

HITTING IT FROM NORTH TO SOUTH

UNDERGROUND

November 1987 Issue Eight



HARDCORE

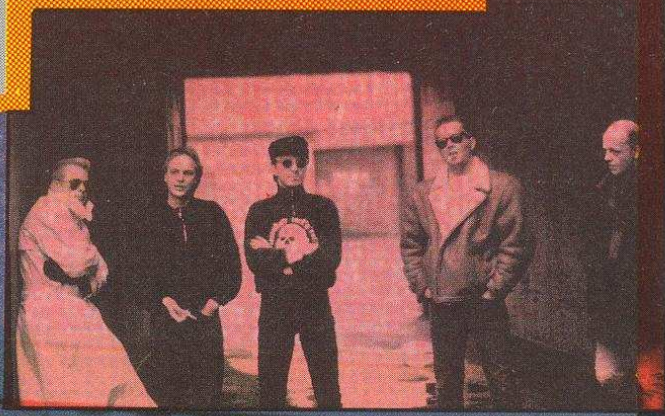
METAL BEAT

DEATH DISCO

QUIPHOBILLY

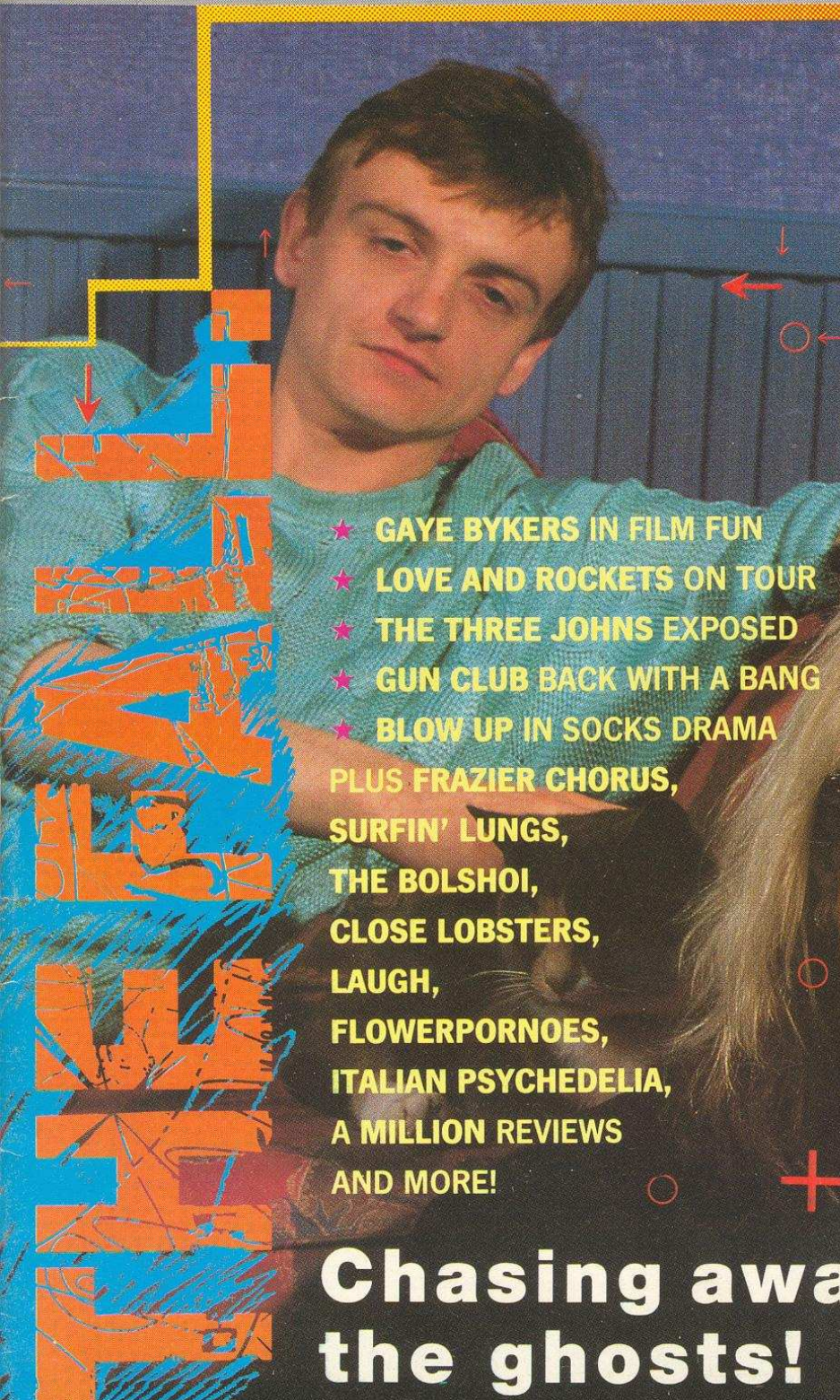
PSYCHE-SURF

PUNK ELECTRO



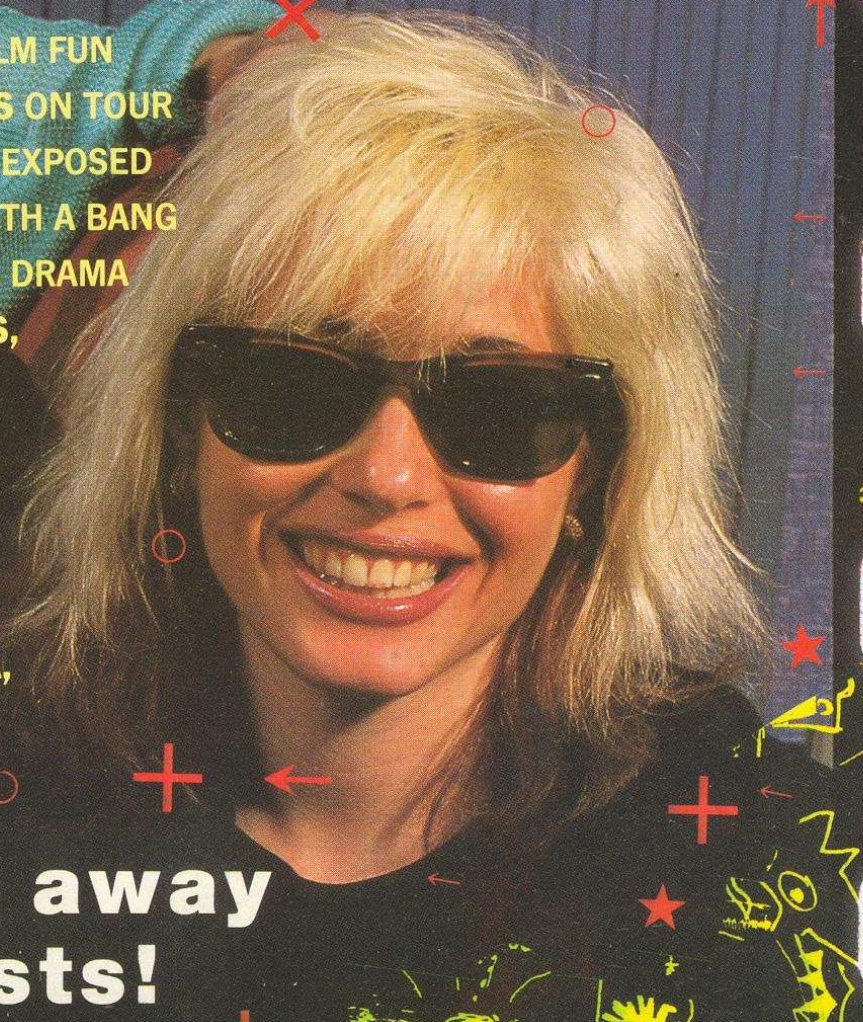
LEATHER NUN

Nuns and the art of motorcycle maintenance



- ★ GAYE BYKERS IN FILM FUN
- ★ LOVE AND ROCKETS ON TOUR
- ★ THE THREE JOHNS EXPOSED
- ★ GUN CLUB BACK WITH A BANG
- ★ BLOW UP IN SOCKS DRAMA

PLUS FRAZIER CHORUS,
SURFIN' LUNGS,
THE BOLSHOI,
CLOSE LOBSTERS,
LAUGH,
FLOWERPORNOS,
ITALIAN PSYCHEDELIA,
A MILLION REVIEWS
AND MORE!



Chasing away the ghosts!

UNDERGROUND EIGHTH WONDER OF THE GLOBAL ZONE!

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UNDERGROUND: a groovy gyration
ISSUE EIGHT: best before November '87
EDITOR David Henderson
DESIGNER Rod Clark
TEAMSTERS
 Martin Aston, Alex Bastedo, John Best, Vachel Booth, Johnny Dee, Ian Dickson, Johnny Eager, Tony Fletcher, Anthony Fragos, Julian Henry, Daz Igymeth, Alex Kadis, Jack Kerouac, Carole Linfield, Mats Lundgren, Dick Mescal, Ripley, Ronnie Randall, TC Wall, Dr Whybrew, Holly Wood
ADVERTISMENT MANAGER Jon Newey
ADVERTISMENT REPRESENTATIVES
 Ralph Boon, Jane Carr, Marc Gregory
CLASSIFIED
ADVERTISMENT SALES
 Andrina Mackee
ADVERTISMENT ASSISTANT Margaret Curle
ADVERTISMENT
PRODUCTION MANAGER
 Kathy Ball
PUBLISHER Eric Fuller
GROUP PUBLISHING
DIRECTOR Mike Sharman
MANAGING DIRECTOR Jack Hutton
 Published by Spotlight Publications Ltd
 Greater London House
 Hampstead Road
 London NW1 7QZ
Telephone 01-387 6611
Telex 299485 Music G
Fax 01-388 5010
Distribution
 Spotlight Magazine Distribution,
 1 Benwell Road, London N7 7AX
Telephone 01-700 4600
Typeset by Offshoot Graphics Co,
 17-18 Great Sutton Street,
 London EC1
Printed by
 Chesam Press, 16-18 Germaine St,
 Chesam, Bucks
ISSN 0951-502X
 © Spotlight Publications 1987

PAY ATTENTION:

NEW FROM NATIVE AUTUMN 1987

① SCREAMING TREES

ASYLUM seven and twelve inch single (12)NTV 24 **A FRACTURE IN TIME** the first l.p. NTVLP 29

② J★U★N★K

DROP CITY SOUVENIRS an album of JUNK culture NTVLP 27 **New seven and twelve inch single (12)NTV 26**
(title to be confirmed)

③ PETER HOPE & RICHARD KIRK

HOODOO TALK new l.p. NTVLP 28

④ BATFISH BOYS

LURVE the best of Batfish l.p. NTVLP 31 **PURPLE DUST** twelve inch e.p. 12NTV 30

INVEST

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The Big Bang

Gun Club
to Reform
— Shock, Horror!

REGROUN

Yes, although many of you probably didn't even know that they had split up, Gun Club mainmen Jeffrey Lee Pierce and Kid Congo are back together, with a line up that is completed by Romi Mori on bass and Nick Sanderson on drums. Not only are they alive and kicking but they are about to unleash a brand new album, curiously entitled *Mother Juno*, and even more curiously produced by Cocteau Twin Robin Guthrie.

Tracking down Jeffrey Lee and the Kid was not too easy as they live a nomadic lifestyle, visiting various studios on different continents and living in different cities to each other. But your intrepid *Ug* reporter catches up with them just before they fly out to Portugal to get the low-down on the past few years, a trip that takes them from New York to London via Berlin, Tokyo, Amsterdam and most points in between!

So, you guys, what happened?

The Kid kicks off: "We just fell apart after spending a really long time together making the last record, and spending an even longer time touring for it. We got really sick of being together and doing the same thing, so we took a break. Of course when we split up, we all said we're never going to see each other ever again, but what do you expect when you're in a band?"

What about you, Jeffrey Lee?

"We were trying to branch out when we did the last album, the *Las Vegas Story*, but nobody quite understood it. We put so much into that record and the last tour that we really wanted to see some sort of response and instead we just got disenchanted. So we just split for a bit and now we just do it 'cos we like to do it and don't give a shit if anybody else likes it or they don't."

So what about the new LP and the choice of Robin Guthrie as producer?

Jeffrey Lee explains: "As far as I'm concerned, I'm really happy with it. The ballads have a little Cocteau touch to them which I wanted. That's why we chose Robin."

The Kid butts in: "We really admire their lush sound and he has a great ear."

Jeffrey Lee: "We needed him for the ballads because most producers of The Gun Club would do everything over the top and aggressive when that's not necessarily everything we want to do. When we get a slower number it's supposed to be a bit more ethereal, a thicker sound. What we were trying to do with the *Las Vegas Story*, which we had to fight to get anywhere near, he was going to know right off."

Kid: "He knows when we say we want something loud and aggressive. He understands that as well. It wouldn't be interesting if you didn't stick your head on the chopping block. Why bother doing something that you know would be safe?"

Admirable statements and even more so because they've gone with an independent, Red Rhino, when rumour has it that they had been offered vast sums of money by the majors.

So is this true, Jeffrey Lee?

"Nah, we'd have taken it! That story must have started because we got offers from Elektra and Geffen, but those people all speak the same language."

The Kid elucidates further: "This happened to us five years ago when we started getting offers. They come in and say you're really great, but let's get a session bass player, a session drummer and there's this Danish heavy metal producer who'll be great for you! Do this, do that and we'll make lots of money!"

Well, The Gun Club have always been as much about attitude as anything else but then Jeffrey Lee has some useful information on record companies' attitudes.

"You always know a liar 'cos they keep changing their story. Red Rhino's story never changed. We kept our part of the bargain and they kept theirs. In fact, when we brought back all those tapes from Berlin they couldn't believe it. Tony (K from Red Rhino) said, 'My God, you guys actually went and worked!'"

So back to the new LP, *Mother Juno*, which sees The Gun Club adding another string to their bow with an impressive, fuller sound and a haunting ballad or two. Well, Jeffrey Lee?

"I don't want to limit myself to one kind of thing. It's not necessary to carry on the Gramps/swamp/voodoo/ghoul/mad-psychobilly/blood dripping/trash horror/B-film stuff."

So succinctly put, eh?

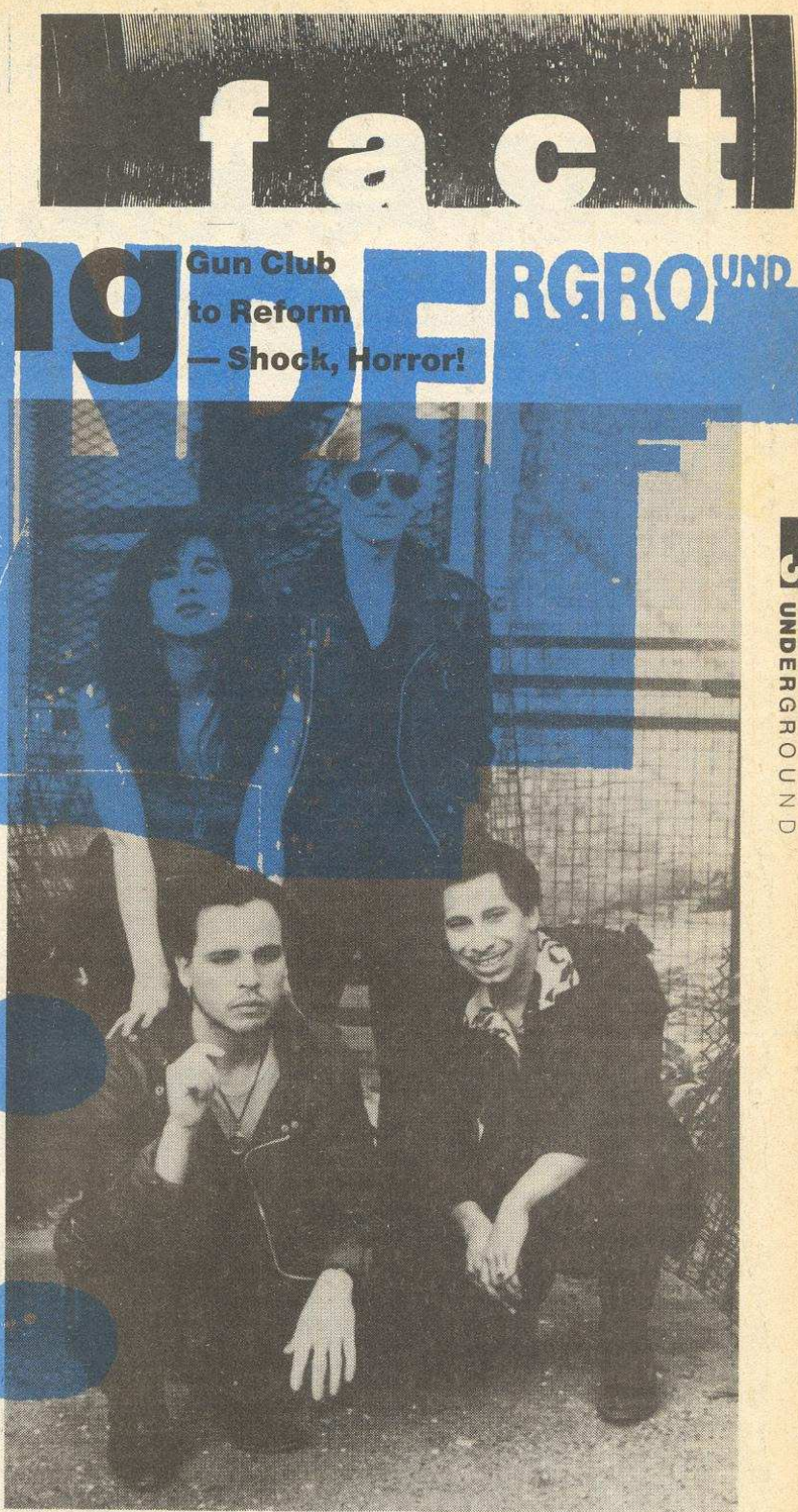
"There was a hell of a lot of time invested only in The Gun Club and that's when things got tense and became unsatisfactory. Now that we spread around more, we use The Gun Club as a central station and as a result, we write a lot better songs."

So the assorted solo projects that all the members of the band are involved in are going to continue, an arrangement that the Kid firmly believes in as well. "We've never had to keep The Gun Club as our only band. It means we don't have to worry about purging that side of ourselves. I don't see why we can't have our cake and f**king eat it!"

He certainly has a wonderful turn of phrase! Among other projects, they talk about Romi's band, in which she gets to realise her ambition to be a singer, as well as pondering about plans to form a blues/R&B unit, complete with horn section.

Above all they show a desire to turn up in the most unlikely places and insist that The Gun Club recording output will be more frequent from now on. In fact they are already talking about the possibility of a single and musing over producers for the next album, mentioning Steven Spielberg as a man they would like to work with. Certainly an interesting, if unlikely, ideal!

Well, sod the over-analysing of the LP, except to say it's more manic tales from the edge, in typical, rivetting Gun Club style — so shoot on out and investigate for yourselves, it's been well worth the wait. Story by Dick 'One Handed' Mescal



3 UNDERGROUND

INDUSTRIAL RENAISSANCE HITS LONDON!

• In a climate where **Test Dept** are having their back catalogue re-issued, while there's talk of them leaving **Some Bizzare** to rejoin Phonogram (?), the industrial-muzak-merry-go-round turns full circle again as the **New State Organisation** announce the first **London Post Industrial Inter Galactic Noise Structure Festival**, which will take place on November 5, 6 and 7 at Club Mankind, 1A Amhurst Road, Hackney. Tickets for the event and further details can be obtained from the Rough Trade Shop, Rhythm Records in Camden or Club Mankind itself, while yet further info

can be gleaned by calling either (01) 806 4231 or (01) 986 2276.

• Bands/acts who'll be appearing at the festival include **Zev**, from the States, **The Grief**, from France, and German groups **Kiwi Sex** and **Gerechtigkeitsliga**. From the UK there's **Bourbonese Qualk**, **Bulbous Skunk Cabbages**, **Greater Than One** and **These Immortal Souls**, plus Austria's **Oil Blo Kotz Klotz**, Hungarian acts **Art Deco** and **GB Zing Zang**, **Trimeh** from Israel plus even more combos accompanied by films, scratch video and other entertainment.

PIIGNS

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NIGHT PARADE by **Thirteen Moons**
WASTED TIME by **Sing Sing And The Crime**
LOVE YOU FEEL ME by **Dirty Dirty Work**
SQUANDER by **Master Twins**

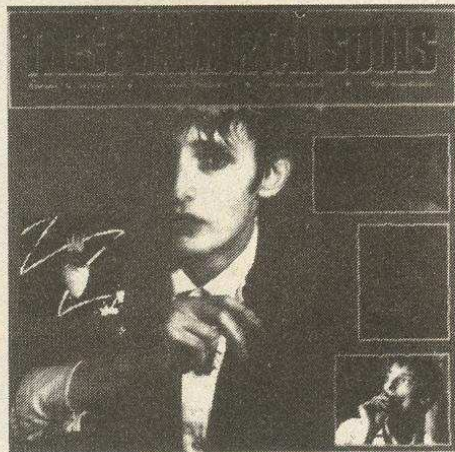


The second token is part of the subs form in the centre spread, the third token will be in next month's issue (and the first was in last month's sold out issue). If you were too slow off the mark to get last month's issue, special grovelling letters should be sent to *Underground* and the best will get a *gratis* token. But make sure you keep this month's token in a safe place or your cred rating will suffer drastically!!!!!!



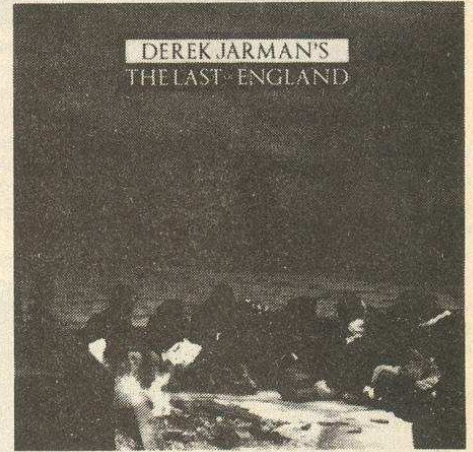
Mark Stewart

STUMM43 LP+CD



These Immortal Souls
Get Lost (Don't Lie!)

STUMM48 LP+CD



Derek Jarman's
The Last Of England

IONIC1 LP+CD



tv for the masses

Snub TV report by Martin Aston

As independent music faces a potential decline in radio exposure, and while *The Tube* has still to be replaced by a sympathetic TV show, so America has been given a new bi-weekly TV music programme, made in Britain, about the British independent music scene.

Called *Snub*, the show is presented by **Brenda Kelly**, editor of Britain's only independent music trade paper, *The Catalogue*, and co-produced by Kelly and Southern Studio's **Peter Fowler**.

The idea for *Snub* was first proposed to Kelly by an American who saw *The Catalogue* (before *UG* was published, bub!) who realised that here was a whole pile of information and music culture that America knew next to nothing about, and that wasn't being accessed on American TV.

"*Snub* was just a crazy idea that we didn't think would happen because none of us had any money and I'd never made a TV programme before," says Kelly. But *Snub* was in fact bought up without a pilot show even being made, purely on the strength of the idea, by Nightflights, the weekend programmers for USA Network, America's largest cable network.

And the initial results? "During the first shows, the ratings doubled," enthuses Kelly, "which is a sizeable jump. Everyone in America wants you to have everything short and snappy, because people are always channel hopping, but people stayed watching *Snub* because they couldn't believe it was actually on! On the West Coast, we had more viewers than NBC, ABC and CBS at the time the show went out.

"There's just so much dross on TV," Kelly frowns. "There's certainly room for something that tries to present music that's a bit harder and more challenging in an unconventional format." Aye, folks round these parts know *that* scene.

King Bambi sends a pic to his homeland



or live in the studio (*Snub* will film a band if there's no video available, and they figure they're worth it) are (deep breath) **Cookie Crew, Bambi Slam, World Domination Enterprises, Soup Dragons, Mark Stewart, The Very Things, Leather Nun, Hula, Fini Tribe, Phillip Boa, The Stupids, The Three Johns, Tackhead** and many more of your cunning indie champions. "What we're trying to do," Kelly goes on to say, "is provide some sort of commentary on the independent scene — not

in an overtly political way, but putting forward why there is an independent thing happening, without being obvious about how people are different."

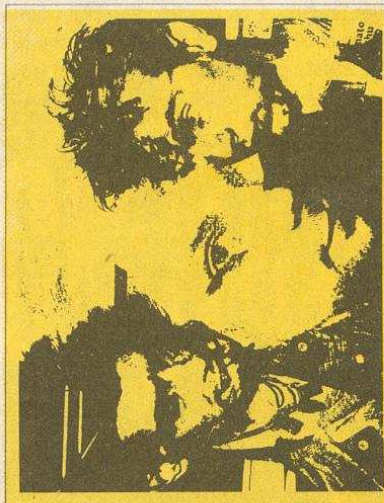
Eight shows young, *Snub* are currently looking for international as well as British licensees. We could do a lot worse than having *Snub* hit our barren screens, that's for sure.

Meanwhile, contact *Snub* c/o Southern Studios at 10 Myddleton Road, London N22. "We want your videos!" *Snub* says, turning back to face the cameras.

Cookie Crew challenge rappers, Stateside



World Dom hit America



Because *Snub* is made in London, it naturally reflects British independent music, although that's no hard and fast rule — **Swans**

and Iceland's **Sugar Cubes** were on show four, while New Zealand's **Chills** are prominently featured on show seven. Already included on video

art sensation hits london!

french group offer hand painted sleeves

Achwgha Ney Wodei have an enormously confusing, but ultimately rewarding project in progress through NIR (Box 244, London SE1 5AZ). Their box "thing" will contain three 45 rpm 12 inch records, 10 colour postcards and, in a limited edition of 1,000, the front of the box is made up of a part of one of ten huge paintings commissioned by ten different artists.

Punters requiring particular paintings on their box "thing" should write to NIR for the postcards, then they can select which one they want. And you thought making records was easy? **Dave Henderson**



Achwgha Ney Wodei defy vocal category

continued over



An Achwgha sleeve art section for your coffee table

SCANDAL AND stuff in the factory of Underground! Well, actually not quite, but did you know that **Jah Wobble** drives the trains on the Northern line? And there's a search going on, because For All And None (Box 87, Ilford, Essex) who release tapes and things (including a live **Portion Control** one recently), are looking for **Save Us** to contribute a track to an upcoming compilation.

Did you know that ex-**Buzzcocks** and **Magazine** person **Howard Devoto** has signed to Beggars Banquet, as have **The Lorries** who have reverted to calling themselves **Red Lorry Yellow Lorry**?

The Irregulars sent a miserable letter begging us to write about them, but they forgot to put their address on it so we can't.

The Drumsticks' Revenge Two is a 'zine with a well dodgy cover but it is packed with wholesome fodder inside. The ish includes things on **The Wonder Stuff, The Sect, Dawn After Dark, Bambi Slam** and it's all well written stuff — it's available from 9 Aspen Way, Newport, Shropshire TF10 JEE.

Product Inc's upcoming schedule includes releases like a **Young Gods** CD, a **Last Few Days** single, a **Skin** album and CD, plus a label compilation with things from **Head, World Domination Enterprises, Keith Allen, Viv Stan-shall** and more. Oh yeah, lots of things from **World Dom** too, in every format imaginable.

Cheeky Sheffield combo **The Warhols** decided, since we didn't want to interview them, they'd contribute their own interview to *Ugl*, and here's a brief extract...

"When will we be hearing the new single?"

"It's all in the can, we recorded it in Plumstead."

Gripping stuff, eh? More next month.

And much more from **Gary Numan**. The guy everyone loves to be derogatory about has his back catalogue re-issued on CD, and pretty tasty it sounds too. Recent interviewers have been greeted by

fiction

Gal's more open and humourous front, including lines like: "I've had a hair transplant, you know." Wow!

Following the Bam Caruso label's subsidiary Disque Noir's debut into the filmic music market with the soundtrack to *The Spy With The Platinum Heart*, they're hoping to release soundtracks from *The Billion Dollar Brain*, *Rosemary's Baby*, *Valley Of The Dolls* and *Beyond The Valley Of The Dolls*, as well as music from *Mission Impossible*. There'll also be special projects featuring "sexy French people", and they'll include releases from **Brigitte Bardot**, **Francoise Hardy**, **Jacques Brel**, as well as **Serge Gainsbourg** and **Jane Birkin**.

Just when you thought it was safe to do something or other, **Karl Blake** is back with a new line up for **The Shock Headed Peters**... and a new LP too. The Fear Engine is a half live and half studio album which will be on the Produkt Korps label through Red Rhino.

And you thought we wouldn't mention **Wreckless Eric** this issue? Well, he called the all-action-Ug desk, yes the one that keeps falling to bits, to tell us that he and **Sian** (ex **The Men They Couldn't Hang**) have just done a string of London dates at strange art school venues under the name of **The Mystery Group**. Aided by a 15-year-old drummer and with **Shane Poguey McGowan** as their roadie, their battered Transit hasn't been seen since.

If you've been lucky enough to get a free flexi in this issue, featuring **The Video Nasties**, **Graham And The Mushrooms** and **Justice Multifury**, you might like to know that all three will be at the Psychedelic Garage at the Clarendon in Hammersmith on December 11. Also playing are the **Cannibals** and punters will be lured in and offered freebies and souvies, too. Bargain time.

Oh, yes we were going to have an interview with **Adi Newton** this month. You know, tracing **Clock DVA** and **The Anti Group**, but **Martin Aston** couldn't understand it all. Next month for sure, though!

Robert K Cohen's
Big Comment

Has anyone noticed

Melody Maker's recent resemblance to *Smash Hits*? I mean, we've always tolerated the pointless inanity of the *Talk Talk Talk* section, but now they're printing letters from 'David Sylvian's Pony-tail' and the like. Where will it all stop, I wonder? Maybe I'll ask 'Andy Rourke's Stash' in *NME*. Which takes us neatly to a tale of two Marrs. One, by the name of **Johnny**, has written a single with **Bryan Ferry** and joined **The Pretenders**. If this palaeontology (study of fossils) represents the great plans for which Johnny felt compelled to leave **The Smiths**, then the future looks bleak. **The present, seems bright for M|A|R|R|S, however, who got to number one despite the alleged dirty tricks of Stock, Aitken and Waterman. Although SAW eventually dropped their injunction against Pump Up The Volume, they managed to squeeze 500 quid out of another group, Now The Party for daring to put the initials of the great triumvirate on the cover of their single, I Feel Good All Over. Stock, Aitken and Waterman are**



ample reason to name 1987 the Year of the Court Case. Or will it become the Year of the Blank Tape Tax? No. The government have voted aban-doned the idea, but I've no doubt that, like the hanging debate and Cilla Black, the issue will return to haunt us.

But who can doubt they will call this the Year of Censorship? ★

Jello Biafra's defeat of the fascists in America was a very minor victory, considering the 65,000 dollar legal bill he's been stuck with — itself enough to frighten people into self-censorship. Indeed, **That Petrol Emotion**, who wear their politics on their record-sleeve, should beware of Virgin Records, to whom they've just signed. The retail department of the organisation has already banned the **Dead Kennedys' Bedtime For Democracy** album, not to mention **Big Black's Songs About F***ing**. And talking (as we were) about democracy, October was the time the Official Secrets Act met the music industry, with the release of **Leon Rosselson's Ballad Of A Spycatcher**. **Billy Bragg**, guest guitarist, says the idea was "to test the extent of freedom of speech on the radio". This it did, for there was next to no airplay. Even so, it outsold its original pressing of 2,000 copies. As well as championing the cause of free speech, young **Billy Bragg** was to be seen, during the Brighton conference, playing a benefit for the Labour Committee On Ireland. That guy plays more benefits than **Michael Jackson** has hot face-lifts. I'm glad I mentioned this, actually, because 'Wacko Jacko', who owns the rights to numerous Beatles songs, refused to waive royalties for a recording of **With A Little Help From My Friends** in aid of muscular dystrophy. A spokesman from the music press said that there'd been a lot of these charity things, and "There comes a time when you have to draw the line."

I quite agree. I mean, if **Michael Jackson** carried on waiving royalties, he'd probably be broke in a million years.

after the fact



Victims of censorship, Jello B (above) and Big Black



The Cookie Crew NEW SINGLE LEFT 12T

FREEMAN LIVES

BLACK IS THE WORD!



