'This won't do, little too much echo on the vocals, too much harmoniser on the drums!'

Steve: When we did that album we considered it sufficiently good enough for them to take any tracks off for singles so there wasn't any argument there. They put out 'Friends',



then the day before it went out they called it back and released 'Now You Tell Me'. It's cockups like that, that sink a band. They're forever setting a release date and we'd set a whole tour round it, then they'd decide on something else.

Dave: So we'd do a tour and lose money cos there was no record out.

Steve: When the tour was over they'd release a single.

Steve: We did a song called 'My Life Story' that Visconti produced and even Muff Winwood came into the studio and said 'That's a grite single', and we assumed there was a

ZIGZAG

X-WORD

release date.

Dave: What's frustrating is recording the stuff and it isn't coming out.

Steve: It may come out under the Wendy Wu title.

Ollie: Probably get our names on the back if we're lucky.

Steve: They've given her two old songs to cover. She'll release two singles, the Bsides being tracks off the 'second'



album... and if the album comes out it'll be the album plus the two singles. It'll destroy any continuity that there was on the album.

ZZ: Did you owe them a small fortune when you left?

Dave: That was the only good thing about it.

Steve: About a hundred and fifty grand.

Ollie: Wendy's got to pay that back.

Steve: Looking at it realistically all we want is a small two singles deal.

Dave: We've recorded two singles already, all they've got to do is put them out.

Steve: Quite a viable proposition I would've thought.

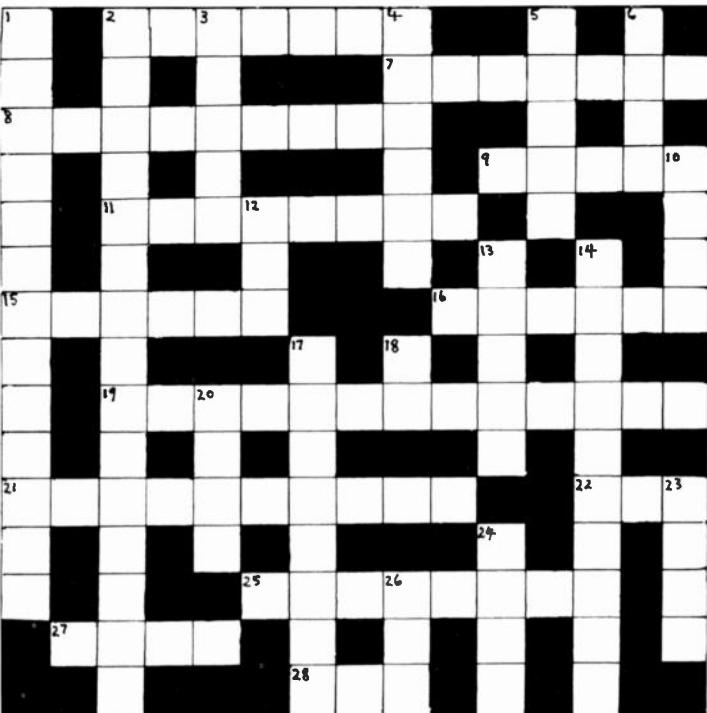
ZZ: Why didn't you want to talk about the split when it happened?



cont.

Hello folks!

Just a little incentive to get your brains working, and all you have to do is this crossword, basically, and send in the results to us, and the first lucky person out of the bag will receive a free album! Send your answers to ZigZag, 118 Talbot Road, London W11 1JR and sit back and await your winnings!



CLUES ACROSS

1. LINX GET THE GREEN LIGHT (2/5)
2. HALF OF SOFT CELL (5/4)
3. AS THE ELEPHANT MAN WAS BOWIE CRACKED? (5)
4. DURAN DURAN MOVE IN AN ORIGINAL FASHION (2/3/3)
5. MR PALMER SOUNDS LIKE A DOCTOR FOR THE BEATLES (6)
6. CLEVER BETTE (6)
7. SHE'S MARRIED TO NICK LOWE (7/6)
8. ELVIS COSTELLO GETS NEAR TO PORNOGRAPHY (6/4)
9. THE POLICE SANG ABOUT ONE YOU COULDN'T SEE (3)
10. A STORY FROM SQUEEZE (4/4)
11. BLONDIE SINGLE (4/2)
12. MARTY'S DAUGHTER (3)

CLUES DOWN

1. A BIG HIT FOR LABELLE (4/9)
2. CLASSIC PLEA FROM THE B-52'S (4/2/4/2/3/1)
3. UNIT FOR PLAYING RECORDS (5)
4. YOU COULDN'T BUY A LOT WITH THESE TWO BEAUTIES (6)
5. (SEE 20 DOWN)
6. ARE THEY NOT MEN? (4)
7. THE CLASH PUT TO VINYL A WHITE ONE (4)
8. BARBRA STREISAND ON TISWAS? (3)
9. OLD GROUP WITH A NAME TO BOAST THEY WERE THE BEST (5)
10. CHRISSEY HYNDE DOZES OFF (1/2/2/5)
11. DARK STRANGLER (3/5)
12. (SEE 27 ACROSS)
13. REPEAT THIS WORD THREE TIMES FOR DAMNED SONG (4)
14. THERE'S ONE IN THE CLASH AND ONE IN THE STONES (4)
15. A DRUM FOR SECTOR 27 (3)

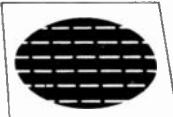
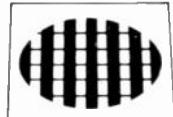
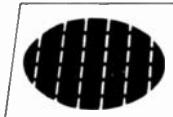
ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1. KICK OUT THE JAMS
2. EASTER
3. TROUT
4. STRANDED
5. ALTERED IMAGES
6. STRANGERS
7. NANCY SINATRA
8. COW
9. BAUHAUS
10. CHILDREN
11. HELP

DOWN

1. KINKS
2. COVER PLUS
3. ONE IN TEN
4. EART
5. SISTERS
6. STEVE
7. HOT
8. RIVA
9. DANGEROUS
10. EVE
11. THIN ICE
12. TRIPPER
13. SURF'S UP
14. MY GIRL
15. NEW
16. HATE
17. BEN



more photos;

Steve: We were advised not to talk to anyone in the press till well after Christmas.

Ollie: So we ain't saying nothing more.

We get round to discussing the new music which David had described once as similar to Dusty Springfield.

Dave: People are gonna compare it to what we were doing two years ago because that's all they've heard. There's two years in between! ZZ: You said Dusty Springfield, does that mean it's all slow? Dave: No, danceable, we're trying to retain the quality of the songs that someone like her would do, but with modern feel. What seems to be happening nowadays is that people are coming up with modern sounds but no songs. The quality isn't there unless it's these slushy Christmas things.

ZZ: Has the new singer come up with any lyrics? (Usually Steve's domain.)

Steve: We did one song of her that turned out all right. She wants to play guitar which is fine by us, and she's good on keyboards too, but like she admits, she's been brought up on an American diet (Ollie chortling 'Rawck and Rahl' in the background amidst the Lego and Plasticine.), countrified, so there's not a lot we can use.

ZZ: Why's she gone back to America?

Steve: No money. We're totally broke. Social Security.

At this point I buy them a drink. ZZ: Have the dole offered you jobs.

Ollie: There aren't any.

Dave: Problem is there are.

Steve: I wouldn't mind but if you work in the factories round here you have to work with such dreadful morons.

Dave: So 'Brideshead'.

Reflecting on the past, Dave speaks once again.

Dave: When we first started everyone was saying we had to be a mod band.

Ollie: So we didn't.

Dave: And here we are!

Ollie: Dress up like frogmen.

ZZ: Sorry??

Steve: Second gig at the Marquee some associates of our manager came up and said 'Look I really think you chaps should get an image together, why don't you dress up as frogmen, no-one's ever done that, then people will look at you.'

ZZ: So you'll never go back to CBS?

Ollie: If we do it'll be dressed as frogmen, and I don't think that's very likely.

MICK MERCER

I never went for Gary the first time round — his giant, generous gestures compared badly to the fiery and risqué danger of the Alice Cooper, David Bowie and Roxy Music of that era. His recent comeback reeked too much of revival and a nostalgia I felt nothing for. So, the prospect of meeting the man 10 years on filled me with nothing but a mild curiosity and a certainty that I wouldn't enjoy myself beyond a severe nervousness which inevitably occurs on meeting a famous person! Pleasantly, in spite of an acutely mirrored dressing room which may have exposed

'It will. It has to. Not under Margaret Thatcher! 'No, but in time to come. We've got to be realistic. Also, there's a third world out there. It's pathetic, but on the other hand they're a lot happier than we are, inwardly.'

So doing a Rock for Jobs is a contradiction in a way, a waste of time? — if you're saying it's not about fighting for jobs, but fighting for a world which places value on people as social beings and not as automatons?

'I think we owe it to the kids to give them something to do.

always lived in a dream-world anyway. I create my own fantasy wherever I go. I think that's what everybody should do. Just don't worry about it. Believe in yourself, be positive.'

The theatricality and timing of your act is pretty impressive. Is it something you've just developed over the years? Were there any major influences?

'When I first started in the late 50s, most people were into imitating Elvis Presley, you know, like (he raises one side of his top lip). For twelve years I

GARY GLITTER

all those nerve-endings even more, the Glitter was the delicate kind, with only the rare raw sharp edge and a good deal of sparkle....

How did you come to be doing a Rock for Jobs gig?

'I didn't know anything about it until a couple of days ago. I thought, 'Oh, that's a good idea'.

So you think it's a worthwhile cause?

'What it seems to me is happening is a lot of kids who can't get a job turn to rock 'n' roll as their outlet. Everybody buys a guitar or drums, so you get more and more groups. Only warning to those people is, treat it as a hobby and don't think you're gonna make a fortune out of it. Only the very few do. Then on the other hand, if you can't get a job doing something else, you might as well have a go doing that. So I've just contradicted myself! Do it. It's a lovely way to earn a living....Nobody's found an alternative to work yet. There's going to be less and less work. For many years we've had human robots putting biscuits in tins (he demonstrates the robotic movement of a worker on a production line). Now all those people, who've been consuming large amounts of valium etc. to go to work cos it's so boring, are getting up in arms cos machines are doing it.

Somehow we've got to teach kids how to fill their days. We've got to have the worker clones, the pleasure clones — I don't know, it sounds like science-fiction!'

Is it ever going to happen like that?

You expect them to go to school and study and do the whole number, even though they should do it anyway, cos education doesn't stop at school. The whole system's got to be re-thought out. I mean, I don't know the answers. I would love to know the answers! I just know that the bloody thing stinks. I think we

was walking round with my lip in my hair — 'angry young man'. When I started writing, it developed another aspect. And also I used to hang around with David Bowie and Marc Bolan — we all started about the same time. I suppose a bit of that rubs off doesn't it? As far as the theatricality goes, every night's different. I think you can get the basic outline of an



should just share everything, share the whole lot out.'

Has you own bankruptcy and sudden lack of money moved you to think like that?

'Certainly. I've never been materialistic. That's why I squandered it all — I'm you modern-day Robin Hood! I've

act, but you have to fill it in. The audience always does something different to me. They've got this habit at the moment, when suddenly they'll all start singing at me, right in the middle of something — they've reduced me to tears.'

Haven't they always participated like that?

'Yeah, but now it's even bigger...Right now I don't feel like going out and doing anything, not until I'm out there and turn round (I always start with my back to the audience). The minute I turn round and hear them — after that I'm floating on a cloud! Was the comeback really induced by the Futurist/New Romantic generation (most likely your original teenybopper audience)?

are full. Why do they come? (He considers for a moment). They know they're going to have a good time. I feel that my audiences are one of the best on the gig scene cos they really have a good time themselves and they really get me at it.' You encourage that in them don't you?

'Yeah, we have a laugh, a love affair. I tease them, they tease me. We play with each other. You know, we play doctors and nurses, mothers and fathers — Oooh, it's lovely! Do you

jog — this keeps me pretty lively. I go to a health farm about 3 times a year, basically to dry out cos I like to drink. I don't work at it too hard though, like Cliff Richard and David Essex.'

Did you see the circus programme?

'Yeah. I really liked it. I thought they captured it very well. I'm gonna do the circus again. It's like most things, when you go into it, you don't realise what you're getting into. I'm like a

maybe, the theatrical performers.'

Is this idea in the pipeline? 'It's what I'm trying to do, yeah. If I can get the sponsorship — it takes an awful lot of money. I should be like a carnival. And I want to video people as they're coming in and flash them up on a massive screen, so that during the show they can cop themselves. I want the whole audience to take part, to be the show. I'm trying to play around with names now, like

LIFE IN THE OLD.....

'Certainly. I do watch trends and know what's going on. At the time I retired the disco thing was coming in and I didn't particularly care for that, even though it manifests itself in a different way now. The funny thing is, when I got out, I had planned a comeback 6 months later, but that blew up cos that very large emperor of the music business (I won't mention his name — he manages Bee Gees etc.) withdrew on a deal we were gonna do — a big show I was gonna headline. So suddenly I had egg on my face! Oh, how'm I gonna come back? It was the greatest thing that ever happened, cos I tried to come back and it didn't work, mainly because my management said 'You should be in show-business now, do all the things' — you know, Blankety Blank, Celebrity Squares. I said No, no, no, no — hold on! But I had to do cabaret and this, that and the other cos I had to eat and I'd blown a lot of money. Then slowly but surely I started to edge back into other things, and the college dates started coming up, which saved my life cos then I started getting all the rock gigs again. I got back to the youth, which is where I am now.'

What was the cabaret you were doing?

'Oh, it was some good things. I did the same acts. All those old ladies with their imitation fur coats and so on...soup in a basket. I always felt that if Chuck Berry and people like that could get out and do their thing at the age of 16 why shouldn't I go out at the age of (he blubbed his lips!) ...and do it.'

Do people come to see the old Gary Glitter and want to hear the old standards?

'I don't know what they come for. All I know is that the places



remember? (He looks at me cheekily).'

Do I remember what?

'Chuckle, chuckle.'

What are you wearing tonight? 'It's a secret! Depends what I feel like before I go on. I mean, if I had the body to get away with wearing nothing I would!' Why do you think you've got such a wide appeal?

'I don't know. I'm pretty honest. I like people. I don't have to pretend to be a star, or prove it...people just like me. It's a bit like my theory on the circus. If you paint your face white, put a funny nose on, doesn't matter what age you are, pull a face, people won't smack you, they'll laugh at you. I think that's my attitude towards it.'

How do you keep fit?

'I'm fit. I'm fat at the moment. I'm having a bit of trouble — I like to drink. I'm hunky! I run. I

kid with a new toy. If someone said 'Do you want to be in the next space shuttle?', I'd say 'Yes'. The other day I tried to do a parachute jump, but I couldn't get the insurance. I luv doing silly things! So this guy said 'Circus' and I said 'Yes'. When I got into the circus, I realised that here was something very magical and what I'd like to do is take it primarily to London next summer, stick it there for 4 weeks, have all the circus people doing their show all day long outside the tent and I want the circus to be the people who come in the evening. I want them to wear the most outrageous costumes, the craziest faces...they are the Circus. No ring, the tent is the ring. And every night I want to have different people, who I think would enjoy doing things like going up on a tightrope, people like Toyah

Circurama. People who wanna go to the circus have this idea of tent, a ring and animals. I mean the only animals that were in it this time was me and everyone else! I wanna get rid of the ring — it's a rock show and the ring is the outer tent. It's a little bit obscure, but we've got to create a Carnival ourselves. And I want to try and get a licencing law in another tent, so they can all go in and get pissed beforehand.'

The Circus Extravaganza Idea sounds really exciting, but don't you think your audience will be limited to those with quite a bit of money. Dressing up can be an expensive hobby?

'It's not. That's absolute bullshit. Most kids, including my own go to Jumble Sales. Any boy that wants to go out in drag for the evening just nicks one of his mum's frocks. What I'm trying to say is, if you wanna be Napoleon for the night — we all want to do that kind of thing from time to time — I mean, I've got my Ceaser gear — I believe I'm Ceaser or Caligula out there sometimes — It's pure fantasy... I really think communication's the important thing and by putting on costumes you get a bigger communication going than if you look straight, cos it's funny. Especially with kids. I'd like parents to bring their kids and the kids can see their parents being lunatics, instead of the straight bank manager and the whole thing — he's not really straight!'

Have you got any tie-ups with Brighton?

'I used to live in Sutton, then in Croydon for a while and my biggest tie-up is the fact that I had a bicycle and Brighton was always your Sunday run. And I've arrived in Brighton with many a sore arse! I've had some good times down here.' And then, he kissed me....

Chris Stone

Pic. J.J.Waller

Lydia Lunch

Lydia and I sit in the less than formidable Venue upstairs lounge, being aurally assaulted by a constant barrage of horrible music negotiated by the Venue bar staff. Lydia's attitudes and moods change like the seasons, this time her hair colour is a two tone orange and black and her band is nameless (or the name being unrepeatable at very least).

Lydia's chronological history goes something like this: Teenage Jesus, The Queen of Siam, Beirut Slump, Devil Dogs, 8-Eyed Spy, 13 13, maybe more, more than likely less. Her latest vinyl chronicle has just been issued by Fetish Records, the 8-Eyed Spy album. I love it and Lydia hates it. She is currently carrying the tapes to the 13 13 album around. It will be yet another chronicle of Lydia's past activities. It will also bear no resemblance to what Lydia is doing at this precise moment or at any moment in the near future.

The new show is, like Teenage Jesus, a joke. It's a travesty featuring Swinging Madisons vocalist Kristian Hoffman playing his 'instant headache' drums, Steve Severin in a guest role playing noisy feedback guitar along with Murray Mitchell working along the same lines and Lydia performing in her own inimitable fashion all over a 35 minute pre-recorded backing track. The closing stages of this backing track end the set appropriately with a classy Jewish skit on the 1968 ArabIsraeli war.

So now that 13 13 is past, there is this one tour Lydia Lunch meisterwerk. The Venue audience reaction was one of bemusement and certain bewilderment, they tried to dance, failed and then made worried expressions all to a soundtrack of noise and impromptu Lunch vocals. 'Ask a stupid question and get no reply'.

'I was bored with 13 13' intones Lydia in an all too seductive voice, 'the album's done, I'll sell it, it'll come out, there's no reason to perform it. Once something is documented, I feel no need to reinforce that documentation. That'd be like putting a bandaid over a

band-aid. There's no need. Music is obsolete. This is the last stand in something that truly stinks. The last stench! I think the 13 13 album is great, the band were great (all ex-Weirdos). All my friends are in London and I'm moving here, so I thought it was a wise move to come here via touring. I'm not going to afford to come here of my own accord, so I thought the country could help me to pay for my move. I'm having my bags sent over.'

So you're not worried about everything closing at 11 'o' clock?

'I don't care about everything closing early because I don't like to go out.'

You're not concerned about TV shutting off at 12 'o' clock?

