

COCKTAIL | SHAKING | ALTERNATIVE | DANCE | RHYTHMS!

# UNDERGROUND

£1

MAY 1988 ISSUE 14

**Underground: File under vinyl vulture's breathtaking beat bible!**

MIX-FRENZY SPECIAL

## NEW ORDER

B-B-B-Blue  
Monday Interview  
Dub Remix Version

**STEVE ALBINI**  
New label, hard production, token swearing

**THE METEORS**  
Still psycho after all these beers

**S-EXPRESS**  
Flare up as DJ does disc

**PIXIES**  
Surfer Rosa on swirling swimathon



## SUGARCUBES

Schizophrenia specialists



**THE SMITHEREENS**  
**SKINNY PUPPY**  
**LYDIA LUNCH**  
**McCARTHY**  
a million reviews, news and conjecture

plus  
**THIS MONTH'S**  
**JOHNNY MARR**  
**PARAGRAPH**  
and  
**TOKEN TWO**  
for the  
**UNDERGROUND/ROUSKA**  
LP

# THE UNDERGROUND ROUSKA RECORDS COMPILATION

## ROUSKA'S DOLLAR CACOPHONY

Featuring  
THE CASSANDRA COMPLEX ★ Wonderworld  
THIRD CIRCLE ★ Cash Crop  
SON OF SAM ★ 21st Century Bible  
GOOD SHEPHERDS ★ View From Eden  
WMTID ★ Onassis  
LITTLE BROTHER ★ Pile Of Images  
DUSTDEVILS ★ Losing Ground  
SON OF SAM ★ Cuts 'N' Bruises  
GOOD SHEPHERDS ★ Cannibals And Kings  
DUSTDEVILS ★ Whim Of Iron  
LITTLE BROTHER ★ Land Of The Rising?  
WMTID ★ Welcome To The Global Casino

and if you've still got some cash left, we've still got a few back issues remaining (selected issues only)

issue one \* APRIL  
SLAB/SKIN/COIL/AUSGANG A  
GO-GO

issue two \* MAY \* sold out

issue three \* JUNE  
ERASURE/WOLFHOUNDS/  
McCARTHY

issue four \* JULY  
BUNNYMEN/SCHOOLLY D/  
SHAMEN

issue five \* AUGUST \* very few left  
DEPECHE MODE/BIG ZAP/  
TALULAH GOSH

issue seven \* OCTOBER \* sold out

issue eight \* NOVEMBER \* very few left  
THE FALL/LOVE AND  
ROCKETS/LEATHER NUN

issue nine \* DECEMBER \* very few left  
MIAOW!/MANKLAN/SWANS/  
CHESTERFIELDS

issue ten \* JANUARY  
GAYE BYKERS ON ACID/THE  
STUPIDS/TRIFFIDS

issue 11 \* FEBRUARY \* very few left  
LUXURIA/THE WOODENTOPS/  
DURUTTI COLUMN

issue 12 \* MARCH  
JOY DIVISION/THE PRIMITIVES,  
STUMP

issue 13 \* APRIL \* sold out

FOR BACK ISSUES send £1.25 per copy to *Underground* Back Issues Department, 8 Grove Ash, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK1 1BZ stating clearly your name, address and the issue you want.



issue six \* SEPTEMBER  
THROWING MUSES/BAD  
DRESS SENSE/DEAD CAN  
DANCE

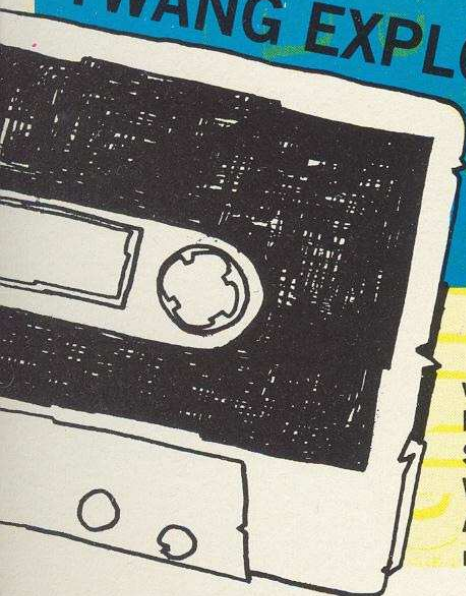
# ROUSKA

Collect token two for this gargantuan album from the centre spread, add it to last month's, then get next month's... then, well, if it's not confusing, send them all with £2.50 (to Spotlight Publications Ltd) and you can get... it!



## COMING SOON!

The Underground C90 burn out  
**TWANG EXPLOSION**



with tracks from The Flatmates, The Bolshoi, Screaming Trees, The Waltons, The Chesterfields, Automatic Dlamini and more