9 UNDERGROUND

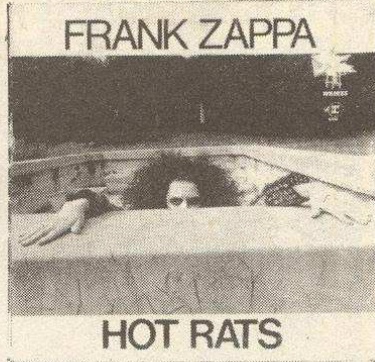
ZAPPA RECORDS

FRANK ZAPPA



FRANK ZAPPA AND THE MOTHERS OF INVENTION

'FREAK OUT'
(CD ZAP1)



FRANK ZAPPA
'HOT RATS'
(CD ZAP2)



FRANK ZAPPA AND THE MOTHERS OF INVENTION
'UNCLE MEAT'
(CD ZAP3)

FRANK ZAPPA AND THE MOTHERS OF INVENTION



'RUBEN AND THE JETS'
(CD ZAP4)

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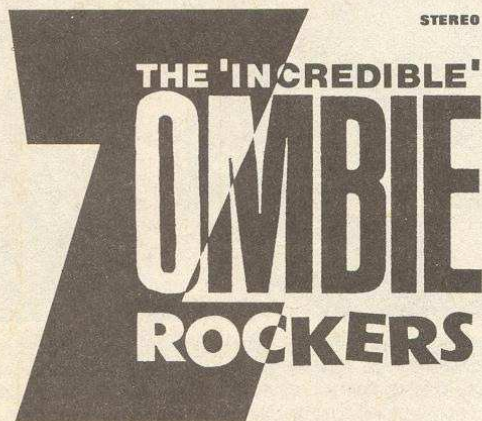


PINNACLE PINNACLE

4 TRACK 12" SINGLE

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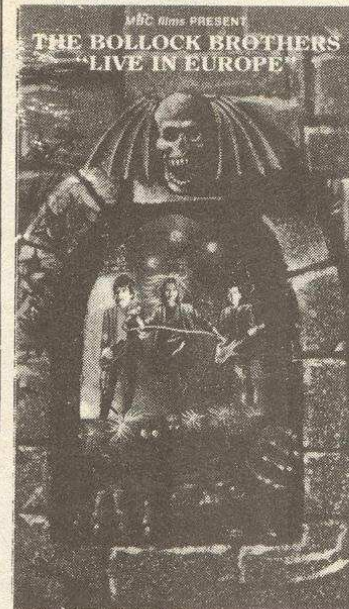
ABSTRACT SOUNDS



MACHINE STOPS

1 2 A B 5 0 4 6

PINNACLE PINNACLE



THE BOLLOCK BROTHERS
"LIVE IN EUROPE"/
"HOME VIDEO"



MBC FILMS

THE BOLLOCK BROTHERS

PINNACLE PINNACLE JOCK VID 001/2

FUNKY ALTERNATIVES 2



CABARET VOLTAIRE · MARK STEWART ·
THE ORIGINAL UNKNOWN DJ's ·
STUMP · NEW YORK PIG FUNKERS ·
QUANDO QUANGO · DAVE HOWARD
SINGERS · CHAKK · OUT · PORNOSECT

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CONCRETE PRODUCTIONS

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SUB culture

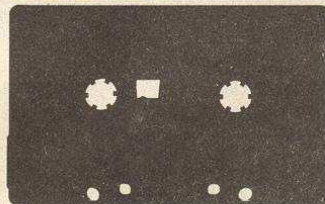
ABSOLUTE ESSENTIALS FOR SUBVERSIVE LIVING

FILMING AGAINST THE TIDE



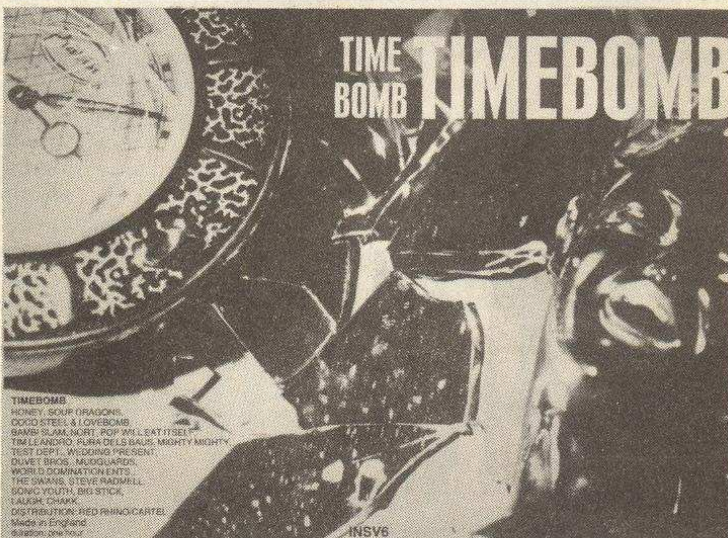
Derek Jarman continues his less than orthodox film career with **The Last Of England** (which opens this month). A tale filmed in Super 8 and transferred to 35mm, it features old Jarman family shorts intercut with new footage in a typically surreal tale. An integral part of the action is built around the music, and Mute Records will be releasing the soundtrack LP featuring contributions by **Simon Turner**, **Diamanda Galas** and **Barry Adamson** to coincide.

NOW LET'S JUST TALK CHROME!



Premonition Tapes, from the town that used to produce stainless steel and have two footie teams (er, Sheffield isn't it?), give us the pleasure of **Psycho-Terrorist Weapon**, a short tape loop reportedly used by the **Atheist Militia** as an instrument of torture. Hearing is believing, as the saying goes, so why not send £2.25 to **Paul Mills**, 69 Kangdon Street, Sheffield S11 8BH and the secret of eternal torture (?), or whatever, can be yours. **Dave Potter**

THE BIG BANG



TIMEBOMB
HONEY, SOUP ORAGONS,
COCO STEEL & COVEBOOMB
BAMB SLAM, SORT, POP WILL EAT ITSELF
THE LEANDRO, FLURR DELS SAUS, MIGHTY MIGHTY
TEST DEPT., WIGGINS PRESENT
DUVET BEKIS, MARGUARDS
WORLD DOMINATION ENTS.
THE DANISH, STEVE MADWELL
SONIC YOUTH, BIG STICK,
VALUER CHANK
DISTRIBUTION: RED RHINO/CARTEL
Made in England
Barton.com/insv6

Brighton's Instant Video label follow up their sporadically excellent **Suck** compilation video, after working on the **Honey** and **Coco**, **Steel And Lovebomb** singles, with a new package titled **Timebomb**. Featuring 60 minutes of variable eye-boggling visual delights, it's extremely entertaining, with the only reservation being that footage of cars going along roads is getting a little boring.

Camera cherubs for a day include Coco, Steel etc on a cutesy cut-up scratch called Don't Crash, an extract from **World Domination's** upcoming film featuring Hotsy Girl, a quite erotic outburst from **Swans**, **Big Stick's** bizarre Dragracing (a must), live footage of **Test Dept**, **Bambi Slam's** excellent Don't It Make You Feel and a vid of **Laugh's** Take Your Time, Yeah, which features some of the most talented dancing imaginable. It's a gem, and there's lots more of it too. Don't miss it; it's available through Red Rhino and the Cartel.

BLABZINE !!!!!!!!!!!!!

Have you noticed something? **Fanzines** are shrinking, they've all gone half size. Could be an EEC regulation, who knows? Anyway, seven of them were crammed into the Eurosize letterbox at Ug Mansions, and here's what they said!

THE COCA-COLA COWBOY issue three is 30p and features your standard **Sonic Youth**-are-pretty-strange interview plus things on **The Boy Hairdressers** among others. The most amazing thing is the centre page, which is full of lists of things that someone or other likes. Hmmm, good idea! It's from Scotland, from **Paul B Henderson** (no relation), 5 McAslin, Townhead, Glasgow.

TEXAS FEVER issue one is 30p from **James** at 5 Brookhouse Gardens, Highams Park, London E4 6LZ. There's enthusiasm and collage layouts in a riot of hard to read typing. I don't know what it's about but we laughed when we read it. That's good, *isn't it?*

PERTURBED issue four is just brilliant and it made some Ug people roll about the office and turn green. There's a million pages and it takes the piss out of everyone, with stupid songword parodies, bad competitions and good interviews. Get it from **Peter** at 14 Overlea Avenue, Acocks Green, Birmingham B27 7UN. It costs 50p.



ECHOING THE BUNNYMEN issue four is a little expensive at 50p plus sae. For some reason it's not all about the Bunnymen, and a lot of the Bunny bits are from other places. Not a quality affair but if you're an enthusiast try **Peter Allen** at 1a Shepherd Road, St Annes On Sea, Lancs.

SO NAIVE issue two is daft. It has a doodles page, an article called "a pervy look at **Robert Smith**", features on **Rosehips**, **Talulah Gosh** and some riotous graphics plus, yes-you-guessed, a flexi of **Bubblegum Splash** and the marvy **Darling Buds**. It's 50p from **Mike** at 39 Cromwell Road, Sprowston, Norwich NR7 8XH.

FLORIAN BOHM AND CROSSED OUT CONVERSE issue one is different. At 30p plus sae from Brookfield, School Green Road, Freshwater, Isle Of Wight PO40 9AU, it's a mind blowing experience that mixes "art" that looks like it's been carved into a school desk, strange drawings, interviews, stuff on skateboarding and general strangeness. Worth a try.

NO CLASS issue 11 isn't A5, but folded in half so that we'd review it. Huh! Unfortunately there's something wrong with its quality control as it includes acts such as **Screaming Abdabs** and **Mournblade**, but there is an interesting **Chumbawamba** feature. From 37 Hodder Drive, Perivale, Middlesex UB6 8LL.



HELL HATH NO PAINTBRUSH!

Latest exhibition at **Some Bizzare's** gallery (166 New Cavendish Street, London W1) features the work of **Val Denham** who's done a sleeve or two for the label in the past. An optical treat, the exhibition runs till November 10, so get there, culture vultures!



gush

... an enthusiastic tirade from Prince Muso

Are you **still** complaining? Maybe you're just reading all the music press and believing what you read about all these scenes that divide groups up. Did grebo exist as a scene before the press made it so? Was there a shambling club before the press said so? Even though C-86 wasn't that much cop, did every band **really** sound the same until the press said so?

Why are you still looking for loopholes? There you go, thinking everyone is a stealer when all music is a derivation or deviation of other musical languages ANYWAY, and that everyone EVER is betraying principles, attitudes, causes like it's some ROCK HOLY GRAIL.

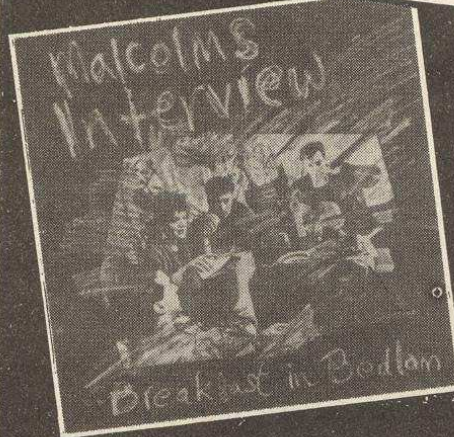
JEEZ! I keep talking to these guys and hear these records and they seem to share the commitment and realise what's at stake. You might say, "BLIMEY WHERE HAVE ALL THE GOOD GROUPS GONE??" But have you thought, "BLIMEY GIVE ME A GOOD AUDIENCE" on behalf of the groups who fight out of pigeonholes all the way through interviews, supported by the like of YOU?

OK, I'll list it for you. Recently (and I've mislaid my diary so this is as accurate as you'll get it) I heard *Dinosaur*, *Hugo Largo*, *Yargo*, *Jah Wobble*, *Deighton Family*, *The Triffids*, *Lee Perry*, *Tuxedomoon*, *Close Lobsters*, *Abdel Aziz el Mubarak*, *10,000 Maniacs*, *Bongwater*, *Mardin Hill*, *The Chills*, *Tom Waits*, *Blue Aeroplanes*, *They Might Be Giants*, *Momus*, *Thirteen Moons*, *Dead Can Dance*, *The Pixies*, *The Sugarcubes*, *Big Black*, *The Oyster Band*, *Spacemen 3*, *Band Of Susans*, *Palace Of Light*, *Eric B & Rakim*, *The Verlaines*; I heard *Whooping Cranes*, *The Crystal Set*, *Bleached Black*, *The Jean Paul Sartre Experience* and *The Mice* on import, *The Flux* albums, *John Cale*, *Gabby Puhinwi* and five *Creedence* albums on re-release, and *SIX Peel sessions*, one *Celtic* music, one *Debris* and one free *UG* cassette on compilation. Naturally there is more, but lists are like bad records - they can go on forever. ● Then you hear these people talk. Even **John Lydon**, who you'd think might have dissolved in his own self-importance by now, turns up at an interview half-cut and, instead of conforming to the cynic-ridden irritant, reels off all these truths and why he can't shut up when he sees them: child abuse, city decay, Brit-country decay, Margaret Thatcher, nuclear insanity ("SAVE ME!" John screams . . .) PiL music could be nothing more than an arsewipe, but instead it tries hard. "At the moment, PiL music is pop - vicious pop. Hard pop. Full of drama and dynamics. It's not mean, I just pose questions. I would hope we're enjoyable too, Witty. Sarcastic. And serious. Thought-provoking. All at the same time."

So what if Johnny smoked all my Marlboros? I mean, I was impressed. Lydon could have given it all up and gone to Stock, Aitken & Waterman, men who turned down the opportunity to produce Gaye Bykers On Acid because "anyone calling themselves that don't take themselves seriously. We take ourselves seriously". And that from Pete Waterman, a man who thinks the most classic record he's been involved in is Bananarama's *I Heard A Rumour*? I'd much rather talk to **Donny Osmond**, which I did a fortnight ago, and even Donny was talking out against the PMRC censorship situation in America, and the freedom of expression that even his Mormon church can't control. Intelligence! Imagine what might have happened to PUPPY LOVE? People like Donny actually refresh you because they see their limitations and they also do a fair amount of hoping. I'd much rather spend my time with people like the Triffids' **David McComb** than the five who make up Lightning Strike, who say things like. "We're not musicians, we're a gang who just happen to have guitars over our shoulders." I mean, are these guys living on the same planet as me? This bluff and self-generated aura is what leads to the music press' 'GANG' scene pieces. Please. At least David McComb considers his work as following tradition and lets his narratives tell the story. Anyone who feels that "if I had to choose one type of music as the highest form of art created by man beyond Shakespeare and Chaucer, I'd say the girl-group sound," has got to have known PLEASURE in his born days! Now that's what I call ENTHUSIASM. "There's nothing else culturally, it's like something like Everest, some of that Phil Spector stuff," says David, getting his syntax in a tiz. Music does that to you, you know.

Special Delivery

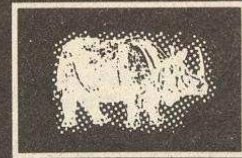
Just when you thought it was safe to go back into the record store we did this to you. Two great new releases from the number one progressive roots label - SPECIAL DELIVERY. CLIVE GREGSON & CHRISTINE COLLISTER - MISCHIEF - SPD 1010 - a great musical liaison, Christine's perfect voice is backed up by Gregson's unequalled song writing and guitar talents together with full backing band.



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THE AMBASSADORS

Somewhere To Hide

Unicorn PHZA 12 **NM** **C** ● Shaky modernist sidetracks from this three piece whose vocal play offs never quite work. The thoughtful approach and slowed pace doesn't enhance things, the lack of power resulting in a microscopic examination of their many blemishes. There are some decent ideas here, but there isn't quite the style to turn it into *hit* material. And there's a novelty too as both sides feature the *same* five tracks. A strange idea, but a little half-baked all round. **Johnny Eager**

HEIDI BERRY

Firefly

Creation CRELP 023

C ● ● 1/2 Cast in the mould of an already mature Marianne Faithfull or Nico, the fragile floating voice of Heidi Berry wafts across six songs that while thankfully having no contemporary reference point, are polished and well-performed enough to sound distinctly late 1980s. The only weak song is in fact the opening *Out Of My Hands*, and once past that, *Firefly* is a collection of sweet melodies, heavenly piano, and an often crisp rhythm section. *Houses Made Of Wood* is the high point, if only because it has the vital hook some of the others lack. Not necessarily a star in the making, but let's hope this is just the beginning. **Tony Fletcher**

BLOOD ON THE SADDLE

Fresh Blood

New Rose ROSE 126 **P** ● ● ● YeeeeeeeeeeeeeeHar! Get gone and slap yer thighs till they bleed pardners 'cos here's where it's at; maximum cow-punkin' country musick.

Ron, Greg, Hermann and Annette rattle along at a stompingly fast pace on eight and mosey slower on two o' them than ten tracks. Check out the geetarin' on this — that guy's fingers are movin'! Heck, though, cousins, y'all should buy this jus' fer to hear Baptist Church Blues; it's a beeyoot! All in all this is sweet as a belly full o' moonshine an' that's rough! Yeeeeeah! **Daz Igyemeth**

BLUE AEROPLANES

Spitting Out Miracles

Fire Records

P ● ● The Aeroplanes' Kerouac-comes-home-to-play mix of poetry, jazzy jives and infectious riffs never sounded so polished. This, their third LP, positively rings with Dire Straits-styled commerciality — why, lead crooner, Gerard even intones a little like Mr Knopfler — and they've got a wealth of material here to back up the promise. The added bonus (and something that is sure to satisfy their cult following) is that Gerard's scribbling lyrical wit wins out, against the instrumental backdrop, through its caustic, carefully constructed realism. Ah, rock with sentiments intact, that's good. **Dave Henderson**

R CAJUN AND THE Z Y DECO BROS

Pig Sticking In Arcadia

Discethnique FN1 LP01

R ● ● Well, you wanted something different, and this sure fits the bill. Brought out on DiscAfrique's new sister label, this is cajun music taken well and truly back to its roots and produced African style. Mixed by the Mad Professor and produced by C D Veitch, this basically takes Paul Simon's Graceland idea to its logical conclusion. Thus, the music is more effective than the diluted bayou bash usually parading under the name of cajun, while nicely demonstrating the common bond so many ethnic musics share. Forget red beans and rice, this is black eyed beans and mash — enjoy! **Carole Linfield**

CHILDREN

Children

Mister HaHa Records (PO Box 51, W Islip, New York, 11795) ● 3/4 It's hard to work out just how a seven piece can come across so minimally, but it's Children's understatement that saves them from cute clichés. They live in an American pure pop world, sketched out on Blondie, The Cars and B-52's — twin girl vocals, pop-sequenced rhythm throbs, part beach party, part street corner hangout.

Children are aptly named, because they all they sing about are variations on boy/girl playgames — smitten, confused, made-up or dressed-down, which Children wear with an ironic glint in their eye. Well, it's not *Sonic Youth*. . . **Martin Aston**

CHRIS AND COSEY

Exotica

Play It Again Sam BIAS 69

RR **C** ● ● As with contemporaries Yello, Chris And Cosey are capable of compiling superb backing tracks in search of a song, but the lack of "tunes" and inspiring vocal performances in their respective repertoires inevitably hold both back.

Parts of *Exotica* will sound great in the clubs, while other tracks are perfect for those more reflective moments, but from being great British innovators (via the Germans) in the late '70s as half of Throbbing Gristle, Chris And Cosey now seem to have been caught up and overtaken by everybody else and their producer. **Alex Bastedo**

● ● ● **MEGA** A godhead uprising

● ● **HOTSY** Tasteful and tenacious

● **TACKY PLUS** Lacking in finish

DRAB No bullets, means no hope

THE CLOSE LOBSTERS

Foxheads Stalk This Land

Fire

P ● ● ● Anyone can write a good riff, a neat sequence of chords, and anyone can chime it right or jangle like rain. Anyone can approximate what makes all the other groups sound great. The 'indie' scene can manage all that sleepwalking but who's writing the SONGS? Antipodeans like The Triffids, Go-Betweens and Chills can, and The Close Lobsters will now bring tears to your ears. They can sound sweetly Cellophane-wrapped guitar-indie, but here are glorious, loping, searching songs, songs that have had ideas stretching them around.

Like Buzzcocks had songs during punk, so The Close Lobsters wipe away 99 per cent of all known 'indie' attempts to write songs. The dark horses have won the race. **Martin Aston**

DAMAGE

Live Off The Board

CBGB/Celluloid CBGB 1001 **RTS** ● ● It's safe to assume that the intent of *Damage* is to get close to the aura of real physical and mental harm than to any "what's the damage, John?" flippancies. As the sleeve tells us, the experience of *Damage* is so closely akin to being in a car accident, you can taste the metal. This hardcore is physically air-tight — a two-bass, two-guitar-nailed, suffocating flail of sweat, drumsticks and rabid disgust; Majority Tyranny and Count Me Out are typical of *Damage's* sprayed message. Don't think too much about the songs — just feel the damage, and bring along your own oxygen supply. **Martin Aston**

DAN

An Attitude Hits

All The Madmen MAD LP 009 **C** ● ● Yep, its thrashpop time again with this, the second album from Darlington's darlings of dynamite demolition work, DAN. It's not exactly a marked departure into original aural landscapes but compensation comes in the form of bags of energy and the brilliant voice of Jools, who somehow manages to make the bum notes sound not only okay but vital. There's a certain childish charm underlying all the punky noise that gives this band that little bit of something special; once upon a time... are you moshing comfortably children? **Daz Igyemeth**

DEATH IN JUNE

Brown Book

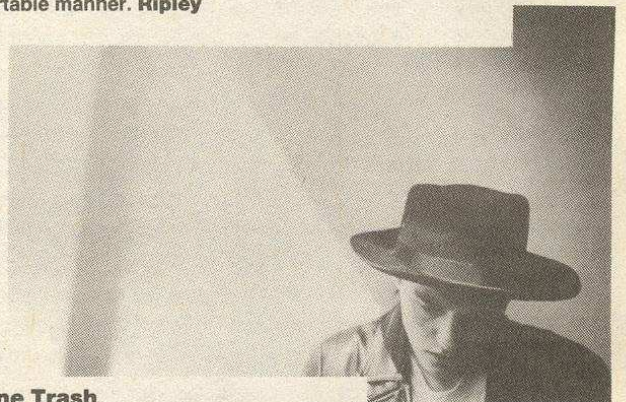
NER BAD VC 11

RT ● 7/8 Death In June's floating ambience and wantonly oblique posture has provided some moving and provocative music in the past, and the trend looks likely to continue. They've become more lyrically intense, more structured, and musically more palatable. In terms of immediate accessibility, though, *Death In June* appear to display a few tattered edges on *Brown Book*, as they try to steal into the front parlour in a pin stripe. *Brown Book* lacks that convincing finishing nail, but it keeps you on the edge of your chair in a kind of uncomfortable manner. **Ripley**

FELT

Gold Mine Trash

Cherry Red B-Red 79 **P** ● ● 1/2 Not as definitive as Cherry Red claim, *Gold Mine Trash*, as compiler Lawrence said, wasn't his idea of the best of Felt but a concise introduction to the 'accessible' side of one of Britain's most elusive post-punk enigmas while they were on C-Red (1980-85) before signing to Creation. Consequently, there's nothing from Felt's first pair of crystalline and mostly instrumental albums, but all the seven inch singles — *Something Sends Me To Sleep*, *Penelope Tree* and *Trails Of Colour Dissolve* (actually a B-side) are included. Felt's guitar-tingling introversion grows bolder and more effervescent with the two tracks from *The Strange Idols Pattern* and the three from *Ignite The Seven Cannons* (one song from each is represented here as an original demo version), the latter supplying *Primitive Painters*, still Felt's most ecstatic perfect moment. **Martin Aston**



EVOLUTIONS

Distribution initials
are as follows:

B Backs | **C** Cartel | **Ch** Charly | **FF** Fast Forward | **Je** Jetstar
J Jungle | **NM** Nine Mile | **P** Pinnacle | **PR** Probe | **Re** Revolver
RR Red Rhino | **RT** Rough Trade | **Sh** Shigaku | **SP** Spartan
SRD Southern

Each album title is followed by label/catalogue number and UK distributors in black bars (if there is no UK distributor, an address is included.)

FOC

Northwest Skyline

MCM Records LP 010 **RR C** ● A disappointing LP debut from Steve Diggle's trio. The shadow of his former group — Buzzcocks — still hangs over FOC, and despite the ten years between then and now, Steve has not moved far enough away from the chainsaw guitars and neurotic-boy-outsider ethic to establish an identity of his own. One song — Just Like Mr Trendy Said — opens just as Love You More once did, and without a co-writer to bounce off, the songs become little more than one-dimensional power punk cast offs.

I really wanted to like this album, but it's hard to see it appealing much beyond old Buzzcocks diehards. **Julian Henry**

FOLK DEVILS

Goodnight Irony

Situation 2 Situp 19 **P** ●● A retrospective collection of Devils singles 1984-85 plus three previously unavailable courtesy of their new label. The Beggars camp will probably be an ideal home for a band thriving on the dirtier, more animalistic and repetitive downside of rock 'n' roll. The Doors, The Birthday Party and The Cure all get a frequent look-in, but it's The Fall that prove the most insistent influence, particularly on Evil Eye and Albino. All the indie hits are present — Hank Turns Blue, Beautiful Monster and the wonderfully-titled Brian Jones' Bastard Son. A good opportunity to catch up with a healthy back catalogue. But as Ian Lowery's umpteenth Folk Devils line-up gets ready for a fresh assault on the indie charts one can't help wondering... has their moment been and gone? **Tony Fletcher**

GAYE BYKERS ON ACID

Drill Your Own Hole

Virgin V 2478 ●●●

How strange and slightly fantastic the Bykers are. Now signed to Virgin they've put together a distinctly courageous album for their debut shot in long trouserland. On Drill Your Own Hole, they opt for effectively commercial melodies treated in a distinctly interesting and "different" manner. Those people who had them bracketed as a trite rock band can think again, for here the Bykers get closer to Pink Floyd, the Cabs playing punk and other hybrids that you'd never imagine. Gaye Bykers haven't bothered to stick to whatever formula the media created for them, instead they've foisted a whole new bag of faded washing to their flag pole. Classic stuff, and they're so young too. **Dave Henderson**

CLIVE GREGSON & CHRISTINE COLLISTER

Mischief

Special Delivery SPD 1010 **NM C** ●●½ There's something still stirring in the "folk" revival. Such a draggy phrase for sure, but this phenomenon could quite easily have ground to a halt were it not for the width of music involved. Gregson and Collister verge close to the John And Beverley Martin bittersweet ballad, fleshed out on more than one occasion by some neat guitar. The most effective tracks are when Christine Collister's soul is bared. Poetically invoking a middle ground blues between teen bedsit, major label chart potential and moody, mesmerising eloquence, making No Word Of A Lie on side two well worth getting into Mischief for. **Dave Henderson**

THE GUN CLUB

Mother Juno

Red Rhino RED84

RR C ●●● The Gun Club are back, almost sober, with Cocteau Twins' Robin Guthrie producing and a bunch of songs that are just excellent. Can it really be happening? Sure enough.

Mother Juno is probably the greatest move that The Gun Club could ever have made, fusing their rampant guitar-rock style to a more thoughtful set of arrangements. Each song has their former power, but now the key notes are given greater effect by the space that they're allowed to breathe in. Superb stuff. **Johnny Eager**

HAPPY FLOWERS

My Skin Covers My Body

Homestead HMS085

C ¾ This is a real promising blend of Sonic Youthisms and Big Black crunch, until... Mr Horribly-Charred Infant and Mr Anus begin to sing, or, er, scream. Then all of this clatter instantly turns into toilet music for toilet heads.

Jenny Tried To Kiss Me At Recess is the funniest joke a five year old would hear all year. Mom, I Gave The Cat Some Acid is the more sophisticated eleven year old humour. Actually, this band might have achieved the impossible: what it would sound like to throw up while yelling at Mom simultaneously. The joke's on you. **Scott Murphy**

CHARLES HAYWARD

Survive The Gesture

Ink Records INK 31

NM C ●¾ Hayward's past, when he lined up as one third of This Heat, produced a pretty noise and a cohesive percussive break. Now his rambling vocal lines — like old sea shanties — and distinctive drum patterns (he's well known for playing everything *plus* the kitchen sink) have been tempered through his time with Camberwell Now, and, gone solo for 40 minutes, he gets back into the excessiveness of folkie tinkling lullabies, producing the kind of albums that Robert Wyatt's self questioning times might have suited. Deep and distinctly original. **Dave Henderson**

ERIC HOKKANEN & THE OFFBEATS

Eric Hokkanen & The Offbeats

Heartland HLP 002

R ●● This is hokum country that reeks of innocence and naivety in the way only pure country music can. These guys don't have any of that mutant undercurrent; this is pure and simple, the way mamma used to bake it. These guys talk about buddies and dimes, they play a mean fiddle, and they write tunes with names like I Hope I'm Asleep At My Funeral. Thus, the keynote is authenticity, and the price your pay for that is a lack of any real surprises. Still, plenty of unblemished melody for the aficionado, with a croonin' gem of a weeper in Yesterdays Are Haunting Me which'll bring a lump to the most stubble-ridden throat. **Carole Linfield**

THE LEATHER NUN

Force Of Habit

Wire WRCD 08

NM C ●●● All the hits (?) and more (15 tracks in all) from the dastardly Swedes, providing a neat potted history of the decadent ones, that's for yuppies only (it's only out on CD, folks!). If you need any convincing that these guys can produce gristle and sweat, wrap your lugs round this for a feast of aural delight. Don't let the hammerhead chords of Prime Mover or the infamous FFA blind you to their more esoteric talents, either; savour Jesus Came Driving Along and Desolation Avenue for the more flavoursome side of the Nun.

This little taster will also prove that there's more to them than the sexual nuances displayed with their cover of co-patriots Abba's Gimme Gimme Gimme (A Man After Midnight), too — and ably demonstrates that despite this occasional heavy handedness, these lot are a habit to be encouraged. **Carole Linfield**

MALCOLM'S INTERVIEW

Breakfast In Bedlam

Special Delivery SPD 1006

NM C ●● Folk or what? York-based quartet Malcolm's Interview may have some of the classic trappings of your average roots combo, but the sound they produce reaches much further than that. On Breakfast In Bedlam they straddle a selection of styles and introduce a commercial veneer to their truly melodic songs. A keenly assembled sound, they harmonise around Josephine Swiss's lead vocals and make the tracks stand up for themselves with added sprinkles of harmonica, accordion and keyboards. Pretty strange name, though. **Dave Henderson**

PLATINUM HEART

THE BRIAN MARSHALL ORCHESTRA

The Spy With The Platinum Heart

Disques Noir BN 2001 **RC** ●● Do we take this with a large pinch of salt? Supposedly the long-lost soundtrack to 1967's drug-influenced 'banned cult film' of the same name, the music itself sounds just that bit too hi-tech, the film stills adorning the sleeve just too studied to make the concept totally believable. But while that mystery remains, the music at the heart of the matter is as perfect a period piece as can be imagined. And it's not just John Barry rip-offs a la Wheelspin and Operation 'H' but a tailor-made Shirley Bassey titles sequence Masquerade and dance floor numbers like Frisco Disco and Tuxedo Tussle, all contributing to as rewarding experience.

Be it that long-lost soundtrack or a perfect pastiche, The Spy With The Platinum Heart won mine instantly. **Tony Fletcher**

SEXTON MING

Old Horse Of The Nation

Hangman HANG 6UP

Re C ●●½ Mr Ming's first solo album, and pretty madcap it is too. Here we have one of life's true eccentrics establishing his role as God-like being through 13 manic chants. All sung in a voice fit to grate carrots over a guitar that sometimes plays in tune, Old Horse is something of a drunken night out treat. **Johnny Eager**

MINIMAL COMPACT

The Figure One Cuts

Crammed Discs CRAM 055

NM C ●● Big in Benelux, Minimal Compact's fourth LP is good, but unlikely to win them many new friends on this side of the Channel.