'I don't mind that either, I hate TV. I just like to stay in my house basically. I have friends here, if you have friends you don't have to waste your time stupidly on watching TV or going out. I prefer conversation

actually. But just because people speak it doesn't mean they have to speak in an intelligible language. I myself prefer to make conversation in unintelligible syllables, perhaps just spending the evening growling and gurgling with a few of my friends.'

Where does the band fit into the picture?

'The band? The 3 stooges onstage, excuse me, 4 stooges myself included? Yes, it's a good kick in the face to anything you pre-expected. I don't even know what it's going to be like. I have to bring the words with me onstage because I'm too lazy to memorise them. I really have to do things with the least amount of effort possible because if you put a lot of effort into it, you get nothing in return. If you put very little effort into it, it doesn't matter. I doesn't bother you because



It's Music, it's redundant!

you've expended so little energy that nothing has been wasted.

'Memory is one very useless format, committing things to memory, especially stupid words to songs. Why? My brain is quite cluttered enough

give it to me, I'll accept it in any amount no matter how large or trivial. If I was interested in making money, I'd do something that would obviously be more popular, like popular music. Something with a beat, they can dance to, with nice

drums. It was the most hideously slow, agonising, raunchy, tuneless wailing. Ask and you shall receive, if not TAKE. Now I'm going to do this, that and a little of the other thing, not much to speak of, anything I feel like,

magnanimous and so minute all at once. Pleasure, when I say Sex I mean contact-vicual, physical, mental contact. I like stimulation.'

All for none and none for all. I need Lunch.

MARTS



Lydia Lunch pic. Shantal Coves

without having to memorise 250 words. I always wanted to be put in a self-induced coma and just have the brainwaves read, I'm that lazy at times. Like most of the time when I'd just rather lie completely flat. I spend an incredible amount of time in bed rotting. But unfortunately it's not in such a state of extreme consciousness. It's just sort of semi-semi-stupidity... wallowing. There's no reason for useless activity, unless you want to go bowling or something which I like but I don't often do. I hear they don't have too many bowling alleys in this country. That's too bad, it's a wonderful sport.

Does the release of the 8Eyed Spy album please you in any way?

Fine, I like documentation. I love money, who doesn't? Only a fool'd say they don't. I don't strive to make any. I don't go for it, I don't work. I don't aim for it, but if someone wants to

words and nice clothes, like all the other wonderfully rich English bands. There are no rich American bands because there are no American bands to speak of. It'd be very easy to be popular, people don't realise. But who wants that problem? I mean I don't, it's probably more agony than it's worth. I think obscurity is a nice place to sit and rot.

On past bands Lydia's attitude's just as judicious.

I listen to two or three tracks of 'Queen of Siam' and the 'Beirut Slump'. 'Beirut Slump' was my favourite band in the world, that was my favourite band. I rehearsed them for a year and we only played out twice. I didn't think it was the sort of thing people should be allowed to see, I refused. Who could find fault with Teenage Jesus? It was just a new way to say that (Lydia raises middle finger in the time honoured manner). The Devil Dogs were a band I had with Kristian on

whatever comes along, whichever way the wind blows. If I have a brainstorm I'll execute it. Next — that's my favourite word, next. NEXT!

And more?

'Sometimes less, sometimes less is more, more often than not. I've been writing a book and I've made a film, and as far as I'm concerned I'd rather do either of those as opposed to making horrible noise because it takes less work. The book is an autobiography of an extremely lazy, snotty, silly girl. In the film I play a private investigator, the female Dick Tracy is the description I like. It's called 'Vortex' and it was made by Beth And Scott B. who I've worked with before (Kristian — 'They make B movies of course!') Sex is the biggest influence in my life. It's what I spend most of my time pursuing I guess, in one way or another, basically. Usually the other. You know, Sex is everywhere, so general, so

Memories of obese Northern males and cackling female travellers fast fading from my mind, I descended from the train a rather truculent old Hector. Yet once past the singing Porter there was nothing for it but to stride purposefully down the road towards the heart of town. Video games, cups of tea, the Vauxhall Inn and a slowly gathering aggregation of familiar faces.

Squandering my poise in a hard backed chair I ruminated over the days ahead. Evesham is an, as yet fully unexplored musical phenomenon, where bands leap from every alleyway and the quality is high.

time you read this The Dancing Did should be uppermost in your mind as their debut single on Stiff records will be gyrating on our national airwaves. Their forefathers spoke seditious talk about the Witchfinder General. Their fans swap hats come the evening.

Since I last wrote about the Dids in April 1980, many things have happened. Their bass player at the time died in a car crash, his replacement has been replaced and only now will the nation know and love them. Or totally reject them.

Drummer Chris and Bassist Roger were absent which left main mouthers Martin (Guitar) and Timothy (Vocalese) to sit at equidistant points either side of the cassette machine. The Dundiddin, Martin's caravan-mobile home played host to us. Tim: It's really weird, speaking to a tape recorder because you speak to it, you're really aware that it's on..

Martin: Another person you have to address. One thing that annoys me, and Roger our new bass player is like this. You speak to him and he won't look at you. I can't take that. If I'm speaking to someone I have to make sure I've got their attention.. The same thing with a tape recorder.. I look at it and wave my finger.

Tim: The other thing is we know you religiously transcribe everything that's on there and it's like a miniature assault course and we've got to get everything right.

ZZ: Are you worried people will think what a prat.

Tim: No! No!

ZZ: People at Stiff as yet remain in the dark about you.

Tim: It's our policy of building up slowly but surely.

ZZ: You're hoping to build up a find working relationship.

Tim: Dunno. I just wanna get things right. I want to get the release right and the single sleeve right.

the DANCING DIDS



Martin: The way the graphic design department works is a sort of humourous and gluteous maximus situation.

Tim: Shall I relate a little anecdote here?

ZZ: You've already told it once but go on, for posterity's sake.

Tim: I'll pretend I haven't told you. Well, Mick, you'll never guess what happened. We went there to see them about the sleeve and we were introduced to this graphic designer.. I carefully explained what I wanted, and I said 'What I'd like is a picture of an old painting of some eighteenth century soldiers marching away to war with Messerchmidts superimposed over the top' and she said 'What are

Messerchmidts?', and when she spelt superimposed, she didn't get past the 'i', it was all too much for her.

ZZ: It might read better than it sounded.

Martin: It might do.

Tim: Was a bit slow, but you don't see 'pause' do you?

ZZ: I could put it in.

Tim: You wouldn't. You wouldn't be so cruel.

ZZ: When you went down did they explain *everything*?

Tim: They were very helpful. That's what I like about them, you're not talking to a bossworth, you're talking to the boss himself which is great.

Martin: it's alright if you are talking to him.

ZZ: Or cowering?

Martin: Yeah, Tim is.

Tim: Oh come on man, I'm not.

Martin: You were totally intimidated by him the first time.

ZZ: Did they say anything about their plans for your image.

Tim: That's another thing.. they don't seem to know, or to find out why. Well they are now but primarily I think they were just interested in the songs.

ZZ: Well that's really good.

Martin: That's what I think. Dave Robinson paid us the greatest compliment from the songwriting point of view we've ever had.. he came to see us and we were being a bit apologetic because the gig he came to was not exactly our best and he said 'It doesn't matter, if you'd jumped around more or what.. flashy clothes etc, fact is I went for the songs', and he actually said 'You've got good songs' which is exactly what I wanted to hear.

ZZ: The image could easily

SWING DID



become a cartoon version.

Tim: I don't think we'd let them. We're too... we're not stupid enough to be manipulated in that way.

Martin: More tea vicar? (and off he scurries to make the beds, wash the lanterns and scrub down little children in the sink).

Martin: We have got in the contract that we have the final say over artwork or merchandising, not that there'll be any merchandising.

ZZ: What's the contract for?

Tim: Just for one single with the option of another single.

Martin: Thing is they're talking about the follow up already.

Last time we went down to the office, which was the night of the famed Zigzag club gig, ..'Swinging!'

ZZ: Got good reviews didn't it that gig?

Tim: Yeah it did, NME, Nov. 28th 1981 page...

Martin: Anyway we went to the office and Bob Andrews who produced it was there, and he said 'Have you got anything lined up as a follow up as I was discussing it with Dave Robinson the other day'...and that's encouraging. Mind you I think he wants the work. He didn't seem to be doing a lot.

ZZ: Explain the Xmas launch theory.

Tim: It's a very long shot, because we're a very minor cog of the organisation, they decided they'd try us out with that. It's released just before Xmas and it's in a few key record shops, and it's taken to all the d.js, as there's only 'War Is Over' and Slade's Xmas song playing, and you can't bear that more than fifteen times a day. The theory is ours slips in and they play it all over Xmas, and people are foaming at the mouth by the time they can get to record shops..

Martin: To get rid of those record tokens.

Tim: And they rush in and buy vast quantities of the record...and we're all stars etc. etc. etc.

ZZ: And if it doesn't work? A relaunch in January?

Tim: Well yeah, we'll start our assault. Hopefully we'll have quite a few gigs and we'll really start to push it. It's kind of a sleeping thing, the hope is that the d.js aren't too keen the first time, when it comes out again they'll be even less keen.

Tim: Well it's tough shit!

Martin: Basically. Those radio d.js are such a motley crew that someone's bound to like it. One of those bloody idiots will like it, it's a cert.

Tim: Well that's blown it.

ZZ: You've got a gig with Tenpole...the comparisons don't worry you?

Tim: We're unique. I'm quite

confident. Maybe there are certain parallels but I don't give a shit about that. We're not like anybody.

ZZ: REcount the conversation you had with Eddie.

Tim: I can't remember it. he just really liked us.

Martin: He was a really nice bloke. He came up to me at the Moonlight next time we played there. He's really shy! He tapped me on the back and I turned round 'Oh Eddie' and he waved and walked away. like he wanted me to know he was there but he didn't want to talk to me, strange guy.

Tim: His shoes fascinate me. They've got lids on them His socks are poking out the end. He stood on my brother's foot at the Moonlight for about half an hour and Ollie didn't dare tell him to get off. So he stood on his foot and walked away again. Pretty cute.

Tim: I'm really looking forward to this Hammersmith one. I like playing big places because I'M a show off.

ZZ: It'll have been and gone by the time this comes out. What did the gig go like?

Tim: It could have been better. Always room for improvement.

Martin: It augered well, but you know how these things are, they never come out as good as you expect them too. Like the aforementioned ZZ gig.

ZZ: Is there a subtle way of describing the ZZ gig?

Tim: Yeah. We were shat on.

ZZ: Did you like the reaction.

Tim: Yeah, that was the good thing, people took the time to listen. I know when I've been more interested in the bands that have been supporting. That's why I used to go to gigs. By the time headliners come on you're a bit knackered.

ZZ: Do you see yourself playing lots of gigs?

Tim: No, we're not into this slogging round shite, we're just gonna play ones we hope will be good. If we're not enjoying it, there's no point doing it.

Martin: Cos we've done quite a few gigs this year and very few of them have been a good event: 'a good time was had by all.' We don't need to do that.

Tim: It's better for the audience if you don't play too often because when you do it's more of an occasion.

ZZ: What about the problem of few new songs?

Tim: That's because of our bass players' problem. We'll get down to it now. We're on our fourth bass player and we've only just broke him in and now we can concentrate on new songs because I'm dying to do some.

ZZ: If he doesn't work out, as tradition deems, will there be anyone else left??

Tim: Yeah.



Pic. Nigel Dick

ZZ: I can't see how there can be so many musicians in this area.

Tim: It's absolutely amazing, considering how small it is, everyone's in a band. Unbelievable. I mean if you take Cheltenham (down the road) there's practically nothing and it's bigger.

ZZ: Has it always been like this?

Martin: Yeah. I had some friends who used to play in some of the old Evesham garage bands, but it was never as creative as it is now. They go, into a more stylish mode now...but people tell me it goes back fifteen or twenty years. People thrashing out 'Johnny B. Goode' but about half a dozen bands doing it. Jim Capaldi was from Evesham. Catseyes, they were semi-famous, Dulcimer the folk rock band, Luther Grosvenor, who called himself Ariel Bender in Mott The Hoople, he's from Evesham. Jim Capaldi's old man, if he's still alive is the best accordian player in the four shires.

ZZ: Right. Tell me the full history of The Dancing Did.

Tim: Oh God do we have to?

Martin: The original Dancing Did was me and Tim, because Tim wanted to make a record. Tim: I just wanted to perform. The first Did gig was me when I jumped on a wall at the Winter Gardens...there was a bomb scare when Squeeze were playing. Everyone went outside and I jumped on a statue and recited 'The Dancing Did'. Never looked back ever since.

Martin: The thing is, to reiterate what I was saying, Tim started because he wanted to make a record, nothing to do with performing. He had all these lyrics and asked me if I wanted to do the tunes, and we got together these three songs, none of which we ever did use, till Tim came up with the idea of The Dancing Did from these dids dancing in The Vauxhall one day and that was the first record.

Martin: Yeah, Tim thought it was really good, mind you he was excessively drunk.

Tim: It's something you won't find now, in my teetotal state. ZZ: Do you feel better.

Tim: Much. It's brilliant. I feel lucid. The thing about getting pissed is it's so time consuming. You spend all the time drinking then you've got to spend all the evening wandering around stupefied, then the next day being ill. A waste of time. It's great, I'm really into

ZZ: Who was the first bass player?

Martin: Dick Crazies.

Martin: He never turned up on time and we all stood around saying 'Is Dick there?'

Martin: Then we booted him out, well...mutual dissatisfaction. He never liked bass.

ZZ: Was Stuart down for bass player before he left?

Tim: Stuart came round and asked me if he could be bass player and we jumped at the chance really. He was great. That was The Dancing Did at their best really.

Martin: Well, it's only just come back hasn't it?

Tim: Yeah, we're really pleased

therapy sessions with him. 'I know you can do it', but it just didn't work.

(The sound of a Dormer farting.)

Martin: Do you know that in Portsmouth 'Did' is a tit?

Tim: All I can say is thank God we aren't The Dancing Dids. I'm going for a chemical (the caravan toilet).

Tim begins adjourning to the toilet but stops when I mention the Panic Button bone thing.

Tim: But (eyes gaping wide) that's not their roots, they're integral to our band, deep meaning, to them it's probably a mere fashion accessory. Sounds very sensationalistic

bones for a stage show?

Tim: No the totem poles will suffice. I'm going to get a Bowie knife as well.

ZZ: Why didn't you get it today?

Tim: Because Jane wouldn't take me to Cheltenham. Oh God I'm excited.

ZZ: What if with success people start turning up at your gigs dressed as 'replica' Dids.

Martin: It's salvaging what's good out of this slowly decaying world. You don't find people of any taste any more. The way they dress. Chain store rules.

Tim: It's all so homogenised. That's why we want to push this area because why shouldn't we be interested in the background.

Martin: The thing that brought it home to me was, we went to do the single. The second night we couldn't go into the studio because Tight Fit were in there, doing their backing track for TOTP and we got in there, saw this lot wandering around and they could have come from anywhere, it was horrible, really horrible.

Tim: I can't imagine those people actually living anywhere. The types you find at the Embassy Club, I can't imagine them paying the milk bill. They're not real. That's what pisses me off a bit about the bands round here, they won't take up anything about the area. Maybe they're so blinkered that they can't see what's on their own doorstep. They're copying the urban trends prevalent at the moment.

ZZ: I would have thought they don't do it because it would seem they were copying you.

Tim: I'm not saying you have to come our decked out in bones or Edwardian costume or anything. It's like writing, you should only write about things you know about.

Martin: So many people have the view that London is wonderful, the be all and end all, and if they can imitate that in any possible way then they're in.

Tim: I don't think we're naive enough to swallow all that crap.

I'd like to think that anyone, regardless of age or mentality, knows the dangers of digesting excreta, and talking of which...I sat on a crowded train, plagued by turbulent bowels wondering as we sped claustrophobically homewards, 'Where do I go from here?' For The dids there is only one way. The capital of Paraguay.

MM.



with Roger. He's a really good player. He's picked it up so quickly. He's inventive like Stuart was too. He's got a brain too, he knows what we're trying to do. He's part of it.

ZZ: After Stuart died the Crazies guy didn't mind doing those two gigs.

Tim: He asked us and we were very pleased that he did, although two gigs was all we could stand, but by then the next chapter had begun... the Wally saga.

Martin: Best left unsaid I think. Tim: Yeah, except Wally is still a good friend of ours. He was good as far as the philosophy of the band was concerned but he just wasn't tight enough.

Martin: He had a terrible problem with nerves. I used to bring him round here to Dundiddin, and have kind of

to me.

Martin: Don't scratch your scabies in here Tim.

Tim: Wipe that off the tape.

ZZ: The audience is in danger.

Martin: Only if they sleep with him, and I'm sure no-one would want to do that. He mixes with the most unsavoury people, not like me I'm a hermit, I stay up here all day — which by the way is really great.

Tim: What's this? (Waving a phallic loaf)

Martin: Well I was going to do garlic bread but I don't think I'll have the time if this interview persists.

ZZ: Do you want to reassure the readers about your scabies?

Tim: No I don't want to talk about it. No comment.

ZZ: Will you be developing the

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A few months ago, Cherry Red released a 12 inch single called '4 Movements' by a wee Scotsman called Thomas Leer which was highly acclaimed in the music press, being voted single of the week in both NME and Sounds. It's a glorious fusion of funk and synth music and is all his own work, Tom played all the instruments, sang, recorded, produced and mixed it all in his living room.

Thomas Leer started his musical career singing with the local band in Port Glasgow at the tender age of 13 and when he was about 18 he started writing his own music. After a series of moves (Scotland to London, back to Scotland, over to Wales, back to Scotland, down again to London) he eventually recorded his first single a couple of years ago which was released on a Cherry Red compilation. There followed a brief flirtation with Industrial Records who asked Tom and Robert Rental to record an album ('The Bridge') for them, until he was eventually signed to a major deal with Cherry Red which involves 5 albums to be released over a period of 5 years.

The first of these five, called 'Contradictions' is due to be released sometime in the New Year, and after hearing it and succumbing to its slinky danceability, I talked to him about music and impending senility.

ZZ: How did you first get involved with music?

TL: I just sang in the local group — they needed a singer and they asked me. It was just Beatles, Monkees type things and gradually I started getting into psychedelia and people like Peter Hammill and wanting to write my own stuff so I learned how to play guitar. As far as influences are concerned I'm influenced by anyone that I like, there isn't just one person I admire and want to be like.

ZZ: How did you get on to synthesiser playing?

TL: Kraftwerk I suppose. In the mid-70s I wasn't very into pop music, not even Bowie, so the alternative to that was either American country-style or European music and it was the Krauts that got me into synthesisers.

ZZ: Your style of music is very fashionable now.

TL: Yes, but I don't see myself as part of it, you mean like Soft Cell, Human League sort of thing? My first single came out at the same time as the first Human League single and I got rather pigeonholed into that kind of bracket for a while by

NME but it wasn't what I was into. Although I use synthesisers my music is more influenced by jazz than that sort of disco music.

ZZ: Your new album struck me as being rather disco-influenced.