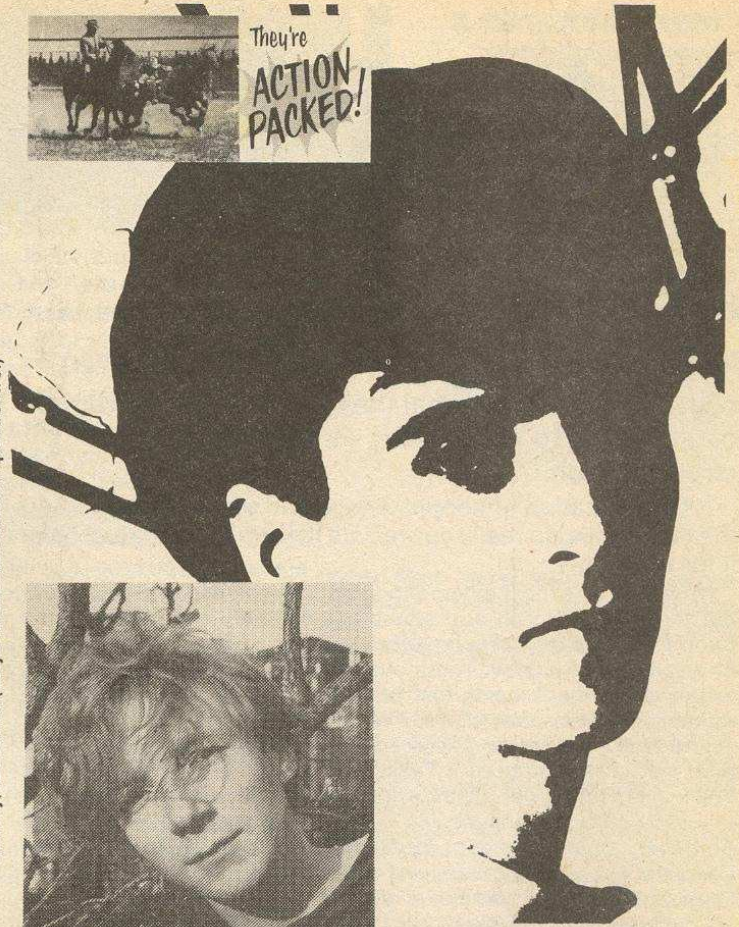


# FULL SCAM

## MARR, MARR we're all crazeee now!

Yes, this month's **Johnny Marr** rumour seems to have a touch of reality to it as several sources have confirmed a tie up between the ex-**Smiths** guitarist and **Colin Lloyd Tucker**! Colin Lloyd-who? I hear you ask. Well, Colin is an ex-member of **The Gadgets**, **The The**, **Jeremy's Secret** and a bundle of other groups (seasonally alongside **King Of Luxembourg** mentor **Simon Turner**). Having worked briefly with **Kate Bush**, it seems he's put down his guitar and is heading to LA to team up with Johnny — although Colin has also been seen, beneath a mop of red hair, leaving a **Jethro Tull** concert just last week. Strange (and slightly psyche-pomp!).

Johnny, don't do it! (Lloyd Tucker on insert and quiff control)



## MEASURING 14 ON THE REMIXED RICHTER SCALE

<b>FACT &amp; FICTION</b>	<i>gossip, feedback and more</i>	_____	<b>4</b>		
<b>FEATURES</b>	<i>Albini 5</i>	<i>Pixies 8</i>	<i>McCarthy 10</i>	<i>S-Express 11</i>	<i>Smithereens 12</i>
<b>REVOLUTION</b>	<i>albums 13</i>	<i>singles 24</i>	<i>re-issues</i>	_____	<b>30</b>
<b>THE SUGARCUBES</b>	<i>voicebreakers of the world</i>	_____	<b>20</b>		
<b>NEW ORDER</b>	<i>Manchester's rhythm block</i>	_____	<b>22</b>		
<b>THOBING AND CUTTING</b>	<i>the UK dance remix</i>	_____	<b>26</b>		
<b>EL RECORDS</b>	<i>eccentrics and entrepreneurs</i>	_____	<b>28</b>		
<b>THE METEORS</b>	<i>in the memory mix</i>	_____	<b>32</b>		
<b>TIP SHEET</b>	<i>demo tapes spliced and edited</i>	_____	<b>33</b>		
<b>EYEBALL ON THE WORLD</b>	<i>Butthole Surfers, Skinny Puppy, Lydia Lunch and a letter from Texas</i>	_____	<b>37</b>		
<b>AFTER THE FACT</b>	<i>what they said</i>	_____	<b>42</b>		
<b>ARROGANT FEEDBACK</b>	<i>what you said</i>	_____	<b>43</b>		

Plus  
Sub-Culture 6  
Masterblast 11  
Listomania 18  
Tapes 30  
Shend On The Run 42

**UNDERGROUND:** a tad mixed-up  
**ISSUE 14:** bluer than the rest  
**EDITOR** David Henderson  
**DESIGNER** Edie Mondrian  
**CREATIVE SCRIBBLERS**  
Alex Bastedo, Vachel Booth, Nick Brody, Elwood Golden-Brown, Robert K Cohen, Johnny Dee, Julian Henry, Daz Igmeth, Alex Kadis, Carole Linfield, Christopher Mellor, Dick Mescal, Mick Middles, Peter Perturbed, Ripley, Shend, Holly Wood  
**INTERNATIONAL TERRORISTS**  
Vittore Baroni (Italy), Jan Cux (West Germany), Tony Fletcher (USA), Anthony Fragos (Greece), Mats Lundgren (Sweden), Brad Manson (Jupiter), Gerard Nguyen (France), Ken Roseman (USA), TC Wall (Canada)  
**ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER** Jon Newey  
**ADVERTISEMENT REPRESENTATIVES**  
Paul Basford, Harry Hellyer  
**CLASSIFIED**  
**ADVERTISEMENT SALES**  
Andrina Mackee  
**ADVERTISEMENT ASSISTANT** Margaret Curle  
**ADVERTISEMENT PRODUCTION MANAGER**  
Kathy Ball  
**CIRCULATION MANAGER**  
Peter Shaw  
**PUBLISHER** Eric Fuller  
**MANAGING DIRECTOR** Mike Sharman  
**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**  
Chesham Press, 16-18 Germaine Street,  
Chesham, Bucks  
**ISSN** 0951-502X  
© Spotlight Publications 1988

NATURE  
BLESSED!



# fACT & fICTION

**ON THE VERGE OF A NEW SOMETHING**, issue 14 of **Underground** — everyone's favourite angstymag — comes with the news that the last issue reaped rounds of applause in **Denmark!** Fine! Fine, fine! Ain't it strange though?

It takes a nation of people who spend a month translating the damn thing to really appreciate it. Here in the UK we have it far too easy.