There is plenty here to get your teeth into — side two's opener Piece Of Green is an immediate highlight — but although the songs are fine and the production is good, the overall feel does tend to get a little samey. Bass driven travelogue tales performed by independent bands with European accents have always gone down great guns on the Continent and lead ballooned in Britain — four albums in, I'm afraid I see no evidence that the situation will reverse for Minimal Concept. **Alex Bastedo**

THE NEW DAY

The New Day

Mourning Glory Records (13923 Old Village Lane, Sugarland, TX, USA)

●½ The New Day? Chuckleguffawyuckhawhaw. More like that-was-that-weekend-when-we-played-Faith-and-tripped-out-and-I-was-certain-I-was-Robert-Smith. Not for nothing is The New Day's record label called Mourning Glory. If you hallucinate alongside this, you'll agree that this is The Cure's Faith and that every track sounds like Primary or Inbetween Days. As echoing voices melt into phased guitars and keyboards climb the slippery walls, my head nails itself against the door. Another wonderful old Cure album for your pleasure. **Martin Aston**

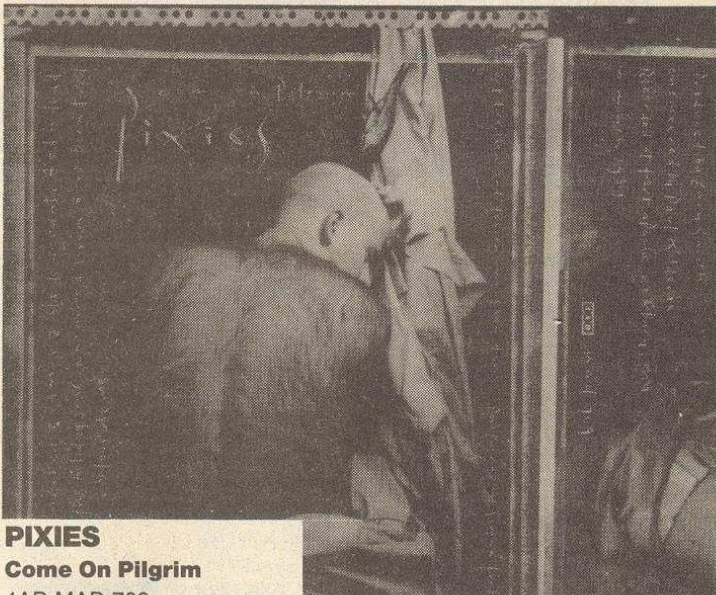
PIETER NOOTEN AND MICHAEL BROOK

Sleeps With The Fishes

4AD CAD 710

C ●● This is an album that could have gone either way. I've never been solid with Clan Of Xymox and their rhythmic guitarpop, though they've begun to grow on me; however, I couldn't have foreseen their mainman Nooten battling it out with former Eno/Hassell sidekick Michael Brook. But here it is.

The result rings ambiently into oblivion at the hands of Brook's arrangements. Keyed into that drifting Eno-esque ambience, the proceedings are spiced with Nooten's vocals, but he plays it so downbeat that the mood sticks like a claustrophobic trenchcoat. Fact is though, there just isn't anyone around doing things of this grace and magnitude anymore — apart from, in places, Dead Can Dance. So this will do quite nicely thank you very much. **Dave Henderson**



PIXIES

Come On Pilgrim

4AD MAD 709

C ●●¾ This is a remarkable eight track set. There are so many good things that I can summon up from my favourite record collection to equate with Pixies' sound that Come On Pilgrim just begs to be inserted in the rack for posterity. Mixing all styles in an eclectic fusion, Pixies breathe deep in a huge open hallway that they've created all by themselves. There's a scary undertone but some keen pop, as sharp as you like, just begging to be played again and again. Social comment, witty lyrics, a bit of slang and a future talking point for sure. Excellent. **Ripley**

POPPI UK

Popée Ōok

Dead Mans Curve DMC 018 **RR C** ●● Comes across like a mix of oddest Talking Heads, Noseflutes and Stump-like jerky quirkiness; but spazzing around the floor with a certain unpredictability all its own.

This is a collection of 'stuff' released over the last couple of years on the continent by these persons from Holland. Delving in we find maniac dancing and do the Disco Soweto, perform agit-pop gymnastics to Multi-Purpose Coffin and swing along to Great Man's Apes. Come on in, the head casserole is fine! **Daz Igmeth**

SEMINAL RATS:
"OMNIPOTENT"
FIRST LP
(GOES ON 10)

THE RATS LET
LOOSE WITH
ENOUGH
ELECTRIC
SPEW TO
MAKE YOU
FORGET THAT
LAST CULT
RECORD!

POST-FEELIES/
POST-TELEVISION
INTROVERT
SOUND:
'WHISPERING
GUITAR LINES
WHICH GROW
INTO A SCREAM
INSIDE YOUR
HEAD'

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THE PRIMEVALS

Live A Little

New Rose ROSE 125 **P** ●●½ The Primevals' Scottish location, sub-psyche name and myth of insensitivity and loudness is soon dispelled on Live A Little, which totally disproves any such immoral branding that the group may have previously received. The Primevals play tortured pop instead, a flowing guitar overture lubricated with excellent vocal performances and some fine arrangements.

Live A Little is a more than worthy suggestion of The Primevals intent. Keep your eye on these people. **Dave Henderson**

PSYCHO

Hosebags From Hell

Manic Ears ACHE 009 **Re C** ●● Classic slice of American hardcore, from Boston band Psycho. If you thought that all metal/thrash/hardcore sounded the same then think again. Psycho inject new life into an old formula with brilliant arrangements, an ultra-tight rhythm section and the most dynamic guitar solos this side of Hendrix. Sadly, the vocalist follows the more traditional path of hardcore shouting, but occasionally develops his own style to good effect as on, strangely enough, the only cover version, a slightly rude Like A Virgin which closes the album. All in all, a highly recommended LP which proves that Boston has more to offer than just a silly sounding baseball team. **Frank Pigg**

PUMP

The Decoration Of The Duma Continues

Final Image Fib 3

RR C ●● The Pump duo took their musical training through a million home recorded cassettes as MFH. They dragged their ideas through a knowledgeable void and developed it in bigger studios. Now, some years later, their masterplan unfurls on this, their debut LP. A monstrous concoction, it has some funky beats beneath the affected, multi-layered music that boasts everything from trad to new age. But the really neat move was to wheel in chief executioner Karl Blake to intone the moody vocals on Lung. Fuelled with a manic guitar, the second side hits off at breakneck speed, while the vocal interludes and interruptions on the third track make all the difference in light and dark after the first side's intensity.

Almost a great album, almost unbearably hypnotic, Pump need more tools to colour with, but at least they're on the right canvas now. **Dave Henderson**

THE RAILWAY CHILDREN

Re-union Wilderness

Virgin US 7 90636-1

●●● A US import remixed by Ged Yeates, Re-union Wilderness now features eight tracks plus the bits from Brighter that appeared on Factory. So, if earlier in the year you missed out on the "up north schoolies" who were writing bittersweet pop, well, here's your second chance, with bonus bits too. A fine album already, it now boasts a few extra hi-tones and surely points to a mass acceptance by the middle of next year. Great pop! **Ripley**

RED JASPER

England's Green And Pleasant Land?

Vixen VIX 101

Re C ● Red Jasper play a neat line in pot belly rockerilla, tackily joining folk and rock in a brash chunky style. Sadly the production on this album lacks any kind of dynamism that this much-gigged outfit no doubt attain when they're trashing their tunes at Chesterfield's Old Etonian or Retford's Nasty Arms. Red Jasper's thumping folkisms probably go down a storm after seven pints of Dog's Bladder, but they don't do so well at home with a bottle of *Cotes du Rhone*. **Ripley**

HENRY ROLLINS/GORE

Live

Eksakt 034 **Re C** ●● A bizarre marriage made in hell. Ex-Black Flag man, Henry Rollins spins out on side one with his new band in a live situation, while on the reverse side, Gore blast the rafters *live* too. The strange thing is that Rollins sounds a little undressed without Black Flag's powerchord drive and direction, and Gore sound like they're just dying to be Black Flag circa the group's instrumental metal phase. It's a funny old world that needs a little push at times, now think what we'd have had if Euro's Gore had actually played live with Henry! **Dave Henderson**

ROOT BOY SLIM

Left For Dead

Bedrock BED LP4

P ●½ Root Boy Slim will still be releasing albums when the bomb goes off and they'll still sound as timeless and authentically R&B as ever. Doused in bittersweet tales of wine-sodden unrequited love, Root Boy's sandpaper throat runs the classic tack and should enliven those late night hics. **Johnny Eager**

ROYAL CRESCENT MOB

Omerta

Moving Target MT 009 **RT C** ●● If Haircut 100 had wanted to be Gang Of Four and were good enough to manage it, then Ohio's Royal Crescent Mob might have thought, 'hey, who's been listening in?' This mob are just so damn

funkadelic as well as commercially viable, throwing up rhythmic trampolines on which they bounce off some straight rock-soul but also more trickier 'No Wave' guitar dissonance. In other words, this is a bit of an intellectual if still organic rumble through the jungle of funk moves, moving in on the sound of Material and Bill Laswell. RCM can steam or relax, cruising on harmonies or harmonicas, but they always manage to *get down*. Join them. **Martin Aston**

RUBY BLUE

Glances Askances

Red Flame RF53

NM C ●●● Scotland's fast becoming synonymous with lyrically adept, melodious music, and this debut puts the Celtic Ruby Blue well into that elusive category. Rebecca Pidgeon's vocal is cool, esoteric and assured, aided and abetted as it is by Roger Fife's ripe talent. Somehow, I suspect there's a large range of influences brought to bear on this LP; personally I thought of Joni Mitchell, the Beatles (on The Quiet Mind), Clannad, Kate Bush... but particularly Peter Gabriel (imagine him singing Just Relax, especially).

It's rare and pleasing to find a group who solely rely on melody and make it work, and as such this one deserves to go all the way. And, if they can keep their eclecticism harnessed without stifling the infinite variety, they will.

Carole Linfield



THE RUTS

Live And Loud

Link Records LINK LP013 ●● Described as an 'official bootleg', this collection of the latter day Ruts is unsurprisingly of dubious quality, yet clearly captures the raucous punk of the doomed foursome. Unlike many live LPs, the audience isn't too invasive and Malcolm Owen's abrasive vocal is audible, all of which goes to capture a band which is, in hindsight, steeped in sadness. Just as their career looked set to reach unprecedented heights, so Malc blew it on heroin, just too early to make him a legend, just too late to be a punk hero. Still, for those who remember them this is a fitting tribute, and includes their bids for posterity in Babylon's Burning and Jah Wars, not to mention an embarrassing rendition of Blue Suede Shoes. **Carole Linfield**

SALVATION

Diamonds Are Forever

Ediesta CALCLP 22 **C** ● Salvation, to be quite frank, would be to shout bollocks! There should be no confusion as to what this is; a poor man's Mission with poppy overtones and a voice even weaker than that of Wayne Missionary. Okay, to be fair, the playing is competent if not very good but this bunch need to stray from the well-trodden path a bit more, know what I mean? Use this record for anything other than stimulating your pleasure centres. **Daz Igymeth**

THE SCENE IS NOW

Total Jive

Shadowline SR0587 Achter de Hoofdwacht 7, 6711 VW Nijmegen, Netherlands) ●●½ Difficult to access at first, Total Jive starts to get the neurons firing only after three or four plays; the rock backbone being a base for many strange and unexpected out-growths which seem ugly at first; purpose becoming apparent through familiarity.

This, in fact, contains a few gems in the shape of Sartre's Acid Trip, 10-Day Space Shuttle Mission, A Man's Coconut and Kid Ory's Nightmare — great titles, huh? Well worth your time if you can spare it... go on, don't be shy... **Daz Igymeth**

SCREAMING TREES

Even If And Especially When

SST SST 132 **P** ●●½ Will SST sign up every band who follow the trail left behind by Husker Du and The Meat Puppets? Screaming Trees are another new world rock band who kick up dust storms instead of knocking back the free cocaine, who strike out in that taut, blustering guitar-swirl — H-Du, M-Pups, Dinosaur, the blurry end of REM. The Trees often use British garage-psychedelia, Merseybeat and West Coast signposts as cornerstones for their dense tussle, and there's the rub. The electric organ only calls for a more authentic '60s backwater. There are enough labels and signs to hang Screaming Trees on, but you might as well hang all those who are still going to love this attitude. **Martin Aston**

The stranger side of vinyl

something

Boy, are things getting hot in this cupboard! All I've got at the moment are a coathanger and some more weird things

to play. **Crazy Backwards Alphabet** are driving me insane. Why are these guys so intense? Their self-titled album (SST through Pinnacle) is a really claustrophobic nightmare with jazzy twists to screw your head up.

More airy is **Peter de Havilland's** Bois De Boulogne, a collection of intriguing instrumentals and chants on Venture through Virgin. First off it sounds like a harpsichord soundtrack to a **Woody Allen** film, then it's a concerto on blow pipes, then the piano

plastic

comes out, echoing. Good one. Sadly **Lester Bowie's** attempts to be magnificent on Venture fail as his trumpet proves to be less than versatile. Similarly **Michael O Sullivan's** piano variations on Venture fail to really shift enough in variant timescapes (man).

this

The French label, Les Disques Du Soleil Et De L'Acier (BP 236, 54004 Nancy Cedex, France) have always been a source of interesting less-than-orthodox music and now seems like no time to stop. Following their **Sprung Aus Den Wolken LP**, they present a new album of short instrumental pieces from **Pascal Comolade** entitled *Bel Canto*. Drifting between affected romanticism and keyboard crescendo it's an awesome, almost frightening, listen.

Jan Stooler/Zizi Ensmble emanate from the same label and have an album out called *Desert Islands Dusks*. In parts it wavers between opera, melodrama and sleaze, but falls flat when it gets too jazzy à la **Zappa**.

way

Still in France, the wonderful **DDAA** release their long awaited *Object DDAA*, a groovy illustrated 12 inch package with a selection of exquisite tracks (crossing all manner of acoustic possibilities) and tracing their career of compilation commitments through the early '80s. When toffs in pin stripes reckon that **Laurie Anderson** is art and music personified, just let them take a listen to *DDAA*, then they'll really get to grips with

comes

non-reality in aesthetics. The record, plus a wide ranging and comprehensive catalogue of other releases, is available through Illusion Productions (15 rue Pierre Curie,

14120 Mondeville, France). Don't miss this one.



The fold out cover of DDAA's Object package

THE SERVICE

George's Duty Free Goulash

Pravda Records PR 3728 (3728 North Clark St, Chicago, ILL 60613, USA) ● 1/2 It's easy to see how you could fall head over heels for The Service. Their US strummer-in-the-summer rock, with archetypal gargled vocals and near pop stature, is charming, but they never quite did it for me. Perhaps the swinging guitar sound was just too sickly sweet, or these ears might not have been at one with their lyrical bent, but The Service, although enterprising and entertaining, aren't quite as essential as they'd like to be. **Ripley**

SISTER RAY

Random Violence

Resonance 33-8706 (Box 213, 1740 AE Schagen, The Netherlands) ● 1/4 Well, you'd guess that these Ohio guitar welders were a little Velvet Underground influenced, but they've certainly hidden it well if they are. Instead, their thrashing, churning sound is closer to a sub-psyche revolution that's spinning off at different angles. On *Random Violence* it's random direction time, as each track suggests a new angle or a different facade for the Ray boys. Not a classic, but suggestive of something good to come. **Johnny Eager**

SKINNY PUPPY

Cleanse, Fold And Manipulate

Netwerk NTL 30011 RR C ●● The Skinny Puppy image of death/gore/glam/terror/combat (you know, to put it in a nutshell), has saved them and their music, placing them in the upper echelons of the soon-to-be-popular-yet-again pseudo electronic movement. With *Front 242*, *Portion Control*, *Nitzer Ebb*, *Cabaret Voltaire* and many more of that ilk receiving a reasonable amount of interest for their fleshy but firm dance music, punctuated with tapes and loops, it's a good time for SP to re-introduce themselves, and this new LP is a regular *tour-de-force*.

Possibly the group's weakest area is the actual song structures, but they make sure that there is enough going on in there, in terms of cross-rhythms, to make the LP move and it all comes wrapped in state of the art "art". Nice one. **TC Wall**

SLAUGHTER JOE

All Around My Hobby Horses Head

Kaleidoscope Sound KSLP 003 RR C ● 1/2 Ahuh! This is such a difficult record. Slaughter Joe, house Creation producer, man of distinction in different pop sounds, has made an album. But, while totally listenable, enjoyable and quite charming, it has so many carbon copies — no, not interpretations, just copies — of the mid-'60s Byrds and Velvets sound, that it's unbelievably kitsch. The desired effect? Well, OK, there's not a lot of music originality here — sound performances and a good production perhaps — but this just isn't anything new. It's *everything* old.

Worse still, the closing cut, a cover of The Byrds' *Wild Mountain Thyme* shows the desperation of such a project. Nice LP, but why? **Dave Henderson**

SPACEMAN 3

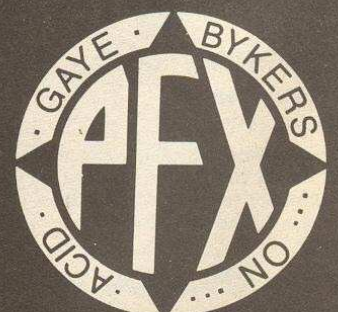
Perfect Prescription

Glass GLALP 26 NM C ●● 1/2 Perfect Prescription finds the three space cadets... sorry, *men*, indulging in a trip of a lifetime that seems to have used Lou Reed's *Street Hassle* epic as a springboard to flight. Their dense throb of psychedelia initially comes on like a young, dwarfish Hawkwind, but with *Ode To Street Hassle*, *Spaceman 3* settle down with Reed/The Velvets' trance-drone of bowed violins, *sad* guitars and drifting, dislocated voices and tempos. Like *The Shamen*, *Spaceman 3* inject their own idiosyncratic serum into the psychedelic host, keeping it valid. Waiter, there's a microdot in my soup... **Martin Aston**

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SPERMBIRDS

Something To Prove

Manic Ears ACHE 007 **Re C** German hardcore outfit with a supposedly ex-GI vocalist, whose lyrics reach new heights of subtlety and taste with one song I'm Gonna Come All Over Your Face. The music only occasionally stumbles out of mundane thrash with the band briefly mimicking jazz and funk on a couple of intros. It's all about as shocking and predictable as a new Five Star album. Re-enlist now! **Frank Pigg**

SURFIN' LUNGS

The Biggest Wave

Beat Int BEAT 1

B C ●7/8 An old style 12 track album from the Lungs, whose manic desire is to cling to Beach Boys harmonies and live out tuneful love on the beach charades. They're a lovable crew all the same, and The Biggest Wave survives the nasty tidal scourge of bad vibes (man) by being cutesy and quite well played. Better still, the Lungs are capable of writing some quite powerful tunes. **Johnny Eager**

MARK T AND THE BRICKBATS

From Middle East to Mid West

Waterfront Records WF034 **B C** ●● A truly cosmopolitan record. This is the second Brickbats album and it continues in the style of Johnny There, which first launched the band's eclectic initiative almost two years ago. By taking their musical sources from literally everywhere and applying a sparse recording technique, the band have come up with an LP that defies description, other than 'pretty weird'. This will be a strong cult seller as there are enough fringe jazzers and folkies mooching around to keep a slap-happy outfit like the Brickbats in lentils and cabbage soup for another year or so. **Julian Henry**

32/20

Guitar Guitar

Shanghai HAI 110 **C** ● Guys who are in it for love, not money? Well, let's just hope that East Anglian five piece 32/20 aren't hoping to be the next D Straits or George Thorogood, and they're just working this bristle-strewn bar room sound out of their system. As a rousing pub rock outfit, with more than a hint of cowpoke slide guitar, they're probably ideal to knock back a few lagers to, but the songs here aren't strong enough, and their tunnelvision clasp to their influences never allows them to pull all the right punches. **Dave Henderson**

LES THUGS

Electric Troubles

Vinyl Solution SOL 5

P ●●1/2 Forget about The Ramones' last set — if you want some real, leathery-smelling rock 'n' roll stuff, strictly brought up to '87 standards, then you can only go for Les Thugs. That's 'Les' as in France, and 'Thugs' as in a French group getting mean, threatening and vicious on vinyl.

Electric Troubles is worked out to a tee — riffs run like sleek electric trains, carrying a cargo of open-gob harmonies and guitar-breaks as merciless as they are brief. Les Thugs sing about Dead Dreams, Legal Frugs and Bad News From The Heart; all wonderfully thuggish at heart, but all sentiments that get buried under the relentless charge of their streamlined runaway express. **Martin Aston**

TREAT HER RIGHT

Treat Her Right

Demon FIEND 97 **P** ●●1/4 There's something haunting about Treat Her Right. From the front cover painting of a cheating wife about to be caught red handed, through to the wood veneer and stamped back cover. Once inside the mood stays as this Cambridge, Mass four piece wander down a dusty trail,

kept in check by a darting harmonica and some bluesy, downbeat, playing. Treat Her Right make the most of the leaving-things-out-to-make-them-count adage and should be crying all the way to the bank. **Dave Henderson**

THE TRUFFAUTS

Fanny

Sputnik PUT 3 **B C** ●● More frisky power-pop, this time spun out by these Francois Truffaut-fixated West Germans who sing in melancholic English. Well, whatever next? The Truffauts sound teen-naive and peachy-keen, pulling on those buzzing '60s beatpop feelings and those close harmonies. A possibly helpful comparison, already made by *Pop Noise* magazine, are The Church and their earnest pop classicism. On occasions, The Truffauts almost slip into a new-wave mod groove, but never go the whole hog. **Martin Aston**

THE UNCLAIMED

The Unclaimed

Resonance 33-8707 (Box 213, 1740 AE Schegen, The Netherlands)

●● This kind of tinny pop — held together with masking tape and enthusiasm — from LA's The Unclaimed, comes perfectly packaged in a superbly tacky sleeve with hazy freak-out graphics. The essential parallels of Music Machine, Seeds and Count Five are scrawled on the jacket and the noise emanating from the groove is something akin to twee pop ready for a '60s beat film. Shake! **Johnny Eager**

VARIOUS

The Bride

Crash Records (305 Swanston Street, Melbourne, Australia) ●● There's something almost comatose about some of the things that waddle up from down under. White Cross aren't an upfront onslaught, a powerhouse of noise or any such infection, yet instead they're a harmonious whirlpool that kind of attracts your attention while remaining in the background. Like all good stormy relationships, White Cross creep up on your blind side and catch you whistling tunes from their latest. There are rock clichés thrown to the frets and strummed invocations running amok, and, rest assured, White Cross look suitably austere and bedraggled on the sleeve of this LP. Intoxicating and at once refreshing too. **Dave Henderson**

VARIOUS

Funky Alternatives 2

Concrete CPRODLP 002

P ●● The dedicated among you will have no real need for this album, filled as it is with names-to-drop rather than totally out of the air artists. However, all ten tracks here are specially remixed or commissioned, thus enticing the more diligent of you to purchase.

You won't be disappointed, either. Among others, there's Chakk, Stump, The Dave Howard Singers (with the LP's prime cut, Yon Johnson III), Poro-nose and even the seminal Cabs, with the previously unreleased (it sez here) Doom Zoom. Pleasantest surprise is Quando Quango's Lowrider, produced by 400 Blows, which delivers a light 'n' fluffy rendition of the much covered War opus.

Buy it for uneducated kid siblings, at least. **Carole Linfield**

VARIOUS

Head Over Ears

Play Hard DEC 007

RR C ●●1/2 An LP compiled by *Debris* magazine, which has been published since December 1983.

All eleven tracks are exclusive to *Debris*, taking in live Fall (US, '80s, '90s) and Big Black (Dead Billy) and studio Railway Children, A House, Twang, Prince Kool, TOT, King Of The Slums and vinyl debuts from Kit and Swivel Hips. The choice of music avoids any typecasting of what independent music might now stand for (the jangle is at a minimum), and the fact that *Debris* don't just dangle the big names for their own self-promotion makes all the difference. All this and a 48 page issue in a gatefold sleeve. **Martin Aston**



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the idiot looks at the finger

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VARIOUS

Indie Top 20. Volume 2

Band of Joy Music TT 02 **RR C** ● 1/2 Wow! What an inspiring collection of independent musical sounds; there's jangle pop, a little bit of rap, jangle pop, some rocky stuff, jangle pop and even some pop that's a bit jangly. Don't you just love drippy vocals and slushy music to death? So does this record! About 70 per cent treacle rock with a few detours thrown in is not my idea of a top twenty record so. But these are the records that charted. So you've probably got most of these tracks anyway. **Daz Izymeth**

VARIOUS

Just A Mish Mash

In Tape IT 47

RR C ● 3/4 The history of primal In Tape, wrapped up and made available for under four notes! What? Just 14 tracks here, some unreleased, and you get the idea that the In Tape bank balance should be moving in the right direction. Sadly no Terry And Gerry, but there are 14 acts who all deserve mentions for one reason or another. The classically wonderful Yeah Yeah Noh stand pugnosed above the rest, but Janitors, Membranes, June Brides and Gaye Bykers can't be ignored. Add to that The Weeds and Heart Throbs, plus the ever pushy Creepers, and it's a queasy equation that doesn't mix, but produces some interesting smells. **TC Wall**

VARIOUS

Make Ready for Revelation

Bite Back BB! 04 **B C** ● 3/4 This is a remarkably good album for such a new label. Portsmouth's Bite Back present eight diverse acts who have more than a wodge of gold-dust in their sleepy eyes. Paul Groovy's '60s stylings are well impressive, the mighty Twelve 88 Cartel power through on a colossal wave of noise, while Steve Austin, Uncle Ian and Strange Men With Guns all manage to sparkle. Best of all must be The Cranes, because they sound so different from anything else. Add to all that the poppier side, with Radical Dance and The Bushbabies, and the Bite Back national flotation doesn't seem to be too much of a far off possibility. All for the price of a 12 inch... sample and behold. **Dave Henderson**

VARIOUS

Music From The Dead Zone Two: USA

Dead Man's Curve DMCDZ 02 **RR C** ● 3/4 Dunno about the Dead Zone

bit but it's all pretty odd stuff. Of course, odd can mean both good and bad; as is effectively demonstrated on this latest DMC sampler.

Recommendable oddness is supplied by Corpses As Bedmates (atmospheric disturbance), Little Fyodor ("We're all dooomed"), For Against (quite nice, really), Smersh (screams and whoos), Psychones/Schlafengarten (groovy and beaty), Boy Dirt Car (rocking strangeness) and The Haters (interestingly annoying). So then, what of the other five bands featured? How much do you like to be irritated? **Daz Izymeth**

VARIOUS

Perdurabo

Cathexis CABLA 2 **FF C** ●● A compilation album document featuring ten left-field outfits, each with their own quite unique reading of music, what matters, and group perspective. The acts themselves are each outspoken autobiographers, whose pencil-sketches of contemporary life are unquestionably awe-inspiring. Band Of Holy Joy's lyrical bent plays off remarkably against the slippy slime-rock of La Muerte, while Attrition and The Legendary Pink Dots prove they've grown into powerful outfits, and A Primary Industry, Heads On Sticks and The Wolfgang Press all suggest that they'll be vital before long. Fine stuff. **Dave Henderson**

VARIOUS

Sick Sick Sick

ID Records Nose 15 **Re C** ●● This album lives up to its name. Three groups are featured, Demented Are Go, Skitzo and The Coffin Nails, and the 15 songs included were recorded live at the Klub Foot in April of this year. A glance at the sleeve reveals the nature of what is contained in the grooves — a full blast, hell-for-leather, smash-and-grab psychobilly workout, with DAG coming out on top with a slightly more colourful repertoire, ie songs like Human Slug and Pervy In The Park. Regular visitors to the Klub Foot will find this album a rewarding purchase. **Julian Henry**

VARIOUS

The Sound And The Fury

Big Store/EFA (Zeisigweg 2, 4355 Waltrop, West Germany) Never mind the Raw Cuts, here's The Sound And The Fury...! The young and striving Big Store label has put all its energy into releasing a sampler, compiling uprising German guitar pop.

Well known bands like The Truffauts, Flowerpornoes, Broken Jug and Strangemen all take part. In addition, the rest of the 12 bands reach international standard. The Sound And The Fury therefore is a hopeful stock-taking — convincing me that the next Goldrush (after New Zealand) will take place somewhere between Hamburg and Munich. **Jan Cux**



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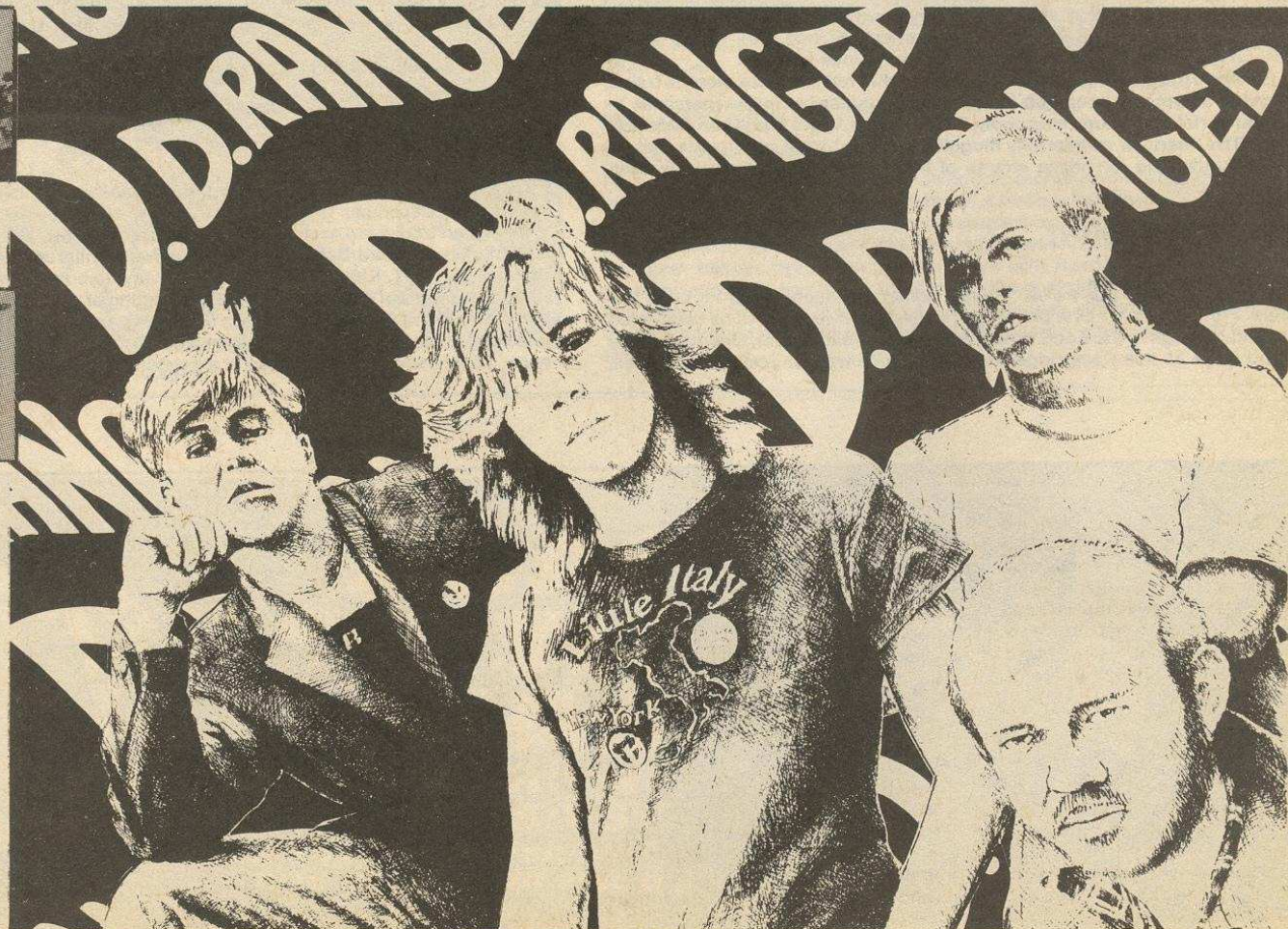
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VARIOUS

Stator

I N Nine INNR 001 (24 rue de Chantilly, 49 000 Angers, France)

●¾ What a long strange trip it's been. Please find enclosed eight dangerous subversives now plying their trade through an array of tantalising thought control methods. Some of them are old, some of them are new, and inside the stark sleeve there's a magazine about other sound terrorists who're vying for position on your psyche.