TL: I like funk disco, soul disco, so in that respect...it's dance music. I don't have only one sound that I'm into, I just like to bounce around, I'd also like to do something like that (gesturing towards his hi-fi where Keith Jarrett's 'Kilm Concerts' was slumbering peacefully).

ZZ: Are you already thinking of the next album?

have maybe got a single out of it, but doing it myself I got a 4track EP and an album. I had a special deal whereby I managed to hire the equipment for 6 months but that was unusual, I won't get that again. It's ok if you're a band and you've got all the numbers well-rehearsed then you can go into a studio for 2 weeks and do the whole thing but when it's one guy playing all the instruments...I mean I'm not a shit hot musician or anything. I can play the guitar to a degree, I can play the bass ok and synths ok and I can also play drums but I'm not a drummer. It's a really involved process, it

album, but as it turned out the album isn't any more experimental so I just made more work for myself.

ZZ: There's quite a different feel to the album.

TL: Although a lot of the tracks were started before the 12 inch they didn't get finished until later, so I suppose the 12 inch was influencing me and made me change my tack.

ZZ: You produced and mixed it all yourself — it must be very satisfying for you.

TL: I think the music is good but I'm not satisfied with the sound of it, maybe if I'd had a producer I would have been.

ZZ: It must be nice to record an album in your own home.

TL: Yes it is, but the mixing is a problem because when you mix in the studio, it's soundproofed to the proper amount so that what you hear coming out of the speakers is what you're going to hear on the hi-fi. I just did it on my home set up and you'd think it would sound the same but it doesn't. It's good fun when you're doing it but the heartache comes later when you listen to it.

ZZ: What are you going to do for the next album?

TL: I'll probably still do it at home but take it to a studio to mix it to get the correct sound.

ZZ: Will it be totally different?

TL: Hopefully. It'll be composed differently. This album was done mostly from drums and rhythms, and the next album will probably start from keyboards. I'm going to try and get a polyphonic synthesiser and write everything on that, maybe some stuff on guitar, and percussion will come along later. It's just a different approach and hopefully that will give a different sound. A lot of it will still be the same, synthy trumpets, my singing will be the same.

ZZ: It's strange that the album should be based on drums if you don't feel that you're a drummer.

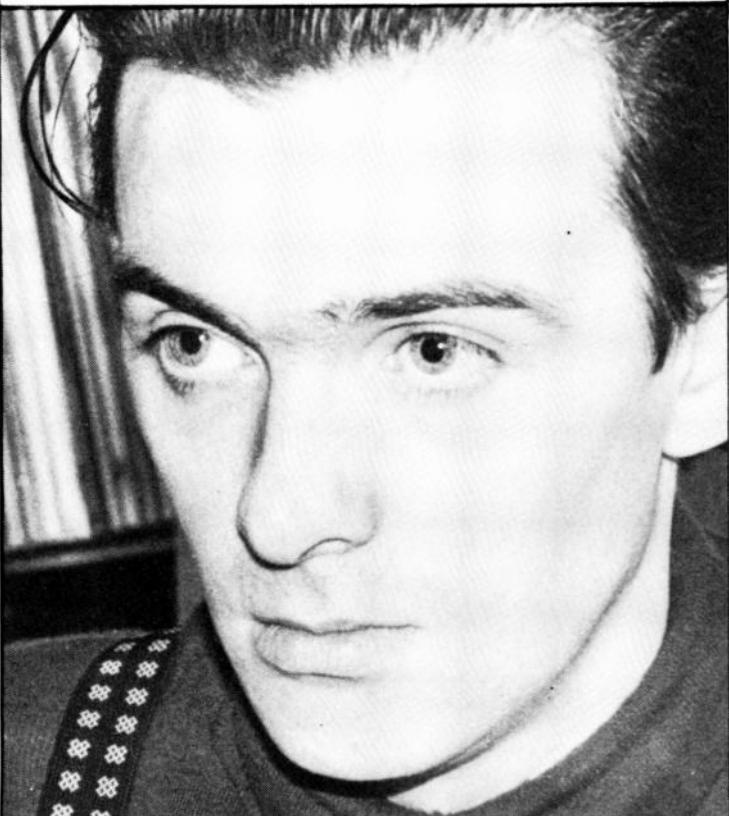
TL: Yes, I suppose it is. I just like rhythm and I've worked with loads of drummers and never found the one that does it just how I like it so I thought the only way to do it is just do it yourself.

At this point I start getting bored with talking about music and decide to be nosy instead.

ZZ: What were you doing in Wales?

TL: It was pretty much at the height of the hippy period when everyone was going back to the country and a few of my friends were living on a farm near Carmarthen so I went to see what it was like and stayed for about a year. I

THOMAS LEER



TL: Yes, but it's very difficult because of finances and things like that. The last one was done on an 8-track here in this room which was ok as far as it goes but nowadays when production has got a lot better on records, you've got a lot more to compete with so I don't know about the next one.

ZZ: Have you ever worked in a studio?

TL: I worked in the studio with Robert Rental on his last single, that was just a couple of weeks ago, but I've never done anything by myself in a studio, it's too expensive. If I'd gone into a studio with the money I was given for this album I'd

can take me a long time just to get something right and there isn't any studio that allows that kind of time unless you're paying a lot of money — so that's why I don't use studios.

ZZ: When does the album come out?

TL: I'm not sure, New Year sometime I think. It should have been out months ago but it took me about 4 months to record it. The 12 inch '4 Movements' was originally part of the album but halfway through I decided these 4 tracks didn't fit in and so I thought I'd release them on an EP and carry on with the more experimental stuff on the

hated it, thought it was horrible.

ZZ: Don't you like country life?

TL: I like the country but I don't like sleeping in cold farm-houses and going down to the bottom of the field to collect water, things like that.

ZZ: Do you want to be a rich pop star and live in the lap of luxury in London?

TL: NO, TL: No, I'd like to be rich but not a pop star, I want to have enough money to make music and make it better and keep as much control of it as I can but I don't want to be a pop star, I'm a bit long in the tooth for that. It probably sounds a bit stupid, I think if you're about 16 then it's a good idea to be a

went through the hippy period and I believed it and thought something was going to happen but on the whole nothing changed. In a couple of years it had all gone stale and glam, if you look at the punk thing and the new romantics, it's really similar to psychedelia and glam in the seventies, it's almost an exact replica of what happened, even music becoming more sophisticated as it has done in the last year. Why can't you have something as important to say when you're 30 or 50 or 60 as when you're 16 or 20? We tend to get conditioned into feeling that once you get to your mid 20s then you start to worry about

and liking what I do but all the things in my music are things that come from 15 years of being involved in music. I didn't just pick up a guitar yesterday and learn how to play so they are getting into something that is actually the result of age, so why can't people the same age as me get into it, because they probably don't.

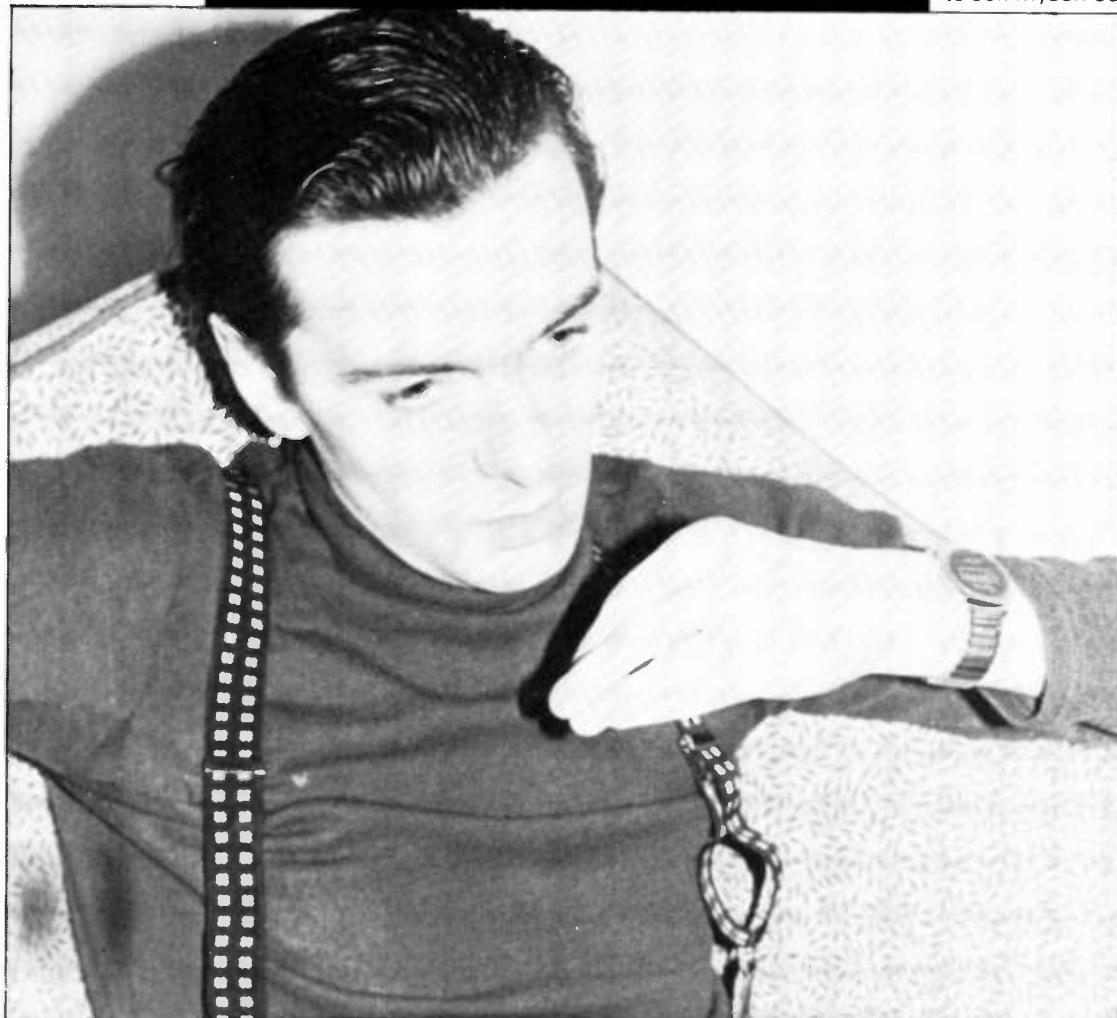
ZZ: If you're not really interested in music and you just happen to be caught up in the youth culture which involves music then perhaps not as you grow older?

TL: I remember when the hippy thing was going on and we used to go to parties and listen

for people who are interested in music across the board, who can appreciate that music doesn't have to be bogged down to one area. There's a lot of things you could be doing that are exciting, and change is absolutely necessary. Some times I think I get too intense about it and I think what does it matter, it's only music, and I think that's true as well, it's just music.

ZZ: You sound as if you'd be happy just playing for yourself. Do you want the average person to hear it?

TL: Oh yes, but there's only a certain amount of things I'll do to make that possible, I refuse to sell myself out and be forced



Fiona Imber

pop star but when you're 28 like I am... I mean by this time I've been through so many pop scenes from The Beatles, through psychedelia, Pink Floyd, Hendrix, Bowie...

ZZ: You must have been through a lot of music styles, suppose the equivalent of punk happened again tomorrow, would you be into it?

TL: Definitely, I hope I'll be into it when I'm 50, maybe not to the extent of doing it but being receptive to it... it's a bit weird, the whole youth culture, it's getting out of hand cos nothing's changing, it's just going on and on with new rebel movements every couple of years and nothing changes. I

being too old for all this and then people tend to get stuck in a certain era. If you were a Teddy Boy in the 50s and now you're 40, quite often you stick in that era same as a lot of mods, they're 35 now but they still listen to old Beatles records and wear mod clothes. People get stuck and when new things come along you get suspicious and I don't want to get suspicious like that. When punk came along I was, by definition, too old to be a punk but I thought fuck it I can get into this, same with the new romantic thing. It's such a contradiction in terms, all the people that are picking up on me are probably very young

to Hendrix and various other psychedelic records, me and a couple of my mates were heavily into it but there were lots of other people who didn't even know who they were listening to — they didn't care — they looked right and they smoked the right drugs but they didn't care and I think that went on in punk as well. There were a lot of people who were only interested in punk because of the fashion and the same with the new romantics, it'll be the same forever.

ZZ: Basically it comes down to whether you're interested in music at all, not what kind of music it is.

TL: I suppose I'm making music

to do it. There's only a certain amount of compromises I'm prepared to make. I don't intend to ram myself down anyone's throat because they ultimately find you out and say wait a minute this guy's not as good as he says he is. I'd much prefer it if what I did was just there and it can be bought somewhere and it's written about enough so that people know it exists.

And so gentle reader, you now know that Thomas Leer's music exists so I suggest you do something about it and listen to some of it. You know it makes sense.

LOUISA HENNESSY

What follows is not so much an interview, more an all-out slanging match. The participants, Mark Hughes, John White and Shep Shepherd, are collectively known as the I Scream Brothers. They live and work on the outer reaches of the Sheffield music scene, creating vibrant music for a small, select audience, first joining forces around the end of 1980. They gigged whenever they could, often supporting Sheffield new wave funsters Artery. John played guitar and occasional sax, while Mark and Shep handled the verbals. A revox supplied the rest. Before long

builds to a powerful climax.

The Brothers also have an extensive backlog of unrecorded stuff. Songs full of numb neon rhythms, stark, incisive guitar lines and cool subterranean sax solos.

I spoke to the I Scream Brothers at John White's swingin' bachelor pad, situated in a grotty residential area called Hyde Park. John started the proceedings by telling me something about how he first got together with Mark and Shep... These two were working together on various things, and I were doing nowt on me own. But I were right into things like

that's all it were.'

'Yeah,' said John, 'and what did you end up doin' wi' the drummer?'

'Shep? Kicking 'im out and replacing 'im by a drum machine. But 'e's improved a lot.'

Shep began to protest at this. 'You didn't kick me out, I left. I left cos of Carter's moaning.'

Tempers began to flare, and in an attempt to restore some semblance of order I asked a few more questions. But Mark and John continued to argue. Mark complained that he didn't like being on Social Security because he 'couldn't afford to

'What's up wi' that?' he wanted to know. 'I wanna be in a supergroup. I want millions. I'm not just bothered about the money side,' he added hastily, 'the music comes first. But I want money. You can't do owt ti'out money. You can't fill your stomach by being 'appy. There's loads of bands saying, 'Oh, we don't wanna be big, we don't wanna be in t'Top Ten, we don't wanna be on Top O' The Pops. Why not? I do.'

John: I don't.

Mark: Well I do.

And off they went again.

At one point Mark suggested bringing a thirty-odd year old trumpet player into the line-up — an idea so bizarre that I figured he was joking at first. Then he wanted the Brothers to supplement their earnings by playing Working Men's Club gigs. John saw red at this. 'You're signing your bloody death warrant if you do that. Any club group you talk to, they say, 'We're just doin' it till we get our PA together... we're just gettin' this an' that... we're just gettin' a van... we're just gettin' a twelve-channel mixer... now we're gettin' a sixteen-channel mixer...' They just keep going on like that till they can't get out of it.'

'Yeah, but it dun't 'appen to everybody,' Mark protested.

'I bet it 'appens to 95% of the people that go into the clubs. All these bloody cabaret artists you see now, I bet they all started off like us, wantin' to be original, wantin' to be summat, to be stars or whatever. But their agent said, 'Get into the clubs. I'll get you a few

The I Scream Brothers

I Scream Brothers (l-r) Phil, Mark and John.

the Brothers were supported by Sheffield entrepreneur Dominic LaSalle, the man behind the excellent PAX label. He took them under his wing and has since helped them on numerous occasions, acting as their unofficial manager and father figure.

In September, Dominic released two of the Brothers' songs as part of a 12inch maxisingle called 'Five Miles to Midnight'. (The record also features tracks by Mortuary in Wax and the Doormen.) The Brothers' contributions to the project were produced by Cabaret Voltaire, and they're clever and engaging pieces of work. 'A Tree Growing Wrong' is especially good — John's chugging guitar combines with Mark's resonant lead vocal to generate an almost palpable sense of urgency; the song

drum machines. We all went to see t'Yuman League and asked 'em to come back 'ere, and played 'em some stuff I'd done on me own —'.

At this point Mark interrupted and went into the first of a series of complaints about the group's policies: I'm dead un'appy about the way our gigs are going, cos visually there's nowt to look at. I wanna make it a lot better than it is. It's just a bit boring. I'm stood over the mike, waiting for the cue, thinking, y'know, 'How long 'ave I got to stand 'ere like this?' I can't wait for the drums to come in. Shep's going to play drums onstage, see. He's played before. We 'ad a band called the Ex-Friends, but we didn't take it serious. We just played a few Right to Work concerts and Anti-Nazi League things. Mates getting together,

live.'

John: 'Can't afford to live? You're making out that you can't afford to feed yourself. It's all right on t'dole. Look at me — I'm getting paid enough to eat, enough to pay me rent, and I can do whatever I want. That's how I see it. Plus there's lots of people off work, so I'm not really skiving, cos there's not enough jobs anyway... The only thing is, I don't see why you should play a gig and it costs you money to play. I suppose every band under the sun's said it at some time or another, but if you're playing somewhere, I'm not bothered who you are, somebody's making money out of you, aren't they? There's too many supergroups getting far too big a share of it.'

At this Mark again leapt into the fray, teeth gnashing.

bookings. Get your act together, get polished.' It's death, mate. Bloody death.'

Mark again disagreed, and so it went on, far into the night. By the time the interview ended, I felt almost shell-shocked. It was like spending a night in a fox-hole, pinned down between two warring armies.

I think the I Scream Brothers are a group with a great deal of potential. They'll soon be appearing on Des Moines follow-up to the seminal 'Hicks From The Sticks' LP, and I have no doubt that their contribution(s) will be of a high standard. Take my word for it, the Brothers are bound for glory — or cult status at the very least. If only they can keep from arguing themselves into oblivion before then...

Ian Blake



ZIGZAG

Readers Poll '82

Instead of the usual Spring Poll we're resorting to a wiser January thing, reflecting the year that has so dearly and most recently passed. Get your finger out. Bands in the "Like To See" section shall be unearthed. Bands in the ZigZag Poll, 118 Talbot Road, London W11 1JR by January 14th please.

1 ALBUM (OF LAST 12 MTHS)

2

3

SINGLE (OF LAST 12 MTHS)

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WORST 45 OF YEAR

RECORD LABEL

BEST SMALL BAND

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2

3

WHO I'D MOST LIKE
TO SEE IN ZIGZAG
(AND ANY OTHER SUGGESTIONS)

NAME

ADDRESS

FAVE PERSON
(No voting for me!)

1

2

BEST GROUP

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BEST LIVE GROUP

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TIP FOR THE TOP

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BEST SINGER
(Male or female)

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KIM WILDE: 'Cambodia' (RAK)

(Starring Ron Disk, 'Prophet Of The Pops', and Dream Interpreter) RD: ...Kim Wilde, see. And me. NO, nothing like that. Just talking, see, and she says, 'The moment I looked into your eyes, I knew we were meant for each other.' That's all.