Now, I don't expect anyone to adopt the ash and sackcloth garb but the influx of cash and status has certainly not helped some people. **The Shop Assistants'** sudden split after signing to Chrysalis/Blue Guitar was ominous, **The Soup Dragons'** pandering to the chequebook being just plain frightening. Will **The Sugar-cubes** sign? Have they signed? Who've they signed to?

**The Wedding Present** seemed close to nationwide success after their last single, *Nobody's Twisting Your Arm*, but they couldn't break the radio barrier (do they need a major?), while **The Cardiacs** — a showpiece of idiosyncrasy — opt for a wacky image, stick with Alphabet, an independent label, and, because of their playsafe **Genesis/Yes** sound, manage to crop up on **Gary Davies'** Radio 1 show (do they need some new ideas?). Well, that's progress!

The Sugar-cubes, arguably the independents' greatest recent success, didn't sign, instead remaining on One Little Indian, but, let's be honest, they're in the minority when it comes to "rock". Instead, the great sales force in the sky is currently dancefloor-bound for '88 and everyone from **Gene And Jim**, **DTI** and even **World Domination Enterprises** are breaking their ankles in their panic to tread flares (and make cash). Not healthy?

This month's issue looks at the roots of independent/alternative dance music, while throwing a few cultural spanners in the works. **Steve Albini's** Chicago exploits are examined, **Pixies** reveal what he's like behind closed doors and **New Order** get the final mixdown of *Blue Monday* poked and provoked. Further out, on a monotone limb, **Mike Alway** reveals the truth (or as close as we'll get to it) about **èl Records**, and **The Meteors** get a touch retrospective about things.

Talking of that trait, **Jungle** have just announced the re-release of **The Stooges'** last ever show. Unexpurgated wild man rock, you'd be forgiven for dismissing it. But the **Ig's** final death throes, as a post-fatigue cash-in, has more to it than that. This double sees the glass-rolling blond in true legend-making stance. After that, rock 'n' roll would never be the same again. Unfortunately that can't be said for the **Rat Cage** re-issue of **The Beastie Boys'** first ever recordings, *The Polywog Stew EP*. Primal, but not primed, it's a punk noise that'll disappoint trendies and give little indication of their post-pubescent outcry.

But bands come and go like that, don't they? And latest scandal suggests that next to go is **Melissa** from **Voice Of The Beehive** (a mere year after they got on the cover of **Underground**, a mere month after the rest of the press clicked). Shame, perhaps, but that's r'n'r, as they say.

Similarly, the much-touted but never very productive **Opal** announced some changes with **Kendra Smith** departing, leaving **David Roback** with combo, plus new member **Hope!** Undoubtedly that'll be the key word, to see if they can muster a chord or two to follow their rather low key *Happy Nightmare Baby* album of last year, thus justifying Roback's pedigree (he's an ex-**Dream Syndicate**, **Rain Parade**, **Clay Allinson**).

Whether they'll do it is another story, as is whether The Sugar-cubes will sign a major deal, whether *Voice Of The Beehive* will split and whether anyone will find a **Pooh Sticks** record to buy. Whatever, don't clean out the ashtray till the morning. **Dave Henderson**

**LET'S TALK Wild!** Yep, **The Wild Flowers** have signed a mega-million bucks deal in the States with **Slash** (who gave us **Los Lobos**, **Faith No More** and **The BoDeans**)... and, **The Wild Swans'** **WEA LP** that we reviewed last month has been put back a bit and will now be called *Bringing Home The Ashes*. The goofy **Idea** label — **Jack Rubies**, **Moss Poles**, **Automatic Diamini** — look set to fold now that publishing parent **Chappells** has been taken over by **WEA**. And, there's more departures as **The Raw Herbs** **Medium Cool** to form their own label through **Revolver**.

Meanwhile, **Alien Sex Fiend** follow their retro LP by splitting up. What's worse, the parting came amid a frenzy of equipment smashing. **The Bodines** (formerly on **Creation** and **Magnet**) look set to release an album through **Red Rhino**, and ex-**Nightingale** **Rob Lloyd** is currently hawking some new tapes in search of a deal. Using session musicians and **Lloyd** originals, we're talking big money, here.

**Clair Obscur** have two new albums scheduled for the next ten minutes, one on French label **VISA** and one on Scottish label **Cathexis**. Er, yes, **Red Rhino** is setting up a dance-orientated label that'll be run by the **Skysaw** guys of **L'pool**... and did you know that the people behind a lot of **UK Acid House** are in fact former **Illuminated** duo **400 Blows**?

**Alternative Tentacles** release some new material from **No Means No** and bring the band over to the UK to tour; **Food Records** have inked a deal with **EMI** for **Crazyhead** and **Diesel Park West** and **Workers Playtime** have **Dan** in the studio completing *Mother With Child And Bunny* — an album that comes replete with a comic.

**Nick Cave** has his writings bookified with **King Ink**. Featuring lyrics from **The Birthday Party** and **The Bad Seeds**, it also resounds with plays, prose and incidental scribbles on **Einsturzende Neubauten**, a play written in conjunction with **Lydia Lunch** and lyrics for German band **Die Haut**. This book will be followed by **Cave's** first novel **And The Ass Saw The Angel** (details through **Black Spring Press Ltd**, 46 **Rodwell Road**, East **Dulwich**, London **SE22 9LE**).

Much ado about **The Colorblind James Experience** recently... and following our raving review of their self-titled debut LP, you'll be glad to find out that **Fundamental** are set to release it through **Red Rhino** at the drop of a fig leaf.

**Bollock Brothers'** **Jock McDonald** dropped in to tell us the sad news of the death of legendary German producer **Connie Plank** through cancer. The last album he worked on was **Jock's** own *The Prophecies Of Nostradamus*.