The glowing tributes go to Zoskia, who're heading into a dancefloor full of men with megaphones; the terminator visits Etant Donnes who solo on dentist drills. It's a weird mix between the accessible, the esoteric and the noisy that mainly succeeds. Ripley

VARIOUS

Underground Resistance

Reaction Records UNREST 1 **C** ● These kind of albums seem like a good idea in theory but inevitably fail to deliver. What we have is a collection of groups bound together for some slim regional reason (not musical), putting them all on one LP lets them have a folio of their work, but as a cohesive album or decent package — the sleeve is awful and there is nothing in the way of info about each act — it kind of falls down. I hate to sound totally down on the project because there are some good tracks/songs/bands featured, but there are a higher percentage who need to work a lot more on their chosen craft. Trying. Dave Henderson

WALKING SEEDS

Skullf***

Probe 13 **Pi C** ●¾ The Seeds play hard, unearthed, powerdrill thug music. Skullf*** throbs and violently makes the needle skid across the grooves. The aggressive, throaty diatribes are further aided by an overload guitar sound that makes you wonder if the studio equipment was faulty when it was recorded. But hell, this is angry music that scalps the rind off cheese and discolours lager. Hard but fair, in a strange sort of way. Johnny Eager

THE WATER WALK

Water Walk

Netwerk NTL 30013 **RR C** ●¾ A glint in the Netwerk chainmail as The Water Walk unleash another branch to the label's identity. Moody and atmospheric, the reverb rebounds neatly on all sides of this strummed pop opus. It's that dreaded word . . . hypnotic . . . that first comes to mind, but TWV live on to play another chord, turning in some sound songs along the way. Expressive and courageously trying new things, this is well packaged and well worth your attention. TC Wall

WEBCORE

Webcore

Freud 16 ARK 27

TC C ●¾ They are difficult to place, these Webcore people. Based half in Cornwall, half in London, mixing musical styles like they do residences, they manage to wiggle their toes in the bleached sand of Oxford Street while smashing bottles on a nuclear free landscape. Webcore peek through a crack in the door and it's difficult to make out whether they're hippy punkers, PIL outcasts or Hawkwind in suits. Disco dancers with elephant boots, they trounce the scratchy irreverence of jazz, scraping their fingers on rock's ugly face. Mixed up for sure, but banging the right dustbin lid and making a powerful din. Dave Henderson.

YUNG WU

Shore Leave

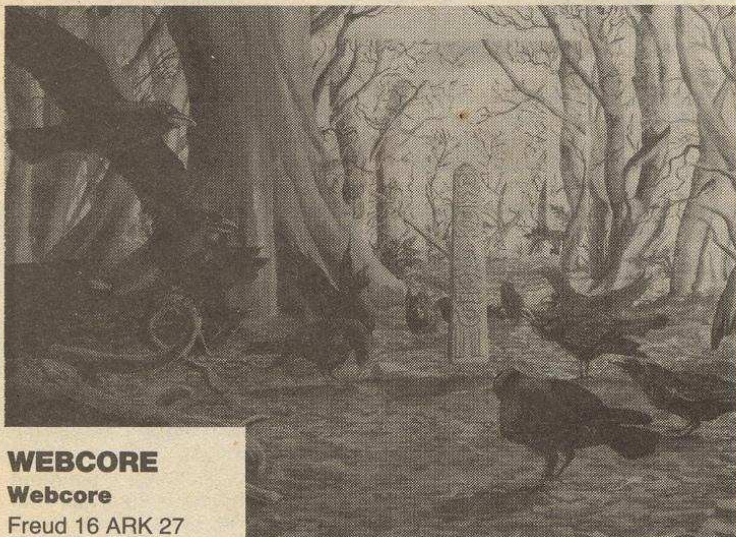
Rough Trade ROUGH 188 **RT C** ● Pleasant day trips into Neil Young's faded denim pocket often end in plagiaristic headaches — well, so say the old soothsayer. But, not Yung Wu. Perhaps their intentions aren't as blatant and that's why this rolling strum thunders in with its head held high. A nostalgic look back for southern rebels, who've let their hair grow and still have the checked shirt in the closet. Yung Wu is an offshoot of The Feelies, the preppie/nerd garb is thrown to the wind, and there's emotion in those notions. Dave Henderson

UG STORE GUIDE

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OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

Fri 6th: LEICESTER The Princess Charlotte. Sat 7th: WENDOVER Wellhead Inn. Sun 8th: CROYDON Underground Thur 19th: LIVERPOOL POLY The Haigh

More Dates to be Added

* Martin Aston,

TC Wall,

Ripley,

Dave Henderson,

Daz Igymeth,

Johnny Dee,

Johnny Eager,

Julian Henry,

Frank Pigg,

(cast in

order of

appearance)

THE ADVERTS Peel Session

Strange Fruit **P** Ah, magnificent! The Adverts perfectly summed up the real facet of punk's original purpose — the DIY amateur-hour of the music, the sublime way pop got bashed on the head by volume and simplicity, and the cartoonish glint in the eye. Bored Teenagers, One Chord Wonders and Gary Gilmore's Eyes — a holy punk trinity — are all included. **MA**

ALIEN SEX FIEND Here Cum

Germ **A** **Anagram** **P** Yet another new single from the Fiends, this time leaving behind their dance orientated tape cut up soundtrack and opting for a similarly raucous sound, spiced with teeny drum machine, large slabs of guitar and various protruding noises, behind a ranting tale of germ warfare. Riveting. **TC W**

BABY A No Respect Specter

B **C** Formerly Baby Amphetamine, this second single with its second hand steals, sucks. Listen to that Beastie album again girls! **R**

BAND OF SUSANS Blessing

And Curse Furthur

RT **C** In line with other Blast Firsts (Furthur is a subsidiary), Band Of Susans (yup, there are three Sue's here) mould more blissful American guitar sculptures, hooked up to a murderous, nervous beat. There are guitars everywhere — all over the sleeve, and in the grooves (guitars are chasing each other's blue touch-paper) layered into a burning pyre on which smoulders four songs. Strewth! More 'New Wave' disco-nance. **MA**

MARTYN BATES The Look

Of Love **Cherry Red** **P** Ex-Eyeless crooner, Martyn Bates gets a headlock on this Bacharach/David chestnut, but it's all a little too slow, too down. Martyn sounds a little phased off that "she's got the look" too. Not very romantic. **R**

BEST OF USHURA The

Savage **New Birth** **RTS** Minimalistic croonalong that sees Joy Ushura tickling her tonsils over a Discolit tin beat. There's something a little haunting and quite memorable about this monotone effort. Enticing and evocative. **DH**

BFG Higher Than Heaven

Attica **RT** **C** A more paced offering than their previous one, Western Skies, and not so bad at that. Still open to flak on the Sisters/Mission front but an identity is being formed and this is sure to please a few people somewhere. They aren't incapable of conjuring up an atmosphere and deserve a listen. **DJ**

BIG STICK Crack Attack Buy

Our Records **RTS** This is a frightening, and frighteningly good, record. Big Stick's Dragging on Blast First whetted a few appetites, and it shouldn't be too

long before someone picks up this classic for UK release. Till then you'll have to raid the import stores to hear this breakheart rap and tape loop cut up, that can only be fully explained/enjoyed when you're holding it to a throbbing deck. The flipside features three tracks that sound like the feeling you get after reading chapter three of *The Wasp Factory*. Mean. **DH**

BLACK ALSATIAN

Something Intense

RT **C** The sound of swinging Rochdale, spiked with a harpsichord, trudging under a brimming bass, this is a downer that claws you into submission and begs more plays. Cool and annoying, their next step is the most important. Doors with no handles. **R**

BLAB HAPPY It's Turned

Out Nice Again Wisdom

(Wisdom, 39 Madway Street, Highfields, Leicester) Formerly raved about in the *Tip Sheet*, and following label interest from all over the shop, Blab Happy prove that there's more to Leicester than leather and lust with four embittered pop twangs laced with charm and individuality. Not a top notch production but a bargain for £1.50 including postage and a natty sticker. **DH**

BOB What A Performance

Sombrero **C** Bob possess some fine things — humour, lyrics that are funny without being wacky — and they're enjoyable to dance to as well. They should play Bob songs in public pools as I imagine you could come up with some pretty groovy synchronised swimming to them. I don't know if it's just because I'm in a good mood today but I'm tempted to say that there is genius at work here, furthermore, buy this record and blow those blues away. Celery in your lunchbox with a milk chocolate Penguin for afters isn't enough for a growing girl — you need a bit of Bob in your life! **JD**

THE BRILLIANT CORNERS

Delilah Sands SS20

Re **C** The Corners push ever closer to the pop market and eventual radio playlisting with another remarkably chirpy tune. Davey Woodward's pen must be dribbling with poptones and, after the twee but assured Brian Rix single, Delilah Sands re-affirms just how potentially massive this group could be. **JE**

THE CARDIACS There's Too

Many Irons In The Fire

Alphabet **P** Yes, it's them again, ringing up, sending records, being arty and "wacky", all in the cause of earning a few quid. The Cardiacs' success totally baffles me, but their quirky art-school pop could easily match anyone from Deaf School to Split Enz, as they swerve into Zappa-jazz land. This group are gimmicky and they may just make it into the big cattle market. They're bloody annoying though. **DH**

THE CARETAKER RACE

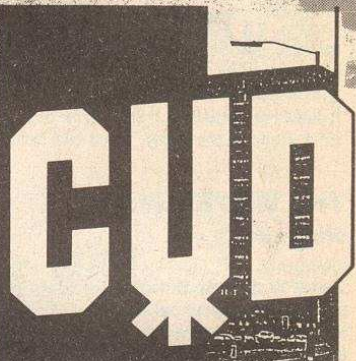
Somewhere On Sea

Roustabout **RT** **C** A sticky 45 which offers four slabs of self-conscious crooning from the Race. A heartfelt affair which lacks something in depth and vocal elegance, leaving the group struggling to keep their plectrums active against a tide of janglers with sharper songs. **DH**

THE CORN DOLLIES Be Small

Again Medium Cool

RT **C** The second single from The Corn Dollies sees them joining the much touted M Cool label (and remember we touted both label and group first, so there). And it's really a rather mega slice of strummed pop, with an edgy vocal line leading the Dollies through a perfect verse/chorus affair. Sweet. **DH**



CUD You're The Boss

Reception **RT** **C** Sorry to use other yardsticks, but if The Three Johns were heavily taken with Joy Division, then the result might be CUD — witness the heavy, repetitive drive and the neurotic swaying rhythms. This also wins Most Muffled Production tiepin of the year, but if anything, it helps solidify the mass of grim guitar and concrete drum patterns. A record that sticks to you like soot. **MA**

DEATH IN JUNE To Drown A

Rose **NER** **RT** **C** Compelling ten inch three tracker from the revamped Death In June, with added ambience courtesy of ex-S Switchblader Rose McDowall, Coil's John Balance and several others. A floating, haunting melody with Rose's Pin-Prick vocal line teasing the acoustic strum and brass chorus. Exquisite. **R**

THE DESERT WOLVES Love Scattered Lives Ugly Man

RT **C** Perfect pop for hopeful romantics. The Wolves play dangerously vibrant music with a convincing zestful zeal all its own. Fine stuff. **DH**

THE DREAM SYNDICATE 50 In

A 25 Zone Big Time The Dream Syndicate's anthemic acid daze seems to have become a little more balanced on this new 45. Still in evidence is that luscious guitar sound, those burning, heartbreak, vocals, but now it's tempered, building to an awesome climax. The second coming, no less. **DH**

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DUSTDEVILS The Dropping Well Rousks **RR** God, what a noise! What a grinding feedback-drenched splooge! The Dustdevils have their volume switches jammed on, they manage to get the microphones working half way through and make a jagged frenzy of a song along the way on the top side of this three tracker, the rather clawing Mother Shipton. Have they no shame? Good! **JE**

ENGLAND UNDER SNOW
Stupid September Opus

RT Swoon. Or rather, SWOON, or even MELT like a snowflake. EUS are just two boys, with two acoustic guitars which sculpt spangles, sparkles, and wistful pipe-dream lullabies, with the occasional accordion and string accompaniment. Soothing. **MA**

EXIT 13 Perfect Dream

Squad Records **RR** The Exits' third single is a likeable stab at what they call 'psychedelic folk'. It includes a painfully authentic Roger McGuinn guitar and some very paisley-flavoured lyrical content. In fact it'd be hard to imagine a more determined tribute to 1967. **JH**

THE FALL Hit The North

Beggars Banquet The Fall follow up their chart hit, There's A Ghost In My House, with a self-penned stormer powered by a simple two chord thrust and that magnetic Mark E Smith drolltone. Not a radio play cert, but a disc filled with character and charisma, a throbbing electronic edge and an authentic bit of sloganeering. **DH**

FEAST OF FRIENDS

Yesterdays Flame FOF (40 Bathurst Road, Winnersh, Berks) Nearly a populist comment disc, Feast Of Friends' debut struggles a little through production, but there's enough of interest on this chunky guitar singalong to get the adrenalin frothing. **JE**

FIELDS OF THE NEPHILIM

Blue Water Situation Two **RT** Cor! This is actually bloody good; forget the comparisons and let the guitars slice into your skin, allow the blood to be lapped up by the sandpapered vocals and submit to the crushing wheels of the driving beat; just move back, step outside yourself and groove! **DI**

KAREN FINLEY Tales Of

Taboo Pow Wow Art International This is a puzzler. Originally released some time ago but withdrawn as being obscene, Tales Of Taboo is a heavy dance number put together by Finley (an NY performance artist who doesn't mince her words), ex-DAF person Robert Gori and Mark (I produced Madonna) Kamins. Hardcore in beat and storyline, it's nevertheless a fine record that makes D-D-D-Dominatrix sound like Vera Lynn. Grab it quick, if you can find it (we don't know where it's from), before the purlets lock it up for good. **DH**

FLOWERPORNES EP Scratch 'n' Sniff **RR** Four track EP from this highly tuneful West German outfit whose jangle is much tinier than their songs deserve. Believed to be pop icons of the post-UK twangalong kind. The Flowerpornes, in fact, write much better songs than many of their British contemporaries. Excellent. **DH**

FRAZIER CHORUS Sloppy

Heart 4AD **RT** If we're talking cliché here, this is more a Factory record than a 4AD one. Frazier Chorus' beating heart thumping more in time with New Order's more introverted, romantic electro-pulse. But then again, FC are tree-lined by strings, clarinet, flute, and tropical percussion, and are made of much more pliable, lovable stuff than New Order. All three tracks on this debut are no less than beautiful, incurably so, and not one cliché in sight. **MA**

THE FRIENDLY FIRES

Happier Than You Dead Bug Records **RR** More fine danceable pop music from Crawley's finest trio and biggest hope for the Nescafe charts. Five growers here on what a lot of people suppose New Order sound like — melodic, neat with a sharp production. The puss on the sleeve made me sneeze. **JD**

FRIENDS Far And Away

Summerhouse **RR** Inside Friends is a big band bursting at the seams trying to get out of a little band's trousers. Pop with zest and sparkle, the occasional horn and a sing-a-long-a-jangle that's worth its weight in Smarties. **JE**

GREEN RIVER Dry As A

Bone Sub-Pop **RTS** From the dark closets of yesteryear, Seattle's Green River drag out the Stooges and Hendrix's big bad metal-blues in a shower of guitar punk grunge. There's slow (PCC) and fast (Unwind) but it's all pretty threatening, loose and full of mean fire. **MA**

HOUSE OF LOVE Real Animal

Creation **RT** A frenetic but slightly too anaemic variation on the pure-1985 garage-punk beat; House Of Love have collared the adrenalin upsurge and ambience but have let the song get all misty-nostalgic. **MA**

THE HUNTERS CLUB Animal

Lover Trash Can **NM** Greasy spittoon rock with pimples on the frets. The Hunters Club play chunky cock rock that disappears under a riff too big for a man to drag his tonsils over. Still, that's rock (old style). **JE**

THE INCREDIBLE ZOMBIE

ROCKERS Machine Stops Abstract **I** A trio made in hell (well, South London, actually) whose blurb reveals a yearning for Cream, Groundhogs and Motorhead. Wah! How untrendy, but just take a listen to the four cut on this EP and you'll not only see those

thin parallels, you'll also hear one of the biggest sounds of the year. Potentially, The Incredible Zombie Rockers are the kick up the bum that irreverent musos have been deserving for some time. More strength to them, too. **DH**

JACKOAW WITH CROWBAR

Sink! Sank! Sunk! Ron Johnson **NM** Another bizarre slice of "fun" from Jackdaw, this time it's a little less structured than their debut demented disc, opting for a more formulated, lyrical approach. Still poetically and politically sound, it's a riot of fun and excitement. **R**



THE JACK RUBIES Lobster

Idea **I** This is a pretty special single. Hot on the heels of the group's well received Be With You 45, Lobster underlines how good the Rubies are in both songwriting and delivery departments. Why, they even turn their hands to a rather oblique, but heartwarming, cover of America's Horse With No Name sloucher too. Classic cuts here. **DH**

JEANETTE Leo Survival

RT Some time ago Jeanette seemed destined for stardom through her dance orientated soulfulness, but it never seemed to happen. Instead Propaganda broke through — effecting the noble Euro-chin — now, though, Propaganda have been replaced by the rather shoddy Act and Jeanette is back with a new 45 that's gushingly enjoyable. Leo is a brave song set in modern times and powered by a drum machine. Jeanette's tickling throat shakes in all the right places and there's a song that begs to be heard. Eloquent. **DH**

THE JILTED BRIDES Bad

Vibes Trash-Can Records **NM** Sort of gothic, sort of psychobilly rock... whatever the category it don't mean much. It's a goodie and that's the most important part. In fact, all four tracks here are *el decento*. Particularly Greed, which is flippin' wld-griffingly scrummy, and here's the main points of the news again; buy. Bye! **DI**

JOY DIVISION Peel Session

Strange Fruit **I** Bernard Dicken on synth and guitar? JD in 1979 were at their peak of meshed melodic beauty and harshly fractured rhythms. Love Will Tear Us Apart and 24 Hours are especially overwhelming, full of drama, solitude, and Curtis' more elegiac despair. Sound Of Music and Colony are hardly much worse. Classics. **MA**

KILL DEVIL HILLS What Comes After Roustabout

RR If The Long Ryders could have stolen this melody, they would have — a fine stomp of a song with a country-rock underbelly, rous(t)ing chorus, grazing Gibson guitars and, uh, do I detect unnecessary American accents? Otherwise, fame comes after, if they can keep up the pace. **MA**

KREATOR Behind The

Mirror Noise **RR** German hardcore. Heavy riffing, shouted vocals and a 'Great wacky guitar solos of our time' entry. You either love it or hate it. Me, I love it. **FP**

THE LARKS All Or Nothing

Girl Exaltation The Larks drop their pretensions and gumshields as they aim head on for Mike Smith's left hand. Pure pop with a reggae edge that might just break the charts, it's a musical step backwards if anything, that should keep them in haircuts for years. **JE**

THE LA'S Way Out Go! Discs

Formerly raved about in *Tip Sheet*, The La's debut is more than justification for Go! boss Andy Mac's advance fee of four free Housemartins albums and a packet of cheese and onion crisps. A breathtaking ballad, a *petit* pop song and an art sleeve too. Great. **DH**

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LAST PARTY Tree Shada

Idol Records **IC** Third single from Last Party, and a rippling bicep of pop irreverence it is too. Floating in on a sea of glistening guitars, this tune of "love and things" is pleasant enough and tonally succinct — as all anthemic tomes of troubled life should be. Still more strum than tunefulness, but on the right tracks. **DH**

LOWLIFE Eternity Road

Nightshift **FFC** Another giant step for Lowlife as the shroud of echoey experience begins to push their music forever uptown. Eternity Road suggests that it'll eventually lead them to a much wider audience as their reverberated obliqueness now seems to be coloured with much more in the way of human endeavour. Sharp and subtle — a confusing coupling, as ever. **R**

MCCARTHY The Well Of Loneliness September

RTIC Now The Smiths are no more, maybe once again, from the ranks of beautiful independence, the great listening public will find a band to cherish. And you won't go far wrong by putting McCarthy into this category — this single, their first away from Pink, is the filler for that gaping hole in your record collection. A record you will still be playing in three years' time. Discover McCarthy, because in the world of part time pop stars you won't find anything else as poignant as the happy well of loneliness. Natural yoghurt for sure! **JD**

THE MEKONS Hole In The Ground SIN/Cooking Vinyl

RRIC The northern madness continues in a dishevelled smuttily wrinkled country gaberdine. Whisky in hand and tormented up-tempo roustabout in motion, The Mekons make sure that their legendary status will continue. **DH**

MIAOW The Code Factory

P This is a more complex approach for Miaow. Their unkempt untidiness was alarmingly embracing on their first two singles, but this new found "timing", added to a bigger, more far reaching set of sounds, makes for beautifully haunting music. A classic that just has to be played again and again. Superb. **DH**

THE MIGHTY WAH! Peel Session Strange Fruit

P God, what do you say? The first side is absolute prime time gargantuan Wah! stuff like Story Of The Blues and Better Scream, all anthems and hard guitars and peaks of spirit and nerve, and then side two is the tepid Weekends and the finked-out Yuh Learn. A game of two halves, I suppose. **MA**

MIRRORS OVER KIEV Take Me Down Imaginary

FFC Melodic and harmonious pop that spirals beneath a

lacklustre, almost disappearing, vocal line. Still, it's quite nice all the same. **JE**

THE MONKEY RUN Waiting For A 409 Intense

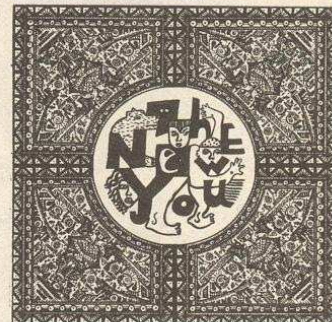
RRIC The Mancunian Monkeys combine their first two singles, add a touch of an extra track and mix it all up into a new 12 inch shape. Showing off their pop bent, rampant guitar banging style, and general skills at writing catchy pop tunes, it all seems to make some sense. Expect more from here. **JE**

THE MORRISONS Storm

Playroom Discs **RRIC** After their hit flexi comes a four track, 12 inch EP. Dexterity, musicality, croonability and simplicity lyric-wise says The Morrisons will never be Orange Juice, but they're dead nice to listen to when you make breakfast. Easy listening with a spring in the heel. **JD**

NEW CHRISTS The Black Hole Citadel **SN** (Import)

Machismatic, charismatic, cinematic... The New Christs' rock 'n' garage is about as new as Christ Himself, but it smoulders with style. Doors overtones swing in and out of a tightly wired R&B-stained surge. If rock had a colour code, The New Christs would be black and blue. **MA**



THE NEW YOU Whispering Down NY Records (Tel: 01-407 1932)

A lulling smoocher featuring a luscious lead female vocal line, a xylophone played in someone's bedroom and a charming arrangement fit for a latter day Piaf. Music with sex and sexuality, humility and style. **R**

NUMBER FOUR JOYSTREET Stephanie Golden Pathway

ReC This, a charmingly attractive 45 packaged in an extravagant fold out sleeve, is the latest Number Four Joystreet release from the obscure but perfectly formed G Pathway. Pert pop spruced up with cello, violin and guitars, it embraces a tactile female vocal line that makes you want to take the whole thing to bed with you. **DH**

THE PASTELS Comin' Through Glass

NMC Scotland's industrious Pastels come up with another fine pop tune. Sparkling with tinkling Christmas bells and the threat of a huge orchestra bursting in, it should be blaring from radios as another marvellous English summer drowns in a torrent of rain. Ahhh. **TCW**

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PJ PROBY Hardcore Savoy

Onomatopoeic (279 Deansgate, Manchester M3 4EW) PJ's career has been wracked in true rock 'n' roll scandal. The bump 'n' grind of real life gets laid bare and the latest chapter takes yet another dubious turn as he teams up with "Madonna" (?) for a lyrically suspicious sex romp, supposedly recreating the horny antics of Elvis and Priscilla Presley. Yes, get your kicks here, plenty of four letter words, guaranteed to be banned and a scratch dance beat too. Nice. R

THE RAINPALS A New Day

Rainpal **EE C** The Hollies revival starts here, and don't it just sound good to hear this kind of perfectly formed guitar pop? The Rainpals are a *real* group who write *real* songs and can sing them too. Great. DH

THE RAW HERBS Don't Bury Me Yet Medium Cool

RR C It's not easy for The Raw Herbs to follow such a smoochily infectious 45 as She's A Nurse, but they seem to have managed quite admirably on this evocative *tour de force*. It's that voice ringing in your ears that pulls the country-esque ambience through the hoop and makes it really work. . . it's just smart. DH

THE SAVOY KING COCAINE BAND Raw Power/The Liquidator Savoy Amoral (279 Deansgate, Manchester M3

4EW) Iggy's Raw Power plus The Liquidator are given the extended rock-hard knees-up cosmetic lift, all clattering concrete drums and electronic throbs with all the ambience of a dungeon. Both fit nicely in with Savoy's ongoing scheme to terrorise the good 'taste' of rock classics with the slur of defilement, parody, cynical sleaze, ordered chaos and 'bad' taste. MA

THE SCREAMING TREES

Asylum Native **RR C** Difficult for the Trees to follow their super-duper Iron Guru, but they can't give up now, can they? Asylum precedes their A Fracture In Time LP, and bodes well for the future, as it follows the same formula as Guru. Dance music fed through a rock synth and churned out like mince. Their best cuts are when they get past the vocal segues. TCW

FRANK SIDEBOTTOM

Timperley In Tape

RR C Frank's back! And on this dangerously groovy disc he offers several pastiches, in fine Pinky And Perky voice, including Vienna — which becomes Oh Timperley — Born In The USA (Timperley) and Pennsylvania 65000 (now

Timperley 969 1909). Yes, strange is the word. JE

THE TRIFFIDS Peel Session

Strange Fruit **D** From 1985, The Triffids' admirable blend of the darker sides of country, blues and rock 'n' roll heartbeats, as witnessed in Life Of Crime, Chicken Killer and Lonely Stretch, works just as well in its more ramshackle, sawdust-spittle intimacy as it does with studio-money. A companion piece to the In The Pines album. MA

TWO BIG BOYS Monkeys

Bedrock/Big Boy **C** Two Big Boys play a slouchy romantic song or two, backed by a drum machine and something that sounds like a string quartet. Keenly arranged and produced, they deserve wide attention and acclaim for their daring at least. Sure, it's got pop written all the way through, but it's performed in such a unique way, you can't help but love it. Graceful. DH

THE VERY THINGS Let's Go

Out One Little Indian **C** The Things have come a long way since I saw them hazily thrash around at the ICA in their dressing gowns. The marvy Motortown single is now followed by a supremely produced opus which suggests that their *film noir* excesses are heading them towards a credible bridge of John Barry and ABC. . . and twice as sexy too. DH

WE FREE KINGS Still

Standing DDT **EE C** Frantic Clash groans over a fiddle-heavy throb that's more in line with rockabilly than folk. Real Celt rock with a spit and a swear. JE

WMTID Transfascist Rouska

RR C Rouska's role in the scheme of things gets a new dimension with this extra powerful pulsing opus from WMTID. A belligerent bustling rhythm with all its hands in the right pockets and its feet toe-tapping in synch. TCW

ROBERT WYATT Peel Session Strange Fruit

D From 1974, Wyatt was more absorbed with his post-paralysis shock and despair than the more political *crie do coeur* of his later Rough Trade recordings. Alifib and Sea Song are stunning, sad drifters, Soup Song is more uppity and mocking while his cover of I'm A Believer (once a hit!) is as wistful and ludicrous as ever. Everything here is invested with ideas out of jazz, poetry, surrealism and Wyatt's unique brainbox. Essential '70s history. MA

ZARJAZ The Inter Block Rock Kaleidoscope

RR C Zarjaz's past releases have seen them doing something akin to a string quartet or harpsichord ensemble in sympathetic *Clockwork Orange* classicist mode, but now they've gone down into the subway to play terror games. The new Zarjaz play guitars and look like freaks from *Rollerball*. Making the sounds that Sputnik tried to, they're really rather good too. Like Bolan on a skateboard. R

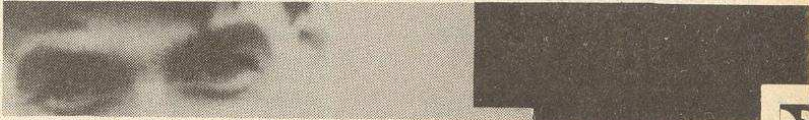
FREE! SHAPED PLASTIC HORROR!

Last month's competition for El Records' latest releases asked, which Derek Jarman film did El release the soundtrack to? The answer is *Caravaggio* by Simon Turner, and the winner, Trev Faull from East London, will receive a framed set of proofs of the latest El sleeves, plus all six singles. Six runners up will receive the singles too.

SWANS COMPETITION

WE HAVE SIX COPIES OF THE NEW SWANS LP, CHILDREN OF GOD ON PRODUCT INC, AND PRODBOSS ROB COLLINS HAS SET THREE QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO THINK ABOUT!

- 1 What was the title of the first SWANS LP?
 - 2 What is the name of the offshoot project that Jarboe and Michael Gira are involved in?
 - 3 There was a live LP released in November '86. What was it called?
- Answers to the address below (please mark your card SWANS)



WEDDING PRESENT COMPETITION

FOR ALL ASPIRING WP FANS AND GEORGE BEST ENTHUSIASTS, WE HAVE FIVE STAND UP BESTIE PROMOS FOR THE WP LP, ALL YOU'VE GOT TO DO IS ANSWER ONE QUESTION AND YOU COULD WIN ONE.

Q George Best scored six goals for Manchester Utd in one cup tie. Who were they playing against?
Answers to the address below (please mark your card WEDDING PRESENT)

LEATHER NUN COMPETITION

IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY GOT A COPY, HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO WIN LEATHER NUN'S STEEL CONSTRUCTION ALBUM ON VINYL OR CD. THREE WINNERS CAN BAG THIS PACKAGE PLUS A LEATHER NUN STEEL CONSTRUCTION T SHIRT. ALL YOU'VE GOT TO DO IS ANSWER ONE REALLY SIMPLE QUESTION.

Q Where did Leather Nun play their first ever UK date?
Answers to the address below (please mark your card LEATHER NUN and state whether you want LP or CD)

Please send all competition entries on a postcard to Underground, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Rd, London NW1 to arrive no later than Monday November 9.

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Strange Fruit

THE PEEL SESSIONS

JOY DIVISION

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THE ADVERTIS

THAT PETROL EMOTION

The Triffids

Robert Wyatt

Please see reverse of sleeve for full listing

21 UNDERGROUND

April 1977. Seventy badly dressed Mancunians wearily drag their Newcastle Brown bottles towards the crumbling wooden appendage which, through a heavily intoxicated vision, might pass for a stage. We are in a smelly shack known, for obvious reasons, as The Squat Club. As it is situated arrogantly adjacent to Manchester's plush and pretentious Contract Theatre, The Squat Club seems to be the perfect place for punks to gather.

Four males and one female lift themselves from the crowd and assemble on the stage. They look, with the exception of the female, like a Tarmac gang. Even in this slovenly environment, the band's dress sense seems stunningly drab. The music they begin to produce completes the scene. A clumsy rock base is topped by a tinkly and wildly out of tune keyboard. But there's something about that singer . . . something exquisitely menacing.

"THE PSYCHIATRISTS MUST BE KILLED" he spits, with charismatic menace. Instantly I forgive him for wearing the most horrendous pink silk shirt known to man. At the front of the crowd, three fanzine editors duck as the singers' mic stand swings dangerously close to their heads. It is probably at this point that they decide to interview the band called The Fall.

Four months later, Fall manager Kay Carroll yelps with delight as the song, called Psycho Mafia, spits fourth from the tiny Dansette on the mantelpiece. The surrounding flat is a vision of downmarket Bohemia. Sixties underground posters

hug the walls, cigarette ends spill from the ashtrays and beer cans congregate by the feet of Mark E Smith. He smiles with a faint whiff of cynicism as John Peel's voice replaces his own embittered drawl. John Peel has just played his first Fall record. Nobody realises the significance of the occasion.

As we are in 1977, we must realise that the music press of the day, whilst being full of spirit and fire, is also full of rather embarrassing naivety. Tony Parsons and Julie Burchill, in search of a figurehead for their battle against the National Front, stumble across a bunch of antagonistic proles called The Fall at The Marquee. Impressed by the band's spirit, by their working class appearance and by their undiluted 'northernness', the deadly duo invite Smith and Carroll down to the *NME* offices. The idea is to attach the tag, 'The band who stand against the NF' to The Fall's shoulders, placing the band on the cover of the said organ. The idea is despicable. Furious at being seen as pawns in the *NME*'s patronising little game, Smith and Carroll erupts and a huge argument is followed by Burchill running tearfully out of the office. Parsons, meanwhile, assures the offended pair that his intentions are honourable, that the scam is more than a mere ego trip. With timing that is, at best, unfortunate, Nick Kent pops his head round the door. "Tony," he states in excitable tones, "Are you coming? We are all having our pictures taken."

This isn't to be the first time The Fall refuse the chance of an *NME* cover story as a matter of principle. Needless to say, the band Parsons and Burchill regarded as the great working class hope, fails to receive a single mention in their diatribe of the times, *The Boy Looked At Johnny*.