DL: Mr Disk is naturally captivated by Ms Wilde's voice and style. So am I. But the unlikely purity of this dream suggests that he has in fact, been attracted, albeit unconsciously, by the ease with which her music acts as a focus for his uneasy intellectual obsessions. For example, he goes on to discuss the gap between public morality and private desire, and how a tale of the lover of a US pilot lost over Cambodia might exploit such a tension, or even, by actually failing to do so, express the irreconcilable natures of these social phenomena. (Curtain and puzzled applause).

MARK SINKER.

THE CLIMB: 'I Can't Forget' (Pinnacle)

Another twelve incher, another great production. Terminally funk bound in a distressingly servile sense, but relying on less than usual stock responses. From heavy to dipsy in a couple of bars, rattling percussion is heavy, the bass surprisingly light. The vocals are dispensable.

MM.

THE FALL: 'Lie Dream Of A Casino Soul' (Kamera)

Much fuller sound than before with two drummers now, roaring organ and rancid sax underpinning the familiar rockabilly charge and Mark E. Smith's deranged repetition (mainly of the title).

HJ.

THE DBs: 'Amplifier' (Albion)

New York pop bounces into the airy West Coast 60s with more sinister undertones in the sulky guitars. Matured after earlier efforts.

EDDIE ANGEL: 'Lynxtail' (Rebel Riot)

Two dense instrumentals from guitarist Ed, who used to back such as Tex Rubinowitz. Backed by NY's Ronnie And The Jitters, he sets up a wall of sound particularly effective on the 'Lynxtail' homage to Rumbling Link Ray (no relation to Ramblin' Sid Rumpo).

HJ.

DOLLY MIXTURE: 'Teen-Teen' (Respond Records)

A single that manages to sound contemporary without fitting into any describable bracket. Great chorus of syncopated girly voices, slight hint of jazz in there somewhere, very good.

LH.

SUZIE: 'Dance' (Speed Records)

Yer average pop records but done so well and infectiously it deserves a mention, sing-a-long chorus, bouncy drumming, bits of classical thingies thrown in, if it ever got played anywhere it would be a monster hit.

offering which shows The Clash are still sparkling healthily.

KN

SECOND IMAGE: 'Can't Keep Holding On' (Polydor)

Penned by David Grant, this owes more than a small debt to Linx in terms of production though not in execution. Stinging guitars and heavy bass rumble build into a neat dance beat though the slightly too-English sounding vocals are a weak link. The chorus makes well sure that this'll hit though.

MARTS.

SHAKATAK: 'Easier Said Than Done' (Polydor)

Laid back and soulful. I like this one enough to listen to but it's no crusher. The instrumental breaks build to the verses in a nice unassuming way. Unfortunately the keyboards spoil it all by the time you get into it.

MARTS.

DIF JUZ: 'Vibrating Air'

DANCE CHAPTER: 'Chapter II' (4AD) 12inch singles

A record company a mite quiet of late coming to life with two enterprising niceities. Dif Juz continue the ethereal noise with distinction. Balmily soothing and perkily exploding. Dance Chapter seem a little wordy and complicated at times (didn't they scratch the title in the plastic; on their first single??) but invigorating none the less. 'Backwards Across Thresholds' is so refreshingly jangley.

MM.

THE CLASH: 'This Is Radio Clash' (CBS)

Worth a word in view of the almost inevitable slagoff it's got/going to get. Hoisted into action by a riff based on the old silent movies, ente-the-baddy motif and Joe's manic cackle, the song grinds incessantly while Joe exhorts the listener 'don't turn over to death' — a refreshing lively assault on the old airwaves problem. Meanwhile all manner of effects pop and crack, specially on the version. Hard and tense

BRIAN BRAIN: 'Jive Jive' (Secret Records)

An unlively specimen that slowly stamps and then is lost in the vast piles of records that reviewers avoid at all costs.

MM.

Competition

DAMNED: 'Friday 13th' e.p. (NEMS)

The four tracks have a disappointing edge to them that I wouldn't have expected. 'Disco Man' is tame but bouncy, 'Billy Bad Breaks' does likewise, and 'Citadel' is old Kinks and Stones riffs churned up.

Only 'Limit Club' sounds exciting in a very dated way. Gentle, slow and moody it bears several plays without faltering.

What are they up to?

MM.

FUNKY 4 PLUS 1: 'That's The Joint' (Sugar Hill)

THE MEAN MACHINE: 'Disco Dream' (Sugar Hill)

GRANDMASTER FLASH AND THE FURIOUS FIVE: 'It's Nasty' (Sugar Hill)

Sugar Hill seems to be the more prominent of the N.Y. Rap dominated disco labels. So out of a clutch of their latest (Spoonie Gee, Sugar Hill Gang etc.) these are the best. 'That's The Joint' combines standard crowd noises with boy/girl chants and a mean percussion track. Walking bass and a horny female vocal rap comes up trumps over this nine minute groove. Lots of great over the top brass just about sums up this one, which incidentally is out over here via Pye.

So onto the other two, which are strictly import only. 'Disco Dream' is another straight bass fed, handclapping treat. This is the closest you'll get to having a party on record. Rockin' to the east side, rockin' to the west etc. The Mean Machine could be huge here, so why don't they release this crusher over here? Well anyway for gluttons of the groove, get this if you can fork out the necessary readies.

Last (not least) is Grandmaster's reworking of the Tom tom Club's 'Genius Of Love' complete with silly Camelot fanfare and the turntable acrobatics the man's renowned for. The Furious Five again support the wizardry with soulful, swingin' intonation and choral treatments. Get

down to Groove and get these now, you won't lose out!

MARTS.

HOUSEHOLD NAME: (Household Records)

A funky four piece four track item which has all the right specifications to enter the new popularised funk collage, but several points slip through seemingly unchallenged that hinder the success of this record. The percussion on 'Indoctrination' infringes on the rhythm too much for comfort and the vocals are too amateurish. 'Lynch Mob Tactics' follows a straight course till the end of the track and never really does anything. It bops and weaves but in recurrent circles. 'Reassurance I-100', is slow, neutral lyrics trundling on, with occasional echo..., and 'World Paranoia' is the only one to bump and grind into life, where pacing comes into its own, and the bass swings well. Many bands, whatever style have trouble organising fluidity or purpose in their initial release and Household Name are no exception.

MM.

MEMBRANES: 'Muscle' (Vinyl Drip)

The record that more than any other had me cringing in exasperation comes from this Blackpool maverick collection. From the guitars abundance of style and the keyboards rustling perceptively in the mix-midst this could have been a classic single. A true classic. Instead, the vocals are rather patchy, possibly through design and the drumming has a back seat role more than they deserve. We get a Swell maps scenario instead of a chart intruder.

The guitars slash tunefully in, acoustically, then turn into devious soundtrack material and electric guitar starts picking over the top. Then the trouble starts as the first vocal refrain blunders in...saved by the stunningly simple keyboard contribution and the slight percussive entries.

By any standards this single reeks of excellence, but with

some more care it would have been too wonderful for words to explain. That makes it sound like I'm criticising them, but I'm not. In fact having witnessed them struggling through their possessions in our office, I wouldn't be surprised if they stumbled across this tune by accident, congratulating themselves on finishing the song in time etc. etc. etc. it's worth buying because it's easily the month's best independent release but to think of the heavenly status it might have aspired to breaks my heart. Buy it and weep likewise.

MM.

PLAIN CHARACTERS: 'Menial Tasks' (Abstract)

Since I saw this motley crew tarnishing stages in London a couple of years back, they've altered their twee pop to encompass Duran-isms, Spandau-ics with artificial energy.

These bands can cajole your limbs with such little effort and compassion, it really is quite horrible. It's a damnedably entrancing dancey thing packed full of explosive bits but at the same time shallow and stupid.

MM

TAV FALCO'S PANTHER BURNS: 'Train Kept A'Rolling' (Frenzi/Rt)

Alex Chilton assisted classic garage drivel here, recorded in a Memphis club, complete with cowboy audience and dodgy acoustics. The Panther Burns are the next rock'n'roll great white hope with their stamping ritual drums, tuneless guitars and off the wall vocals. Tav Falco is obviously a genius or a degenerate, his guitar style crossing traditional (trad dad?) blues strength and a rockabilly/punk attack to depth bomb consumers into senselessness.

MARTS



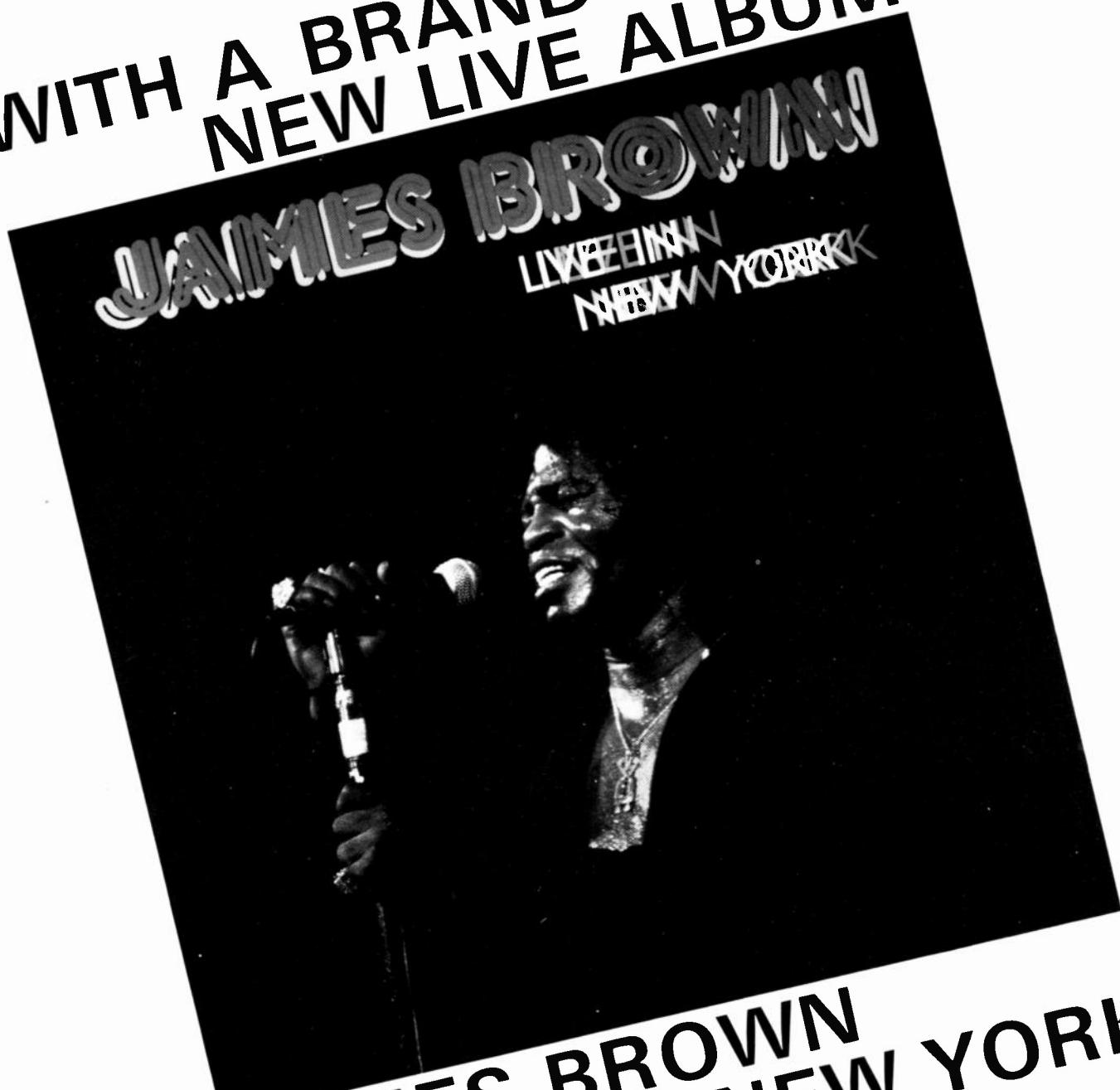
Above you see a photo of an angry young man, pictured in 1978 striking a striking pose. Today his pose is similar, but the image has changed. First right entry gets four free I.P.s, second gets three and so on. Write to ZigZag, 118, Talbot Road, London W.11. Last months competition was won by Marina Lambrou, whose entry was so confusing and boring it certainly deserved something. She claimed it was Manfred, Louisa's husband! and Mandy Connery who thought it was the guitarist of The Two Beats. Utter balderdash! An honourable mention to "The Lodger" for his desperate entry. Prizes on their way.

Your Quiz Master!



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BAUHAUS



Pic, Fiona Imber

As the snow lay crisp and even, there came into sight a tall gaunt figure, clad in peculiar garb, visible (just) through the office window making curious circular motions with his teeth.

Cue freezing of blood: the typical response to a Murphy sighting. Was he displaying anger, was his head bowed in disgust, muttering to himself foul oaths set on revenge? The door flung wide and hands are shaken. Peter Murphy, elegant reptile of the Bauhaus stable was eating pie and chips.

A spellbound image immediately shattered and we get down to the business in hand.

As the finest amongst you will know, the band have been exploring foreign territories and promoting their second album on Beggars Banquet, 'Mask'. Away then.

ZZ: There were rumours abounding that BB weren't too pleased with the album when you offered it to them. Were these scurrilous?

PM: Well, Martin was, he got the original tape and was very surprised by the change, the smoothness of it, which we wanted. Martin's got some good ideas but I think he expects us to go on with the 'Flat Field' type thing. Y'know, to it's end. That was the end, 'Flat Field', that sort of approach, angst and anger.

ZZ: What's the fan's reaction to the change?

PM: Well, it's hard to tell, but Stella, my girlfriend who runs the information club, gets lots of letters, and they really go with it. What's most important is how we feel. And we all listen to it. We're pleased.

ZZ: You're not one of these bands that can never bear to listen to their own stuff afterwards.

PM: No, we left 'Flat Field' alone for ages though, it was so hard to listen to. We worked with Mike Hedges on a load of the tracks at first (of 'Mask') and he was putting his own sound onto it: over-produced, lots of effects...we saw them as a novelty at first. Then we

took the tapes away and mixed it ourselves.

ZZ: Tell us about the B-side of 'Passion Of Lovers'

PM: We were all frustrated in one area, all wanted to do something on our own, so we said 'Right, let's do it within the band'...give each other ten minutes each in the studio, we'd go out, one of us would stay there and do whatever, on the spot. There was no writing. The only thing we had to link it up was the rhythm machine. We mixed our own separate pieces. It was great, really good to do your own things. That also gave us more respect for each other, after living and working with each other..you can get really pissed off. It was just a really healthy thing to do. We did that on a video called 'Consequences' where we had fifteen minutes each and did a soundtrack, and we showed that on our last tour.

ZZ: The David Jay one, particularly the vocals, impressed me. Do they want to put vocals on an album. Would you object to that?

PM: One song, David was singing 'Hair Of The Dog' originally, I let him do it, but after I said 'Well I think I could really do that much better', he was singing it very softly. He admitted it, but at least he had a go. He's got a really excellent voice. I'm sure he'll be really good on his own when all this ends. I encouraged him to do that B-side thing as a whole song, and he's going to which'll be great.

'We're like a workshop, we all have total freedom to do what we want. I play piano, but it always seems to come back to our original roles, which in the end we're best at really.'

ZZ: Typical question.. how did the European thing go?

PM: Great, the reaction was good. We played with The Passions. We went on first, totally blew them off. I don't think they realised the pull we had. After the second night they wouldn't play with us.

Then we did some Dutch dates and they were in these really strange small venues. They were awful, but the crowds loved us and then we did the

going... and the boys. Get that feeling between the legs going. I think the audience deserves that sort of stimulus. Then the gigs are an experience

Where they've got lots of legends about hobgoblins living in hills. The people of Cornwall believe that in these hills are large caverns where the underworld hold banquets and if you stumble upon one of those you will be forever reduced to being an immortal. ZZ: Were you writing anything before you joined the band, because your lyrics aren't really like anyone else's?

PM: I was a printer before. I wasn't doing anything creative at all. I was really suppressed. Daniel rang me up, he'd just split up from a band, like his sixth attempt, and he said 'Come along I'll try and write something'. I sang. He said you've got a really good voice. Two weeks later we had a gig! It was unreal. A dream, and a total accident. I think the whole

personal. It's a pisstake of myself. 'Dark Entries' is some of them, like 'In Fear Of Fear' is directed at YOU (meaning the listener), about fear of one's self. If you have confidence you can do anything. I was afraid, like of teachers, and told to be afraid, afraid to be an individual yet I did this through my own personal choice. So it follows that if I can do it, others can too.

ZZ: Music seems to be the best medium to put these thoughts over and to receive them, especially at a young age.

PM: One thing I like as you mentioned about young people, is that people have always asked if I am responsible for anyone coming to our gigs and I've always said 'No'. Now I am

Pic. Fiona Imber

Bunnymen gigs, which went down really well.

Yet Bauhaus feel unhappy with the touring syndrome at present and after commitments to Australia and Japan have been honoured they'll be taking six months off.

PM: We got into that up until now, that whole circuit. Something's got to change, because some bands get to the stage where they tour all the time and that's stupid. The danger is you can ruin yourself, although a really major part of Bauhaus is a strong live show.

'Those naughty bits are just things I throw in to get the girls going... and the boys. Gets that feeling between the legs going.'

ZZ: You can be alarming onstage, but how do you cope with the larger venues when it comes to making contact?

PM: It's changed yeah, and perhaps lessened. That's one of the things I really enjoy, stimulating people from afar, it's like a visual task, but it's very important to make eye to eye contact with the front row.

(Discussing the 'naughty' picture of him in the last issue.)

PM: Most of it's totally spontaneous. I do what I think would work visually and what I feel about the song. Like 'Dark Entries' makes me feel really violent. That's usually last, and it's like an explosion. There's a hysteria there. 'Kick In The Eye' makes me feel very sexual, those little incidents there (picture time again), those naughty bits are just things I throw in to get the girls

and they've gone away with something.

ZZ: What has to happen before you do an encore?

PM: We have to feel like we really want to do them, regardless of what the audiences want. If we want to do one we have to feel right. Likewise if the audience really want us to then we have to feel up to it. We got a lot of hassle from 'obligatory' encores in Holland, they regard that as an insult if you don't do one. We almost had a couple of riots because we didn't feel like doing them.

... things I throw in to get the girls that feeling between the legs

After a discussion concerning David Jay's solo single with one of the old men actually involved in the original Bauhaus movement, I asked whether solo work was on the cards and if so how long they envisaged the band continuing?

PM: I dunno, we've still got to feel like we're together basically. We do see an end to it, in the next three years I'm sure it'll be finished. I'm certain it will be but when it ends it won't be on bad terms. You can never tell. That vital spark has to still be there. To continue because you've got some vain status would be silly.

We move to the subject of lyrics and in particular the song 'Hollow Hills' which is certainly my favourite on the album.