Through **Underground** during the summer, there'll be a fabby **C90** featuring unreleased primal **Jonathan Richman**, **The Waltones**, **Automatic Diamini**, **The Chesterfields**, **The Flatmates** and loads more. Cover versions are in vogue and **The Bomb Party** look set to unleash *Sugar Sugar*, while **The Psychones** offer *Panic In Detroit*. Also scheduled for release soon is **Drag's** version of *10cc's* *I'm Not In Love*, while **Imaginary Records** follow their **Syd Barrett** compilation (with tracks by various bands) with a tribute to **Captain Beefheart** called *Fast'n'Bulbous*, with tracks from **The King Of Luxembourg**, **XTC**, **The Scientists**, **The Membranes**, **That Petrol Emotion**, **Sonic Youth**, **The Primevals** and pals. Next up is a **Ray Davies** tribute.

**The Passmore Sisters** have expired from this mortal coil... following the general public's inability to notice their wistful pop melodies... and **Hula** have left **Red Rhino**. The group's next release, a potent 12 inch called **VC1**, is so far scheduled for **US** release only through **Wax Trax**. **Frankie Howerd** has refused a royal decree to appear on the upcoming **King Of Luxembourg LP**, claiming that he has "hurt his foot". Hmmmm, a likely story. No reply has yet been received from **Kenneth Williams**.



Opal with Hope!

about his new label and new group

Steve Albini talks



## Ruthless to the point of peversion

As with his former band Big Black, Steve Albini seems to have become increasingly more popular since they split up last summer. With various recent production jobs on both sides of the Atlantic keeping him busy, including new LP's by Pixies, The Membranes and Head Of David, he also has a brand new band on the go, as well as several more localised Chicago based production jobs in the pipeline. Oh, and his own Ruthless Records is also about to come out of hibernation.

So come on Albini, tell me more...

"Just recently I've been getting paid ridiculously well for various production jobs, the bulk of which have been for people I know who I just haven't had the chance to do anything with before. Or, they're or people who think that I can superimpose whatever I did with Big Black onto what they're working with. That end of it doesn't tend to work out too well."

What did you think of Pixies?  
"I really enjoyed working with them, although I got the impression that Ivo from 4AD was almost insulted when he first heard the finished tapes. He was expecting me to take this guitar band into the modern age, presumably because he

knew that Big Black used a drum machine, whereas all I did was give the guitarists Marshall amps and said pretend you're in a heavy metal band. From then on it worked out fine. I like it, the band like it, and I think Ivo has come to like it."

Is it true that Depeche Mode wanted you to produce them?

"Yes — it seemed like a joke to me, but they were serious. I was supposed to go and see them backstage after a show at Wembley but after about 10 minutes of the live performance I walked out and gave my pass to some teenage boy who was mouthing the words and was obviously a big fan."

So nowhe's producing the new Depeche Mode LP...

"Well no, the Mute road crew tackled him to the ground and wrestled the backstage pass away from him! I suppose if I was being totally professional about this I should be willing to work with people whose music I don't really like, but Depeche Mode was beyond that, and I didn't see the point of subjecting them to someone like me who would just sit in the control room and ridicule them."

So what's happening with your own music?

"Last October Rey Washan," (the drummer from Scratch Acid)" and I started playing

together with a view to starting a band, but it took us a while to find a bass player. In the end we did something that we had originally resisted for obvious reasons and took on Dave Sims, the old Scratch Acid bass player. Barry Adamson (ex-Magazine, Bad Seeds) was another possibility, but when I finally met him I was disappointed in him as a person, although he's one hell of a bass player. Maybe it was the fact that he once hung out with Mick Cave and Blix Bargeld for a couple of years — a prospect far too horrible for me to contemplate!"

Have you got a name yet?

"Yes, but partly for reasons of avoiding hype at this early stage I'm not going to tell you what it is!"

(When I got back to England someone told me that John Peel had already announced to the nation that they are called Rape Man. So much for secrets!)

"All of us are disgusted at the amount of hype that goes on, even in the American independent scene. In an effort to dilute the kind of anticipation that surrounded the whole Minutemen/Firehose fiasco we'll probably just slip a record quietly out into the marketplace just to diffuse any expectations that aren't particularly appropriate."

You're presumably wary of people's expectations post-Big Black.

"Oh yes, I'm well aware of it but I really don't give a shit what people expect or want. The new music is radically different from anything any of us have done before, but it is still rock music and it is still aggressive guitar music."

So any hints as to when we can expect any vinyl?

"I'm not sure yet, but avoiding any sort of hype is particularly important to us. It's like with Big Black — we didn't want to be around when substance stopped mattering and the image took over. The fact that we got still more popular after we split up was exactly what we were trying to avoid. The whole reason for me to be in a band is that I've always loved playing live, but with Big Black for about a year the audience had been getting dumber and dumber. While we didn't think that was particularly our fault it wasn't very satisfying to be playing in front of admittedly larger audiences, but larger audiences of boobs."

Alex Bastedo

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR SPONSORS



### POP FAX WITH THE GIRL FROM WAHOO COUNTY, USA. (The one with the very rich mommy who owns Underground)

Hi guys, Cyndi here, with all the gossip about your cute record charts. I've wanted to write for a real magazine for aeons, but I guess *The Underground* will have to do, as it was the only title Mommy's publishing house owned which wanted a far-out-with-it-girl-of-tomorrow.

I read half a book on a coal-mining before I was told *The Underground* was a magazine about rock music, so I had a copy flown in by Markus on his way back from Scotland, where he has a castle. Anyway, I couldn't find any mention of *The Eagles* or even *The Allman Brothers* which personally I think is pretty gross. So I rang the editor and he was really gross as well, with his dinky accent and funny language. Hell, he talked to me like I was an ordinary person which is a bad idea unless he wants to find himself editor of *The Camping Gazette*.

Still, you guys want to know what I think, right? And I've spun a few of your vinyl things and talked to your *Bruno Brookes* (what a hunk) so I know *all* about it.