Ten years later, Mark E Smith sits smugly in the Prestwich house he shares with his wife, Brix. He scans The Fall's discography with pride before handing me this impressive list. Substance indeed. My mind flashes back across the memories provided by the astonishing 20 singles and 12 albums. Remember The Buzzcocks pastiche, It's The New Thing? The totally dry Totally Wired which dented the top ten in New Zealand, or the hilarious football hymn, Kicker Conspiracy? No band has ever captured the absurdity of ordinary working class life as effectively as The Fall. Mark E Smith has consistently used the surrealism of his own back yard to colour his bizarre aural poetry.

Significantly, Mark and Brix's house is situated less than 100 yards from Smith's former primary school. He clearly still loves the area and literally dreads the day when his fame may elevate him, no doubt kicking and screaming, from his beloved ordinariness. Still, with the chart activity of their cover of R Dean Taylor's There's A Ghost In My House earlier this year, Smith was flirting with this possibility.

"The hit record did make things easier for us," he states philosophically. "Since then it's been better for us when we play. It is weird round here. The people are dead proud of The Fall. They are genuinely pleased for us which surprised me because, just prior to Ghost, I was dreading it. We do get kids standing outside the house, which I've always had to some extent but now it's nine or ten-year-olds which I don't really like."

There have been other breakthroughs this year. I, for one, never thought I'd see The Fall playing Reading, or, even worse, supporting the godawful U2.

"Reading was . . . well, I wouldn't like to be in that scene. It was really depressing to see 20,000 Quo fans all aged about 35 and all pissed out of their heads. There were about 3,000 people at the front to see us and 20,000 behind them throwing stuff. As far as U2 is concerned, I didn't want to play it. We actually played to do them a favour as the previous band dropped out, but the press attacked us for playing for the money. To feel the hatred from the U2 fans was great. I know U2 are all religious and we must have seemed like a bunch of Satanists to that crowd. They bombarded us but we didn't care, we could handle it. Incidentally, The Mission flopped after us, as they did at Reading . . . ha! Well, the idea was to play those big gigs and then stop playing until January."

However, in the midst of this gigless period – their first for nine years – The Fall have released a single. Called, rather aptly, *Hit The North*, it

THE NORTH



sees the band in a fiery hip hop mood. With a nod towards the scene that has replaced the northern soul phenomenon, Hit The North aims to take Smith's subversive genius back onto the northern dancefloors. It's a noticeably attractive record; is it, I wonder, a play for a second hit? Smith shrugs before admitting, "Yeah, maybe. I don't see why not, there's nothing better up there."

Which is hardly the point, but never mind. There is another project at hand, a new record label which should see Smith delving into his extensive back catalogue.

"The label will be called Cog Sinister Records Limited. The first release, on November 28, will be a compilation of Fall stuff from the Rough Trade period. I don't wish to exploit this, it's simply a way of letting people get hold of old Fall stuff. I have all the old Fall tapes stored upstairs and all the publishing rights. This stems back to the days when I used to rip contracts up. I just didn't believe in them which, I'm telling you, was insanity at the time. But now it's proved

worth it, it was worth starving the band for."

Believe me, The Fall have endured their fair share of lean periods. Happily, although hardly encumbered by wealth, Mark and Brix are languishing in hard earned mild comforts. Brix slides home from an Adult Net practice session in her BMW as, get this, two leather Filofaxes sit conspicuously on the table.

Brix exudes ambition. A single minded, competitive and highly talented lady, she literally shakes with frustration at a minor set back. Apparently the present members of her spin off band The Adult Net (amazingly, Mike Joyce, Andy Rourke and Craig Gannon) have displayed a reluctance to go on tour with the unit. The conversation begins to drift towards the sordid demise of Joyce and Rourke's former house of employment, The Smiths. Not wishing to hear the gruesome details I drag Mark E Smith out and away in the general

direction of the local off licence. Outside in the street a gang of repulsive 13 year olds search for ways of causing pointless trouble. Mark E Smith looks on with an uncharacteristic wistful air.

"I used to be just like them, causing trouble in the streets. I used to think it was really good."

He is openly proud of these kids and their unpretentious local suss. Unlike certain other Mancunian stars, Smith has not evolved into a paranoid tragedy. He has more sense than that. He is, quite uniquely, unchanged.

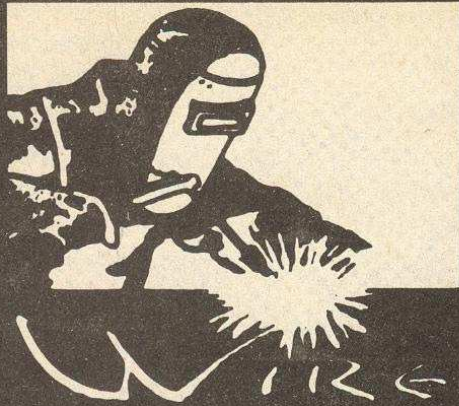


UNDERGROUND

Mick Middleton puts it all in perspective

Mark E Smith transcends the pop paranoia! The Fall follow their Ghost with a throbbing anthem for the wastelands,

WILL RISE



RECORDS

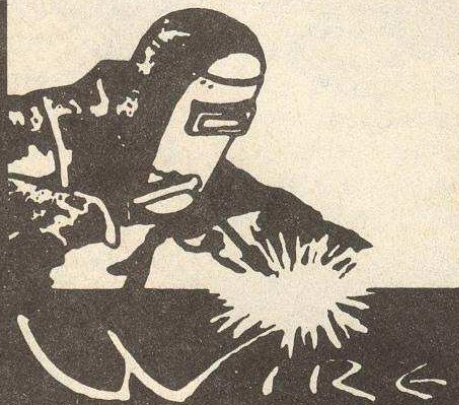
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RE-REWIND

Back on the racks, dusted off from the vaults, this month's selection of re-issues and repackages boasts some real gems. . .

AMERICAN BLUES

Do Their Thing

See For Miles SEE 99 **Ch** Texan rock with a blues chaser from the late '60s. American Blues featured Frank Beard and Dusty Hill, who later went on to be ZZ Top people. The album was originally released through a subsidiary of MCA, after the group had been seized from the Texas melee, but the reaction wasn't so hot and the band were soon dropped.

Quite unlike the Top-styled material you might expect, or even the rootsy blues their name suggests, Do Their Thing is a powerfully produced rock record that stands up much better, in hindsight, than many of their contemporaries. Well recommended and not just for ZZ Top fans. **Dave Henderson**

BONZO DOG BAND

Keynsham

Edsel XED 235 **P** According to *Rolling Stone*, this Bonzos album was their last fling at something, that didn't quite pay off. After the reasonable success with Urban Spaceman and all that stuff, the group's final fling at conceptual rock humour produced Keynsham — a kind of sleepy village story, narrated by Viv Stan-shall and illustrated by some of Neil Innes' wild tunes — punctuated with things like dentists drill solos. All in all, it's bizarre stuff that Python enthusiasts might like, Half Man Half Biscuit fans will say is close, but too dated, and I, Ludicrous fans will totally ignore. Good first time laughs though. **Dave Henderson**

CANNED HEAT

Livin' The Blues

See For Miles SEE 97 **P** From '68, this See For Miles re-issue features the better half of Canned Heat's third LP release — which was originally a double of the same name. Pretty confusing(?), but don't worry, for what we have here is some of the finest, and most innovative music that was being drummed up in the late '60s.

Canned Heat's "boogie" tag, never gets foresaken but there's more diversity to events and side one's classic cut, Going Up The Country still sounds as fresh and essential as ever. But, perhaps the most intriguing track is side two's 20-minute Parthenogenesis. An ever changing, swiftly drifting affair, it breaks into verse, instrumental break and distortion in the mould of, say, a film soundtrack, or the way in which The Doors intermingled influences and sounds on the title track of their Soft Parade LP. Classic stuff, indeed. **Dave Henderson**

THE COUNTRY GENTLEMEN

Yesterday And Today Volume 2

Fundamental SAVE 31

RR C More country/bluegrass classics (recorded between '62 and '71) recounted by The Country Gentlemen. Unique in their stylised delivery of the standards, the Gents offer a hybrid emotional squeal that the uninitiated might have only heard in terms of the Flying Burritos' latter day Rick Rogers-focused albums. Here it's for real though, as their working of This Land Is Your Land easily displays. Excellent fare that should impress country-hungry youths, seasoned campaigners and Byrds/Gene Clark/Dillards fans everywhere. **Dave Henderson**

DISCHARGE

1980-86

Clay Records CLAY 26 **P** In the wake of America's blister-and-blood hardcore productions, Discharge's seriously underproduced punkoid thrashing harnesses half the power. But there's no denying the force, commitment or adrenalin punch in Discharge's epileptic anger, or the hoarse, acrid voice they provided for Britain's punk diehards. Yes, punk grew up and all their little sisters and brothers became new romantic lovers; 1980-86 tells of the storm before the calm — the fight to preserve a subcultural solidarity in the throes of adversity. Goodbye, Stoke-on-Trent, anyway. **Martin Aston**

FAIRPORT CONVENTION

Heyday

Hannibal Records HNBL 1329 Tracks culled from '68/'69, when Fairport Convention were putting together Unhalfbricking and being generally acclaimed. What we have here is a set of radio session, cuts that stray somewhere further afield than the Fairport's recognisable sound, even throwing in a wealth of truly original readings of other people's material including Gene Clark's heartfelt Tried So Hard, Leonard Cohen's downtrodden Suzanne — which somehow sounds uplifting here — and The Everly Brothers' Gone, Gone, Gone. A fine set that more than deserves your undivided attention even if they do occasionally drift into Radio 2-land. **Dave Henderson**

FOREST

Forest

Zap ZAP 2 **Re C** A curious re-release, this. Are Zap hoping that this rarity from 1969 might catch some of the downwind created by the present popularism of folk, or are a million young minstrel fellows waiting for this evergreen set of songs? The "cutting edge" of folk '87 doesn't seem to have time for the winsome, whimsical serenading that Forest charmingly weave around their plucking of 12-strings, mandolins thrust against harmoniums, harpsichords and pipes. Forest can be lush and as fresh as a spring fair, with earnest triple-harmonies in tow, so they're worth a visit. And this long-deleted Harvest LP now provides the opportunity. **Martin Aston**

DOBIE GRAY

Sings For 'In' Crowders That Go 'Go-Go'

Kent KENT 071 **P** Doble Gray's 1964 Crusader/Charger period of lost and rare sides made into a prime album that displays his gritty soul style, accompanied by his most potent backing brigade and that distinctive northern soul rhythm. Punched out with vibes and featuring the classic title cut plus the northern stomper *Out On The Floor*, among 14 tracks in all, it's a real treat to hear the less immediately locatable sides including the excellent *Monkey Jerk* and *See You At The Go-Go*. This is a great dance music collection that highlights the lack of innovation in a lot of latter day soul music. **Dave Henderson**

JEAN KNIGHT

Mr Big Stuff

Stax SXE 003 **P** Aha! Jean Knight's '71 Fantasy/Stax album with that classic title cut — and the original gross-out sleeve — gets a re-release, and you can just hear why all and sundry have tried to copy, or cut up, Jean's hit over the last year. That apart, the rest of this LP follows a similar funky-sho'-nuff line with wailing horns, throaty Knight vocals and that guitar rattle holding the rhythm down. There's not really another track of the stature of *Big Stuff*, but soulful shoes won't be offended by this package. **Dave Henderson**

THE NICE

20th Anniversary Release

Seal Records SLP 2 Yes, we all know what happened. The Nice were great circa their eponymously titled platter, then they went on to get boring and Keith Emerson emerged as part of ELP. But what of this, pre-nice Nice, when they were a four piece with Davy O'List, when they were more akin to Pink Floyd than throwing organs around a stage?

Well, the truth is it's not all that good. O'Listr seems to have been on a par with Syd Barrett, personality-wise, but his classical training never let him break free of the limitations, the only real positive stroke here being made on the instrumental cover of *America*, from *West Side Story*, which pointed the way to The Nice that were nice. **Dave Henderson**

SAVAGE REPUBLIC

Ceremonial

Fundamental SAVE 22 Prime time US music from a couple of years back. This is *Savage Republic's* second LP, with four tracks remixed, which boasts a growing of character and a development of playing style from these ingenious West Coasters. *Ceremonial's* instrumental sounds flow like a sea of polluted

memories, spiced in places by vocal dribbles as each tiny piece of the group's make-up is washed clean. *Savage Republic* are a cultural art ensemble, aware of their surroundings as much as their musical routes, they make sounds to breathe in, creating vast chasms of fulfillment as mountainous regions explode. Phew! **TC Wall**

SHAM 69

Angels With Dirty Faces — The Best Of Sham 69

Receiver Records RRLP104 With the current crop of thrash trendies trashing up the charts, the timely release of a Sham package puts the yobs of yore in a whole new context. While their anthemic stompalongs never had the ring of authenticity at the time (it was left to the Clash for that) and their politically controversial following (detested as it was by the band) always left something of a sour taste, now they seem almost ahead of their time. Nostalgia can also blunt the ridiculousness their somewhat simplistic lyrics, so that even the beery, football terrace mentality of 'Hurry Up Harry', 'Borstal Breakout' and 'If The Kids Are United' (yes, they're all here) raises a smile. Lager top, anyone? **Carole Linfield**

ARTHUR

'GUITAR BOOGIE'

Jumpin' Guitar

Zu Zazz RR 245 **Ch** This is a throbbing full-sounding album considering the conditions under which it was recorded. Arthur recorded these tracks back in 1945, playing an unamplified guitar and managing to make his fingers do all the talking as he briskly whisks and rattles around and across his guitar. With jazzed specials like *After You've Gone* and *Stompin' At The Savoy* given a downhome fireside feel, the inspirational vitality makes it easy to see where later outfits on the guitar beam got some of their ideas from.

As I say, not a quad CD sound, but hi-fi and full of life nevertheless. **Johnny Eager**

THE STAPLE SINGERS

Beatitude: Respect Yourself

Stax SXE 001 They did it first, well almost! The Staple Singers gospel classics of the '60s and '70s, creamed with soul and sweat, made for some of Stax's most notable UK chart positions. And, in retrospect, this music is still as finely attuned in the personal comment department as it ever was.

There's two kinds of Staples here, which is more apparent than on some of their other LPs. Pa Staples' vocal line on *Respect Yourself* is per-

fectly delivered in a gritty Covay blues/R&B vein, thrown against his three daughters' more airy hollering. The opposite effect is achieved on a collection of more straightforward gospel tunes that the girls give gusto to. Whichever way, this is a keenly paced LP, with more than a handful of standout cuts. **Dave Henderson**

THROBBING GRISTLE

Nothing Short Of Total War

Cause For Concern CFC 1

RR **G** Way back when TG were a strident, but finally terminal case, London's Cause For Concern mag filched some out-takes for a cassette-only release which marginally put the Throbbing doctrine over, but at times slumped into teething uncertainty. And now, in the fullness of time, this "collector's item" has made it to vinyl. Not a classic — as in the group's studio LPs that're available through Mute, but an interesting aside that catches more than a couple of the combo's more monstrous effects in full flight. **Dave Henderson**

TOMMY TUCKER

Memphis Bad Boy

Zu Zazz Z2001 **Ch** This is a record with an odd tale dragging behind it. It feels like a wind-up, when they tell Tommy's story — like it's fresh from *Dallas* with smut, but who knows? They don't even go on to tell about his Hi-Heel Sneakers mega hit, instead the sleeve tells of Tommy going to jail, after doing various dubious deeds and eventually dying in an apartment fire. Sure enough, the guy's career kicked off in the late '50s and his *Miller's Cave* for the Hi label, two versions of which are included, is a pretty hot tune. More followed, but it seems few were interested, but, from what you can hear on this rare set, they should have been. **Johnny Eager**

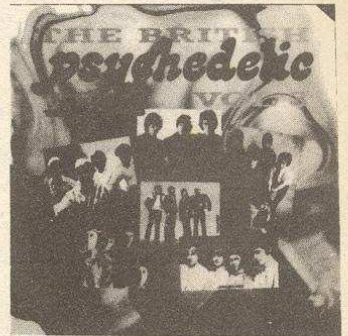
VAGINA DENTATA ORGAN

Music For Hashasins

Temple TOPY 12 **RR** **G** Released from 1983, when this was a limited edition, it's hard to paint an accurate picture of VDO, but read *Psychic TV's* rational defence in the last UG for guidance. "Listen carefully to these recordings, you might discover your true will. It is highly recommended as background music to your sexual games and blood rituals." You never can tell.

The intense, guttural utterances of this record — split into two parts, *Trained To Kill* and *Sexual* — go right back there, to unknown pleasures and confronted fears. Sounds like the growl-regurgitated breath of ravaging wolves and the curdling rasp of possessed human tongues are tape-looped into an unnerving

aural experience, especially on a comfy Sunday afternoon in London, NW2. "Functional to play only at selected times..." Now it's your turn... **Martin Aston**



VARIOUS

The British Psychedelic Trip Vol III

See For Miles SEE 86 **P** This is a fantastic collection. When I used to live in the strangely-deserted junk shops of the far north, various obscure records with ridiculous names would arrive, immediately to be snapped up by our gang who were keen on mind expansion. Imagine our surprise when these dusty gems — on the whole — turned out to be bizarre mixtures of sounds and styles that mixed diverse elements such as Love, Byrds, Velvets, Dead, Hollies, Beatles, Merseybeat and northern soul. Everything that we'd been weaned on.

They were treasures, and so are these. Volume III's roll call could easily have been plucked from those self-same shelves. Boasting 20 tracks it weaves through such luminaries as *The Outer Limits*, *The Cuppa T*, *Jason Crest*, *Virgin Sleep* and more, while waving a flag for acceptance with Bolan's prime movers *John's Children*. Could it all have been so long ago? Well, what the hell, this is nostalgia time. Let's taste that dust again. **Dave Henderson**

VARIOUS

Louisiana Blues

Ace CHD 211 Smooth and sweet collection of tracks that deny classification. Sure, the Jin label, set up in '58, was based on the blues, but their catalogue includes a surprising width as shown on the out-takes here, which span the '60s. This is more akin to a genre all its own, mixing country, rock 'n' roll, swamp and all its affiliates. Here, within *Jin Records'* tasty roster, are the kind of things that'll turn hairs grey, shake a tail feather and make dead lemons sparkle again. On show is *Rockin' Dopsie*, *Cookie And The Cupcakes*, *Carol Fran*, *Duke Vallery* and *Junior Cole*, among others. The names might not mean much, but the music will shake you out for sure. **Dave Henderson**

NEXT MONTH IN UNDERGROUND * WE DON'T KNOW, ACTUALLY!

Well, OK, we have a rough idea.

That ADI NEWTON feature will finally be translated into English (or nearest offer), then there'll be a SWANS thing. Oh yes, THE MEAT PUPPETS will be waving from America... and Johnny Dee has gone 'on the road' with THE CHESTERFIELDS. Dedication, huh?

So that's generally what's happening!

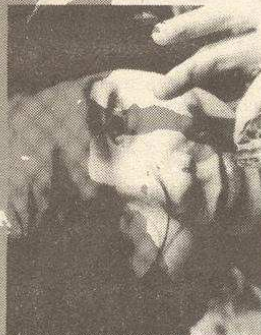
Next issue of UNDERGROUND is on sale on Friday November 20... so check it out*

sharp plastic Pow-wow in plasticland



TWO D&V'S

One Little Indian's distinctive visual packages, hi-tone production and creative business sense has made them one of the top independent stylists during their brief history. The story starts here . . .



A Sugarcube

- Life, as our grandmothers will tell us, is just one game of snakes and ladders. It's not as simple as RIGHT or WRONG. More a case of UP, DOWN, UP, DOWN . . . which can apply to the running of a record label as well.
- This is the simple story of such a label. They used to call themselves Spiderleg and they belonged to Flux Of Pink Indians. Now, everybody concerned was fiercely committed, musical and political idealists, and everybody tried to do this the RIGHT way but it kept on going WRONG . . .
- Now read on . . .
- "We've lived communally since 1977 so the bank support us," explains **Derek Birkett**, a Flux and OLI official as well as our narrator of this tale. "We all work and the money gets pooled which pays the rent and buys the food. It came from working with Crass who were brilliant to us — they gave us the money to make our first record. Then we saw other bands that we wanted to work with, said we wanted a label like Crass's and they gave us the money and told us to do it! They are the inspiration for what we've done. So we worked with The Subhumans and started Spiderleg."
- GOING UP . . .
- "Spiderleg was run as a co-operative and, as well as Flux Of Pink Indians, we drew in others who shared the same political and musical ideals, but it just got out of hand. We had so many records, it became like a full-time job to run it all. It became very business-orientated which wasn't what any of us wanted to do, so we packed it in and gave all the bands their records back, and told The Subhumans to put their records out on their own label which became Bluurg Records. We kept thinking, because The Subhumans were selling two to three thousand records a month at that time, that we'd lose all that money but the fortunate thing about living communally was that there's always one person who'll say, 'let's stick to what we started out saying or we don't do it at all', and it's worked . . ."
- GOING UP AGAIN . . .
- AND DOWN . . . "On reflection, us and Crass didn't work hard enough at it. We got disillusioned with it when it became a big machinery, getting too involved with the making of the music. We ended up going up our arses politically, because we got into the situation of almost telling people to go out and fight. We were getting these little Youth Anarchy groups from Bradford saying they were hassled and what should they do, and little Asian support groups writing to say they were getting beaten up by skinheads, and at first we'd tell them to turn the other cheek because trouble escalates, but they'd write back, saying that a brother had been stabbed, so we'd end up saying fight back. So we ended up acting like generals sending the troops off to fight while we were sitting in our house in Wood Green in London.
- "What with Wapping and the Miners' Strike. Class War and Conflict were getting very militant, and we had seen on the miners'

pickets, how the more force you use, the more comes back. So we felt alienated and pulled out. If there was any mistake, that was it. Copping out rather than sorting it out. We knew what we wanted to say but it sounded out of order."

- AND UP AGAIN . . . "When the label packed in, we had a big discussion about what Flux Of Pink Indians wanted to do. We took two years off and saved up 5,000 and then went back in to do the new Flux album, *Uncarved Block*. What had happened when we had Spiderleg was that we had worked with other people, so we thought that the best way to work a label was to deal with people who love what we do. Also the best way to run it was to get one person to run one part, so first Sue got a job at Mayking Records' pressing plant. I wanted to engineer as well as produce so I got a job as a studio engineer and Tim got a job down at Southern Studios in distribution. It took us two years to get it together again and run it all ourselves."
- AND EVEN THE UP CAN BE DOWN . . . "It all got out of hand again. The Flux album did really well, as did the AR Kane single, and we did The Babymen single which had legal problems because it mentioned the Royal Family, and we initially had to sell it mail order which was a huge problem because there were five of us running it from the house, dealing with 250 mail orders a week, like a mail-order company. Then the D&V single did really well. But the business reality is that you peg the records to the Cartel, and you have a great cash flow problem. We were getting in so much good stuff that we kept recording it and getting it ready. We've still got an Annie Anxiety album to come out, a Flux single and half an album, plus The Sugar Cubes album and three singles and an album from The Very Things all stacked up, so the business side started to fall to pieces again."
- DOWN AND DOWN . . .
- "Also our sleeves are really expensive. It seems to be another way of getting across the message of what the bands are saying. We've always chosen what we wanted to do and done it and then seen the best way of approaching putting it out. We made a conscious decision that the business side of it should be the last consideration. Like we've just repressed our double album *The F***ing C***** Treat Us Like Pricks which we deleted two years ago, which became a big deal because of all this rubbish that's happened with the Dead Kennedys record. Although the album was pressed and printed four years ago, nobody would touch it, so we had to get plates made in America and printed in France and sent back over, which was a nightmare."
- BUT THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING ON THE UP . . .
- "Going back to the sleeves, they're a very important part of what you're saying, whether it's political or something like AR Kane's single, where the sleeve was very important to them. I've always liked lovely packaging. It's how Paul White got involved. All the sleeves I liked, like Test Dept, Erasure and Foetus, were mostly by Paul, so I played

him some tapes and asked him to work with us but that we didn't have any money. He agreed to work with us until we got off the ground. Same with Adrian Sherwood who helped out on Flux's *Uncarved Block* and the Loudspeaker single. I worked on the Lee Perry and Mark Stewart records in return.

- "The basis of the label is that we set up a core of people and then pull them in, like our co-producer Ray Shulman who's such a brilliant musician. He used to be in Gentle Giant but he had a huge independent record collection and was really in tune so I asked him to co-produce with me. So we have the facilities to work with the best."
- AND CAN YOU BELIEVE DOWN AGAIN?
- "Yeah, we just got carried away in the studio with all those records stockpiled up and ran up a £24,000 dept — they gave it to us all on credit but we just couldn't get any more time. Brian Bonnar at Mayking was concerned that we were going to get swallowed up by a major label so he gave us a hand. He gave us £6,000 to get The Sugar Cubes' tapes back but we needed serious funding. Fortunately Brian loved the music and the artwork so we went with him. More important, he's a real good businessman. Every week, we have a meeting and he helps us be realistic, like with release dates. Our motives were artistic but the business side is still reality."
- ONE LITTLE INDIAN'S ADVICE ON THE UP-AND-DOWN LIFE OF A LABEL . . .
- "It's difficult because it's the same thing as making blanket statements about politics. We get people coming round who are starting their own labels — the only thing you can tell people to do if they haven't got all the things open to us is that you have to be really careful. We obviously ran in and did too much. You get very successful labels like Stiff who go under because of cash flows. There's so much more to making records."
- "It's become a business again but I suppose what you do is to try and retain control and draw in people to help you out."
- AND MAYBE TO WIN THE GAME AFTER ALL . . .

Ears impressed by Martin Aston



Three V Thingsies

DISCOGRAPHY

- TP1 Flux *Uncarved Block*
- 12TP2 AR Kane *When You're Sad*
- 12TP3 The Babymen *For King Willy*
- 12TP4 D&V *Snare*
- 12TP5 Loudspeaker *Psychotic*
- 12TP6 Annie Anxiety *Bandez As I Lie In Your Arms*
- 12TP7 Sugar Cubes *Birthday*
- 12TP8 The Very Things *Let's Go Out*
- 12TPEP1 Flux *Neu Smell/Taking The Liberty*
- TPLP2 Flux Of Pink Indians *Strive To Survive*
- TPLP3 Flux Of Pink Indians *The F***ing C*****
Treat Us Like Pricks

Circuit Breakers

Alcohol And The Common Man

- "I always worry that transcribed interviews make us appear to be people we're not." John Hyatt.
- When interviewing The Three Johns you're treading on a foundation of preconceptions, laid by the many who've gone before and compounded by repetition and misunderstanding. The trouble is this: complex individuals they may be but interviewing the Johns is just *too* easy. There's no fumbling for that headline because this band come packaged with an all-inclusive set of journalistic hooks by which to turn a tale; politics, booze and belligerence. It's got to be a winning combination, but for who?
- I have two of The Three before me – Langford is absent, off wearing his producer's hat in Greece. As I brace myself for intellectual intimidation, Hyatt and Brennon guide me to the nearest Leeds hostelry to tell me about their latest Never And Always 45 on Abstract and a few other home-brewed truths.
- This is hardly the vision of hard men of rock 'n' roll I'd expected; soft-spoken, kind-eyed Hyatt reconciles his stomach with home-made steak and kidney whilst Brennie bemoans his hangover and laments another night of excess. A picture to form . . . are the Johns really. . . .

DRUNKEN ART SCHOOL MARXISTS?

- Hyatt: "I've always thought your job is very difficult. You have 500 words in which to say what The Three Johns is, therefore, the way that you present it is going to be false because of what the initial premise is. So a lot of the early interviews presented us as drunks which we're not. We don't drink so as not to think, in fact, I find I think better after a drink. So the first thing that was written was 'drunken art school Marxists', and that became the repeated attitude."

ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT?

- It was Brennon who made the statement that rock 'n' roll by its very nature should always be anti-government and anti-establishment. But what happens when a rock band *become* an establishment? The Johns have the right criteria; it could just happen.
- Brennie: "Like U2? Well, yes, that's how it works. It's big business enterprise. Like everything else it's capitalism, and people have vested interests."
- Hyatt: "It couldn't happen with us though. It happened to Bob Dylan in the 60s because there was a market for what he was saying, therefore he was promoted, became famous, became an institution. Now, there isn't considered to be a market for what we're saying, therefore, we don't become famous, therefore we don't become an institution. It would only take a major company to hype us and we'd be as big as U2 but they're not going to do that because of what we're like. They tried it with – oh, I've tried not to mention them – The Redskins!"

SUBLIMINAL INDOCTRINATORS?!

- Whatever you say, these Johns are presenting a hardline politic in the emotive gift wrap of a good song.
- Brennie: "Subliminal indoctrination? That's a big question. I don't think it is at all because the people who dig us are already there, already like-minded."
- Hyatt: "And we're not didactic and if it is didactic it's accidental. That tends to make you think of anthem-type choruses which we've never gone in for. It's didactically saying 'think for yourself'. It's didactically anti-didactic! How about that!"

PUBLIC ANARCHY – A THREAT TO THE GOVERNMENT?

- Hyatt: "I must say I don't think it's possible for any individual to be a real threat. But I would be very surprised if there isn't a police file on me. As soon as you realise that you go way over the top. I want a big fat file!"
- Brennie: "I know my phone is tapped – if it isn't it's been doing some very strange things! It's basically down to severe paranoia and megalomania on the part of the government."
- Hyatt: "Or rather the silent state – the silent right-wing power that runs this country regardless of who's in government."

DISILLUSIONED?

- Hyatt: "I have been disillusioned by the music business, yes, it's the best thing that's ever happened to me. It's made me think. I used to see David Bowie on the cover of the *NME* and think it was fantastic. He was like a God. Then we're on the cover of the *NME* and I thought, what a joke! It used to really worry me. Did people think of me like I used to think of Bowie? Probably not but it's a thought. It's a complete contradiction, it's not me. The me in the interviews is not me. Probably when you write this interview I'll read things I've said but it won't be me."
- Brennie: "Things get de-contextualised, but basically we've learned by other people's mistakes, so we were aware of the problems that we could come up against. Basically it's to do with keeping your feet on the ground and not being destroyed by the business."



The Three Johns throw up over the capitalist grape, Alex Kadis passes the Kleenex

COMMODITY WRECKERS!

- It was Brennie who made the statement that music shouldn't be treated as a commodity.
- Hyatt: "When I say that I can't stand the music business it's because it's just so dull. The things that finally get through the sieve of capitalism are just so bland because that's what society's about."
- Brennie: "That was one of our original points. We all swapped instruments, not to deliberately play badly but to avoid convention. We can play well, honest! We just want to keep putting things out that slightly wreck the parameters of what rock and roll is supposed to be."
- Hyatt: "That's why World By Storm was a misdirection. It was too commercial. Basically, we were asked to do that by Abstract, or rather coerced into producing more commercial singles so we did, it was dead easy. But our audiences didn't respect us for it and although we didn't sell out 'cause we didn't make any money, politically and personally I felt I'd sold myself out. That's why Never And Always sounds like it does. In the future we're gonna stick to what we want."

FLEAS IN THE EAR OF THE WORLD . . .

- Hyatt: "At first I was dead against having children." What changed your mind, John?
- Hyatt: "Biology! Hahahahaha! But it does worry me. I want to bring up a real fighter."
- Brennie: "I was worried too. There's so much evil to fight against. I thought, 'what am I making here? Cannon fodder?'. But now I've got a nine-week-old daughter and she means more to me than anything else in the world. She's completely protected. It changes your whole life, but it doesn't stop you doing anything you want to do. It's wonderful. Hyatt'll soon find out – his wife's got eight weeks to go!"
- Hyatt: "I'm really excited that me and Liz are gonna have a kid, it's just the waiting that drives you mad! That's what I mean about the me in interviews not being the real me. I mean, I'm really in love and Liz never even gets mentioned. It's a very, very macho business and even if I say things like that they never get mentioned." (There, they just did, John.)
- Brennie: "Who wants to read it? That's the problem. The music industry is geared towards selling itself as frivolous, provocative, let's shag everything in sight, which is wrong. None of our music is about that."

SO WHAT ARE YOU ABOUT, THEN?!

- Hyatt: "I was just thinking, this grape grew in Italy as a grape and now we're drinking it as wine in Britain. It's gone through the capitalist system so that we can buy it here and drink where we shouldn't be drinking" (ie well after hours, readers!) "and that's what I write songs about. It's a really complicated idea to put across in a song. You need a lot of songs."
- Brennie: "His lyrics are brilliant. In fact we're the best rock 'n' roll band on Earth!"
- Hyatt: "One of us always says that!"