PM: 'Hollow Hills' is based around the Cornwall area

reason why I started writing is because it was out of an insulated area. I was never involved with music other than listening to it. I used to sing on my own, without ambition. Out of that negative insularity, suddenly you're thrust into this creative machine. It was like a break. I was free and really happy. I left my job. The change was amazing.

ZZ: These songs which were the first you ever wrote did any go on the first album?

PM: Yeah, 'Stigmata Martyr' — most of the songs I wrote on that album were from that period — 'Dark Entries' —

I wrote a lot of junk as well. I went along and they were all experienced. I was the observer. I was virginal compared to them.

ZZ: I find it very hard looking at your lyrics, to work out if the songs are personal at all.

PM: It varies. 'Muscle in Plastic' is the most obviously

feeling responsible. Like if you're projecting this dark side, it doesn't matter if you take it seriously, but someone else might.

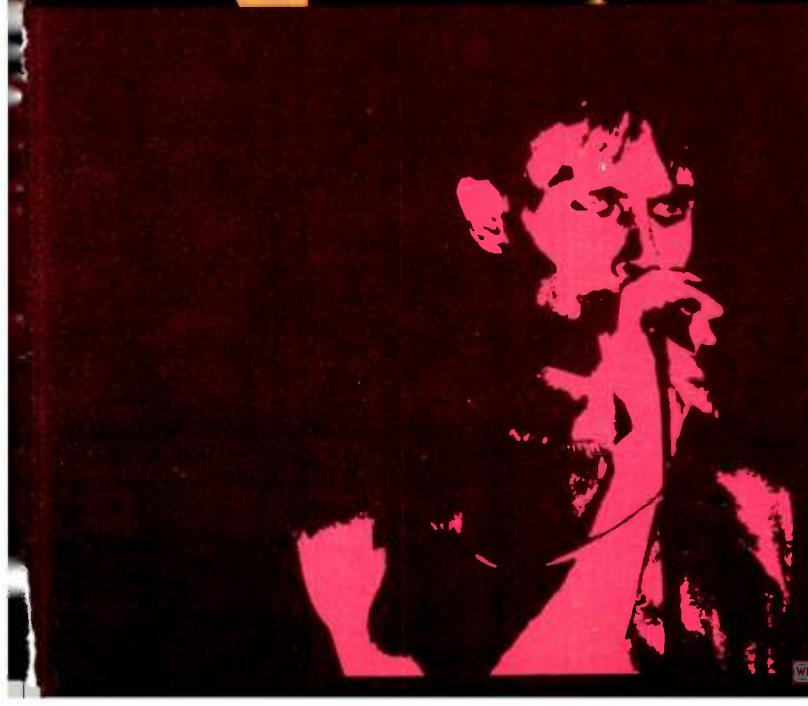
'Flat Field' was out of a depression and being totally pissed off with having to conform and being good moral and polite, and I was just getting into wanting to be really bad. Then again I suppose that's my religious past. It's a good lyric but it could influence a young mind. That's what I'm worried about having an influence.

ZZ: Obviously bands mean more when you're young, you have one main band and for a lot of people it could be you.

PM: Yeah and they certainly look up to you and at first I didn't care I was so wrapped up in myself. Now I realise I have responsibilities. I have to learn to be a performer but in a responsible way. I haven't learnt it yet. I'm still headstrong. A very ego-centred



Photo by Sheila Rock



person and I realise that. When you're doing something like 'Dark Entries' it's so violent that you forget. On reflection I may think 'Maybe that's a bit too strong', but that's how it is.

The tape becomes well buggered at this point and there are few things that remain, although the Murph professed his fascination of dancer Nijinski and mentioned the desire to work with Lyn Seymour but at the same time accepting that such things were 'Pie in the sky'.

PM She was heralded as being brilliant. She was brilliant and I think she should be doing something just as

potent in what is her new area, but she's not. I said that to David and he said 'You what??', and he really slagged me off assuming that I could work with her. I didn't mean it in an egotistical way like that. I just saw something in it.

The tape eventually ended, as did the interview. Hitching up his riding boots he departed.

The Mask has dropped?

MM.

★ Stray Cats

Stray Cats guitarist, singer and songwriter in chief, Brian Setzer gazes at the vacant cigarette pack lying on the couch of publicist Claudine's salubrious Kilburn offices.

"You smoke Lucky Strikes eh! It's toasted. Did you ever see Luckys adverts in the war? Luckys colours on the pack used to be olive drab before they went red and white. They used to come in Army colours and during the war they needed the dyes for the U.S. army uniforms — olive drabs and field greys. So they said 'Luckys colours have gone to war' and there was suddenly this enormous boom in Luckys sales, they sold billions and billions of cigarettes seeing as they had to change to the red and white pack."

So what about your Marlboro packet then Jim?

"Well actually, in the fifties and early sixties when Marlboro first started to come out with filtered butts, only old grandmothers in tennis shoes smoked 'em because they had a filter, right. So then they started to portray Marlboro as the tough Cowboy thing where now it wasn't faggy to have a smoke with a filter on it anymore. They pushed that big manly campaign across. Come to Marlboro country and ride your horse etc. So now Marlboro is the tough thing to smoke, but when it first came out, you had to be cissy to have a smoke with a filter on it. Before that campaign it didn't sell, so they changed it so Marlboro's were the COOL thing to smoke, the cowboy's cigarette. And that's how they started off. Mr Herman from my High School told me that."

At this, cigarettes are respectively drawn and lit before the next line of idle chat-cum-interrogation is called upon. The Stray Cats have gone through most of the correct hitmaking motions recently but have also omitted some important points. They have come up with a worthy successor to their debut album with the forceful 'Gonna Ball' but have also failed to tour or appear in any form over these shores since their first crosscountry jaunt.

This effectively negates some previous success evidenced with the poor chart showing of 'You Don't Believe Me', the first 45 cut from the new platter. Now they find themselves in a not too unique position, that of the chart group having to regain their position as a vanguard of youth and having also to regain their treacherous following which may be happy enough with other exponents of the unfortunate rockabilly revival which the Stray Cats themselves initiated.

Only a few weeks ago, they eyes of the record buying public were greeted with the sight of more Stray Cats plagiarists (namely the Jets) turning out their shallow parodies of Brian, Jimmy and Lee on *Top Of The Pops*. 'Goodnight Josephine' is the most obvious example of this creeping efficiency yet, with that snare sound, that bass thump and THAT guitar twang that Brian himself reintroduced to the record buyers. The chance that these copyists will continue for any appreciable length of time though is limited, but also depends on whether the Stray Cats can continue to keep their self-made standards above the waterline.

Jimmy explains his and the band's stay in the States as such: "We don't know what's going on, we haven't been here. But I don't think this rockabilly revival's going to affect us. We're old timers and we've established our own identity. The album is not as rockabilly as the first one, but it's still rock 'n' roll and we're a rock 'n' roll band."

"We could have sold out and made another straight rockabilly album like Shakin' Stevens is doing, but we didn't because we love the blues and R and B and that's what we've been listening to. That's why 'Gonna Ball' came out like it did. I think our sound is undefinable. If you want to call it rockabilly, then fine. But it's just our interpretation of rockabilly."

Brian continues — Everybody's freaking out about the album, but I don't think it's all

that different from the last one. I think everybody was expecting the same exact album with a different picture on the sleeve, — if we'd have done that they'd probably fuckin' love it.'

On the topic of their financial and worldly fortunes Jimmy is also enthusiastic. 'We're becoming more experienced in the studio every time now. We had a week to record the first

well, you're not a professional. Part of my job besides songwriting and playing the drums is dealing with the public. I've had trouble with schoolgirls, but that stuff is all part of it. I'm obnoxious to them sometimes and they seem to like it because that's my image, — my image is being the tall dark nasty one. It's weird with past connections too, long lost friends and stuff. The same people who made fun of ya might be your friends now, but Lee and



album, the whole fuckin' thing.

This time we had a month in Montserrat. Our manager Tony (Binge) has a business sense about him, he's a salesman and he has a good product, and if a salesman has a good product, he can sell it.

Our (still unmentionable) advance was paid for from the first album. It was a lot of money and now it's paid off. Time is money and talk is cheap. So cheap money takes a long time if you talk about it! Now we're thoroughly confused.

So what of the hassles of maintaining images and dealing with schoolgirl hordes et al?

'Dealing with the fans is part of your job and if you don't pull off that aspect of your career as

Brian's brother were my only friends then though, so that's okay.'

So now the Stray Cats have few immediate worries aside from the dilemma of Brian's Harley stuck in customs. End of story then. Bye bye

MARTS.

letters



118 Talbot Road, London W11 1JR.

won't be disappointed.

Well done Louisa. I hope interviewers from the weekly music papers pick up a tip or five from you ('Canton' is quite good really).

Marina Lambrou

to his 'rock 'n' roll' friends, rather than being given the opportunity to carry out this personal vendetta.

Yours,
Mood Six

(Any comments on the Mood Six were not my doing as any of the staff can confirm. I could additionally challenge you to detect any hint of sycophancy or favouritism in my writing. Is this all part of your master plan, chaps? You, and in particular your managerial staff (the disreputable Clive Solomon) really should get your facts straight before making feeble accusations and overtly hilarious threatening phone calls. Where does this personal vendetta hail from, or are you degenerating into premature paranoia? My only thoughts on the Mood Six were (and are) that as an honest to goodness pop band they fare amiably, but paisley garb does not a new Roky Erickson make. - Marts.)



READERSHIP 1982

(Whenever readerships become a 'readership' it evokes a flock of shiftless sheep, or worse; pigs that slop out); this is to be avoided because jails are overcrowded.

So from February I'll be writing a page or two on how the power structure hits you U.S. Australia or Warsaw - and especially as it hits rock'n'roll and what back drop .. steel, brick or wood.

While I write, a.m. one London morning the radio tells me that Washington sees

Dear 'Letters',
Hurray. At last. An interview on Japan without the usual trite references to their make-up or pretty boyishness, but one that actually concentrates on their music. I kept expecting smug, condescending criticisms to appear after every sentence (due to conditioning by other music papers) but it did not happen - a major breakthrough!!

Louisa Hennessy's answer-provoking questions incited Japan to talk (in depth) about their music, inspirations and attitudes, and revealed to the public the eloquent and



intelligent musicians that Japan are. In fact (surprise, surprise) Japan always have been, but cynical, irrelevant interruptions by the interviewer always detracted the reader from what was written and left them with 'a fictitious image created by the music press.'

I certainly cannot understand why it has taken so long for the music press and public to appreciate the music of Japan which is nothing short of fantastic (cliche I know, but I cannot think of an appropriate word to describe their music, except that 'IT IS').

Incidentally, 'Nightporter' is my favourite song of all time and I am going to see Japan live on the 23rd December. All I expect is Japan and I know I

do us punters find out what's happening next?

Well anyway I shouldn't crowd you with praise. I'd better go now to iron my best frock for the next great Zigzag event.

Love Pete.

PS: Who was the geezer with the hairy face, bloodshot eyes and silly cloak?

Dear Zigzag,
Thanks for the name-checks in last months ish. Marts' comments about Mood Six were fatuous but gave us all a laugh anyway. Shouldn't he be confined to writing his usual sycophantic drivel, pandering

another unnecessary death.

The facts and who'll buy isd all down to who sleeps with that rock'n'roll dream.

And also, on morning t.v. today comes "Hotshot", the laser machine that eradicates graffiti, no matter what it is writ upon.

Potential bones of contention could be (even for h'or deuvres) the events that Robert Johnson, Buddy Holly, Otis Redding, Lenny Bruce, John Lennon, Joe Strummer and Arthur Scargill kicked the traces over.

Robin Banks

ORANGE JUICE

After the ludicrously small and inept piece on this band last issue the band shed two members and now there are but three. We could see them soon.

MM

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STIMULIN

The Great-Brit-Funk-Fair is undeniably here and, as the saying goes, what you gain on swings (Vitality, Dancability, Action), you lose on the roundabout (Originality, Subversion, Progress)—or do you? A.B.C., Haircut 100, Funkapolitan....and the list—unlike the novelty—goes on...and on. 'Tears are not enough' they tell us but nor are secondhand fu(n)ked up instrumentals, aped rap vocals and synthetic soul—needle stuck in (or out of) the groove.

Tense, Nervous Headache? You need Stimulin...or so they tell me and perhaps I do. So, stifling a yawn of dulled anticipation, I'm off in search of revelation, refreshment or at least some remarkable rhythms. Shaking my soulshoes at the sound-check, a flicker of optimism kindles: this is the stuff conversions are made of...

Vocalist/guitarist Alix Sharkey, who doesn't want to be a sex object (TOUGH!), smoulders away nicely in the corner and has surprise in store. From what I've just heard Alix's approach to vocals bears that out: he overlays a distinctive voice interestingly on the other sounds. It's no mere emulation of a black-American funk style.

'No, well the songs aren't. I mean, we all work on the songs and that's what comes out of a collaboration: the vocals are a reflection of that. We don't fit into that funk category too easily and we've never tried to. That's why you can't pin down the lyrics or the vocals, we're not covering the same ground'... (all the way to Memphis—and back again?)... 'that would be pointless'. Collaboration is a key concern amongst the band, it's the principle on which they operate and it's working very nicely, thank - you. They're in this thing TOGETHER, sharing energy, (com)passion, tolerance and r-e-s-p-e-c-t. All good, clean christian virtues, you'll agree, but Stimulin aren't worshipping at anyone's altar. The Faith is in their music's power to inject life and their audience's ability to respond.

Pic. Chris Jones

The values, like the voices, are positive: anything but anarchic, everything but downers, depression, despair. Just like me, you and everyone (who didn't make a Pot of Gold out of it) Stimulin are blowing the

rub/compromise/cop-out. 'I think all of us would agree it's important to live your politics, not just spout them'

'There's a hell of a lot of implicitly politically biased funk music and a lot of tradition. It's music against oppression after all'.



...which leads us safely back to the sounds and why not? They're good at it, not highly sophisticated (yet) but inspired and individualistic—it's danceable and diverse. Elation, emotions and Innocent Rhythm: strip off the layers with your clothes: get back to basics. Red-hot passion. Enjoyment's a pushover. Alix articulates the consensus:

'What's important is the feeling that goes into making records. Anyone can bash out funk chords and if it's got the right bass and guitar it'll be a funk record but not necessarily a good one. Good funk's got a lot of soul in it—it's eighty percent soul'. Roger continues:

'When we say 'soul' we mean a musical high from listening to something. The word 'funk's the most abused in the musical shelf-labelling category. It's more to do with an attitude and if it doesn't work on the night it's not funk'. Care and anger, it would seem are two basic ingredients in Stimulin's particular Soul Stew. CARE and ANGER?? It makes them sound like social-work sould boys but they're in earnest, honest.

They're all aware that there are far more black funk bands in this country...but you never hear them, because of prejud-

ice basically'. Roger goes on:

'It's very unfortunate that white funk gets all the credit. Stimulin may be 'holed up in white harlem' but the breakout's in sight. Back to Alix: YOU'RE SO ANTI-FASHION SO WHY PERRY HAINES?

'Posing's no reaction to oppression, you know', Alix announces, leading me helpfully to my next question. You know, it's the one about Fashion, Image, The Scene Rumour has it that Stimulin want out, that their anti-image stance is unshakeable which surprises some because the band are managed by King of Image Consultants, fashionneer and I.D. editor Perry Haines.

'If you read I.D. you'll see that the principles of it are anti-fashion'.

Sorry, John, I do read it but I don't see it. Sure, it's about street level flambouyance but that kind of sartorial artistry denotes no small dedication to the Perfection of the Pose. Alix continues, undeterred:

'I think the magazine demystifies fashion. This is it. That's it's principle and it does it very well. It elevates people in the street to a certain position... we won't say what that is... so bringing down people normally above that. It compresses things and levels them out. That's what we're into as well, it comes across in our visual presentation...'.

If Stimulin lack cynicism it does not make them naive, they know what they're about. Whilst criticising the crass commercialism of the record industry they have no illusions about non-participation:

'We can't remain outside of it, we're very much in a position where we've got to deal with it and cope with it properly'... 'We want to do this as a living and we have to rely on it to get finance, basically—that's what it boils down to'. In the next three weeks a single will be recorded. The title? 'Absolute Number One'... With Wit.

Stimulin favour feeling, promote passion, sure, but that doesn't make them spiritual mentors or metaphysical missionaries so let's not mystify what's already clear. 'What's metaphysical anyway? It's a stage show...'. Well, I hate to be pedantic Alix, but it's got a lot to do with the SOUL and if the cap fits...

L.WHITE

a fresh Selection

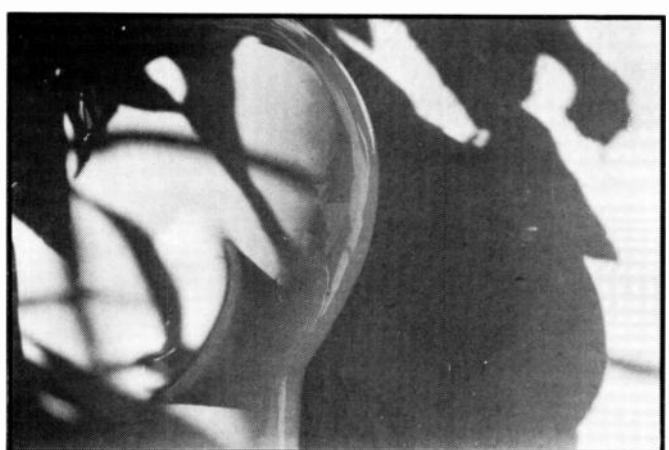
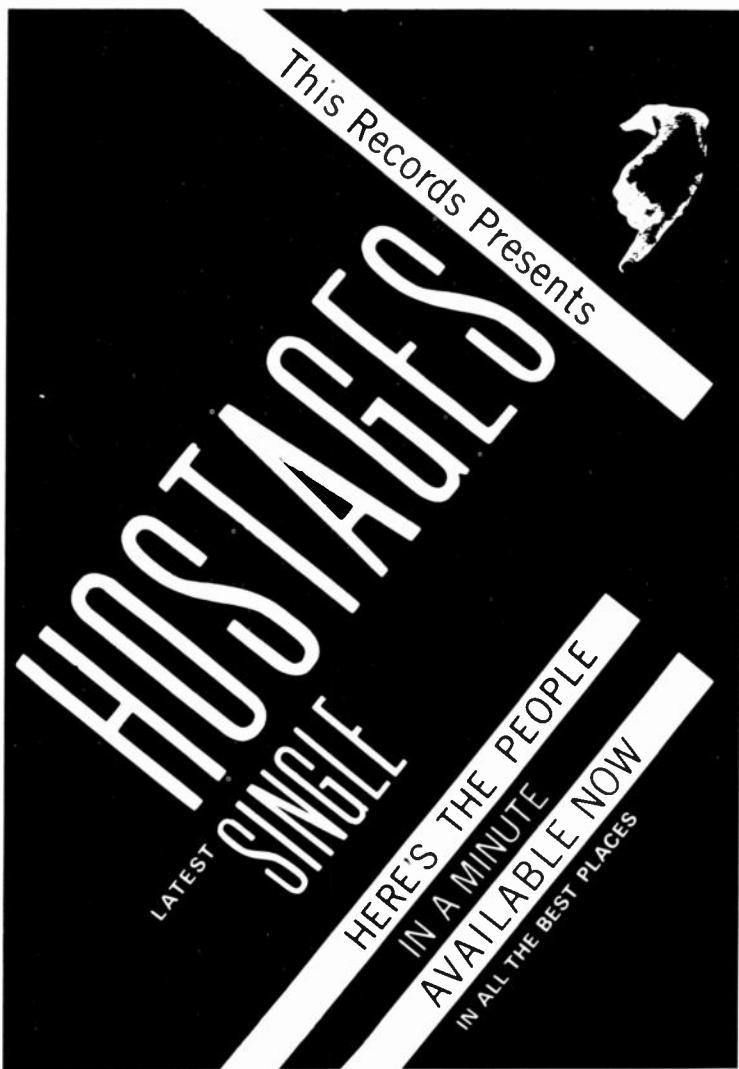


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SONGS

THE DAMNED: 'The Best Of The Damned' (DAM 1)

There is really nothing to say about this record which contains all the old favourites from 'New Rose' to 'History Of The World Part I'. Compilations are rather odd in that I would have thought that any fan would have all the tracks anyway, but they must surely serve as a handy way of getting a band's most well-known work without suffering all the dross as well (if your ideas of favourite tracks coincide with the compiler's, that is). A must for any Damned fan or any would-be fan.

and he displays it all in an album which should appeal to absolutely everyone. An undoubted winner!