Firstly that *Jim Morrissey of Smiths* and his songs about a typical English day... now, he needs a few big meals and some workouts in his gym by the look of him. Surely you Brit girls don't go for such wimps? If he wants to sell records, he ought to look at *Bon Jovi* and realise that kids want guys that could punch them out. I bet Mr Smith couldn't even load a Biller AK 90, let alone mow down any anti-establishment agents. So get wise.

*The Fall* have a cute name, although they ought to change it to *The Summer* if they want Billboard success as no-one wants dreary music in this new age of optimism. (Billboard is the real chart in the States, but only *Elton John* is allowed in from Britain.)

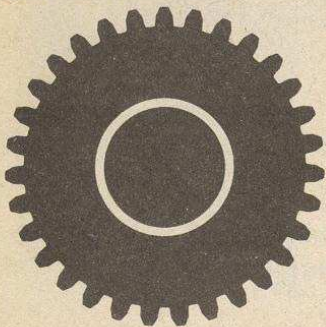
And, what the hell is this house stuff you all talk about? I've got four houses and the one in France has got a parapet, so *flake off!*

*The Wedding Present* sang about George Best, a football player I'm told, buy why didn't they sing about *Mousey 'Big Grill' Chesterton* the Pittsburg Porcupines' gorgeous winger? He can be my record anytime. (And probably will, at the Girls For Morals Nancy Love Ball next Thursday.)

Anyway, your Cyndi has to go and buy her plane tickets for Cannes now, as I can't find a single thing to wear in little old London. So keep up the good work *Duran Duran* and come to the States if you want to become a star. (Even your *John Lennon* had to come here to get shot.)

More hot news next month unless I can get a better offer. Lots of love and sloppy kisses,  
CYNDI TEX x x x

(P.S. Your Ed has told me I can't do a piece on fashion design for yacht living. I thought this was a young persons' mag! You're being seriously misled, kids...)



**GREAT LOGOS OF OUR TIME**

Yes, we've had more mail for the other alternative building *Underground* mag, and this time we detect the work of Laibach is at hand. Just look at this logo for the *Amalgamated Engineering Union* and tell me it's not part of the work ethic!

**VITAL PROSE**

Magazines of the moment. . . *Delight In The New Wonderland* (Alistair, 64 Lugar Place, Troon, Strathclyde) features tatty scribbles, self-questioning garb and stuff on Tiffany, Groove Farm, Baby Lemonade, Sea Urchins etc. (A5) *Get Out And Give Em Hell* (14 Diana Road, Ashton In Molerfield, nr Wigan, Lancs) features harsh layouts and stuff on A Certain Ratio, John Avery Of Hula, demo tapes, skateboards and Paul Haig. (A4/50p)

*Happy Pow* (Stephen Brennan, 88 Killyglen Road, Lame, Co Antrim, N Ireland) is fun and frolics with a strange hybrid wobbling between Big Stick, the Mary Chain and gibberish. (A5/20p) *Intense* (10 Spencer Street, Littleborough, Rochdale, Greater Manchester) is action-packed fun and arrogant mind assaults. Features Monkey Run, Chameleons and wild stuff. (A5/30p)

*Law Of Accident* (Mike Shankland, 12 Broadway West, Fulford, York) is loose when it should be intense about the bands it covers. There are some good areas probed though. Includes Coil, PTV, Annie Anxiety, Conflict. (A4/40p)

*Perturbed* (14 Overlea Gardens, Acocks Green, Birmingham) is all over the place. Wild, libellous and chock full with features. A hoot. (A5/40p)

*Shine* (C Lovell, 69 Crown Street, Peterborough) is well printed but lacking in design and editorial direction. Some good bits with Sudden Sway, Fields Of The Nephilim, Webcore and Into A Circle. (A4/80p)

(Send accordingly sized sae plus money where appropriate to addresses supplied.)

# Pooh

## on you!



"Actually, we're just Pooh groupies"

### Who are The Pooh Sticks?

**The Pooh Sticks** are a paradox. Hooray! They embody that most hated of forms, **anorak pop**, but they still manage to be rather cool and groovy. Cynics would say it's simply because their debut single, **On Tape**, is out on the ridiculously hip renegade label **Fierce Records**. . . but the band do have an element of parody which gives them a value of their own.

- The Swansea-based combo feature two grown-ups, **Hue** and **Paul**, who both play guitar and sing. They're backed by three precocious teenage nymphets, **Trudi**, **Alison** and **Stephanie**, who attempt tambourine, bass and drums respectively, as well as helping with the vocals.
- The band are completely submerged in indie pop traditions but they're **not**

**luddites**. According to Hue, there's already a Pooh Sticks promo video for the single. "We haven't got it played anywhere because it's highly controversial. It features me and Stephanie re-enacting the big scene in **From Here To Eternity**. Stephanie is only about 14 and I'm a strapping lad of 21 so it looks a bit rude." (*Is that the fight scene?* — Ed.)

- There is a follow-up planned, **I Know Someone Who Knows Someone Who Knows Alan McGee Quite Well**, which should be released as soon as the band receive the financial rewards from On Tape.
- "We haven't got much cash at the moment," moans Hue. "The girls only get 50p a week pocket money."
- This could soon change as a Rough Trade distribution deal is on the horizon, as well as a publicity scam so monumental that Fierce supremo, Steve Gregory, reckons it'll catapult the band into the indie big league. Anorak superstars? Yeah!
- For details of the Pooh Sticks single, send an SAE to Fierce Records, PO Box 29, Swansea SA1 1BG. **Anthony Farthing**

### We say Yeah (Jazz). . . or even yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah!

Chats: "What did you expect us to be like?" Chats (appropriate name folks!) is Yeah Jazz's permanently smiling guitarist and he has a reason for asking!

Kev: "People expect us to be professional northerners! You know, *Coronation Street* dwellers and pigeon fanciers!" Kev is Yeah Jazz's singer, the responsible party for those plaintive colloquialisms and bittersweet, soaring lyrics. Admittedly, they don't look much like pop stars, but then, they're not really trying hard enough!