HOTTEST ACTION

FROM THE PULSE FIT TO BURST

Circuit

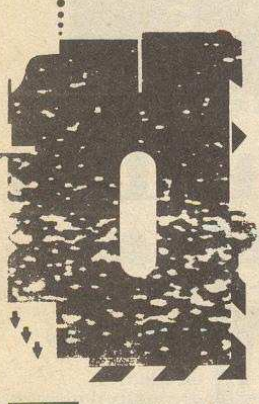
Breakers

Explosion in the centre zone!

Blow Up get squidgy about ice cream!

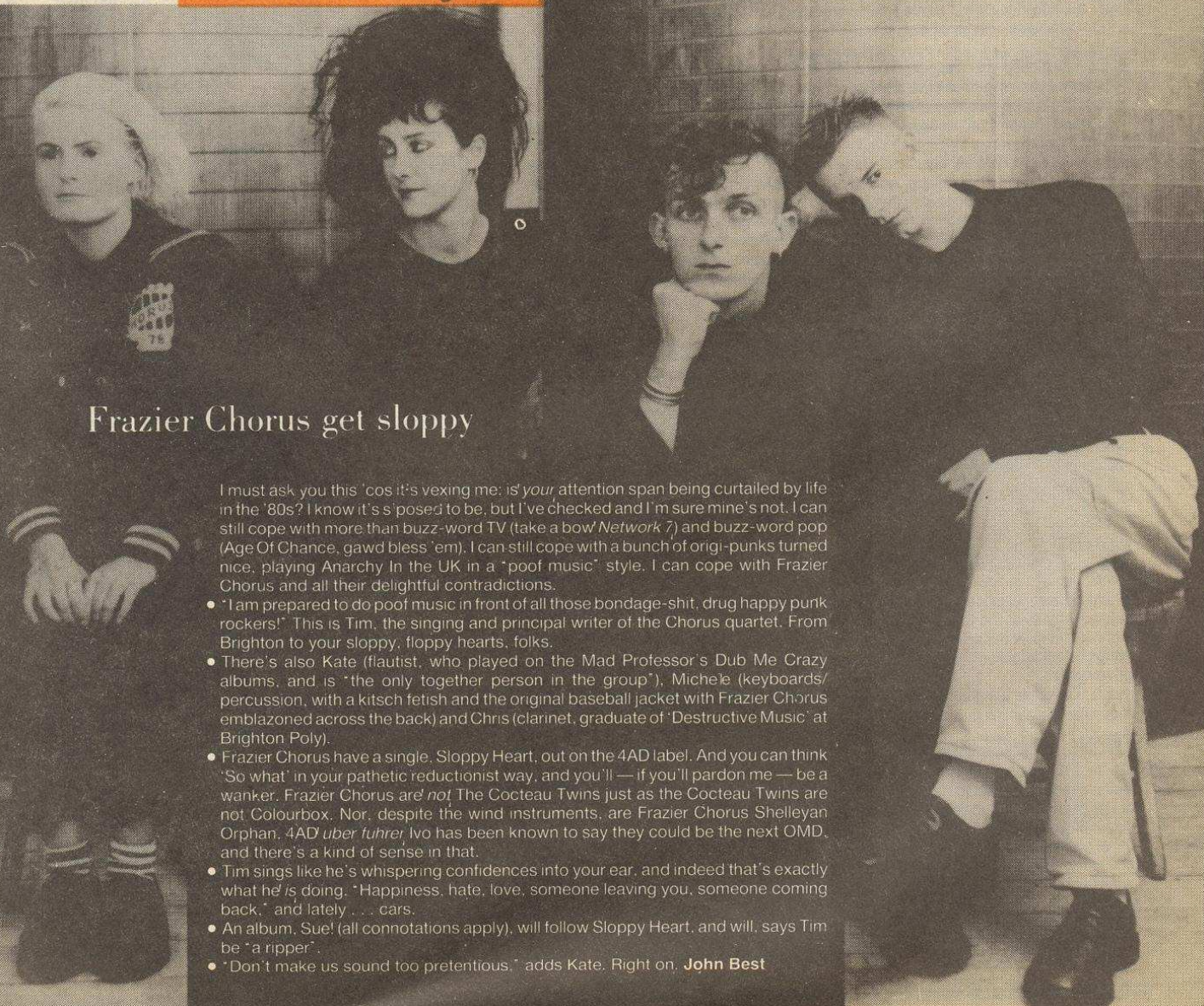
I'd never spoken to Nick Roughley before — a man of flowing locks, white denims and lead singer of Brighton hopefuls Blow Up. I always thought 'you moody bastard', but he always made me laugh — his self confident swagger around town, the way that when he played with 14 Iced Bears he upstaged the singer by standing behind him sneering and generally looking... pissed off.

- "I wasn't into anoraks," he says. And so to Blow Up...
- Nick was into Chelsea boots, while Josh (the group's manager) was into rock 'n' roll mythology, Alan (guitar) was into eating meals at regular times, Trevor (ex-bassist) was into drinking a lot and falling over, and Chris (drums) enjoyed hanging around...
- It was then only a matter of time, then, before they formed a band and, under the guidance of some keen bullshitting from Josh, signed to that independent dinosaur... Creation.



82 UNDERGROUND

Poofs in anarchy!



Frazier Chorus get sloppy

I must ask you this 'cos it's vexing me: is *your* attention span being curtailed by life in the '80s? I know it's s'posed to be, but I've checked and I'm sure mine's not. I can still cope with more than buzz-word TV (take a bow *Network 7*) and buzz-word pop (*Age Of Chance*, gawd bless 'em). I can still cope with a bunch of origi-punks turned nice, playing *Anarchy In The UK* in a "poof music" style. I can cope with Frazier Chorus and all their delightful contradictions.

- "I am prepared to do poof music in front of all those bondage-shit, drug happy punk rockers!" This is Tim, the singing and principal writer of the Chorus quartet. From Brighton to your sloppy, floppy hearts, folks.
- There's also Kate (flautist, who played on the Mad Professor's *Dub Me Crazy* albums, and is "the only together person in the group"), Michele (keyboards/percussion, with a kitsch fetish and the original baseball jacket with Frazier Chorus emblazoned across the back) and Chris (clarinet, graduate of 'Destructive Music' at Brighton Poly).
- Frazier Chorus have a single, *Sloppy Heart*, out on the 4AD label. And you can think "So what" in your pathetic reductionist way, and you'll — if you'll pardon me — be a wanker. Frazier Chorus are *not* The Cocteau Twins just as the Cocteau Twins are not Colourbox. Nor, despite the wind instruments, are Frazier Chorus Shelleyan Orphan, 4AD *uber fuhrer* Ivo has been known to say they could be the next OMD, and there's a kind of sense in that.
- Tim sings like he's whispering confidences into your ear, and indeed that's exactly what he's doing: "Happiness, hate, love, someone leaving you, someone coming back," and lately... cars.
- An album, *Sue!* (all connotations apply), will follow *Sloppy Heart*, and will, says Tim be "a ripper".
- "Don't make us sound too pretentious," adds Kate. Right on. **John Best**

- How to get a record contract (part 121) by Josh Dean: "I saw Alan McGee every month or so and kept winding him up saying I was the manager of this bloody great band. I kept promising a demo — but really there never was one and there was never going to be. Eventually I played him a really bad quality rehearsal tape and McGee said 'well I thought it was going to be crap, but f***ing hell, it's brilliant!'"
- Stories followed their debut gig — £5,000 on a video, 25 grand advance, a deal with WEA to follow the first single and, more recently, that Blow Up was merely a vehicle for Nick who was being groomed for Roxyland.
- What flavour ice cream are Blow Up, Nick?
- "Melon. Fresh and tangy. Fresh and twangy."
- What's your favourite colour?
- "F*** off"
- Looks like a bit more grooming is in order.
- "Most bands go about things the wrong way. Pissing about with demos and support gigs for years. We decided to skip all that; we were a bit cheeky and got away with it." By the time of their third gig they were headlining in London — but reviews were predictably sour and instantly labelled them as a '60s copycat band. In fact far from spelling instant recognition, signing to a "cult" label like Creation has meant a bit of an uphill struggle.
- The band's first single, Good For Me, was played for the first time on Janice Long's 'singled-out' show, on the nation's number one fun station, Radio 1, and was greeted with bed-wetting enthusiasm from the studio guests, Jon Moss and Pepsi (half of everyone's fave throwaway pop band).
- Pepsi: "I must say I was jumping up and down on my seat."

- Moss: "It's one and half minutes long, that's rock 'n' roll. I think it's *nouveau moderne*, actually. This is the sound of tomorrow."
- Long: "You like it then?"
- I think they did, Janice. If anything, Good For Me was the sound of yesterday beefed up a bit, hardly *nouveau moderne* — which is a term usually used to describe a variety of interior decorating, I believe. The single only added to the strength of the '60s tag, though, making it harder for the band to deny the reference and far easier to embrace it (and why the hell not?).
- Blow Up have recently acquired a permanent bassist in Zeiss, who will hopefully add a bit more friendliness into their live performances. I'm sure they don't mean to look aloof, but Nick always looks so... pissed off.
- "People say, Nick Roughley, he's so cool, he's too arrogant. I don't think of myself as being that. It's just that when I relax my face it looks cool — I *can't* help it. People think 'What's the matter with him, the moody bastard?'. I'm always being hit, usually in takeaways late at night, people walk up to me and hit me or say things like 'Are you a girl?'"
- Nick is in fact a girlie.
- To be honest I'm not completely certain if I like Blow Up or not. Live, the aloof air sort of puts me off, but the records are springy enough for me to bob to. There's a new 45 out on Creation this month, so decide for yourselves. I sort of get the feeling that up to now they've been faking it, but pretty soon they're going to have an orgasm. They came pretty close recently when they played a "happening" in a friend's kitchen with one 15 minute song — that had the audience, I'm told, "freaking art".
- Cool, huh? **Johnny Dee**



Blow Up, totally knacked after dealing with Johnny Dee's probing

The latest wave!

Surfin' Lungs portray envy and charm

How many bands tout the 'surf' prefix before their name, only to turn out to be some kind of fourth rate garage band? But, if there is such a thing as a 'genuine British surf band', then The Surfin' Lungs are it. Although they are based in Bracknell (Bracknell beach boys?!), The Surfin' Lungs possess the spirit of The Rip Chords and the charm of The Fantastic Baggys. There's more to them than torchbearers to the memory of Jan And Dean — the Lungs are a *damn* fine pop group.

- If their debut Cowabunga album on Big Beat paved the way, then I'm sure their latest long player on Beat International will open all the remaining doors. They write great songs, too! But why surf music?
- "We just love it," says Chris Pearce, singer and chief Lung. "It's as simple as that."
- But do you surf?
- "We've tried it but we're all crummy surfers. But then we don't do any songs that claim we're 'hanging ten' and 'riding that wave!' It's always someone else."
- Bass player Steve Dean agrees: "None of our songs are about bragging. Whether it's car songs or surf songs — it's always someone else."
- Chris: "If there's a recurring theme in our songs it's envy."
- Bearing in mind that the spiritual home for every surfer boy lies way over on the other side of America, do the Lungs ever feel California calling?
- "It's just a bunch of images to us," observes Geoffo Knipe. "It's probably nothing like we imagine it."
- Chris: "I don't think the reality is important. It's like *The Avengers* TV show — they had a certain image of England which everyone wanted to see and they didn't let reality intrude on it. All those things in *The Avengers* are really there but they made sure that they didn't include things that would spoil the image."
- "I guess our music's a bit like that!" **Chris Hunt**



Lung time no sea

Circuit Breakers

Filming for fun!

Marden Hill's bustling biopic

Three scenarios from the world of Marden Hill:

- 1. A white sports car, probably an Aston Martin, speeds down a winding French lane. It's raining and the girl's headscarf is flapping in the wind. She turns to her tweed-jacketed boyfriend and asks, "Happy darling?"
- "Happy." He smiles and changes up a gear. . .
- 2. The camera pans down from the rooftops to a crowded Piccadilly as red buses and taxis grind past. A girl in a red mini-skirt steps from the tube station and heads down Shaftesbury Avenue. The newspaper vendors turn to watch her, a traffic warden whistles and she laughs as her handbag swings against her white plastic mac. She's happy just window-shopping. . .
- 3. A pitiless sun burns on the desert sands, cracked weather-beaten faces grimace, the saloon doors sway in the breeze, scrub rolls down the empty street between peeling wooden house fronts. There's a sound of nails being hammered into old wood and a rope creaks then stretches. . .
- They would be great films but so far only the soundtracks have been made by Marden Hill. Unable to see the films I thought I'd meet up with Pete and Mark of this enigmatic group. Wouldn't you?
- "Actually, we did make a video for our first single. We were called Sixty Minute Man then, it was called Spies On 45, all old Shadows and spy themes, but we couldn't release it because we'd used some dialogue from the Bond films. Then we became Marden Hill, although we sometimes revert to being Sixty Minute Man, when we want to do the Shadows, surf and spy themes."
- Marden Hill's new single, on El Records, has its B-side performed by Sixty Minute Man (under the guise of Marden Hill, naturally). That track, Hangman, is the last film scene I described. The A-side, Robe, is the second scenario. It's almost unbearably happy, a real swinging brassy, fake '60s jazz romp.
- "Yeah, it is pretty cheerful. Mike Alway" (El team coach) "told us to go in the studio and think *Top Cat*, so we did, and you can hardly sound miserable with that in your head!"
- These are genuinely creative people who make records for the right reasons. They have no financial dependence on sales, so they can simply enjoy making records. One day all bands will be like this. **Hoxton Leonid**



The unwillingly ill at heart!

Breathless cough and splutter in pro-pop mood!

It's crazy that I should be sat sitting here, 400 words at my disposal, trying to sell you Breathless, a band who in any world worth saving from nuclear annihilation would be bigger than Anne Diamond and a million times more darkly sparkly.

- Still, who cares about the planet when you can leave it on the wings of Gary Mundy's firmament-splicing guitar, buoyed up by the voice-of-an-angel vocals of Dominic Appleton, 4AD understood *that* when they drafted Dom in to sing on *The Jeweller*, *Strength Of Strings* and *Tarantula* on This Mortal Coil's *Filigree And Shadow LP* last year. And a moment of religious realisation will pass through you too when you hear *Into The Fire*, the most starkly affecting track from their untitled second LP due out any second on their own Tenor Vossa label.
- Breathless' problem (professionally speaking — personal later) is one of perception. They don't fit in. They're truly psychedelic, yet, understandably for such intelligent folk, balk at the word. They refuse to accept the fundamental trivialisation that is at the heart of our every perception of psychedelia.
- This is both what holds them back and what makes them fascinating to those in search of *more*. They can never play up (or rather down) to a part, and therefore misunderstand a basic tenet of pop (that groups should be unambiguous), while encapsulating a basic tenet of life (that ambiguity riddles our every molecule). This puts them either into a wondrous elite or makes them complete non-starters, depending upon whether your brain waves are spiky or flat.
- Breathless, meanwhile, just sit and shake. Nerves, y'see. Rattle when they walk. Puke before and after playing.
- Dom in particular. "I have this terrible stomach. When I was about 16 every four weeks I'd get stomach cramps and vomit. It was very confusing. I had to go to the hospital and have all these X-rays and I thought 'Oh my God, they're going to find a womb inside me. But they didn't. . . I was a little disappointed actually."
- There are few turns of interview where a Breathless ailment doesn't crop up.
- Talk about performing and you'll hear about their latest pills to ward off the shakes. Talk about food and you'll hear about Gary's desire for a drip to avoid the chores of mastication. Talk about the past and you'll hear about his time as an agoraphobic Croydon lad unable to get on the school bus. Talk about pets and you'll hear about Dom's allergy to anything with hair — he has five goldfish — including, of late, the opposite sex. And these people are supposed to *project* themselves as a Rock Band!?
- Listen, if you're not going to take my word for it (ask *anyone*, they'll tell you how trustworthy I am), there's only one thing for it, I'm going to have to invent a scene for Breathless to spearhead. . . Er, how does this far-out movement, where everyone's deeply into neo-miserabilist bands with male singers who look like Charlotte Rampling and sound like aural-marcarsite, grab you?
- Gods, I tell you. Shy Gods. **John Best**



Breathless, but breathlessly enigmatic! Hiding in the shadows of neo-miserabilist noirism (ya dig?)

BACKS RECORDS COMPETITION RESULTS

For those of you still wondering about the answers to Backs Records extremely difficult quiz from issue six, here's the answers.

- 1 For which band did **Andy Gill** play guitar?
(A: **Gang Of Four**) Easy
- 2 Name the five labels that **The Higsons** have been on?
(A: Romans In Britain, Waap, Two-Tone, Upright and R4) Not easy
- 3 Which other groups are the members of **Big Zap** from?
(A: **Gaye Bykers, Janitors** and **The Bomb Party**) Quite Easy
- 4 Who compered last year's Ideal Guest House cassette?
(A: **Ted Chippington**) Sort of easy
- 5 What was the title of **Bogshed's** Peel session EP?
(A: **Tried And Tested Public Speaker**) Bit difficult
- 6 **James Taylor's** cover of *Blow Up* is from the film of the same name. Who starred in the film?
(A: **David Hemmings**) Difficult
- 7 Which legendary Cambridge band featured members of **Jack The Bear and The Bible**?
(A: **The Great Divide**) Oh yes, very, very easy

So now you know. Only one person got it right, and that's **SA Jeffries** from Reading. He will now be appearing on *The Krypton Factor*.

We're absolutely useless!

The Bolshoi demand bad press!

- "Trevor Tanner's determination to make The Bolshoi really count has paid off." The words of our very own TC Wall in his recent review of the group's Lindy's Party LP, and never a truer word has been spoken by an UG scribe! You can probably count them on the fingers of one hand – current bands who, while maintaining precious indie adulation, would do very nicely crooning to the masses on *TOTP*. The Bolshoi are one of the few who seem to be actively capable of completing the transition without essential loss of credibility! While their previous Friends album played a safer game, Lindy's Party is a harder affair, raw and more adventurous. A new Bolshoi is emerging and Jan Kalicki (drums) and Nicki Chown (bass) know why.
- In the past . . .
- Nick: "We never really made compromises but we spent too much time listening to other people."
- Jan: "We only ever made one real compromise and that was our single Sunday Morning. It was a bit of an experi-

ment but it still didn't get any airplay because they objected to the lyrics. We can't bloody win!"

- Nick: "Friends was a bit ahead of its time really because we were too clever for our own good. It was too polished. I listened to it last night and I still like it, but we're better live and that's what we've tried to capture on the new LP." But for the present . . .
- Jan: "This time we wanted it to be a lot punchier. Our label, Beggars Banquet, were loath to let us produce the album ourselves, but we wanted it to be like, f*** you, this is what we do! We're a lot happier."
- Nick: "We are always changing because 'interesting' is a key word for us. If we stuck to one musical style it would cease to be interesting. If you look at our singles they've all been very different. It would have been easy after Away to do another song similar to it, but we didn't want to take the easy way out. That's why Lindy's Party is so diverse. It's ten completely different songs."

The Bolshoi: liked by a mum



And as for the future . . .

- Jan: "You wait till the next show. You should see what we've got up our sleeves! The live show has to be entertaining or a gig is just a gig!"
- Nick: "The audience gets bored and we get bored."
- Jan: "Even my mother likes our show now. She came to see us recently and she loved it!"
- Yes, but are we finally going to see The Bolshoi on *TOTP*?

- Nick: "Well, we've started to get bad reviews for the first time ever, which we think is a good omen. Before now we've had single of the week and the record's done nothing!"
- Jan: "Our single Please really got slagged – *Melody Maker* reviewed it twice just to emphasise how bad it was – they called us *The Bolsite!*"
- Nick: "If the press don't like Lindy's Party it's got to be a good sign!"
- Err . . . cancel that intro **Alex Kadis**

Foxhead uprising

Close Lobsters debut LP severely damages Ug scribe!

"Let's make some plans so they can go wrong." Let's Make Some Plans.

- That's what I like. There's a lot to be said for not having the vaguest idea what you're doing. Especially when you're talking media manipulation.
- Close Lobsters don't know. Haven't got a clue. And while all the clever money (alright, all the money) was away primping yer Primal Screams/Shop Assistants/Lemon Drops/Fuzzboxes and all their petty, pretty plans for world domination, down the less desirable end of C86 Avenue, Close Lobsters were just flaring like a Catherine wheel to themselves and going nowhere.
- "You can reach for the stars of heaven, it doesn't mean you'll ever get there." A Prophecy.

- Doubt shadows Close Lobsters' songs, but somewhere between the self-deprecation and anti-belief lies something far more delicious than a chorus of trumpets baying for attention. There lies dignity, and now – because they've never been under pop's microscope – there lies a modestly great body of work.
- Foxheads Stalk This Land (Fire Records) is the album. It's not the new thing (in fact it's already vaguely old-fashioned). What it is, though, is spirited and oblivious to what it *should* be doing. For these reasons I recommend it.
- No-one should expect to call a song Sewer Pipe Dream and have people like it (which I'm afraid is inevitable when it says "and you look at me with those big brown eyes" in reference to a cow!). And what kind of Paisley tough boys sing about "kissing the flower in bloom"? Paisley tough boys like Close Lobsters, actually.
- Sometimes, chief Lobster Andrew Burnett will unconvincingly mutter in inter-

views that he's a star waiting to be discovered, and even for this pathetic charade of press chicanery, I love them dearly.

- On every tightly faceted Close Lobsters gem is a glint of fire to light up their romantic eye. The panicked "don't let it slip through your hands" refrain of In spite Of These Times. The way the line "I reluctantly threw a boomerang" echoes off into the ether in Foxheads. Ah! The little things that get you!
- Best of all, though, is Mother Of God, something of a modestly proportioned rock 'n' roll behemoth, with its main repeated lyric of "Never repeat those words" and a slow churning, burning, melody that scorches and finally bursts into flaming crescendo, and might have me mouthing the words *Velvet Underground* if I really wanted to indie-ghetto-ise them. You may be close. You may even be a lobster (in which



Close Lobsters get squiffy

Devils in disguise

Kill Devil Hills get tingly

- Just released: a 'churlish yet chewable cud of sensible rock' called What Comes After, the debut single from four-piece guitar bandits Kill Devil Hills – two of whom sit in the pub and tell me why folks should give them a listen.
- Paul: "When you go to see a good live band you just get all tingly and get totally lost in it – there's a certain depth; a base thing that separates emotional music from something like Rick Astley or whatever; you get stirred inside and it lifts you . . . though we can't say we'll lead you to the promised land if you follow us – we're not the Pied Pipers of Leyton!"
- Phil continues: "The best thing about us is that we're a hybrid of a lot of things; but if a song sounds too similar to something we've heard then it just gets rejected."
- Quality control from the Killies, that's Alex on vocals and guitar, Paul on guitar and vocals, Jon on bass and Phil 'the most beautiful drummer in pop', and a band identity almost communal.
- Paul: "We're all really close – we've grown up together as friends; it just happens that we play in a band together; music being the only thing we're all passionate about. . . ."
- Paul: "We're not a 100 per cent love song band, and we're not spouting 100 per cent Clash rhetoric – we're a little bit of everything, really; there should be some sort of middle ground and that's what I think – and hope – we do."



The lip-curling Devil Hill bros

- All things to all people? I don't know about that but, as their press handout says, they are 'aggressive yet stylish, intelligent yet direct'. Find out for yourselves; get the single today and look out for them in November when they'll be playing the live circuit. Like the man says: get lost! **Daz Igmeth**



Leather Nun's dingy beginnings and tattered past has taken them from post-industrial heavy metal to the shores of the Americas. Now signed to IRS, Stateside, their independent youth on Wire Records (both in Sweden and the UK) and before, has been examined and released on a brand new compilation, *Force Of Habit*, which will appear on vinyl, cassette and CD in the States, and in CD format in your very own street. ● Leather Nun's guitarist, Bengt Aronsson, or Aron to us, casts his mind back for Dave Henderson.

that Primemover was really good, and we wanted to get it released. . . I think we approached about five labels and Subterranean gave us the most positive response." **Probably** the most interesting track on this record is FFA, though. A lament to fist-f**ing that's illustrated with a clenched fist soaked in gel on the sleeve. Guaranteed to cause a stir? Created for effect? Or was this a true-to-life thing for the Nuns? **"We used to live in a flat above the largest video porn store in Gothenburg and we used to watch them a lot and they're quite funny. I mean, you don't get horny watching that kind of thing."** **Natural** guys! And no doubt dubious and "dangerous", now that people might actually think again about what FFA is about. The record re-appeared briefly in Britain through the Obsession label, but disappeared a couple of years back, just around the time that the group signed to the newly-born Wire label, a twin-base partnership pairing Sweden and the UK (which is currently branching out in West Germany and the US, too). **The group's reputation was already beginning to cultivate the cult status, and gosh, they weren't even totally Wired yet.**

SLOW DEATH OF THE WARM LEATHERETTES

I was there, I was there! Yes, me, Dave Henderson! Slouched at the back of the Scala cinema for one of their February '80 all-night sessions of film and general weirdness, I was there. This time Throbbing Gristle's Industrial Records were holding court, and in the arena were a howling squidge of barbed, cranky or just plain exhausted high-lifers. Films of bikers' bottoms, Kenneth Anger's *Scorpio Rising*, art, art, art and more art filled the luxurious hall, and in between all this the Throbbers played, as did Monte Cazazza—a San Fran weirdo joined by Tana Ernolo Smith on guitar (and I'm-Really-Expressing-Myself pained facade). Finally, around four-ish, The Leather Nun kicked into action . . . and central London has never really been the same again. Sure, it was a "happening" of sorts, a mental test, an SAS-style self survival experience . . . but heavy metal and extra volume? *At four?*

The die-hards and the dead awoke to hear the grumbling consciousness of Jonas Almqvist and his Swedish cohorts extolling the virtues of Slow Death. The pale got paler.

Aron: "That was an amazing night, we were just happy to be part of it. You really felt like you were involved with something, the response was so amazing."

So how did you team up with Industrial?

"Jonas had been in contact with Gen from the group for some time." (That's P Orridge, now of Psychic TV, for the younger members of our audience.) "Jonas was a music journalist then and the whole industrial thing really interested him. The label had been in action for some time and Gen prompted us to get together properly and record some material for a single. That was the Slow Death EP. We recorded it in our apartment and we were really surprised at the reaction it got."

So how were other Swedish bands reacting towards what you were doing? Were you out on a limb?

"We were totally out on our own, but that didn't really bother us. Even the Swedish press didn't understand what we were doing. That hasn't changed either, we still have a pretty bad relationship with the press in Sweden."

But if anyone thought that the initial noisy metal tag was going to tie Leather Nun down, they were in for something of a surprise. What's more, they even moved away from the Industrial umbrella—which by that time was beginning to concentrate solely on TG and their activities.

Leather Nun's next release happened in California, on the ludicrously good Subterranean label.

"The contact for that came through Monte Cazazza who'd been releasing things solo, plus stuff with Factrix, over there. We'd done recordings of five new tracks and we knew

STUDED RELIGION IN CIRCUITRY BLOW OUT

Once the Wire label was set up to expose the burgeoning Swedish undercurrent (now developing nicely into the Euro upper echelons of pop/rock reality), the head on collision between Leather Nun and the foaming punters of world city became a reality. The group's first release for the label was the 506 EP, a set of rock-based, but hauntingly orchestrated, songs centred around the esoteric title track.

So what's in Room 506?

"We don't know. It came about one Christmas when Jonas was in London. He got invited to a party in a hotel but the room number was wrong and he got really pissed off because he missed the party."

As you would. See, natural guys!

"Anyway, it all started from there."

Then you followed that with a live LP? Rock literati always claim that that's the worst thing for a "new" act to do . . . to make their first LP a live thing.

"But so what? We do that with every release, we never worry about what people will think. We do records that are sometimes bad, sometimes good. We're irrational, like the group's personalities. We can't just do ordinary rock songs."

So what do you think of the release that followed that, *Desolation Row*?

"That's got a good A side, but a badly-produced B side."

As you can probably tell, The Leather Nun are something of a law unto themselves. They don't stand on tradition, they don't play by the rules, but do they like Abba?

"What! Abba! What do you think?"

But you covered their Gimme Gimme Gimme—and in doing so thrust the Nun image and imagery into households that were otherwise content to suffer the sins of contemporary bore-o-pop.

"That was just something that we wanted to do, and the record label was really keen for us to do it too. Both groups are Swedish, and in a way it was a catalysing of Abba by Leather Nun."

A frightening thought. And do you have anything else in common with Abba?

"No."

No plans to record with Andrew Lloyd Webber and produce drab "rock" musicals like Chess?

"No."

The success of Gimme in all unexpected corners had brought the group to the attention of a confused music hierarchy as well as a glut of new enthusiasts. And, in time-honoured style, they opted to assault a totally different area for their next single (instead of following the miserable Bananarama cover version route to trauma).



The new single was Pink House, a sketchy slice of comment on America and its shortcomings, which was created by Jonas and Aron attempting to recreate the climate of America — where Aron had been living for some time. And next . . . well, an album, of course!

THE LUST TRUST AND THE STEEL GENERATION

After a virtual torrent of 12 inchers greeted with praise, pondering and preposterous confusion, Leather Nun's first album, *Lust Games*, was laid to vinyl. But, Aron, can you listen to it now?

"It's a good album, there are quite a few good songs there. It was done at a good time and a lot of the songs are pretty strange, but when you get really close to something like that it makes it very difficult to sit down and enjoy it. There are some good things there, but eventually the music gets beyond the group and you get to the point where there's about ten people deciding on what the sleeve should look like. Then it can feel like you've lost contact."

A single, *I Can Smell Your Thoughts*, was lifted from the LP and remixed, further enhancing the Leather Nun 'less than normal' reputation.

"That was a good thing to do, though, as that remix let me listen to the other tracks on the album. It re-introduced me to the record."

Another track from the album, *Jesus Came Driving Along*, began another chapter of LN life, when the movie moguls picked up on it for last year's brat pack flick *Dudes*. So what's that about, have you seen the film?

"No." Another mystery. But does that kind of recognition get you excited like, say, the Scala event did?

"No. I think we've been involved in music for some time now and that kind of excitement has worn off."

What about signing a deal in the States with IRS, surely that must have felt good?

"Sure, they're a company who work well and we're looking forward to doing things with them."

And do you think you'll move into chart territory like other IRS acts have managed, like The Bangles, REM, you know, that kind of thing?

"Oh no. I can't see anyone moving Leather Nun, we're too heavy to move."

More recently — like around six weeks ago — Leather Nun's second and most perfectly formed album was unleashed on the world, with the single cut *Cool Shoes* further enhancing their left-field fun approach (!) being a kind of rap-a-longa-strangeness. The LP, *Steel Construction*, reaped great press response, and further oiled the fountain pens of the cross-channel enthusiasts. The sound now has veered not to pop, but to a uniquely European structured rock sound that's glazed with effected oddball interludes and spiced with a melodic bent that could convince even the most strung out of AOR purists.

So Aron, what do you think of *Steel Construction*?

"It's totally different from the first LP. . . . I can listen to some of it, I love to listen to some of it, there's like a nerve in it."

Yes, a raw edge that's still sparkling with energy. *Steel Construction* is brimming with excruciatingly accessible noises that make you just want to play it again and again. We'll, you've probably read the reviews. You've probably got the record! And now you can catch up on the group's back pages with this finely packed compilation set.

Is it a 'Best of', as it were?

"Well, I . . . well, it was compiled by IRS for America really. We don't want to argue about these kind of things. It's what they think is right for that market, and we think they know what they're talking about."

What more can you say? And just what will Leather Nun be doing to promote this release — and the brand new *Steel Construction* package?

"Well, we'll be on tour briefly, for about three weeks, then I'll be going to the States for about four months to recover (I've promised myself this for ages). Having been involved in the production of that LP, playing live, writing and all that, I'm really ready for a break. I've quit my job in Sweden, which I was trying to do at the same time as the group, so I don't know what will happen next. I suppose I'll just cool down."

Will you come back a new man?

"No way."

peddle power



● **Gaye Bykers On Acid** go for the big sell with their debut Virgin LP, *Drill Your Own Hole* (released November 2), by going totally tele-visual. To celebrate their vinyl excursion, they've produced a madcap 45-minute flick, with the working title *Acid Test*, which will be released on video on November 13. It will also be screened on MTV and Channel 4 at a later date.

and dress as cowpokes (right). Rock is art!

the band turn out on *The Price Is Right* (centre)

Byker Mary joins up in the true Lennon grimace (left).