LH.

'Tonight Is The Night' is slow and sax ridden and 'King Of Siam' is Japan territory. A lumpy LP but devious with it.

MM.

TENPOLE TUDOR: 'Let The Four Winds Blow' (Stiff)

...and crack they cheeks and bones, Bob looks silly on the cover. Whilst I first love their music I prefer it in 45er dosage as opposed to large circles, so this wasn't immediately sizzling beneath my scat.

From track one it skips idiotically about, with zest meeting grappling rhythms:

LH.



The Damned

JAMES BROWN: 'Live In New York' (Audiofidelity)

A live double album recorded in New York containing lots of the old favourites, including 'It's Too Funky In Here', 'Sex Machine', 'Papa's Got A Brand New Bag' and a tremendous 14 minute version of 'This Is A Man's World'.

Virtually all the funk bands of today, be they black or white, can trace their influences back to James Brown and this album shows you why: he's got soul, funk and style and is rightly the Godfather Of Funk

'Trumpeteers' for instance is a slow ballad, Eddie weeping pathetically into his mulled wine. 'It's Easy To See' is classique Tenpole, bopping furiously as rampages through the tweeters, strangely akin to a Gary Glitter item.

My favourite track opens side two, called 'Local Animal' here, although it was 'the B-side to the last single and was then known as 'Conga Tribe'. It could have been the liveliest single of the year. They must be mad! 'Her Fruit Is Forbidden' thrashes delightfully, but

SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES: 'Once Upon A Time'/'The Singles' (Polydor)

Enclosed within these grooves and pointless sleeve notes: 'Hong Kong Garden', 'Mirage', 'The Staircase(Mystery)', 'Playground Twist', 'Love In A Void', 'Happy House', 'Christine', 'Israel', 'Spell-bound' and 'Arabian Knights' (oy, what happened to 'Fireworks'?). One of the finest streams of 45s ever to be unleashed onto mankind. Just that.

KN.

DAVID BYRNE: 'The Catherine Wheel' (Sire)

By now everyone must be familiar with Byrne's recent work and this album of music for the Twyla Tharp Dance Foundation is a continuation of his work with Brian Eno. It's quite similar in style to 'My Life In The Bush Of Ghosts' although not so frantic, a style which has been much copied in the last year and which has influenced so many people, but David Byrne still does it best. For creative invention and use of instrumentation coupled with listening accessibility, it can't be beaten. Excellent.

LH.

DIAGRAM BROTHERS: 'Some Marvels Of Modern Science' (New Hormones)

Well-packaged album with cut-out portfolio and cards, instructions on how to listen to the album whilst reading the relevant card etc. The Diagram Brothers' sound is quite sparse with considerable emphasis on the words, the songs on this album referring to some marvels of modern science i.e. the usual references to seals, ads, bombs, police etc, I'm sure you can fill in the rest. Musically, it's quite inventive, not vastly different from their 2 singles, well worth a listen.

LH.

ABBA: 'The Visitors' (Epic)
Oh! Sneaky one. Suddenly a year after 'Supertrouper', the album I had been led to expect in the New Year just in time for Christmas.

What to say except it's reaffirm Abba's supremacy in pop fields — no-one creates a widescreen gloss of sound like this. And they've boosted the drums to sound like mountains and the voices like they're in your front room. Also a tightening up on the lyrics, which deal succinctly with such themes as loneliness, paranoia (the ominous title track), nuclear war ('Soldiers' and how they could make us dance when they want), and, of course, love. 'One Of Us' might be the single but the miraculous choruses of 'Head Over Heels' and 'When All Is Said Is Done' would be the Christmas Number Ones. Phil Oakey is unfriendly.

KN.

ALAN VEGA. 'Collision Drive' (Celluloid)

Sadly, it seems . Suicide just can't keep together despite their recent teamup for the ZE Christmas record. This makes me mad — they've been going over a decade in that psychotic electronic, keyboard-vocal setup and just as wankers like Soft Cell come along and clean up in that format, they bow out and Vega goes and forms a three-piece guitar-orientated rock band!

My biggest gripe about the silly, fickle and scared Music Scene aside, it can be said that Vega is still dangerous and different. Further into the ludicrously-simplified rockabilly of last year's solo effort for most of this album, doing a razor-job on 'Be-Bop-A-Lula' and charging through many tracks with a simple backbeat and murmur-scream-murmur voice. Sometimes the bluesy guitar gets irritating, more often the relentless fuzz roar is compulsive, but it's the closing 'Viet Vet' which'll stand as the classic, the new 'Frankie Teardrop'. It fills most of side two — death-slow, ponderous, almost HM, screaming,

heaving, disturbing, as Vega relates the sad tale of the war-veteran with his bleeding stump and no marbles.

As usual from the Suicide camp the real thing to slash all the gloss and fake sleaze. Hopefully, this time, not unnoticed.

KN.

AFRAID OF MICE: 'Afraid Of Mice' (Charisma)

This album is a mixture of fairly standard new wave, interspersed with the occasional good bit. The first track 'Popstar' is powerful and commanding, but the rest of them don't really live up to the initial promise. 'Intercontinental' in particular demonstrates that the usual 3 chords have been done to death, although there is a strong melody line. The opening track on side 2 'Taking It Easy' is a departure in style from the rest of the album being more reflective, but on the whole there's not a lot to distinguish it from any other band.

LH.

THE REFLECTIONS: 'Slubs And Toads' (Cherry Red)

That old illustrious role call that reads Nag, Karl Blake, Dennis Burns and Mark Perry heralds another worthy release of worthy songs. A naive collection of amateurish songs that seem deliberately hampered by a will to be this way.

The complete opposite of Mark Perry's last album that showed the other side of the coin. Charming in a way ('Zigzagging' is quite bouncy) but also annoying for some reason ('Demon Of My Desires'). I like it not.

MM.

VARIOUS: 'Making Waves' (Girlfriend)

Quite why the gathering of all girl bands should be a clarion call of independence and publicity be expected in droves for this uninspired item I know not. There's so many female musicians around at the

entice listeners other than ardent feminists who will buy anything they're told is good. If you don't believe me buy a copy of Spare Rib and see prejudice in action.

MM.

VARIOUS: 'Disco Rough' (Celluloid)

A puzzling concept of 'different' disco (is that what's meant to happen?) and a boring one. Alan Vega is entirely insipid. Tortoises may yet be able to dance rock and roll.

Material make resonantly interesting soundtrack noise for American B-Movies. The rhythms are bouncy enough but the keyboards decidedly weak at the knees.

The star of the show, although not much of one at that, is someone called Jacno who turns up in various roles all over the album, and coaxes memorable tunes out of the morass. Real Eurovision stuff.

Reasonable also are Mathematiques Moderne, and obscure breeding of Plastic Bertrand and Ultravox.

Waste of space really.

MM.

RAS MICHAEL AND THE SONS OF XEGUS 'Disarmament'/PRINCE FAR I 'Voice of Thunder'/PRINCE PAR I AND THE ARABS 'Cry Tuff Dub Encounter Chapter IV (Trojan)

Three albums of varying moods, with Cry Tuff being my preference, beginning as it does with a gloomy detective soundtrack — built on moodiest of moody feelings. The dub revolves around a set routine but it's great thinking music. 'Sound Gestures' is entrancing, 'Earth Stone Shake Down' is divine. Not bad at all.

The 'Thunder' album bored me occasionally. A nice mixture of imposing music and sweet dalliance but pretty dull.

'Disarmament' rests on lazy serene musings, tinkling here and there. Relaxed and swaying. Drift away....

MM.



Afraid Of Mice

SLADE: 'Till Deaf Us Do Part' (RCA)

From 'Rock and Roll Preacher (Hallelujah I'm On Fire)' to 'Knuckle Sandwich Nancy', this album is what you might expect from Slade. Very commercial, very heavy, occasionally a touch grandiose, but good abrasive fun. There is no need to dwell on details because you know their trademarks well.

MM.

moment that the subject is no longer controversial. Everyone accepts it. This is no longer 1976. On the whole album it was only The Androids Of Mu who sounded remotely interesting.

Most of the music seems pre-ordained to be pre-historic. It's all so dated. The quality of music is as exciting as Beril And The Perils, a feminist satire troupe and hopelessly misguided. Nothing here will



TRB: 'TRB' (EMI)

A simple enough collection of all the TRB songs which you should remember. '2468/Glad To Be Gay/Don't Take No For An Answer' etc.

MM

COMPILATION: (The Thing From The Crypt

A Watford compilation this and a relatively enjoyable mix. Space restricts this review, so let's just say if these are your kinda thing, then just buy this for the peculiar tracks by a band called Mex. I like it but I don't know why. Peculiar.

MM

WASTED YOUTH: 'Wild And Wandering' (Bridge House Records)

There hasn't been much happening this year to stir me out of my local opium den and into a sea of excitement. Apart from Wasted Youth, that is. I don't particularly want to go too much over the top about the first Wasted Youth album, but I have to be entirely honest in saying that they have produced something that will keep me happy for some time yet. Not since The Only Ones or Psychedelic Furs debut albums has an album truly kept me spellbound and the mere mention of those two bands - one past, one present should show two of many influences within the music of Wasted Youth.

Wasted Youth are kids of today growing up through the punk era and into tomorrow. Former Ant fan and now Wasted Youth vocalist, Ken Scott writes lyrics that epitomise today. He doesn't sing about career opportunities or anarchy in the UK, but he does sing about sex, violence and drugs, drugs, drugs! Drugs have become an important part of the music business and any band with The Velvet Underground as its major influence will sing about drugs.

Youth all come from East London and have all seen and been involved in violence on the streets and therefore this comes across as well. Wasted Youth live and feel their music and just as important, their image. Constantly slagged by the ever changing face of the music press (Psychedelia and Latin-American funk today, tomorrow - who knows), Wasted Youth live in their black outfits and they live out the rock'n'roll image of live fast, die young.

'Wild And Wandering' is a good collection of Wasted Youth music featuring faves like 'I Wish I Was A Girl' and 'Maybe We'll Die' as well as newer material such as 'Housewife' and 'Pinned And Grinning'. The production is the best yet by Bridge House artiste, John Holliday. Ken Scott's vocals have never sounded better and there's a nice surprise in 'Survivors Part One' when Ken's drumming brother Andy takes over the vocals and creates a sound not unlike Doll By Doll's Jackie Levene.

The regular five piece line up include Darren Murphy (bass), Rocco (guitar) and Nick Nicole (keyboards) and they are all very much up to scratch, musically. Andy's drumming on 'Survivors Part Two' is reminiscent of early Pink Floyd and I could scribble out influences all day and night but the point is that Wasted Youth are today's music. They are the afterglow of nuclear destruction, (sorry?... Ed) the decadence after the fall of the punk empire. They are everything I love about rock'n'roll from their music to their image.

ALAN ANGER



WASTED YOUTH

TOM WAITS: 'Bounced Cheques' (Warner Bros):

MINK DEVILLE: 'Savoir Faire' (Capitol)

DR. FEELGOOD: 'Casebook' (Liberty)

Three 'Best Ofs.' plonked into our laps for the Christmas market, and in the case of Willy, to grab some of the action on a UK tour with old label back-catalogue.

The Tom album mainly concentrates on the smokey vamps and ballads off more recent albums like 'Heart Attack And Vine' and 'Blue Valentine' but with alternate masters and an out-take ('Mr Henry' off 'Vine') to magnetise the devotees who've already got 'em. This album made me really get interested in Waits and his twilight world Louis Armstrong croonings.

For Mink tracks are drawn off his three Capitol albums - a mixture of Latin ballads and hoarse shouters, plus the 'Spanish Stroll' hit. Unfashionable but pleasurable.

Meanwhile the Feelgoods pop out another looking-back except this time it's not live but the originals. R. and B.

KN

KISS: 'The Elder' (Casablanca)

Yay! Kiss make their stab at a concept album, I love Kiss just 'cause they have to be the grossest band ever. But this one's a bit disappointing once you get past the storyline because of the pandering heavy metal style. BUT, it does hold a couple of great moments, like the fanfare and Gene Simmons' first try at falsettoism in 'Just A Boy'. 'Mr Blackwell' is more heavy metal fare but yields some great lyrical moments as in those superlative lines, 'You're not well/Mr Blackwell/And we can tell/Why don't you go to hell'.

Let's hear it for the American Symphony Orchestra!

MARTS.

VIRGIN TOP 20 SELLING ALBUMS.

1. SIOUXSIE & THE BANSHEES: Greatest Hits (Polydor)
2. AC/DC: For Those About To Rock (Atlantic)
3. TEARDROP EXPLODES: Wilder (Mercury)
4. GROVER WASHINGTON: Grover Washington (WEA)
5. SOFT CELL: Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret (Some Bizarre)
6. POLICE: Ghost In The Machine (A & M)
7. DAVID BYRNE: Catherine Wheel (Sire)
8. HUMAN LEAGUE: Dare (Virgin)
9. Ze Christmas Album (Island)
10. EARIH, WIND & FIRE: Raise (CBS)
11. CMD: Architecture & Morality (Dindisc)
12. ELKIE BROOKS: Pearls (A & M)
13. DAVID BOWIE: Changestwobowie (RCA)
14. SIMON & GARFUNKEL: Simon & Garfunkel Collection (CBS)
15. BLONDIE: The Best Of Blondie (Chrysalis)
16. ELVIS COSTELLO: Almost Blue (F-Beat)
17. NEW ORDER: Movement (Factory)
18. ULTRAVOX: Rage in Eden (Chrysalis)
19. ASWAD: New Chapter (CBS)
20. GEORGE BENSON: The George Benson Collection (Warner Brothers)
20. JOY DIVISION: Still (Factory)

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FINISH THE STORY

"First of all there is the feeling of desperate loneliness. Then out of the confusion and void, you find the reason to carry on, finally the decision to do your best for the one you love most."

Nichola

Those lines came from the mind of Nichola Mumford, singer with Evesham's Finish The Story, an unusual band by anyone's standards.

The whole reason behind the band's existence, their music and their lyrics centre around a touchy and emotional subject.

When Stuart Dyke, at the time playing bass for The Dancing Did, died in a car crash, Nichola lost the person most important to her.

Witnessing their first gig at the Phoenix Club in hill-laden Malvern, I was instantly astounded by their unrelenting purge of the atmosphere, (yet in the basic couplets there was variety and a certain fragility) and made plans to interview them, the idea of which caused them much worry at the time. The delicacy of the matter likewise made me think twice, and in cowardice I put it off for

several months.

Later again the mention of 'interview' sent Nichola and Garry (Keyboard and video impressario) into deep bouts of nocturnal worrying. They composed a short statement that they hoped would get over the problem of bringing themselves to talk about something that they'd rather the songs explained. It ran thus...

"How can you consider speaking or writing things that words don't even come close to expressing. It's hard to put a reason to something that had to be done; it's even harder convincing people this is no ego trip. But to reject and forget would be callous to play on the subject even more callous. An answer may be that no-one should ever know."

So we met in a ludicrously kitsch cafeteria and the matters were finally broached. To dwell on the past might seem 'historically justifiable' but persistence against their wishes would be immoral.

Fellow members Pete (Bass and lead guitar) and Jeremy (saxophone) were absent, which made Nichola's ordeal much easier.

ZZ: Is everything about the band a constant worry?

Nichola: Not really, you don't think about it that much.

ZZ: What did you think when you first started it?

Nichola: Well then it was all so clear, I knew exactly what I wanted to do. The fact that it might upset people didn't cross my mind at all, but now it's such a touchy subject.

Garry: It's not as though Nichola does it from a generalised point of view, it's totally personal. People who do listen probably don't understand.

ZZ: Of the (six) songs how many are about Stuart?

Nichola: There are two actually for him, but it's all loosely based around him.

ZZ: In the future there'll presumably come a point when the lyrics do become more generalised?

Nichola: There will come a point obviously when I can't sing the set that I'm doing now. At the moment it's alright because I still feel strongly about it, but there's got to come a point where I don't want to stand up there and sing songs like 'Apparently' anymore.

ZZ: Is it enough that those songs existed in a live form or would it be important that they come out on record?

Nichola: I don't know, it's

hard... I don't really think our stuff would work on record. I think we're an actual live band. 'Doorways' live is terrible. It's awful.

Garry: What we're thinking of doing is putting that out on a single and then dropping it from the live set. Bit of an unconventional thing to do: bring a single out then never play it live, but it means we haven't 'dropped' it; it means that it exists. That and 'Apparently' are the most important songs in the set but it's such a bugger to play live. I haven't got enough hands to work the keyboards. It's either that or buy more equipment or get another person - I don't want a drummer. In fact on the new song we don't even use the drum machine. It's really bare. The synths just going (FX: The Titanic sinking), we've got no musical style at all, it's not based on anything, in fact each song is almost a pure thumb up itself, sticks out of the set like an oddity. 'Boxes' is the oddity: people actually dance to it.

The new song, we're gonna show on the end of the set, after the video, it brings attention back to the band and the music. It also finishes cleaner. When you finish on the video on

something like 'Playing At Life', it falls apart. The TV stops and people realise the band has walked offstage as well.

The idea of using a video entered before we actually wrote a song. The only reason we did live work was because Timmy (Dancing Did) offered us the Malvern gig, so we had to get something live together. It could conceivably have ended up with Nichola writing words and me just putting music down, and making videos to it and just releasing little video albums.

Nichola: About three days before the gig Pete arrived.

Garry: He had four hours practice with us before the gig.

Nichola: I didn't matter though because the musical content wasn't that important. It was all so naive, it was beautiful. Garry: I think that's why we're finding it so hard to write songs. We'd written a couple of pop songs!!