Chats: "That's the problem, you see, we don't really have a clothes image."

Kev: "It doesn't bother us at all now but when we first started out we'd keep thinking, 'shall we get some leather trousers or leopard skin spandex?' . . . We ended up with Oxfam gear!"

Chats: "Anyway, we'd never live up to it, I mean, I could never go on stage wearing leopard skin trousers. I wouldn't be able to live up to what people expected me to be. Let's face it, I'm just not it, am I?"

Yeah Jazz aren't the least bit image-conscious, nor is their conversation, thankfully, cutely-tailored rock-speak. Where they've been, what they've done, what they had for tea and how useless they are at giving up smoking are all topics of the moment. Yeah Jazz, you see, live in the real world: Six Lane Ends, their simply *amazing* new LP on Cherry Red, is full of pathos and humour, *real* songs about the *real* reflections of *real* people. Rather than communicate through the fictitious extremes that so much pop fodder would have us believe is the human experience, Kev and Chats come from a place where emotional weaknesses, human failings, regrets and reminiscences are respected. In other words, it's OK to be normal.

If ever there was a potential hit single on an album it's All The Stars from Six Lane Ends, possibly the most poignant YJ story of all.

Kev: "Yeah, that is a good story. What happened was I was staying at my grandad's, and he's a great conversationalist — he's dead now but he was a great talker — and he just started telling me all about me grandma who I never knew, she died way before I was born. I knew I was meant to meet Chats at nine so I looked at the clock and it was 11 o'clock! I'd missed the whole evening. That became All The Stars."

"When there's things like that, there's no need to write the 'baby baby baby' stuff. People have always got tales to tell. I don't think I could ever write a song specifically so that it had a chance of getting played on Gary Davies' Radio 1 prog. There's no point, because I just couldn't believe in that."

Chats: "Once you start doing that you'd never respect yourself in the morning." **Alex Kadis**

Yeah Jazz: bringing strange hats



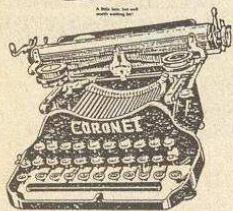


# SUB culture

Life and how to abuse it!

Fireman sets his own fires to make job more exciting

## THIS IS THIS...



### THIS IS IT!

Recommended eye-food comes from *This Is This*, a tastefully conceived manuscript that looks like a 'zine but tastes around twice as good. The perps involved weave prose and pose into a textured stream of consciousness, and your education into this fine art of latter-day Dylan Thomas can be grasped for a frittering 50p plus A4 cheap wrapping, from Andrew Collins, *This Is This*, 33e Telford Avenue, London SW2. . . well, it's just like *Underground* never happened. (And few mentions of musak.)



### RUMBLEFISH

If you believe Jeremy Paige's blithely self-deprecating tales of his band, you'd reckon nobody had ever heard of *Rumblefish*.

Just before their first label, Pink Records, sank without trace, the Birmingham outfit issued their debut 12 inch single, *Tugboat Line*. It followed the label into oblivion.

Now, a year later, expanded to a five piece (the band started out as a stand-up drummer, guitar and trumpet), they've got a two single deal with Summerhouse. *Medicine* is the first release, and despite Jeremy's claims that the band are "pretty bad" when it comes to recording ("but there again what do you expect when you only go in a studio twice a year?"), I rather like its bouncy, Woodentopsy attack. Jeremy reckons it's unrepresentative and should have been out six months ago. Instead, he says they're doing "much more flighty things". So now you know.

Mike Davies

Pixies: haven't they got a gnome to go to?



# SURF'S UP!

**Pixies' new album has shot into the national charts. It uncovers a raw nerve of rock power. Alex Bastedo takes the pulse**

*Come On Pilgrim*, the debut mini-album by Pixies, was one of the best 'new young guitar band' LPs heard in recent years, and is yet another example of Americans doing it better. Two songs in particular, *Caribou* and *Levitate Me*, just begged to be played again and again, while the overall feel of the eight songs was of some exotic hybrid between *Sonic Youth*, *Violent Femmes* and *The Gun Club*.

Now we have their first full length LP, *Surfer Rosa*, produced by the ubiquitous Steve Albini, which is even better, even if it did take a bit longer to get to grips with. Lead singer/songwriter Black Francis has heard that remark before. . .

"Actually, a few other people have said that this record is not as commercial or immediate. However, I think it is much better. Parts of the mini-LP were too quiet for me, and Steve Albini certainly cured that on *Rosa*. It is sparser but definitely louder sounding and guitar heavy, which is something we wanted."

How much of that was down to Albini?

"We virtually let him have a free rein in the studio. We're basically a live band and don't know too much about recording. Steve Albini was the record company's choice for producer

so we trusted their judgment. I have to admit that I wasn't too familiar with Big Black either."

Would you agree that *Gigantic* is the most immediate song on the record?

"Definitely. That song is built around a riff I've been playing for years, one of those Sweet Jane sort of things. In fact, we were going to call the album *Gigantic* at one point, but it's probably a good job we didn't in the end, judging by the finished sleeve artwork."

Bare breasts on 4AD in the cause of art! And why a reworking of *Vamos*, from *Pilgrim*, on *Surfer Rosa*?

"That was Ivo at 4AD's choice. He wanted us to re-record that song and I'm glad we managed to come up with a better version — we opened out the song a lot more and gave it much more mean, fiery guitar."