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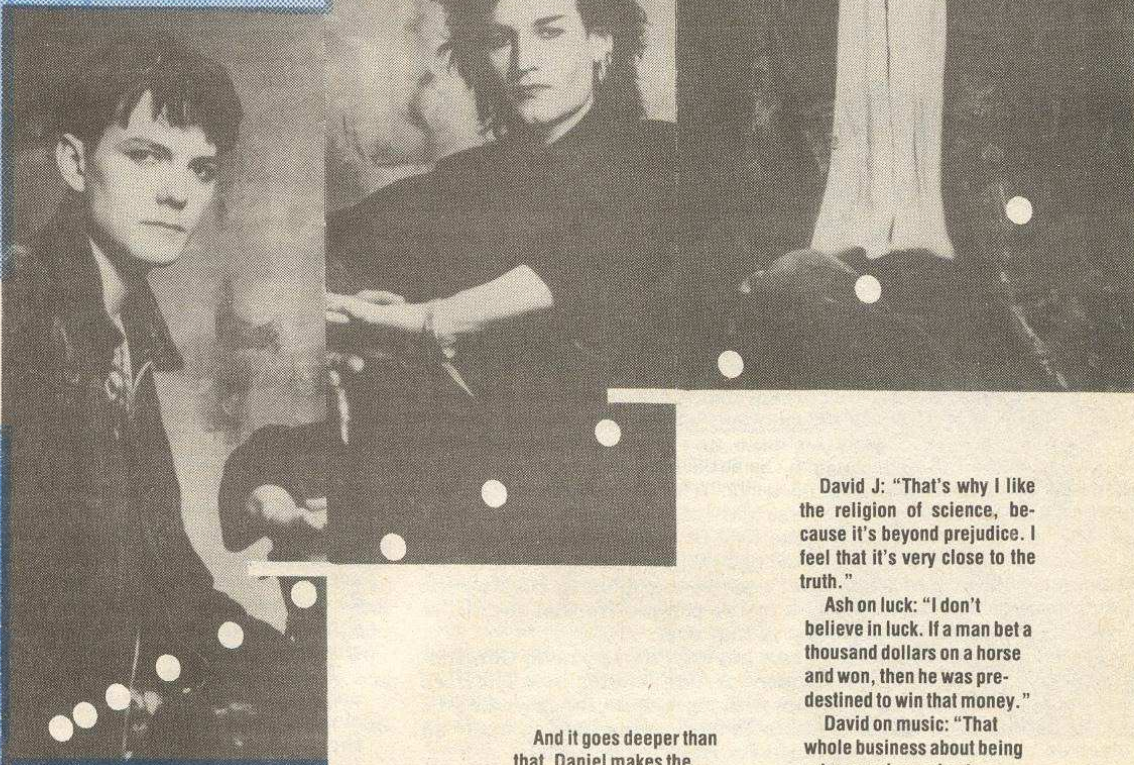
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Elementary eloquence

Haskins (left), Ash (centre) and J

Love And Rockets

reputation continues to grow, their new LP, *Earth, Sun, Moon* portraying their new-found depth. **Scott Murphy** follows them to Nottingham to find out more



Watching them during a soundcheck for their first UK gig in quite a while, you can't help but think that Love And Rockets have a completely positive sound. Seeing Daniel Ash harmonise with David J, while Kevin Haskins provides a backbeat, it's clear that there is no Bauhaus, no Jazz Butcher, and no Tones On Tail: there is just one band. Trying to perfect a sound which is unmistakably theirs. What's theirs is part of an evolutionary process in itself. Their first album, *Seventh Dream Of A Teenage Heaven*, was filled with ambience, the kind of album to listen to when, well, it's gloomy both outside and in the house. And their second LP, *Express*, was for the rock and roller in all of us.

Ash on *Express*: "It was an electric sort of album. Electric drums,

electric guitar, very big sounds. It was getting boring, like a rock and roll circus. All those clichés."

So now they've come to their third album, *Earth, Sun, Moon*, an album that Ash claims was in the back of their minds even during *Express*. It's minimal, wearing the T Rex and Beatles influences on its sleeve, without any sort of apologising. Only two tracks, *Mirror People* and *The Light* recall the loud sounds of their second release. It's the way Love And Rockets want it. As for its critical thrashing — "Don't believe what you read," asserts Ash quickly. "For us, it's very different from *Express* as a complete album. As far as we're concerned, it's a big progression from the last record."

For them, that's all that matters. Critics are tossed off with a quick remark. Audiences are merely there because they want to be, not because the band asks them to. The band's only requirement for continuing is themselves.

And it goes deeper than that. Daniel makes the revelation that "It's quite schizophrenic".

What is? The band. It's divided. But it's that division that makes them healthy.

"A lot of the time it's like usually splits down the middle between my songs and David's songs. I observe an audience that likes one half but not the other. Generally speaking there are tracks that cross over. But, there are two halves."

David interjects: "I think it's more than that." Lyrics bear the difference out. While Ash is questioning someone's darkest night, David J is waiting for the flood. It is those opposites, with Haskins as quiet mediator, that creates the term Love And Rockets.

Although opposites in some ways, the band collectively spews thoughts on a range of topics that ultimately fuel their lyrics.

Ash on religion: "I was brought up in a Catholic school and you were taught to fear God. At least you were when I was there. All the little stories they tell you like 'If you don't go to confession your soul will get blacker and blacker'. All that symbolism. . . It's just a load of bollocks."

David J: "That's why I like the religion of science, because it's beyond prejudice. I feel that it's very close to the truth."

Ash on luck: "I don't believe in luck. If a man bet a thousand dollars on a horse and won, then he was predestined to win that money."

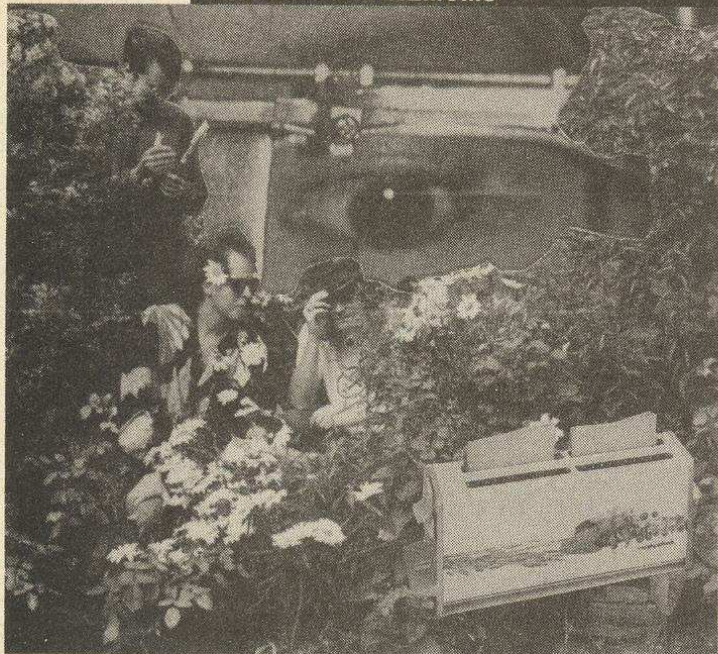
David on music: "That whole business about being retrogressive and not breaking new ground. I quite accept that. I don't think that is necessary to make something that's valued. John Lee Hooker or Hank Williams, Sr made the same record every time but it was a good record."

It's those same opinions which have forced the band to play a great deal more in America than Great Britain. Over there, the popular demand for the band's blend of today's psychedelia has given them a bit of time to assess that country and its lifestyle.

Haskins on America: "In the States, if someone sees some bloke driving down the road in a Rolls Royce, people will go up and say 'That's a beautiful car'. Whereas in England, they would say 'That sod, how did he get a hold of that?'. That's a generalisation, but. . ."

It's almost a parallel of the band. Love And Rockets are in a tour bus. They drive to their first destination. It's standing room only as the full to capacity club can't hold any more people. Then, days later, they perform before an indifferent audience; the opening chords of *Mirror People* ring out, as Ash peers over a gaggle of Bauhaus shirts. . .

THE CHRYSANTHEMUMS



An enigma, man! A surrealist dream that touches taboo areas in the name of pop. But what are **THE CHRYSANTHEMUMS** about?

"We like pop music," admits a 'mum, and yes, that's pretty obvious as their debut LP, *Is That A Fish On Your Shoulder Or Are You Just Pleased To See Me*, perfectly portrays. When I say debut, there's a little confusion here, as the reverse of the sleeve reveals that the year is 2030 and this is a re-issue of the 1987 LP, going on to explain the group's meteoric rise up to the end of 2030, suggesting a further two albums by the end of 1990. What's more, they plan to stick to this game plan and place themselves in the perspective that the sleeve explains. Now, get to the bottom of *that* one.

Probably more factually, for now anyway, the two main Chrysanthemums stand up and are recognised as Alan Jenkins from The Deep Freeze Mice (a Leicester conglom with a penchant for sporadic LPs of the psyche-pop kind) and Yukio Yung (leading light in many an electronically motivated pop outfit for Hamster Records).

"I suppose we're like-minded people," muses Yukio. "We're pleased with the album but it doesn't seem to be doing terribly well, even though it got some good reviews."

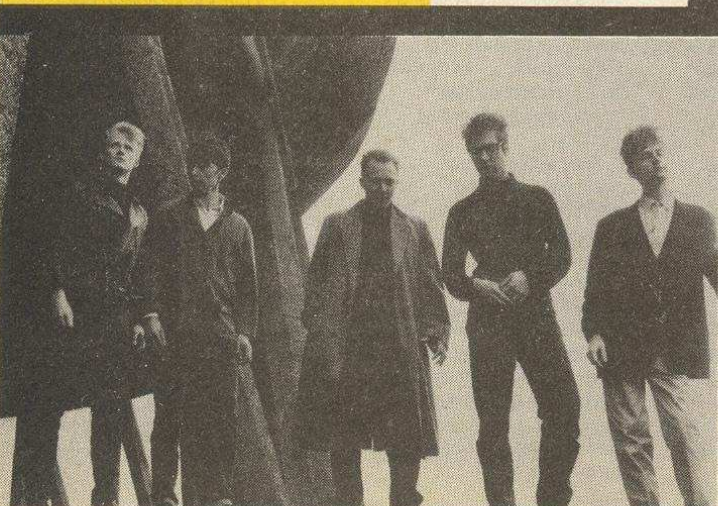
And how does it feel to be incredibly hip?

"It's good, it feels incredibly good to be stopped in the street and asked for your autograph," is the sarcastic reply. "I suppose we feel like we're people's poets, but we don't want to be laughed at, we'd rather be laughed with."

Now that's a difficult one, but there's plenty of grins on the first LP so they could be on. But what of the future (apart from recording those scheduled LPs before 1990)?

"We'll just keep recording, we're past the phase of worrying. We did think of covering a whole LP, like *Tales From Topographic Oceans* by Yes, or something. I've never heard it, but the lyrics are unbelievable."

Yeah, like, wow! Dave Henderson



LAUGH

The pressure of being a member of a group that everyone wants to make a joke out of has slowly got to them. One left to become a doctor, another to pursue a design career, a third to become a Smith (Craig Ganlon to be precise), while the others just laughed. Martin Wright (vocals/guitar), Martin Mittler (bass and original member), Ian Bendelow (Craig's mate and his replacement) and "the fabulously monickered" (thank you, press office) Spencer Birtwhistle (drums) are left behind to carry the can(ned laughter).

So, *Laugh's most hated question*: "It's quite a dynamic name," says Martin W, "and people always remember it. It also sums us up in a way because we are very serious about what we do but we don't take ourselves that seriously. And there's no exclamation mark after it either!"

There's so much more substance to Laugh than a false exclamation mark might say: they'll even talk about it. Laugh's first single *Take Your Time*, *Yeah/Never Had It So Bad* deals with life-before-optimism and angles on bedroom boredom,

to which their second single Paul McCartney (both on the excellent Remorse label) shapes up an answer.

"Our new single is intended as a message to the hapless, hopeless, already forgotten bands of today, and those of Paul McCartney's stature, content to wallow in the security of their previous successes, along with the majority of today's bands who seem satisfied basking in the shadow of their idols."

Instead of jumping on the guitar bandwagon, Laugh are jumping ahead, literally, because of their impulsive northern soul leanings. Independent hi-NRG!

"Whatever the guitars are doing, we try and make the drums and bass get a real dance feel, because we all like dancing, and think dancing's really important because it's equated with having a good time. When we recorded Paul McCartney, me and Martin went into the other room to see if we could dance to it — if it was in the right time and all that. That's how we judged it!" Martin Aston

1000 VIOLINS

From the back, it looks as though **1000 VIOLINS** have been regarded as taking The Smiths' classic trail of jangle 'n' regret no further than The Smiths did, but t'aint so. They have their own way of spelling 'shit', 'confusion', 'disappointment' and 'melancholy'. Now free of Dan Tracey's Dreamworld label — "we were getting let down too

much while Dan was concentrating on his own band, The TV Personalities" — the group have signed up with Pacific, usually Americans who license Brit-indies but who are now expanding to steal some of The Cartel's distribution business. The new *Locked-Out Of The Love-In* single is on Dreamworld, but the forthcoming *If I Were A Bullet, Then For Sure I'd Find A Way To Your Heart* won't be. A stab at a love song?

"Not necessarily. It's just about people, not just necessarily between a boy and a girl. To me, maybe I'm being a bit big-headed, it's obvious," claims lead violinist David.

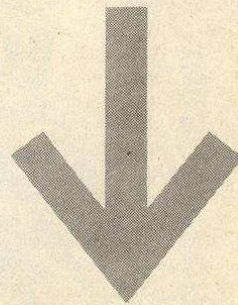
My head is small, very small.

"It's about getting constantly let down and people not caring, acting too self-interested. But if I were a bullet. . ."

Then you'd get through for sure. By their titles and sentiments, 1000 Violins seem tainted by this gap between hope and grimy reality. Songs like *I Remember When People Used To Ride Bikes. . . Now We All Drive Cars*: "We like a lot of things that have gone and past — things like 90 per cent of music now is utter rubbish as bands rely on producers and not songs."

Songs like their second single, *Please Don't Sandblast My House*: "Some things are best left as they were — like shitty blocks of flats. Ten years later they admit they're mistakes."

1000 Violins have also been known to sing The Walker Bros' *The Sun Ain't Gonna Shine Any More*. Yes, yes, life's often shit, and someone's got to say it on behalf of the silent minority. Martin Aston



THE RISK



Guernsey, one of the Channel Islands, is hardly famed for its spate of indie-pop bands; in fact, it's hardly ever been famous for any music. . . There's only ever been one band of consequence, to emerge from its shores, namely **THE RISK**, a young and aggressive duo who have released two albums in the last four hectic months. Frontman Mark LeGallez admits that they face more than a slight geographical disadvantage, being far closer to France and the continent than they are to Britain, but they seem to have made a fine job of overcoming it undertaking extensive tours of the US and Europe. In fact, they've played almost everywhere except England. LeGallez explains that they've just not had the time to do so, yet. It seems that The Risk are well on the way to being Guernsey's biggest musical export since Barry Grey's *Joe 90* theme. Invitation To The Blues, their new Unicorn album, was actually recorded in Grey's converted German machine-gun bunker in Guernsey earlier in the summer.

Lifting influences from Elvis Costello, The Jam and a spate of '60s R&B stars, as well as dressing with an eye on the sharper side of Italian style, is bound to align The Risk with the now underground mod scene. LeGallez is quick to point out that, although the band have their roots in the mod scene, they've grown to include a much wider range of influences and styles, as Invitation — a strong slice of power pop tinged with hard brass arrangements — demonstrates.

Felix Adler

TOTAL

namedrop!

DIESEL PARK WEST

Still, although their chosen name might suggest otherwise, **DIESEL PARK WEST** aren't a garage group, but an energised rock group who have already been harnessed with "pomp-proportioned stadium-rock" reviews. I'd say they're just guilty of magnifying *guitar ecstaticus*, West Coast harmonising and swelling melodies through a post-U2 1980's production (even, if DPW's John Butler says, they record on eight-track). It's rock, but rock naturally has peaks, no? "The immediate kind of image that rock 'n' roll or heavy rock has is a kind of semi-boziness," says John in defence, "with all these well-dodgy bands, or empty-shell bands as we call them, who pout and

THE GO HOLE

THE GO HOLE have created their own Open University. And they've opted to try "pop" music and how it can affect your life. But they blew it by sending out the wrong demo to Tip Sheet.

"It was a mistake, but who cares?"

They recorded a single themselves, the gloriously joyful Flight Of Angels.

"We're really skint now."

And after a touch of media attention, it got picked up by Pinnacle.

"We're always having to ring them up, like we have to ring up to get gigs and everything, it's really hard work."

But, guys, *that's* the game. It's confusingly confusing too. It takes time to learn the ins and outs, to get stuck into the real tasks and avoid the things that don't matter. You've got to be careful what you say.

"But we're a split personality. We say things to please people, to get an effect, to annoy."

And that seems to ring through to the music too. The "raunchy" sound is quite raw and aggressive ("it should be *more raw*") and is emphasised by the beat. My, you can hardly believe that there's just three of them.

"We're out to con people in a way. The label, Big Pop, is us too and that means we have to adopt a different attitude when we're being the label, than when we're being the group."

Uh, yeah. Pretty schizophrenic guys! Dave Henderson

posture and strike their chords, but we think there's a link between being able to play loud and stridently but with some depth and vision — maybe with some undercurrent of weirdness."

What, like the admission of playing football on acid on the sleeve of When The Hoodoo Comes (their first single, on Food)?

"Usually we get beaten because we're the worst team, but the few times we've taken acid, we've played like Brazil! We were tremendous! But I don't think it's good to extol the virtues of acid, like this is the new hip drug again, and if you take it, you're somehow in tune with



what's going on, because that's what happened last time, and I think that was wrong."

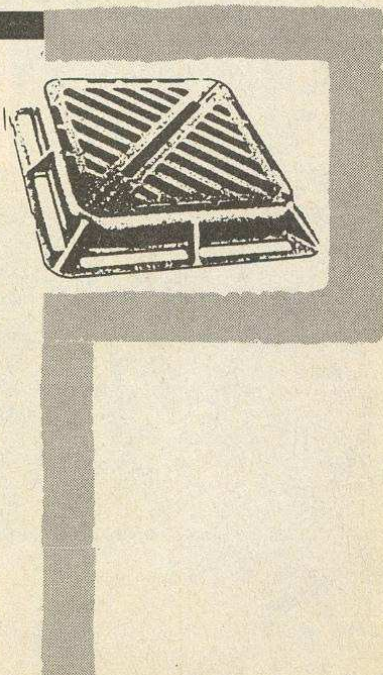
Footballers on Acid!!! Now there's a name. But the only certifiable returns Diesel Park West will get from this song are great billowing transfer fees from Large Record Companies United. Martin Aston

VEE VV

"Heh! C'mon now! **Vee VV**, your time has come!" Words uttered by fanzine editors nationwide, as Vee VV sent them into an irrepressible state of hysteria in the wake of their previous two releases, Kindest Cut and last year's Boom-Slump 12 inch. 1987 sees the punky Membranes (nah, make it funky James Brown) soundalikes putting together another slab of punky funk/funky punk.

Vee VV avoid getting hot and sweaty over the fact that Stump, The Shop Assistants *et al* get swooped off to major labels, while they are still slogging 'round the country supporting The Cradle, dragging their rolling bass and cutting guitars merrily in pursuit.

So the class of '87 steps up another gear, sleeps in another Transit van, releases another single. Now, that's something to look forward to. Dave Potter



● This month's *Tip Sheet* is another "thingy" from the house of **Julian Henry**. This month he teams up with legendary pal of the good guys, **John Peel**. Together, in the confines of Broadcasting House, they discover the dangers and delights of this month's demo bag. The numbered system after each review refers to marks out of ten for content (of tape), delivery (in performance terms), presentation (of the overall package) and potential (as to whether they'll bend a cheque book or two). Any outfits wishing to have their tapes decimated, send them to Underground Tip Sheet, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1.

BANDUNG FILE (0494 813506) come from High Wycombe and went to some lengths to amuse us by sending their tape in a plastic glove. You really have to **HAND** it to them (get it?). Our star guest critic, Mr **John Peel**, was stoney faced though as he grappled with the glove trying to get it open, and it eventually took some deft handiwork with a pair of BBC scissors to extract the tape. John, it transpires, gets sent cassettes and records in all manner of bizarre disguises - he has seen it all, as they say - hence the lack of raised eyebrows at Bandung File's determined efforts. Their music was vaguely industrial with a few synth noises, and failed to register many plus points.

"I expect this sort of thing would go down better with Janice Long," he commented.

So would the intercoms be buzzing in Broadcasting House, as news of the Bandung File cassette's arrival in Radio 1 was relayed from office to office? "Er, no," said John. "I usually expect these bands to send material to both Janice and myself - of course I would dearly love to be able to answer the band personally with a letter, but due to the sheer volume of tapes, it's impossible. All I can say is that I do listen to everything that I'm sent."

The mountains of cassettes and records that surround Mr Peel in his office bear this out, and one can only ponder at the unhappy *twist of fate* that gives a DJ like Mike Smith an office full of researchers and assistants while JP is left to fight his way through ever-increasing piles of records and tapes single-handed. With tears welling into my eyes, the points were awarded.

3 5 2 5

SYCHOTODE (9 Conniston Road, Newbold, Chesterfield, Derbyshire) did not make many friends with their mantle.

"What a crappy name," were John's exact words. Still, he seemed fascinated by the group's photograph which he studied for a few moments before passing across the room. It revealed four young men with longish hair, three of them wearing sunglasses, staring with a rather po-faced expression at the cameras.

"I don't usually pay much attention to pictures," said John. "In fact usually they go straight in the bin." But what of the music? "Well, it sounds a bit like the Gaye Bykers to me, I wonder if this lot come from Leicester as well?" We only listened to one song by Sychotode, and I asked John why this was. "You can usually tell what they sound like, if they're interesting or not, by one

song . . . the problem with this sort of thing is that you can tell straight away who they've listened to, who their influences are." One thing that did keep John's attention for more than a few moments was the rather interesting piece of painted metal work that the group had stuck in with their package. Perhaps if we'd been reviewing this for *Copper Beating Weekly* they might have scored higher points, but as it is



4 4 3 5

THOSE FAMOUS RED SHIRTS (65 School Lane, Standish, Wigan) managed to cheer John up for a few moments with their name which presumably he interpreted as a homage to his favourite football team. A conversation about groups with 'Red' in their name ensued.

"I used to like Simply Red until Mick Hucknall slagged me off in a *Melody Maker* interview," remembered John. "It struck me as being very odd as I'd had a perfectly friendly conversation with the bloke a few weeks before in the BBC bar . . . anyway, I went home and threw all his records away after that."

Back to the music. "A lot of people might say this is no good because it sounds like it's cheaply recorded, but I think it sounds rather interesting," decreed JP. I crawlingly agreed. The group play normal instruments like guitars and suchlike, but their appeal is in their application, which shows some imagination and no little songwriting talent. A moody vocal sits on top, a trifle maudlin but attractive nevertheless - this group therefore score handsome dividends in the points department.

7 7 6 6

BURNING BABY (no address sent) prompted John to reveal one of his pet phobias - Jiffy Bags. "It came about when the National Front used to send various people turds in Jiffy Bags I think," he said. Happily, Burning Baby had not pursued this same line of self-promotion, though it must be said that their package contained all manner of useless junk, like torn up bits of paper, lists of books to read and 1p pieces. Their music was an intriguing mess of spoken vocals, chopped up guitars, and the sort of drumming you'd expect from someone with his arms tied behind his back.

"I like the ideas but I don't think they see it through terribly well," said John. "It's all very well if you're going to do this confrontation stuff, but you've still got to be able to do it well; if they keep at it they might get better. I went to see The Butthole Surfers the other day, and though I didn't enjoy it I was impressed and a bit disconcerted."

4 4 4 4

CONSPIRACY (159 Lidgate Lane, Deusbury, West Yorkshire) had sent a tape to John inside an *Oxford Dictionary*, a gimmick which successfully attracted us to their package. Their music contained a slightly confusing combination of a hip hop beat which suddenly turned into an Eagles track for the middle eight. "There are some quite good ideas here," said John. "It doesn't pull it off completely as it's not hard hitting enough; if you're going to do this sort of thing you've got to be aggressive about it." So had this been a little bit more muscley, would he have phoned them up?

"If I like a band's tape or record, I always call them and get in contact; we could then possibly have them in for a session." For Conspiracy though, such an opportunity does not seem to be on the cards. "Again, this is something that I think might be more suitable for Janice," says John.

6 4 4 5

GUTTERSNIPE (30 Rydal Way, Enfield, Middlesex) sound a bit like The Vibrators used to. Or maybe even The Ramones with a manic lead guitarist. "Ten years ago I would have thought this was fine, but now, in 1987 . . ." John tails off and looks dejectedly at the floor. The group are compiled of ex-Cock Sparrer, Infected Cut and Size Paranoia members plus a gentleman who used to clobber the biscuit tins for Jimmy Pursey. So they are obviously an outfit with a pedigree.

"They strike me as the sort of band who people would like to go and see live," says John. We cannot disagree with this. However, a stab at the charts would seem unlikely, though a healthy 'indie following' could result from a period of active Guttersnipe self-promotion. While the tape is clattering away in the background, John explains his current career as a journalist for *The Observer*. "Thursday night is my gig night," he says. "I see the band that night, and then have to get my review in by the following morning at 11.00am - it works well, as it means I have to concentrate on something intensely for a short period. I don't actually read

interviews that bands do as a whole, as you have to wade through so much rubbish - I wish journalists would just write more of what they saw."

2 4 3 4

GIANT TREADS CLEAN (8 Bruford Road, Penn Fields, W'ton, WV3 0BA) evoked an interesting geographical comment from John. "These days you see a tape from Manchester and you find that it's usually more interesting than a tape from, say, Liverpool. This one's from Wolverhampton, so you don't really know what to expect." We listened to the cassette for a few moments in silence in order to redress this situation, and discovered an unusual sound that suggested a degree of original thought, and proof that groups with guitars don't all have to sound the same. "You have to hand it to them for getting away from the norm," said John. "Though I do find it a little off-putting the way that the singer goes 'Ooh-ooh'." The *Underground* view of the band is that with a period of development and a little more of those horn blasts, good things could be anticipated for the curiously titled Giant Treads Clean.

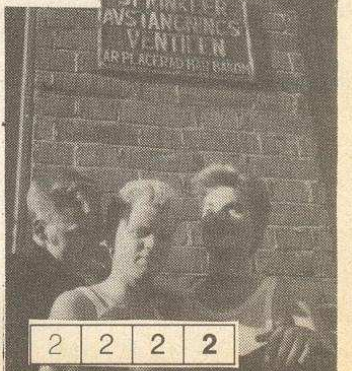
5 5 4 5

HORACE (c/o Jan Valentin, v.a Vinterg 228 703 44, Orebro, Sweden) excited us with the foreign stamps stuck all over their Jiffy Bag. What is happening in Sweden, we wonder? Errr . . . well, not a lot judging by this tape. John didn't like the chiming guitars, and I wasn't bowled over by the well-trodden rock avenues that the group seem bent on pursuing.

"It's a bad sign when groups send in great wads of words and lyrics," said John, waving a great portfolio of carefully typed sheets of paper about his head. "It means that they think they're terribly good, but it usually means they aren't. It looks like this lot seem to think they're rock outlaws or something when they obviously aren't. I mean, look at this fellow," he said pointing at the band picture. "This one's almost bald!"

It was true. There, among three fine young men with trendy quiffs and crops, was one poor soul with a bad attack of the billiard ball. What hope is there for Sweden with an effort like this?

"I don't mean to be hard," said John, perhaps reading my thoughts. "In a few years they might sort themselves out, but they well definitely need to re-think."



2 2 2 2

PIG (*Skalitzer Strasse 49, 1000 Berlin 36, West Germany*) made friends with John immediately and without fuss. "Any band with a name like that starts with an advantage," he explained, adding that Pig was the nickname for his wife. The strictly unbiased nature of the review was further borne out by my own admission that Pig were in fact personal friends of mine, and that my audience with Mr Peel had been engineered solely to bring their cassette to his attention.

The group have in the past contributed to various Genesis P Orridge and Neubauten records, a fact that seemed to interest John.

"I often wish that German music actually sounded more German," he said, as Pig's thundering metallic din chundered away in the background.

"There's a Foetus quality to this sort of music, only I've a feeling that the singer is pushing himself a bit hard as it sounds a bit forced," John said. Then, just as the conversation was threatening to penetrate further intellectual depths, Peter Powell walked in the door, drawn not by the music, but in search of cigarettes. A conversation about forthcoming appearances on *Wogan* ensued, and sadly, Pig were forgotten.

5 6 4 7

THE VOLUNTEERS (0774 892110) made their way onto the cassette deck just as John started tucking into his supper for the evening (a rather colourful combination of pickle, pitta bread and cheese). "Perhaps this group will get a better listen now I've got some food in my stomach," he muttered between mouthfuls. Meanwhile The Volunteers made their debut at Broadcasting House with a neat, if unspectacular performance that was notable for their singer's husky growls. "I'm not so keen on harsh voices," commented John. "It sounds like he's forcing it. A lot of the time when people sing like this, they don't really sound like they mean it."

Still, some signs of efforts at originality and spirit were apparent - despite the odd heavy metal guitar solo - and so the band scored above average in the points stakes.

6 6 5 5

THE BEANFIELD (20 *Lynegrove Avenue, Ashford, Middlesex*) sent us a cassette which resulted in an animated conversation on the merits of pop music. John admitted that he'd just about had enough of twee guitar combos and lemonade bands, but confessed an admiration for chart big-hitters such as Madonna and Terence Trent; The Beanfield contributed to the proceedings with some very mainstream and clean-cut Alison Moyet-sounding songs.

"This is too much for me," declared John. "It just doesn't seem to have much to offer, and it sounds like it's been done much too many times before." In the current climate of weedy white soul copycats though, the *Underground* opinion is that this might just have what it takes to impress those with the cheque books. Too feeble by half to make the ground shake here though.



3 3 5 3

WHIRLPOOL GUEST HOUSE (24 *Dunedin Avenue, Hartburn, Stockton On Tees, Cleveland*) touch a soft spot in my heart, coming at the listener with a dreadfully commercial wink and a nudge that's hard to turn your back on. John did not start a dance of joy as the tape spun though, despite a grudging confession that it was "well done and had a certain depth".

Is this not the sort of thing that a major label might sign? "Well, that's a complete mystery to me," the great man countered. "I've never understood the success of *Curiosity Killed The Cat*, though I'd agree that more pop music should sound like this. If I heard this on the radio I would turn it up, whereas a lot of the time I find myself turning it off."

So, Whirlpool Guest House partially succeed where others have come a cropper.

6 6 5 5

FLOWERSHOP (*The Basement, 19 Ermine Street, Huntingdon PE18 6EX*) wrote saying they'd appreciate a review in our magazine, and so of course we oblige. The band boast a primitive '60s delivery topped with an aggressive vocal, though there are a couple of problems - they don't know when to end a song, and seem unaware of the drawbacks of playing fast. A nice touch in Byrds-style harmonies though.

Mr Peel remained silent for a few moments before passing comment. "It's one of those things that I'd like to like but there's nothing there to keep me interested. When I listen to tapes like this, I begin to wonder who they think they're appealing to. I mean, it's well-rehearsed and I'd probably like them if I saw them down at the pub, but I can't really see where they're going to. It's agreeable I suppose, but it doesn't really inflame the passions."

That's the trouble with pop music I suppose, it's such fun to do, but we often forget about all the poor blighters who actually have to sit down and listen to the stuff.

5 5 2 4

If you want your tape reviewed and graded (remember, two ex-Tip Sheeties have already signed major deals), then send them to The Tip Sheet, Underground, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London, NW1 7QZ.

JOHNSON ENGINEERING (*Top Flat, 319 Kennington Road, London SE11*) won the prize for the best name and the best package as they included nice looking bits of paper, like Xeroxes of all the Johnsons in the telephone directory. Perhaps the strain of the reviewing session was beginning to take its toll, but we gave them the award anyway.

"The only problem here is one of identity," said John. "There are lots of bands like this - most of them are Belgian - and not many of them have the quality they need to push them through. A tape like this should be saying 'Don't listen to that crap, listen to this' but it isn't quite strong enough. I think it would have had more impact a few years ago." However, Johnson Engineering should not be discouraged. Their drum machines and sampling tricks sounded fine at the end of the day.

5 6 5 6

SHEND ON THE RUN



CONFESSIONS OF A POP ICON NO 5: GET A SESSION, DO YOURSELF A WORLD SERVICE

While reviewing Buck Trillion's latest blockbuster, *Harleys From Mars - The Sequel* for *Guinea Pig Monthly*, I decided to idly flick through my postbag. I couldn't find any letters, but I suddenly remembered a question from a reader that was addressed to somebody else. **'What is Peel Session?'**

Well... **FACT ONE:** The first problem is getting one. Put something fabulously interesting in the first 1.7 seconds of your demo tape and you could be on the way.