Nichola: Yeah we'd started to get complex! It's not nice.

Garry: It was almost like getting happy again.

ZZ: What's the criteria for a song, if you bunged 'em out cos they were too poppy?

Nichola: If we're happy playing it, that's most important.

Garry: We're all naive. There seems to be some kind of kamikaze instinct to try and be professional.

Nichola: Obviously it doesn't matter, because we are getting over to people I really believe in what I'm doing, so I put every ounce of everything into it, when we're playing 'live'. They say 'I like that', 'That's good', and things...

Garry: And 'You're better than I thought you were going to be'.

ZZ: What about the onstage visuals. You're often grinning your head off, do you think afterwards maybe you shouldn't be doing that?

Garry: Well at Malvern we had that song 'Dodgy Concept' which I immediately dropped like a hot cake afterwards, we didn't even consider rehearsing it again.. we didn't even mention it. I practically burst out into hysterics, crawling around the floor trying to hide, pretending I was mending something. Totally lost it.

Nichola: We only did it two hours before the gig.

Garry: I wrote the theme and couldn't for the life of me remember it. I love playing 'Apparently' because of my own personal reasons, and I don't mind playing it. 'Always' 'Boxes' is the one I tend to play around in, tend to just Beethoven type arm movements.

Nichola: It always goes so

quick.

Garry: That's why we're trying to write a song where it ends on such a climax that you walk offstage almost wanting an encore.

ZZ: Is there a danger for you of it becoming too musical?

Nichola: We've been through this already actually. We had a really awful row.. it's like we're all married to the band, and it got to the stage where I was put in the position where I was forced to write even though I didn't have anything to say. I couldn't cope with it. It was 'Set's not long enough, we need new numbers'. It wasn't free at all, and you could tell. It was terrible, a big clash and we said 'Look we're going about this the wrong way. It's got to come on its own', and it works so much better. You can't force things; not with stuff like this anyway.

ZZ: Not being able to 'write to order' do you envisage difficulties when you reach the point when the songs change?

Nichola: The thing is I'm

changing all the time, the way I

feel about things, and the way I

look on things. The more I write

the easier it is to write what I

feel.

Garry: Well take the line from 'Apparently'.. 'Left alone to finish the story', hence the name of the band. What Nichola's doing is finishing the story. It's just the continuation of her life from the point when we started the band. I suppose the set will become like a diary, the further you get into Nichola's growing up or life continuing, then songs like 'Apparently' will be like the front of a diary that won't be read. They won't be forgotten.. they'll still be in that diary.

ZZ: Have you seriously considered records?

Nichola: We haven't even thought about that. We're still doing it because it's what we want to do. Record companies just treat you like shit. You haven't really got any say in what they do, and I mean it's your material, it's your stuff and they say 'We want to do this, want to put that out'.

Garry: It's because records are just ephemera, they're just throwaway. To them it's all money so they don't look upon them as art, or emotion.

Nichola: I think the trust aspect of it is so important, having faith in people. I can't stand people who lie and let you down.

Garry: We can't really go on a big label because if Nichola can't and doesn't want to write to order then no record company would ever have us. We'd have to have it as a

clause in the contract, they couldn't say you'd have to turn out three singles a year.. we couldn't do it. We could never sign a contract like that. There's no hurry. Everybody's hurrying to be famous these days. It's really nice to be riding along, really believing in a single song and put it out under your own power. I don't mind having a thousand copies of a single wallpapering my bedroom.. as long as it's got my name on. Long as my mum thinks I'm doing something. It is fashionable to have been to an art college now isn't it?

ZZ: Yeah, this week.

Garry: That's alright then, at art college you're taught to do what you want really, and bugger everyone else. So it's a continuation of art college really.

ZZ: Where do you get all the money from because the gear looks expensive.

Garry: It is.

Nichola: (giggling) Do you have to ask that question?

Garry: I got left some money in a will a few years ago, and I think when the Russians invaded Afghanistan I thought well it's not worth hoarding all this lot so I went out and blew it.

Nichola: I'd like people to buy a record by us and listen to it.

ZZ: Could you put a single out at the moment?

Garry: No, she wants to buy a car, we want to have a van, have you seen our wonderful van?

Nichola: You just sit in it and pray. It's a wagon. That's the only thing we haven't got, proper transport.

Garry: If we toured abroad, well we can't. The synths would need flight cases, the TVs would need to be boxed up. Nichola: Nothing's got cases, hence a cup of tea over the TEAC.

ZZ: Is it good that you all come from separate areas (Evesham, Bristol, Bromsgrove and London)?

Nichola: I really like it the way it is, we're all in our own little worlds. We ring up to arrange a rehearsal and then we all come together (so the rumours are true!) It's a really nice feeling.

Garry: We'd probably be pressurising Nichola to write songs because we'd be bored knowing damn well that the instruments were there, but now Jez can only come up from London every other week, which puts the edge on it because it means at the weekend we have to work hard or suffer. We can take it very relaxed. The first week we just drank champagne. It was





ZZ: Malvern was supposed to be only a one-off, why continue?

Nichola: When I walked offstage I felt I was about ten foot tall, I felt the best I'd felt since it happened. It was a way of exorcising it. It's a way of getting over it.

ZZ: Has it remained therapeutic?

Nichola: Oh yeah, at the Moonlight I was in a world of my own. They could have dropped the bomb and I wouldn't have known any different. Gary, Pete and Jeremy thought it was terrible, which was because what they were doing was all falling apart but I was so wound up...

ZZ: Your performance at the Moonlight was more impactful than at the Malvern gig.

Nichola: I felt more on my own, more isolated. I felt such a live wire because it's the place where I last saw Stuart play live.

ZZ: Do you envisage many problems, like this interview?

Nichola: The record side is alright, but interviews... I think we'll be misunderstood. Things we say could be twisted so horribly. I mean it's the subject people don't want to talk about.

Garry: It's something every religion in the world tries to suppress, they say it's a wonderful thing and you shouldn't harp on it.

Nichola: But it's our direction. People are going to get really upset, that's what I can see.

Might get quite hurt. People don't like talking about it basically. Thing is we're coming over as such bloody macabre depressing people, but we're not. But because that's what I write about and that's what the set is about then that's what's gonna come over in interviews. We've got to sort out how we're going to say things, not what but how.

Garry: It can all get twisted. You can say you formed because of the death of Stuart.. the only reason she keeps going is because she doesn't want to fail in front of Stuart. The reason why we turn up for rehearsals is for him. We Even if we drop 'Apparently' in a years time and the songs then are about what's happening to Nichola in a years time, it'll still be for him. It's one hell of a driving force but that's gonna get twisted something rotten. 'Necrophiliacs' and god knows what else.

Nichola: I think what I'm doing is a much nicer memorial.. it's the nicest memory he could have... to keep him going.

ZZ: Traditional idea of a person grieving after a death is introverted and angry... it's saved you from that?

Nichola: Oh yeah, I still get really wound up and angry. I think it's disgusting the way things turned out, all the jokes about British justice. It doesn't exist, it's so fucking pathetic it really is. That really annoys me. It's a way of letting it out.

We change the subject to

Berlin, the fair city they recently visited and they haven't even written a song about it!

Garry: It's funny we didn't get any material out of it, because I got so frightened in the East

ZZ: Any hostility?

Nichola: Curiosity more than anything. 'What the hell is that?' but it got too much after a while

Garry: You go thinking, 'We're the West, aren't we wonderful' but you realise that they don't give a shit. I don't think they liked us at all. The people in East Berlin have got it pretty easy comparatively. That's supposed to be the showpiece of communism isn't it? That's why they let people in to have a look at it. We did find one pub that played rock 'n' roll. It was about the size of your cassette player

Nichola: It was crazy. You'd be walking down the street, great big grey bland buildings and you'd turn the corner and there'd be this great big bloody fountains, and they'd built it all for us to spend our money on when we go over the wall. It's ridiculous... they've built a completely different sector.

Garry: It's a brave new world, it really is.. but it's horrible. You can't go and see the real Berlin, it's pubs, clubs and people with silicone breasts.

Nichola: It's got an extra little bit of magic though because it's frightening.

Which in a sense sums up Finish The Story. It's weird. Keep watching Top of the Pops.

MM



"...so now you've poured out what was inside,
the feeling doesn't change,
but direction must,
now the decision to carry on,
to the one I love most".

Nichola



ONE STEP AHEAD OF THE B.I. BLUES

O
A
M
P

'We wouldn't take a band's career in our hands and destroy them.'

1981 will go down in history as a year of mass unemployment and Margaret Thatcher, nuclear warfare and rather be dead than Red' policies from Ronald Reagan, bloody riots and burning streets as a generation of condemned youths hit back at their oppressors. It was a year in which Britain was forced to her knees like an ugly old lady no longer capable of answering the demands of her starving children. It was depression and disillusion.

And as always the music world has microcosmed the real world. 1981 has seen angry idealism from defiant young bands such as the Exploited, frantic escapism from the 'futurist' sector, and from UB40 came harsh realism.

UB40 are in my opinion the band who summed the whole situation up the best. They state what they see without imposing their views upon you. The very name of the band reflects urban youth. They are both unobtrusive and potent, a group without a face or a cult. They rely on quality music rather than image, a refreshing thing nowadays. Anyway, onto the main issue, which is the interview.

I met UB40 in the basement of their record company in Kilburn. I think all of them were around, but I only spoke to three — namely Ali Campbell (rhythm guitar), Earl Falconer (bass guitar), and Brian Travers (saxophonist). They've just returned from their second European tour this year...

My first question is the inevitable 'How did the tour go?'

Earl (who proves to be a man of gentle disposition but few words) — Great!

Brian: We went with Afrikan Star. It's the second time we've toured Europe, we went over earlier in the year. In the

South. We did Northern Europe this time.

Ali: We managed to play most of the places we had to miss out on the first tour. The audience has been more responsive because they've heard more of our music, they know more of what we do.

Brian: Have you ever seen us?

ZZ (panicking as I realise that I haven't) — Well, no actually, sorry.

Brian: I'm surprised. We've played about three million gigs in this country. We've been all around it four times.

Ali: Six times. We've done half a dozen major tours of Britain.

Brian: We're going to America early next year, just to do a short tour. We were there last year, in May, as well. We're going to do another single first, though, in January.

ZZ: You're doing a benefit gig for the T.U.C. next week?

Brian: Yeah, well, it's not for the T.U.C. We're doing it for the three thousand unemployed people in Coventry. The T.U.C. are just organising it. We wouldn't do one just for the T.U.C.

Brian: Well basically the T.U.C. are manipulating young people just as much as anyone else is. Ali: It's a rough situation for the Trades Union because they're in a situation where there aren't many jobs and they're not going to have many members. They've got to enrol as many as they can.

Brian: They're not going to get many from this, everyone's unemployed.

Ali: No, they're not, but they can get an aura of respectability about themselves, if you see what I mean. They're influencing kids now that may some day be employed. Very doubtful, but some of them will be.

Brian: That's the main reason they're spending so much time and money on things like the Right To Work Campaign. They're mainly conservative.

Ali: They certainly don't agree with the right not to work.

Brian: It is basically a money-making concern. It's a business, a big business, a big organisation.

Ali: Let's talk about the album. (Present Arms in Dub)

Brian: That's my favourite album we've done, my favourite to listen to anyway.

ZZ: Tell me about your record company (Dep Records). Have you your own studios?

Ali: Not yet. We're building those. We're buying a big warehouse in the middle of Birmingham, because they're all going for a song now. We'll make that into a studio, with a lot of practice rooms.

label being like Trojan, where you know you're going to get quality on the label, you know there's going to be no bullshit attached to it.

Brian: We're going to have dub on it, we're going to get good music of that mode.

Earl: It'll be music that we're into personally.

Brian: There's a big problem with the music business at the moment, where record companies are run by businessmen. They'll only make sound investments. There's so much good music that won't ever be listened to by a lot of people.

Ali: Music comes first to us.

Brian: That's it. Our company would never have signed Adam and the Ants, because his music stinks. It doesn't matter about all the rest, and how much money we would have made.

Ali: What we want to do is have a record label that will be producing good music, and will be recognisable as such. It will appeal to people who are interested in that kind of music.

Brian: We control everything we do, totally. It seems really old-fashioned now. When we started three years ago, a band just wasn't taken seriously if they signed to a major label. That wasn't our reason for doing it, we did it ourselves because we have a basic mistrust of everyone. And as it stands, it's great because anything that goes wrong is our mistake, there's no-one

music. They've most definitely succeeded. You might not like them, but the standard is high. Brian: Have you heard the Bureau? They're twice the band. They are what Dexy's should have been. They've still got all this macho bullshit, but without the intellectual pretensions.

Ali: Music without the literature. The important thing isn't what you see, it's what comes out of the speakers and what it does to you when you hear it.

Brian: To me, the best records I ever hear are when you don't know who's playing them and they're so fucking good. You

really fantastic shows, what a fantastic medium to work in. But it shouldn't be more important than the music, they should go together.

Earl: The difference is there's a lot of good music in Vaudeville. Brian: The best thing about the new trend, the salsa and that, is there's a conscious return to playing instruments and making them sound good. But it's white-washed by all this crap.

We want to put the emphasis back on to music, they say. Like them or hate them, the honesty of the music is undeniable.

SARA JONES



'We wouldn't sign people because they play particularly 'fashionable maracas.'

ZZ: Are you going to release records by other bands?

Ali: Yeah, but not yet. Not until we can give them the financial support that they need. We've got to get it all sorted out. We want to get enough staff and experience, get to know enough about the business.

Brian: We've got to get enough technical ability first. We wouldn't take a band's career in our hands and destroy them, which could happen quite easily. You know, if you bring out a record by someone and it doesn't sell, it's bad business for any record company and the band may never get a second chance.

Ali: If it all comes off, and I'm sure it will, it should be quite exciting. Once you've got your own record company...well it might sound a bit high hopes and that, but we envisage the

else to blame. And if anything goes well it's because we've worked hard at it. And hopefully that will go on with the label. We'll sign bands who play good music, rather than wearing particularly fashionable clothes.

Ali: We won't sign people because they play particularly fashionable maracas.

Brian: Exactly. We just want to produce quality music like Trojan or even Tamla. Music that will last for years.

Ali: Putting the importance back onto the music.

Brian: I think Dexies have done quite a good job over the last few years. I mean they're not friends of ours or anything, but we're from the same town.

Ali: It's not them, it's just Kevin Rowland. But they have done a good job of putting the importance back into the

don't know if the band wear zoot suits or fifteen foot chains hanging down their trousers or anything. You just know it sounds good, and nothing else matters.

Brian: People spend so much money on videos. Some of them spend more money making a video for a single than they do on their album. I quite like the idea of people wearing nice clothes, and fashions changing. But when clothes take over the music business...it's like the Vaudeville. If bands could tour the theatres putting on shows,

DESTRUCTORS

Everyone knows the problems of provincial bands, laying unheralded in nether regions of the globe. Away from the capital where by and large it really isn't happening, but slothful reporting centres around the basking corpse that is London, and gives a depressingly false picture. Small wonder that retards retreat into nightclubs for fun. In a dingy joint they can no more envisage excitement out

were doing the press: overpublicising, they never put it out. They got me really pissed and I was sick in their car.

Neil: They were feeding him drink all night being real sods, and my father's a headmaster and they kept asking what he did and I wouldn't tell them because you can imagine the headline... 'Headmaster's Son In Northern Ripper Punk Sick Crap' and all that.

Neil: When we brought that

they did we'd put em straight. I'd go apeshit, especially if someone wrote it. Since they first gave me a tape of approximately 2.3 million songs, they have been offered a contract, hopefully (if they get their way) for twelve inchers, so that their old songs can be put onto vinyl as a lot of their songs are updated '77 numbers that they felt too strongly for to ever see disappear without trace. The

We gave him a demo tape and then when we asked him for a gig he said he hadn't got a tape. We've got the impetus to get us and go, we've got the people to come and see us, the only thing wrong at the moment is we can't get gigs.

Alan: Or we have to shell out fifteen hundred quid to get on somebody's tour.

Neil: That's how much it cost Pasti to go on the Subs tour. That sort of money's just



of town then they can hands in front of faces

The Destructors have all the problems a band can have for access to entertaining folk and becoming known. This problem is too well known to dwell on. We pass on. Hipsters pass out. Your lethargy becomes you.

Three of the five appear in our office, with a manager and Yvette Doll. A selection of Peterborough's musical stock.

Now the Destructors, some of them previously lurked amidst the ranks of The Blanks and recorded a single that was *nae* bad, called 'The Northern Ripper'. Scandalous? Cheap outrage? Explain yourself. Any come back on that?

Alan: Well, I got interviewed, the Ripper squad came and saw me, asked me where I was on certain dates, could I prove it and did I march round in Nazi gear and did I have a copy of *Mein Kampf*? They found my 'G (Throbbing Gristle) stuff.. I put together booklets called Method Execution Information, which were clippings from newspapers condensed, and we got banned from a university because they claimed it was really sick... And the Sunday People came to them for an interview!!

Alan: It was at the time the Ripper got caught and they

out, where the last girl was killed, we got offered a gig at the pub where she left, and we thought 'Nah, we're not playing that, cos the lyrics of the single aren't gloryfying it at all, saying it's great or anything, but you probably can't hear the words so people just go 'Urrgghh', well I suppose it glorifies him slightly by just singing about him.'

Alan: The original version was written in '77, although it was totally different to that.

Do you get any other comebacks, what about the song 'Dacchau'?

Alan: We called it 'Dacchau was no Butlins holiday camp'

and it made it obviously anti-Nazi, which was the idea behind it. Cos at the time it was written ('77 remember) everyone was wearing swastikas, and if you're prepared to wear em you should realise what it all meant.

Neil: The Nazi problem round our way in '77 was virtually non-existent, there was only about two and they was laughable. Now it's got to such proportions that you can't go around singing 'Dacchau was a Butlins Holiday Camp' which was what it was first called. I don't think anybody could ever think it was a pro-Nazi song, unless they're real thickos. If

Record Company interested comes from Sweden!

Their hopes to avoid going sour is to escape Peterborough, because where they haven't been banned, not generally their fault, they've played too many times for it to remain worthwhile, and other gigs are slowly drying up. The same old problem.

Neil: We got so many songs, and the trouble with playing new songs is that no-one's heard them, so there's always about twenty that are always in the set and about ten 'new' ones that we can alternate. There's so many cities around, like Birmingham, but we don't know the clubs, people, nothing! There's no point playing to the same hundred people which we were doing last year, although I'll admit they're good fans and everything. They always come and see us, but you want to get across to more people.

Alan: We'll have to start getting gigs soon or it'll be too late or people like Exploited and Discharge, Anti-Pasti will be established. We're supposed to be getting gigs with Anti-Pasti.

Neil: Every time I ring up their management I just get this answering thing. The Retford Porterhouse is a really good gig but the manager is a real toad.

bloody ridiculous really. Do you think there's a danger to these main bands becoming established?

Alan: The drawback is, because the companies will make them, is that they'll start going commercial.