### SING SOMETHING SARAH!

The ever-effervescent Sarah label, who brought us *Pristine Christine* by *The Sea Urchins* and *I've Got A Habit* by *The Orchids*, have a paper and flexi concoction with scribbles on *1000 Violins*, *14 Iced Bears* and *Talulah Gosh* crafted into grammar by ex-editors of *Kvatch* and *Are You Scared To Get Happy?* zines, plus a mini-disc featuring *Another Sunny Day's* pomp-rock classic *Anorak City*. A bargain at 50p (plus a bigger than A5 sae) from *Clare and Matt* at the Garden Flat, 46 Upper Belgrave Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2XN. **Dave Henderson**



# PLEASE! DON'T SANDBLAST MY BRAIN!

Last year Head Of David received rave reviews for their first five track release *Dogbreath*, and conjured up equally enthusiastic acclaim for a live performance, christened *Godbreath*, which was broadcast as a John Peel session. Slipping both *Dog* and *God* into record label Blast First's melting pot produced a full length elpee called, simply enough, *LP*, which had fans and critics alike frothing about Dudley's *Deadly Foursome*. "Big and ugly", "Ferocious", "Hardest of the hard core", "Menacing", "Intense, macabre and maddeningly repetitive" and "Fearless, fierce and devastatingly LOUD", were the flag-wavers comments.

- That was last year when the singer was called Reubin and HOD were lumped in with the noise filth independents. The singer remains the same but now he's called Steve.
- Last year HOD played the ICA. (The rock week held for the 'Great Unsigned' by predatory EMI.) The £500 deal was for a short set and permission to use the recording on a compilation. Head Of David took the money, played a compilation cut-up of big EMI acts in the background and churned out a continuous, cankerous noise for 20 minutes before the fire

brigade invaded the smoking venue and broke things up...

- Steve: "People thought it was some attack from within British pop culture or something. I didn't understand the reviews. If we were revolutionaries we'd probably be The Pet Shop Boys — it's the best way to do it."
- You got some kind of reaction, though?
- "Well... yes, it was great, 'cos we didn't have a clue what we were doing, as usual really, and everybody was throwing things at us and some were spitting, and, what with all that smoke, you couldn't see anything..."
- The new LP, *Dustbowl*, is something to be valued, if what we're being told, that HOD will wind themselves down in June ("once we got a deal, all the fun went out of it"), is true. The record that Head Of David are retiring with is full of primed noisy stuff, standing tall and very metal, but not in the clichéd, deady dull way of its contemporaries. It's 15 tracks of white-hot substance, with an added ingredient X. HOD wash blacker than black and sting like sizzling sulphuric acid playing over the cracks and crevices of your cranium. Pretty dramatic, huh?! **Daz Igmeth**

## Head Of David create storm clouds in the Dustbowl



Axe victims: HOD

# SUB culture

Life and how to abuse it!



B.F.G.

Rash statements have likened, perhaps lazily, the **B.F.G.** sound to a Missiony, Sistersy kind of thing but, of course, it's not really that simple. Steve the singer does have a deep voice and Mike's drumming does possess a certain beatbox-like tightness over which Paul's guitar strums, picks and chops with as much authority as Marx or Hussey could muster, but they're no rip off merchants; strong tunes, which are both commercial and intense, make for much more than a grey carbon copy.

They've signed a publishing deal with RCA and, despite some offers, prefer to stay on Attica Records for the moment. Output-wise, there have been two 12 inch EPs, namely *Western Sky* and *Higher*, both of which are accessible and atmospheric, and well worth investigating. **Daz Igmeth**



It's Trad, dad

## Anarchy sets Wales alight!

Meet a group who sing in Welsh, live in England, and have a German record company — TRADDODIAD OFNUS. They have a new LP out on Phil Boa's Constrictor label, distributed in the UK by Red Rhino, and called, naturally enough, *Welsh Tourist Bored*.

"That village with the long name — *Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogoch* — is an invention for tourists. Nobody who lives there calls it that, and anyhow, it's a really boring place, so our LP cover has a picture of a Welsh tourist, bored," claims a Tradd.

Why the German label?

"There are only two Welsh labels of note — *Anhrefn*, who are interested but haven't got any money, and *Sain* (meaning sound), who have money (mainly because they have released so many Aled Jones records) but aren't interested."

*Traddodiad Ofnus* means a tradition that is afraid of the future, frightened of moving on. A good description of the Wales the group have moved away from, but they still sing almost exclusively in Welsh.

I imagined *Traddodiad Ofnus* would be well militant, slipping into Welsh and advocating the destruction of English holiday homes. But as they say, "There is no reason why we should have to justify singing in Welsh, the language sounds really poetic." Even if most people can't understand what the songs are about. So what are they about?

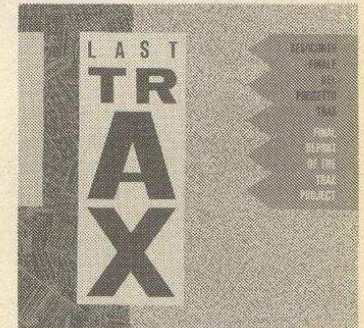
"A bit about Wales and Britain today, a bit of love, a bit of sex, the normal content of songs really."

But of course there are clever bits you miss if you can't speak the language, like on the single, *Hwyl*.

"*Hwyl* means fun, but down in south Wales it also means goodbye. So it's like goodbye, have fun, it was good while it lasted."

It may be goodbye, it might have been fun, but *Traddodiad Ofnus* are still in love with Wales and the Welsh language. They play there as often as possible — and they are not worried if singing in Welsh is considered uncommercial.

"If you could speak Welsh, I know you'd understand." Quite. **Christopher Mellor**



END OF THE TRAX

*Trax* started as a mail-art/art/art-art/music-related art fiasco, and developed into a globe full of strange people — with cohorts including Genesis P Orridge, The Haters, DDAA, William Burroughs, Brion Gysin and more. But now, in true style, it's all over. The numerous literary, illustrative and recorded highlights are shown and deciphered in their last, succinctly designed package *Last Trax* — which comes complete with a seven inch record by members of the *Trax* core. Stimulating and innovative stuff and we have three copies to give away!