FACT TWO: Don't use tapes bought in packs of six for 28p from 'Better Dead Than Red Tape' market stalls.

FACT THREE: Make sure you pack the tape well, so it doesn't arrive in little pieces. (Although this could be considered to be avant garde, it cuts no ice, so avoid.)

So Mr Beeb rings you up and says 'you're on'. You now whizz to Maida Vale, in London, to set up for the contracted time of 1pm in one of the voluminous studios. During the inevitable wait for your designated BBC producer to arrive, you can stroll around this labyrinth of recording suites. See the aircraft hangar-sized orchestra studio where, if you shut your eyes, you can picture Andrew Lloyd Webber blowing another blockbuster musical-to-be into his hanky.

When the producer finally arrives, the loyal recording engineers put down their copies of *Caravanning News* and bugger off to the subsidised restaurant (three course meal for £1), so you have to as well. After your fourth pizza, chips and apple pie, you realise you have to record and mix four tracks by ten pm that very same night.

While feeling this sick, it is necessary to gingerly inform the producer that you haven't quite written the lyrics, and has he got a Merlin Spitfire engine for the noises in the middle of track four? ('Shite' and 'No' are the commonest responses to these statements.)

The BBC have spent huge amounts of the money they charge you and I in licence fees, (which also gives us the right to watch Benny Hill get older and more crap) on computer equipment, which, as precious seconds tick by, will go to sleep. Strangely garbed aliens are then summoned to fiddle with the slumbering behemoth. Technology is a fickle mistress.

Sessions always seem to go over time and the producer will make it fairly clear he is not too overjoyed at missing the *Mission Impossible* re-run on the box. Still, through all this struggle, the positives are numerous. You get well paid. You get paid again if the session is repeated. Mrs Higgins from your local paper shop will get her niece in Durham to listen and it may even be released on the Strange Fruit Record Label which zaps your pop charisma all over the globe. All in all, a jolly exciting and useful day out...

listomania

BAM CARUSO FAVE FIVE 45S

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1 PSYCHE ROCK <i>Pierre Henry</i> | Phillips |
| 2 ELEVATOR DRIVER <i>The Master's Apprentice</i> | Astor |
| 3 NOVEMBER NIGHT <i>Peter Fonda</i> | Chisa |
| 4 LOVE IS COMING <i>Strawberry Children</i> | Liberty |
| 5 STRAIGHT DOWN TO THE BOTTOM VIPS | Island |

BAM CARUSO FAVE FIVE LPS

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 1 FOREVER CHANGES <i>Love</i> | Elektra |
| 2 SWEET COUNTRY SWEET <i>Larry Murray</i> | Verve |
| 3 THE CIRCLE GAME <i>Tom Rush</i> | Elektra |
| 4 THE QUILLER MEMORANDUM <i>John Barry</i> | CBS |
| 5 YOUNGER THAN YESTERDAY <i>The Byrds</i> | CBS |

Compiled by the Bam Caruso enthusiasts!



Psyche-one: Arthur Lee of Love, big at Bam

RHYTHM RECORDS HOT FIVE SINGLES

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1 THE MODEL <i>Big Black</i> | Blast First |
| 2 THRU THE FLOWERS <i>The Primitives</i> | Lazy |
| 3 GIRLFRIEND IN A COMA <i>The Smiths</i> | Rough Trade |
| 4 BEAVER PATROL <i>Pop Will Eat Itself</i> | Chapter 22 |
| 5 HAPPY BIRTHDAY <i>The Sugarcubes</i> | One Little Indian |

RHYTHM RECORDS HOT FIVE ALBUMS

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1 STRANGWAYS HERE WE COME <i>The Smiths</i> | Rough Trade |
| 2 SONGS ABOUT F***** <i>Big Black</i> | Blast First |
| 3 IMPERIUM <i>C93</i> | United Dairies |
| 4 WHEN THE CAVE COMES ALIVE <i>Lime Spiders</i> | Virgin |
| 5 WIG OUT AT DENKOS <i>Dag Nasty</i> | import |

Compiled by Ali at Rhythm, Camden Town, London

CHERRY RED TOP SINGLES SELLERS

- 1 HERE CUM GERMS *Alien Sex Fiend*
- 2 MY BABY'S LAUGHING *Alternative TV*
- 3 THE LOOK OF LOVE *Martin Baytes*
- 4 DEBBIE *Silver Chapter*
- 5 GO, BUDDY GO *The Meteors*

CHERRY RED TOP ALBUMS SELLERS

- 1 DON'T TOUCH THE BANG BANG FRUIT *The Meteors*
- 2 GOLD MINE TRASH *Felt*
- 3 HERE CUM GERMS *Alien Sex Fiend*
- 4 FRESH FRUIT FOR ROTTING VEGETABLES *Dead Kennedys (CD)*
- 5 FOR A FEW PUSSIES MORE *Various Artists*

All releases are current Cherry Red/Anagram, compiled by Ruth (our heroine)

LOWELL, MASSACHUSETTS BIG SELL FIVE

- 1 SUICIDAL TENDENCIES
- 2 DRI
- 3 CELTIC FROST
- 4 METALLICA
- 5 ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN

Compiled by Going Deaf 4 A Living from biggest sellers last month

CKLN MOST PLAYED 45S

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1 NEW MIND <i>Swans</i> | Product Inc/Mute |
| 2 BABY X <i>Look People</i> | MSM |
| 3 THE FIRING SQUAD <i>For God Swimming Pool</i> | Q's DB |
| 4 NIGHT TRAIN <i>Dub Syndicate</i> | IDL |
| 5 WEIRDO LIBIDO <i>Lime Spiders</i> | Zinger/Virgin |

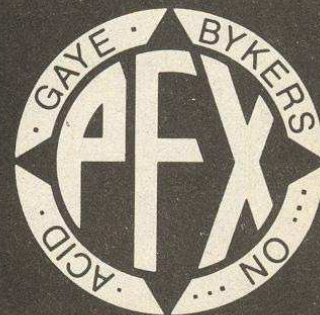
Compiled from CKLN, Toronto radio rotation



Psyche-two: Primitives, selling well at Rhythm



**LET'S
SHAKE
SOME ASS**
SEVEN INCH/TWELVE INCH
VS 1008/VST 1008
SOFT TOILET PAPER AND LOCKS ON THE
BOG DOOR TOUR 21st Oct - 8th Nov

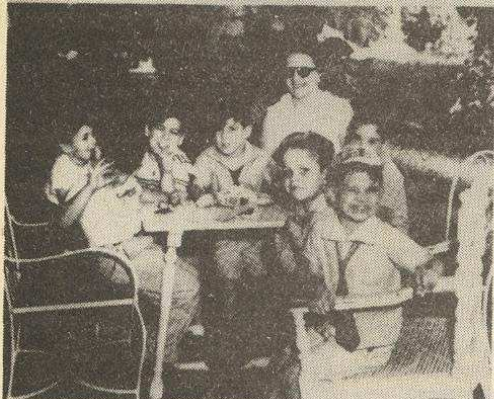


It's D time!



The Silos' country guitar class

SILOS



CUBA

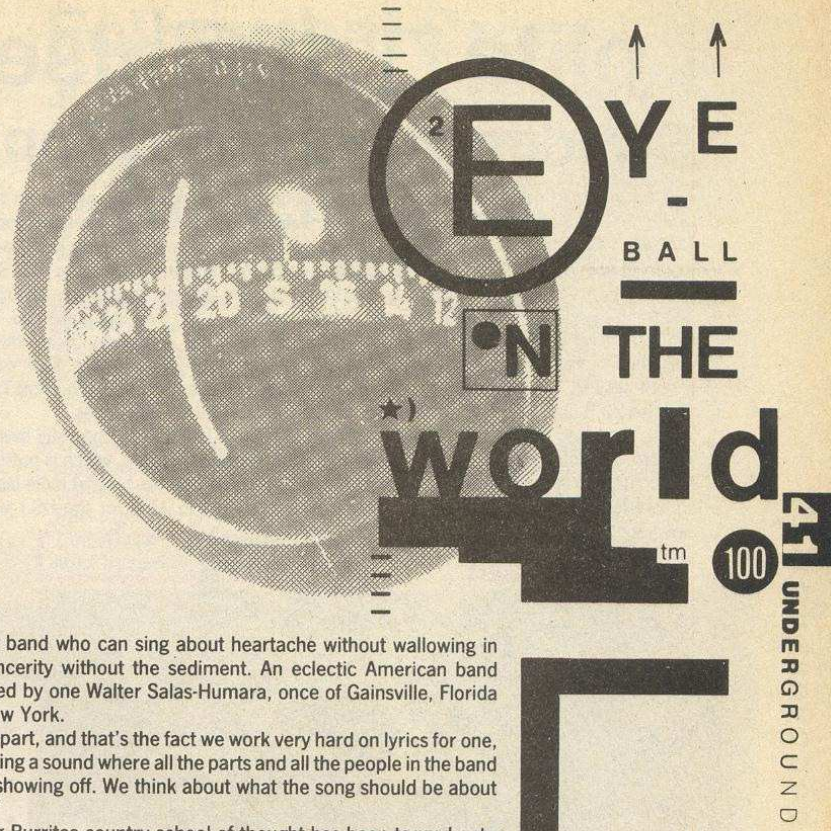
Here is an American 'song' band that shares the same ring of authenticity as an REM but doesn't sound like them; an American band who draw up water from a country well but don't sound like Conway Twitty or The Long Ryders; an American band who don't sound like

Hüsker Dü; an American band who can sing about heartache without wallowing in sentiment, and about sincerity without the sediment. An eclectic American band called The Silos, pioneered by one Walter Salas-Humara, once of Gainesville, Florida but now of New York, New York.

"I'll tell you what sets us apart, and that's the fact we work very hard on lyrics for one, and really hard on producing a sound where all the parts and all the people in the band fit together, with no one showing off. We think about what the song should be about first. We're very careful."

■ The Gram Parsons/Flying Burritos country school of thought has been tagged onto The Silos in the past. Any truth in this? "I think that a lot of that comes from not really being able to play a guitar that well," murmurs a modest Walter. "I'm limited so I tend to strum a lot. . ." Ah, the strumming argument. "I play a lot of D over D, you see. . ." Lost me there, Walter. "Right away, if people hear an open D, they think it's country. I also grew up in the south so sometimes I affect a southern accent while I'm singing. For fun! But Bob" (Rupe, Walter's compadre) "is certainly a blues guitarist. The new album's far more rock, I guess."

■ Hmmrrgggh. I hear country on that LP, entitled Cuba, but scored out of a plaintive beauty, by violins, by open D chords and what could be called an *urban* definition of country. Martin Aston



IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME!

Anthony Fragos exposes the latest Athenian delights

Libido Blume, a band you may remember from July's review, were born out of the ashes of the semi-legendary **Captain Nefos**, broken up by bassist, vocalist and main composer **Akis**, who set off in pursuit of further fame. It was the end of 1984 when Libido Blume took their first deep breath of the grey Athenian smog and began rehearsing and composing as a trio. Nearly two years later, *Colours Melting*, an LP of extreme sensitivity, made its way into Greece's new rock 'n' roll history. These Blumes know how to write real pop songs, how to "rock" and steal your heart away! Through infinitely melodious vocals, crunching guitars and a merciless rhythm section, their songs, with a touch of psychedelia right in their core, are full of teenage angst and frustration. A few months ago, they released their new album, *Brilliant Names And Dames* and made a crushing appearance confirming their qualities. It's a truly brilliant mini-LP of five incredible songs. The end of September finds Libido Blume recording new material with **Jon (Three-Johns) Langford**!! Now this'll be well worth waiting for.

■ **The Last Drive** started in 1983 as a trash-psycho combo mostly doing cover versions of old rockabilly and garage-punk songs and soon developed into a dynamic rock 'n' roll band, combining all the values they had grown up with. Their obvious '60s punk influence helped them to be loved by a lot of youngsters, in addition to their dedicated psychobilly fans. It was time to go for worldwide recognition. They have already appeared on three garage compilations (*Battle Of The Garages Volume 4*, *Sounds Of Now* and *Raw Cuts — European Volume*), released a seven inch EP on Voxx Records and undergone an extensive European tour. This explosion of activity is to be followed by a period of settling down to write new songs, and a single is already due out, probably to be called *I Love Cindy*.

■ Should the world hold their breath?

■ You bet!



Lolita disguise Sweden plays Lolita Pop!

Lolita Pop could easily be seen as the next potential Swedish music export, in the wake of The Leather Nun, The Teen Moons and The Nomads. But eight years of indie life hasn't been easy. Their British album debut has finally come about after last year's contract with Virgin US was signed, but they've been preparing for it since '82/'83.

■ Lolita Pop's English-sung album is a string of the epic attacks which have brought them their well-earned reputation, one of the most promising Swedish indie acts. To say that they've flavoured their musical language in the American "new wave" tradition — Patti/Television — isn't the full story though. Certainly the New York circuit around '77 ignited their desire to express themselves but, like Echo And The Bunnymen, Lolita Pop found their own way to transform their influences.

■ The deal with Virgin, hasn't really changed the life of Lolita Pop. They still live in Örebro, 200 kilometres from the capital Stockholm and Mistlur Rec, which is putting out Lolita Pop in Scandinavia. (And, Mistlur's now growing into the biggest indie label in Sweden with their other "major" act, Imperiet, signed to A&M for the US.) Mats Lundgren



Lolita Pop use Harmony hairspray!

The Flowerpornoes ask what's German for Patchouli?

PORNOE SECT

"We want to be more famous than the Beatles. . ."

■ It's a long time since the German music scene has been as healthy as it is nowadays. An "ardent" newcomer are the Flowerpornoes.

■ The Flowerpornoes are megalomaniacs! They believe in their success, are keen on being hyped and are convinced of being pop stars real soon.

■ Their first release was "published" by the West German indie-magazine *Pop Noise*. After which the 'pornoes had a track on the important Big Store sampler *The Sound & The Fury*. It's the best song Tym G Liva (guitarist, composer and singer) has ever written. The guitars are multi-layered — the result is a song with a guitar break that could have been from a Sonic Youth songbook.

■ Their first proper release is the ten inch *Wake Up on Scratch & Sniff* (a so called sub-label of What So Funny About) that's released in the UK through Red Rhino. The 4-track single contains pure guitar pop, the throbbing songs Neil Young and Bob Mould never wrote. An LP is to be released later in the year and one listen confirms that their self-confidence won't go unrewarded. Jan Cux



The French independent scene is alive and well but not always living in Paris. Although **NOX** now live in Paris, the group comes from Metz and release their first album, *Sessions 84/86*, on Dossier Records. . . from Berlin. Their music is based on heavy hypnotic percussion and metallic guitars, full of warrior chants and strange noises, with production which gives the music an almost live sound, the effects reduced for minimal expressions. Compulsive and intriguing, *Sessions 84/86* is one of '87s best French records, placing Nox as the link between Swans and Test Dept.

■ Nox are now recording their new album for **PERMIS DE CONSTRUIRE**, a French independent which released *Coup D'etat*, a recent album by Manchester based **MUSLIMGAUZE**. "Coup D'etat features material recorded between 'HAJII' and

'JAZIRAT-UL-ARAB' (reviewed in *Underground's* July issue). Again, there's a middle-eastern mood in a more rhythmic vein which gives the music a more appealing edge. This record could easily have been released on Brian Eno's Fourth World series. Also on *Permis De Construire*, comes the first album by **GEINST NAIT**, simply called *Geinst Nait*, which reflects the good taste of French musicians for tough and weird electronics, noises and rhythms, using just tape loops and drums. A new album, *L'or* Cat, is due out soon. . .

■ Many musicians would probably kill to play the soundtrack for a Wim Wenders' movie. **DICK TRACY**, from Nancy, didn't kill anybody but were invited to compose and play the music for *Tokyo-Ga*, a film directed by Wenders about Tokyo and Japanese director **Ozo**. On this soundtrack record *Dick Tracy* show their more melancholy side, which just appeared here and there on their previous records. NOX: 214 rue de la Croix Nvert 75015 PARIS

PERMIS DE CONSTRUIRE: 21 rue St Nicolas 54000 NANCY

■ As most of these records are not distributed in UK, you can get them through mail-order from DSA: BP 236 — 54004 NANCY CEDEX. Mai-Tham

Psychedically Italian. . . and then some!

Are you ready for a roller-coaster ride into the scented time-tunnel of '60s-orientated rock? If you think that **The Chesterfield Kings** are weird and the **Blacknight Chameleons** are far-out, wait till you hear the likes of **Joe Perrino & The Mellowtones** or **The Effervescent Elephants**. . . c'mon let's go — whoopee!

■ Like many countries today, Italy has a lively and groovy underground of neo-psycho-garage bands, with a scanty but strong cult following. The compilation '80s Colours, published a few years ago, was the first piece of vinyl to hail the new trend. A Volume Two of this Italian battle of the garages is being compiled right now by journalist Claudio Sogger, a key figure in the development of the movement through his work on the pages of *Rocke'lla* and *Lost Trails* (this last one a fanzine with a seven-inch record in each issue), and as director of the Electric Eye label (C.P. 144, 27100 Pavia, Italy). Let's visit the cities more abundant with living-in-the-past devotees.

■ **PISA** — **The Birdmen of Alkatraz** are lissergic prime-movers guided by drummer-composer Daniele Caputo. They have a 12 inch EP on E Eye, *Glidin' Off*, that displays a skilled and obsessive love for **The 13th Floor Elevators** and similar vintage freak-outs. The Birdmen's early composition *Song For Convict Charlie* (yep, **Manson**, that's him) is a little gem hurled to us through a time-dimensional warp. Unlike the **Dukes Of Andy Partridge**, there is very little humour here, but no sticky nostalgia either. Ex-Birdmen guitarist, **Maurizio Curadi** has formed his own combo, **Steeple Jack**: their mini-LP *Serena Maboose* (E Eye) shows definite west-coast/acid-rock influences, emphasised by a sleeve reminiscent of Rick Griffin. **The Liars** play a straightforward brand of roots-garage: the trio, lead by singer-bassist **Alessandro Ansani**, can be heard on *Optical Sounds*, a 5-track 12 inch on Supporti Fonografici (Viale Coni Zugna 63, 20144 Milano — I). The brains behind these three bands from the city of the Leaning Tower (Daniele, Maurizio and Alessandro) all used to play together as **The Useless Boys**: their 1981 cassette *Dream's Dust Factory* is already a mythical relic of the '60s renaissance.

■ **TORINO** — **The Sick Rose** moved from a varied psycho-beat-bluesy sensibility, but developed a personal language well rooted in the present. In fact, though they play many covers in concert, only one appears on their first LP *Faces* (again on E Eye), published after the EP, *Get Along Girl*, and contributions to international compilations like *Declaration Of Fuzz* (Glitterhouse Records). Luca Re and friends are excitingly honest and surely among the best neo-psycho acts worldwide.

■ **No Strange** represent the dreamy edge of the neo-'60s scene. They have already recorded two LPs and a single (Toast Records, via Duchessa Jolanda 13A, 10138 Torino — I). The new album, *L'Universo*, is a mind-combing delirium, partly in the native idiom, filled with languid sitars, sweet melodies and spaced-out effects. The singer Ursus is also the author of the mystical sleeve art, while Alberto Ezzu provides most of the arrangements and songwriting.

■ Also on Toast are Alberto Serra's **Double Deck Five**: their seven inch EP *Have God!*, with his convoluted guitar solos, seems lifted from the darkest hippy era.

■ **MILANO** — The bands in the Milan area joined forces and put a compilation out themselves on clear vinyl splashed with colours, entitled *The Invasion Of The Tambourine Man* (**Silver Surfers**, **Sreamin Men Club**, **Acid Flowers**, **Bad Medicine**, etc). The record includes a couple of very twisted versions of Beatles and Zimmerman classics. **Four by Art** (ate being labelled "psychedelic", but their two LPs on E Eye have an unmistakable '60s flavour. **Pression-X** are a garage-rock outfit with an aggressive Mini-LP, also on E Eye. **Peter Sellers And The Hollywood Party** have released a single and two cassettes on their own *Crazy Mannequin* label (Via Montenero 5, 20098 San Giuliano Milanese — I). They've signed to *Glass Records*, so you'll probably hear more about them soon (and if you've seen the movie, you know what to expect).

IN WITH THE INSIGHT

Spahn Ranch, Glorious Din and Wiring Dept!

■ In these darkening musical times, when many Indie labels seem no different than majors, and records tend to be centered around making money instead of making music, one American label has emerged as a beacon in the darkness. Its home is San Francisco, and its name is Insight records.

■ Insight was formed in 1986 by musicians Eric Cope and Jay Paget, members of the now defunct Glorious Din. The first release on Insight was an album by **Glorious Din**, *Leading Stolen Horses*, which contained eight finely crafted, haunting songs.

■ Glorious Din's music centered around minimal drumming, melodic, intricate bass lines, a far-eastern guitar, and patterned, subdued vocals. Their music was very emotional, and this first release explored many varied states.

■ From their beginnings, Glorious Din were constantly active, playing and setting up gigs at the many venues in the San Francisco Bay Area. In the winter of 1985/6, following the release of *Leading Stolen Horses* they toured across America.

■ After becoming increasingly disillusioned, and generally fed up with the state of things in 1986, Glorious Din disbanded to go on to other projects. Before splitting up, they recorded a second album, *Closely Watched Trains*, released posthumously by Insight in May of this year. If the first album contained any flaws, it was mostly due to studio naïveté, and unfamiliarity with producer **Matt Wallace**. All traces of this had vanished by the time the second album was recorded. From start to finish, it is simply beautiful.

■ The intention of Glorious Din and Insight was always to help out other worthwhile bands. The band was never selfish, nor were they particularly trendy or hip. They were just four guys playing what they felt, and getting things together for other bands as well as for themselves. This was why Eric Cope also began a magazine, the illustrious and eclectic **Wiring Department**. Originally, the magazine served to give exposure to underground bands, such as **Faith No More** (who have released an album, *We Care A Lot* on Mordam Records); **Trial** (who've released one album, *Moments of Collapse*); **MJB** (who released one album, *How To Abandon Earth*, before recently re-forming as **Raining House**); **The World of Pooh**, **Caroliner Rainbow**, **Problemist** (album *Nine Times Sanity* released on *Sordide Sentimentale*); etc, etc.

■ The third Insight release was *Thickly Settled*, the debut album by a trio from Michigan called **Spahn Ranch**. Spahn Ranch had recorded a demo after playing only a handful of gigs, which Eric Cope was so taken with that he convinced the band to journey across the US to play some dates on the West Coast and to record the album.

The Spahn Ranch sound is sparse but powerful. Although they may draw from a post-industrial sensibility, their music is never trite or gimmicky.

■ The latest project in the works at Insight is a compilation, hopefully to include 14 of the finest underground bands from San Francisco and beyond, such as **Stick Dog**, **Stiff Legged Sheep**, **Archipelago Brewing Company**, **Caroliner Rainbow** and **Raining House**. Insight are distributed through **Rough Trade**, as is **Wiring Department** magazine. Both are also available from the source: Insight, P.O. Box 5599, San Francisco, CA 94101, U.S.A. **David Katz**

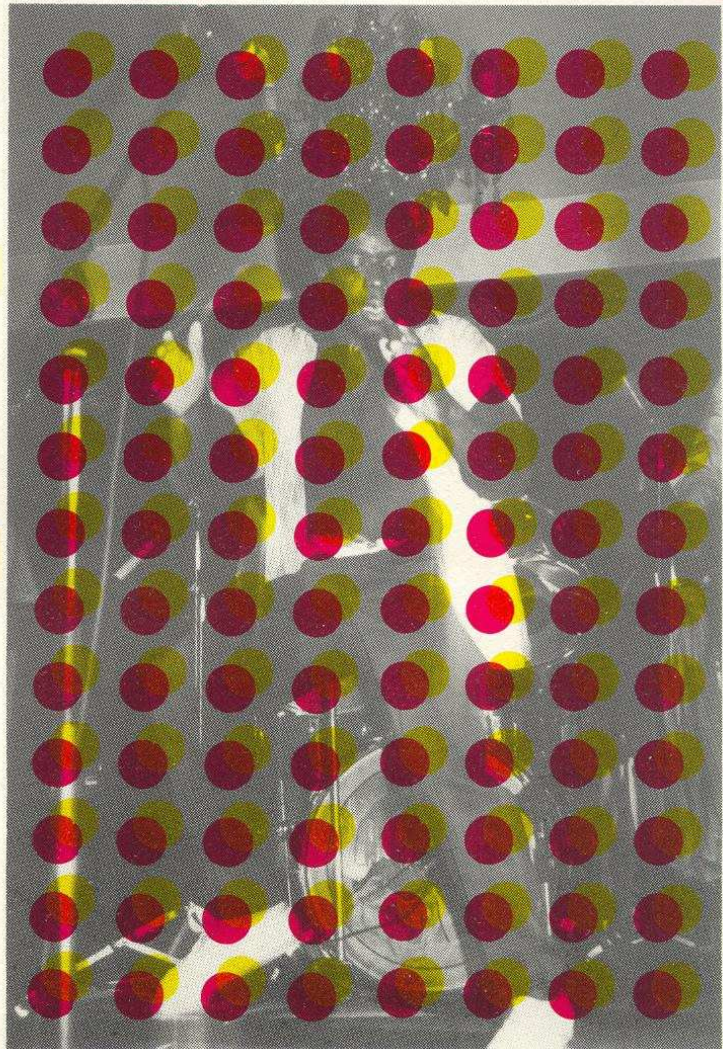


Follow that Crocodile!

JONAH MOYO AND DEVERA NGWENA

The smartest guitar steps I have seen this season have been those of guitarist brothers Jonah Moyo and Joshua Dube who produce a Bhundus sound, beefed up with brass and congas, and who dance like The Shadows on a hot tin roof. For this is Jonah Moyo And Devera Ngwena (which means follow that crocodile), probably the most sparkling of the African bands in Europe this summer, giving European pop a kick in the sensitive parts, except they're no longer sensitive, being in such a state of atrophy. Comparisons with the Brighthouse And Rastrick Brass Band and with Angie from **Fast Fenders** may seem out of place, but the origins of Devera Ngwena and The Brigs both lie in the same place. Both arose from the works band to increase industrial prestige, principle that was behind the rise of brass bands a century or so ago in this country. Jonah and most other band members were recruited in 1980 through newspaper ads to assemble a band affiliated with the local (Mashira) mine. A works band!

■ The Angle connection — Devera Ngwena have the distinction of having had an entire soap opera in Zimbabwe based on their most successful single, *Solo na Mutsai*, which tell the story of a young couple (Solo and Mutsai). This is one of two Devera Ngwena tracks featured on the Earthworks album *Viva! Zimbabwe*, still a good introduction to Zimbabwean pop and Devera Ngwena's only recording easily available in this country. Must try harder. Snap! **John Lewis**



Man chased by crocodile

■ **BOLOGNA** — The **Ugly Things** are true followers of Yankee garage primitivism (and have a seven inch EP out on E Eye). **Gli Avvoltoi** (meaning The Vultures) have a lovely single on Toast, recreating an happy-sad beat mood and featuring an Italianised version of the Kinks' *A Well Respected Man*.

■ **ROMA** — **Technicolour Dream**, unlike the US-oriented majority of Italian neo-psychedelics, look back to English oldies-but-strangies (*Tomorrow*, *Pretty Things*, the inevitable *Barrett*). After a LP on High Rise, *Pretty Tomorrow (!)*, they split into two groups, **Pale Dawn** and **Magic Potion**. With unchanged sound attitudes, both ensembles recorded a seven inch single (*High Rise*, distributed by Supporti Fonografici).

■ **MORE EXOTIC TOWNS** — There are plenty of bands to choose from, so I'll just drop a few more names. **Soul Hunter** from Firenze (Contempo Records) revisited *Mr, You're A Better Man Than I*, the old classic, painting in LSD-hues. **Out Of Time** live in Bra, out in the country, and suitably adopted a folkish-Byrdsonian style in their only LP *Stories We Can Tell* (Mail Records).

■ If now you want something wild and sexy, then look for the next three bands. **The Boochoos'** debut mini-LP, *The Sun The Snake And The Hoo* (E Eye), is an explicit homage to the raw power of **The Stooges** (including a remake of *Search And Destroy*). The opening title, **TV Kroeger**, must suffice for lovers of the splatter genre, who'll understand the general tone.

■ Equally energetic, but with a **Crampsian** bend, are the indie veterans **Not Moving**, who have recorded for many different labels. Their recent mini-LP, *Jesus Loves His Children* (Spittle Records), captures well their mature surf-garage style, lead by **Dome's** flawless guitar work. **Pikes in Panic**, from Siena, are possessed by the same demon that seized **Rudi Protrudi And His Fuzztones**: you can do the *Mary Dance* with their self-produced seven inch EP (distributed by Toast) and only wish for an explosive album as soon as possible.

■ Well, if you're tired of depressive existentialism in black and boring artsy rants, you'll enjoy these sounds. The uncertain mastery of the English language by some of the groups only adds to the outlandish and peculiar fun. Here we leave the time-tunnel, running out of space and breath, but just wait next time for another googolplex of occult and unheard-of names. **Vittore "Dizzy-on-Fuzz" Baroni**

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NEW FROM

SST

BRIAN RITCHIE

MEAT PUPPETS

ANGST



The Blend. Giving up the bass he played with the Violent Femmes for guitar, conch shell, banjo, jaw harp and elephant tusk, Brian Ritchie achieves "The Blend" on his solo album for SST. Combining influences as diverse as Sun Ra, Son House and Sonny Bono, he has concocted the perfect blend for the global village. From the untraditionally traditional version of John The Revelator to the hard funk of Alphabet, these eleven songs are THE blend for the eighties.



Huevos. Hot on the heels of their amazing Mirage album, the Meat Puppets have done it again with a brand spanking new album on SST. Closer in sound to their legendary live shows, this record has balls. Starting off with the kick in the head double blast of Paradise and Look At The Rain and ending with the brain-crushing I Cant Be Counted On, this record reaffirms the Meat Puppets' status as one of the coolest bands on the face of the planet.



Mystery Spot. Like never before, the songs of Angst are suffused with a shimmering glow. On Mystery Spot, the remarkable interplay between brothers Joe and Jon is fully realized with their best-sounding record ever. With a bow to country and folk, Angst take off on a hell bent for leather electric train ride on Outside My Window, Colors Of The Day, Mind Average and nine more songs.

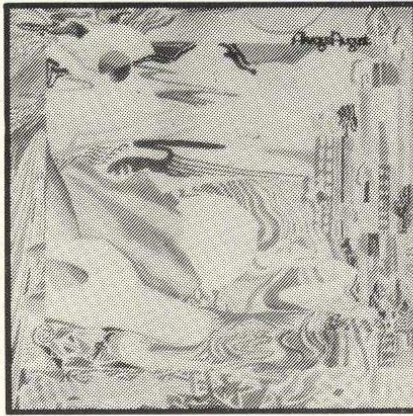
THE LEAVING TRAINS

Always August

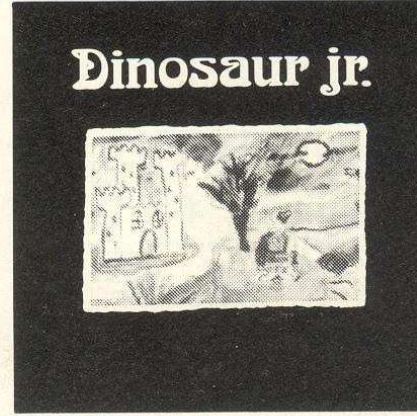
Dinosaur jr.



F*.** The second album from the Leaving Trains on SST finds them claiming the throne of true rock! From the "Exile On Main Street" punch of the guitars to the personal words of Falling James Moreland, this record is the one to play for people who ask "whatever happened to great rock and roll?!" Hear for yourself what F*** is all about.



Largeness With (W)holes. A cryptic title gives you the listeners the cipher with which to break the mysterious code that is Always August. Backwards, forwards and inside out, the lifecodes that Always August reveal on this album are the keys to a healthy psychic glow. From the stone groove of About Time to the triple-deadbolt lock of Rahsaan Rollin' Cat, the new album from Always August paints a startlingly whole picture of your life.



DINOSAUR JR.: Dinosaur JR. Hot on the heels of their amazing SST debut LP, Dinosaur Jr. releases an EP of mega-sonic proportions. Featuring a mind-blowing rendition of the Peter Dinklage classic "Show Me The Way", along with J. Lou and Murph's own classics Little Fury Things and In A Jar.

P.O. Box 1, Lawndale, CA. 90260

Distributed by Pinnacle

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