Neil: But the good stuff about new punk is that bands like Discharge aren't capable of going commercial. I think Exploited could and Anti-Pasti possibly could.

Alan: I think the Exploited could go like Cockney Rejects went.

Would you willingly support a band like them?

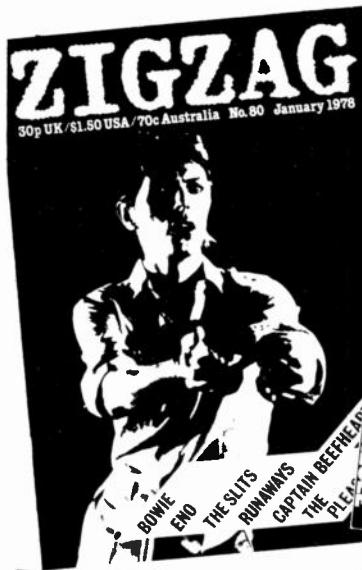
Alan: If you're songs are different and you've got something to say you have just as much chance to put it over to the audience as the Exploited have.

Neil: If you totally disagree with them then you shouldn't play with them, but I don't totally disagree with them. I think they're a good laugh. They're not a band to be taken seriously. One minute they're anti-violence, the next it's 'How great it is', but they're good fun to see.

Dave: Like bands saying there's something wrong with appearing on TOTP, there's nothing wrong with that.

Neil: I think there is.

ZIGZAG



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R I P R I G & P A N I C



Pic. Kishi Yamamoto

Britain, in the last couple of years has experienced a continuous backwash of its favourite preoccupations — nostalgia. So where is the present....?

1981 was the re-emergence of 'Beat' of 'Beatniks' (as in Beatitude, not beat-up or music beat) into the clothes consciousness of art students around the country. However, the Beatniks were and are rather difficult to assimilate to teen radio and provincial fashion shops, their music being the endless weavings of harmony perpetrated by the likes of Charlie 'Bird' Parker and Thelonious Monk. Be-bop is not that easily danced to. Also the existential wanderings of Kerouac and friends are not easily identified with the concrete jungles of small England. But it's the feeling that counts.

London seems under siege from small gangs of 'happening' minded youths who are always ready to rant and have a party, checking out extroversion and sometimes going to the trouble of setting up public situations for outsiders to join them. This seems 'Beat-style' enough.

Only one group of musicians

has had the label 'Beatnik' colourfully daubed on them. They, being RIP RIG AND PANIC are predominantly made up of ex-Pop Group members and currently holding the prize for wild men of Pop. Permanent members include Gareth Sager, Mark Springer, Bruce Smith and Sean Oliver, plus usually two or three others or whoever is around at the time.

When I spoke to Gareth, Mark and Sean, it was quickly apparent that the brand they have received is not appreciated. Sean (bass player) claims that everybody in the band is tired with boring advertising tactics. 'If somebody reads about us and comes to see us, then he will discover it isn't true.' But Sean quickly goes on to elaborate on their recording methods or lack of it. 'It's done live in the studio. Springer on piano, Bruce with drums, me, and Gareth playing whatever he wants to play. Then we just put on overdubs, different instruments, voices and so on.' So, a more freeform attitude to music, improvising towards empathy and away from dull routine. Continues Sean, 'We don't sit down and write what we're going to do on a little piece of paper. Twelve songs to be done in an hour — enact

this every night. Somebody drops a bum note. That's the peak of creativity.'

They've been working with Don Cherry, one of the original free-jazzers of the Ornette Coleman group back in 1959. 'We've got three hours with Don which we can use how we like. He wanted to get involved with the first album but he was on tour. It's a new audience for him. Younger.'

But they are very suspicious of the respect musicians like Don Cherry get, which constantly ends in mere reverence....'People look up to musicians but musicians are no better than bricklayers acting into something. They (the usual appreciative jazz audience) just sit there, telling themselves that they're understanding it, but never alive enough to respond. They are so static, so grooveless, like being in church. It's just taken with the wrong kind of seriousness'

I mention the idea of improvisation being more than just a musical style, being a moving blueprint for a society of complete involvement where each individual flow is washed into a group. Gareth and Mark take up the dialogue. 'We are the way we are. We keep out natural flow but it's not a head-wise thing. Absolutely no intellectual processes

going on here. Just cider.' I can't make out whether they're pissed or not, but it doesn't matter that much, I suppose. How do they deal with the grooveless world? 'Yeah, when you live by emotion alone, you're on shaky ground....it's frustrating when you're dealing with what I believe to be the natural forces around us, when you try and get right down to the feelings inside you, it's bad to have to deal with the opposite.' The opposite being Western culture. 'People are so hungup you know, especially in England and probably in America. It's that whole culture thing, a



don't want to be limited to that one thing. So we'll play some stupid shed in Paisley, anywhere.'

The music is there to be drifted into, not attended. There is much diversity in tempo and in the instruments played, giving a feel of no beginning or ending, but somehow leaving you with a feeling of totality, a feeling while you're listening to it of something overheard somewhere. Spontaneity. Voices giving over made-up words. They gang up on you, hate your impassiveness. 'Through everything you do, you're trying to communicate, talking from one soul to another, soul to soul, which is very difficult to do with words. But you can hear music from the depths of Amazon and have strong



Pic. Kishi Yamamoto

culture of discipline, a sitting-straight-at-the-table kind of culture. We have been pumped full of shit, absolutely incredible stiffness and no looseness in mind or body.'

Maybe they feel a sense of confrontation with the cuboids they seem to have nothing in common with. Do they want to do something about the whole mess? 'I think we do something about it just by being ourselves....it would be useless to go onto TV and say 'Drop your jobs, Drop your pants'. You have to show a sort of exuberance. It's not a conscious thing. It just has to come out somewhere. A wildness that has been put in and just comes out again naturally, rather than sitting around

thinking you're pretty wild.'

They talk constantly of being individuals making something together. 'It's just like putting these four shits together so you can photograph them, make them play and then sell them, just like a TV woman pushing soap. We didn't even want a name, we haven't got a manager. We take care of all that stuff ourselves, that whole group ethic with the manager phoning you up telling you where to be. It makes you soft. If anyone needs to be seen, we see him'.

In this country over the last six months Rip Rig and Panic have tried to break out of the concert circuit. On one occa-

sion they hired an old theatre called 'The Action Space' showing a film and playing a free and easy set. They also played for three afternoons in a central London art gallery where busy passers-by could relax to an acoustic sound of congas, piano, double bass and saxophone, far from the maddening city. Are they concerned with setting up an event as much as playing? 'It's more interesting but we feel we can do what we do anywhere. Of course it gives you an extra dimension if you make the whole thing, but we

sensation about what's going on there, what those people are feeling, that's what attracts me to other countries. I hear the music and I want to go there right away.'

DANNY CRILLY

JAMMING!

with Tony Fletcher

Perhaps the second most notorious fanzine person to spring from the afterspill of punk and Sniffing Glue, (Mark Perry being the first) has to be Tony Fletcher. To date he has his own fanzine, with a hopeful circulation for their next issue in excess of twelve thousand, his own Record Label, Jamming Records started by Paul Weller, plays in the band Apocalypse, writes for 'The Face' and possesses a hideous yellow jacket unashamedly sported during the interview, the like of which you've never seen before. All this and barely three years of age. Or to be more precise about seventeen or eighteen. Quite some achievement.

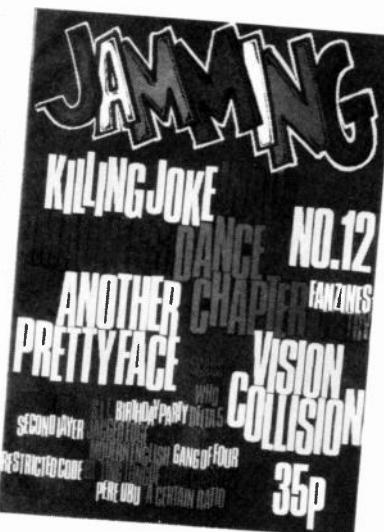
The fanzine never one of my particular favourites has built steadily, something that most haven't. His band having slowly built themselves a following, his Face contributions have maintained their size (minuscule) and his Record Label shows signs of becoming one of the finer new Independents.

In a small office a mere yard from the Jams' offices he sits and responds to questions. Perhaps the youngest entrepeneur at present, and more importantly, heart and brains in the right place.

With 'Jamming' off the streets for a while I wondered why we had heard little of it, and suspected wrongly, like many others, that the record label had become his first love. Nothing could be further from the truth. Tony has been burrowing into libraries of law, working out with cunning detail all manner of things relating to proper distribution and 'Jamming' will be out in January shortly after this copy of Zigzag.

My initial questions centred around the record label and the involvement of Paul Weller. 'This has become confusing.

We'll have to explain it in the next 'Jamming'. Jamming fanzine is all my money, Jamming Records is all Paul. He owns 60% of it, I own 40%. When he set it up, for his own accountancy reasons you need directors so you split it 50/40. He more or less owns Jamming Records but he leaves that to me, but we've started getting letters saying 'Dear Paul Weller, can you tell me how much a copy of your fanzine Jamming costs?' I'll have to get that better known. Does he butt in at all on anything?



'He's left most of it to me. You know he's got Respond Records as well, that he's putting his groups out on. I won't make any comments on what I think of Respond groups, and he wanted an independent as well. (Respond goes through Polydor). He helps out as much as possible, like getting the Rudi single recorded for nothing. Have you had any problems on the business side? 'No, as you know it's a shitty business..it gets boring. Unlike the fanzine you have to talk to your bank, accountants, lawyers. The only people I hate

talking to is the weekly press. When you've got a record out and they won't review it. When the record's out, you're on the phone two days solid. The NME review was sickening. Paul Morley rang us and the first question he asked was 'Why does Paul Weller want to start a record label considering the current financial climate and the unhipness of independents?' All these complicated questions! I said straight away that Paul started one because he wanted to. He has the money and he wants to spend it properly. Morley was so cynical, looking for these deep involved answers. He slagged the Rudi single despite the fact he hadn't heard it. That really pisses you off. Paul Morley must be earning a fair amount from his writing but I've never seen him doing anything constructive with his money, just goes round the nightclubs, but I mean Paul (Weller) had the money and wanted to do it. People say 'Tax reasons' and maybe there were but it's better to spend it on a record label than a Rolls Royce. Had you ever considered starting a label by yourself through the fanzine? 'No, cos Paul mentioned the label last summer and it took a whole year of talking because they were on tour. People started doing flexis in fanzines but it seemed to be a way to get a band to sell the fanzine, like people doing Crass, Poison Girls, Mo-Dettes (Hello Marts!) just to sell the fanzine. Both Rudi and Zeitgeist, the bands on Jamming Records so far, were bands that Tony had previously met up to a year and a half ago and been impressed by. When the chance came to release a record he did so. The Rudi single has already sold better than their usual amount. Are the contracts a one off deal or do you have long term plans for the bands?

'The contracts are a one-off. Magnet are interested in Rudi, but Rudi aren't interested in Magnet, so we've got another single by Rudi coming out. If the Zeitgeist single does well and a record company offers them a contract and advance it's up to them to decide what's best. There's no set rules. The whole thing, label and contracts is all done on trust. If you realise people are business-minded I think you should leave them alone.'

'Would you ever consider putting out a single by Apocalypse on Jamming records? (the band he plays with)

'Hmm, I always try and keep Apocalypse separate. I'm not a famous person, but because we haven't got a manager, and I probably know more about the music biz than a manager could...(trails off whilst trying to explain the moral issue). I love music all round and the line ups been the same since we started it, at the same time as the fanzine. I was thinking the other day it might be an idea to ask Respond to put it out instead. As far as playing in a group goes that's a totally



separate thing, but putting a record out on Jamming...I'll have to get my views together on that. I've never tried to take advantage of Jamming. I never ring up for gigs and say this is Tony Fletcher from Jamming records....maybe I should.'

In fact Tony began organising gigs for Jamming Fanzine last year and with a crowd needed of at least 120 at each gig (held at the Africa Centre, Covent Garden) to break even he did surprisingly well, and only fell below that figure twice. The gigs were good (Birthday Party, twice, Girls At Our Best — 'brilliant' — and bad, The Directions, where money was lost because the band squabbled over payment, Rudi where not enough people turned up, and Long Tall Shorty booked after the original band planned couldn't make it. Informed that L.T.S. had a following Tony went ahead with the gig only to discover 'They didn't have a following'.) The worst gig was the Original Mirrors.

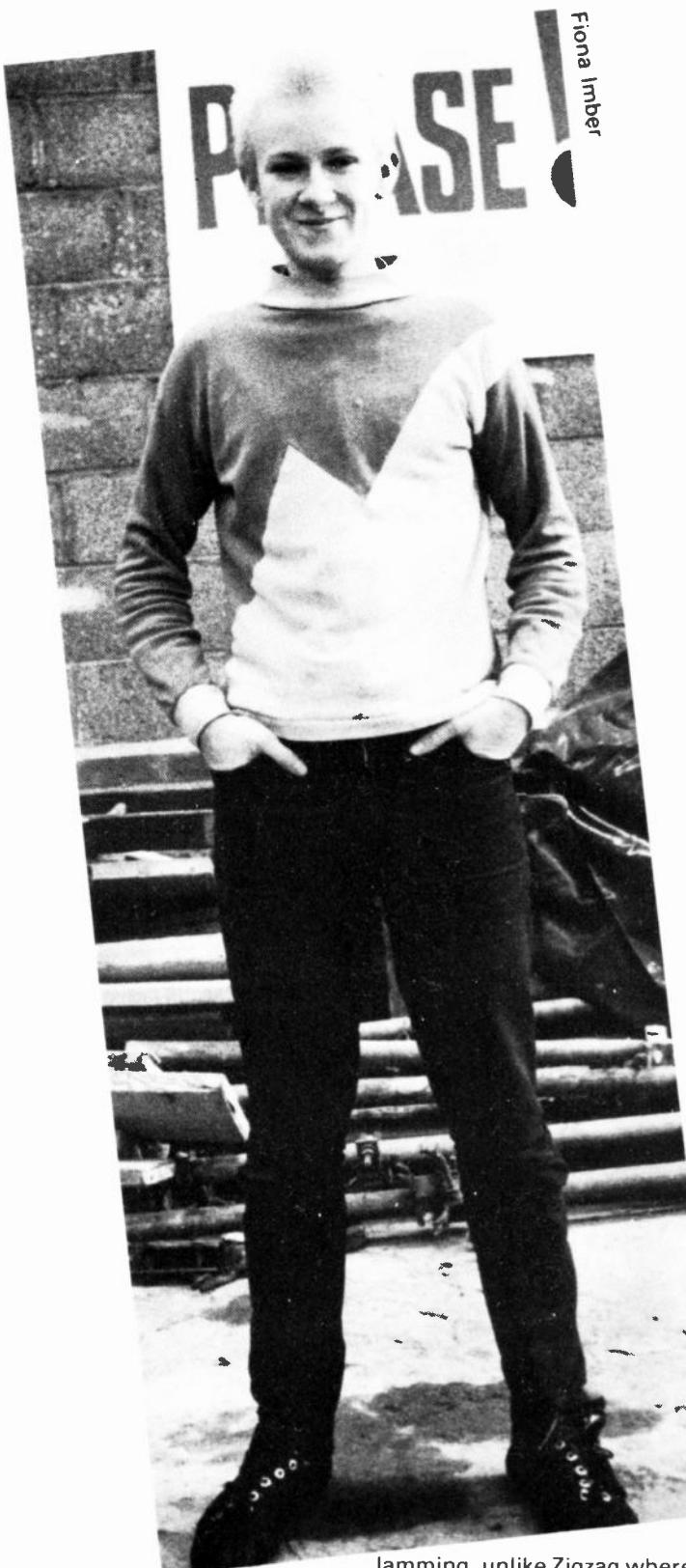
'Flopped...totally. It wasn't so much the band as their management. It was sickening. I learnt a lot that night about business and the way people are. I lost £100.'

And the current position?

'I'm going careful. It's partly time that's stopped me doing them really, they take about four days organising each. I haven't made a penny out of them, and the idea was to subsidise the fanzine.'

Time and organisation have weighed heavily on the Fletcher skull of late as first Record Company then Fanzine have been organised for a world take over bid. Having started it in December '77 whilst at the third form of school, it has increased numbers issue by issue and number thirteen out any day not will be the biggest and hopefully the best. Personally I have always found it lacking energy or excitement but packed to the gills with information and comment. I didn't expect Tony to agree and of course he didn't. We both know we prefer different styles. Tony slips into the history.

'After the fourth issue it was going well and we wrote off for interviews and the first to reply was the one I'd wanted most. Paul Weller. It really escalated. We even got hold of Townsend for Number six — maybe he came too early for me to ask what I'd probably ask him now. By number seven we got stuck for a printer and Joly said he'd



help (Joly being the man responsible for a plethora of Beta Badges induced publications) and after that I got the hang of doing a fanzine, knowing why I was doing things.

'After number twelve the record label really got going so since July I've been up here...all that time as far as the fanzine goes I've been really worried what to do cos it's built more than other fanzines — we've got an office, we've got other people helping out. But anyone who writes for

Jamming, unlike Zigzag where they're writing to see their name in print or for pocket money, writes because they're really committed. We're currently getting the money together to print number thirteen and carry it on to number fourteen because it takes ages to get the money back. We've gone into all the business things we never had to worry about before. We're setting it up with capital of five thousand. The main thing is to keep the energy there and write what we believe in. There's always been a couple of bands in an issue who can

sell it, but only bands that we want to write about. I never thought when I started that it would grow to the extent that it has. I've really tried to stick to the same attitude all the way down the line.

In fanzine circles, everyone knocks 'In The City' and... 'I know what you're gonna say but say it anyway'... ... and Jamming gets the same treatment.

'I know some people treat us the same. When I read 'ITC' I think it's lifeless. I know they do good things, like no adverts, but I find it glossy and distant: totally dead. I've always tried to keep Jamming down to earth and honest.'

I criticise certain points, feeling remotely guilty as I do so because even though it never truly sets my mind afire it is a worthy endeavour and has boundless possibilities to improve. Surprisingly he maketh not with the meat cleaver but dissects the mag with reason.

'I'm willing to experiment. It's not that we've found our niche and we're sticking to it. I think Jamming does a lot more than other papers. Back to about number eight I couldn't have defended myself...but two years ago Morley did a fanzine review round up and did about two hundred words on Jamming, which I suppose was very nice but from that we got thirty replies, from about 200,000 readers. I can write a reasonable review of a fanzine and that gets 20 replies, and that's from about four thousand. From that comparison we should have had about a thousand from the NME. People care. Like one letter we got a few weeks back said 'Come on Fletcher, get off your arse, it's about time we had another Jamming', now even though it was a slag off in a way it proved he cared a bit and some bloke from another fanzine who's coming down to do an article similar to yours wrote and said 'The fanzine's more important than the record label, you can't let it die'.

The over-riding feel Tony emanates is one of commitment and passion for music. Not only that but any band taken under the Jamming wings is in for a good deal. No way is he a rip off merchant or a fool. If only all record companies operated this way.

MM.

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