Just answer this question on a postcard and send it to *Underground/Trax Competition*, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1 7QZ to arrive pretty quickly.

Q: *Trax* was started in Italy by Ug's Italian correspondent. What's his name?

# SUB culture

Life and how to abuse it!

## ROCKETS *passing overhead*



*Captain Star never ceases to hope... never ceases to dream of other worlds*

### CARTOONING ABOUT

A scrawling, begging postcard from Steven Appleby arrived chez *Ug* with a fabby new publication called *Rockets — A Way Of Life* — which he claimed to have written and drawn. This finely surreal, illustrative trip to the outer echelons of the planetary system reveals that there is still humour in cartoons and futuristic thangs — and the star of this piece, Captain J Star, is rife with it. It's an Assorted Images Publication that should be read beneath the bed covers immediately.



### FLOOR PRODUCTS

Enter *Floor Products*! No, not the latest line in brushes, missus, but rather the latest line in dancefloor sounds. *Floor* is an 'organisation' in the true business sense of the word, they make music, they produce other people's music, they release music.

At the moment they're heavily involved in a film project being produced by north west independent film maker Neil Adams, concerned with the growth of house/hip hop in the north of England. It's hoped that the finished product will eventually be taken up by Channel 4.

Meanwhile, *Floor* has to establish itself as a cassette label; their sample tape *Bacteria From A Baboon's Stomach* (I kid you not) has been available from various local record shops for a while. The next item on the agenda is a compilation of Manchester artists of a similar dance-beat persuasion. Craig Ferguson

McCarthy take basketball to the art elite



## McCarthy on the road to the big bible belt!

"Make it funny," said the editor of beat bible, *Underground*. Make it funny? Make an interview with McCarthy funny? That's a joke! Apart from entirely fabricating an endless stream of quips, double entendres and side-splitting anecdotes, how are you supposed to make an interview with McCarthy funny?

"It'll be a challenge," he said. Who does he bloody think I am — Anneka Rice?

### BASKETBALL !!!!!?

Feeling pretty light-hearted and full of the joys of spring, despite the mountainous task of having to bring back humorous copy, I sped my merry way to Cambridge Circus and a pub inhabited by neanderthal rock 'n' roll roadies and three members of McCarthy. I remembered Malcolm, the lead singer, from a recent gig. He'd pointed at me and said, "I like your anorak".

Funny, I wasn't wearing an anorak. The bloke behind me was though — he was a mad, six foot six, basketball-playing student and he was having a whale of a time. I still have the bruises to prove it — he pushed and cajoled me throughout, as many psychologically disturbed students are wont to do.

So (and let's get on with it) what do McCarthy mean to me? Six rib-tickling singles? Vaguely camp and lost vocals? The C-86

champions of indie pop? No! McCarthy mean a whirlpool of sound that pulls you in. Something you're prepared to like despite its popular misconceptions. Lyrics (so disassociated from the happy tunes) that slice like a cheesewire through ordinary pop words. Drumbeats that are impossible to repeat. Odd, odd, and odder than odd. Four, not spectacular, people on stage that shamble and stumble and fumble and sometimes make you laugh with comments like, "I like your Harrington".

### TOOTHPASTE !!!!!?

Trivia — that's the answer, be flippant, it never fails, smiles all the way.

What toothpaste do you use?

Malcolm: "Smokers' toothpaste, I don't know what it's called."

Brand names, Malcolm, I want brand names.

Malcolm: "Eucryl, something like that."

Have you any amazing anecdotes to recount, to share with the readers?

Tim: "No."

This is not strictly true. Billy Bragg played live in Tim's street on the day of the Queen's jubilee.

Tim: "I left after one song."

What's your favourite drink?

Malcolm: "Port. Look, I don't know if... Is this...? Shall we pursue this line...? Why are you asking us these questions?"

I had none of this trouble with Debbie Gibson. This is a pop interview, you're a pop band, these are the kind of things pop fans want to know.

Malcolm: "I think that's wrong. People should want to know about politics, think about things, become critical about things. We're just the same as everybody else."

### VEGETARIANS !!!!!?

Let's get intellectual.

McCarthy are the same as everybody else. But it's their lyrics ("she was egged on by loathe-some goblins"), their vocabulary and, as Tim puts it, "revolutionary fervour", that makes them different. McCarthy are blunt in a round about kind of way. When they speak, phrases like "working class liberation", "orthodox methods of protest" and "economic structure" roll off their tongues as easily as, "what's your favourite TV programme?" rolls off mine.

Malcolm eats books for breakfast. I can imagine his room piled high with biographies, text-books, dictionaries and Penguins of every kind.

Malcolm: "It's not just books. It's ideas, things I see on the news that are happening in the world. I find it quite difficult to write songs. Other people seem to do it as easily as breathing. I have to think about what I'm doing. I spend hours searching for the correct word. I don't find it natural in the least — I don't think it should be."

Even so, people still get them wrong. Me and the basketball player included. McCarthy lyrics are not as plain as the nose on your face. They're there to puzzle, disturb, initiate ideas or to disagree with.

Tim: "The lyrics are often taken in the directly opposite way to which they were intended. Malcolm doesn't write in a sloganeering way, it's not obvious. It's done in a way where you have to think about it. On Anti-American Cretin everybody thought, 'oh good, they hate Americans', but it's the exact opposite. Kill, Kill, Kill too sounds like a very pro-vegetarian song, but it isn't."

### MARXIST !!!!!?

But how can you disagree with something as harmless as I Should Be So Lucky?

Malcolm: "You can disagree that the most important thing is people's lives is unrequited love. It's not the central issue in the world today." Despite their outrage at traditional pop themes, fun, love and money, McCarthy have written a love song, called *This Nelson Rockefeller*. It's like *I Think We're Alone Now* with a twist, the *Pet Shop Boys' Rent* turned on its head. It's about a Marxist love triangle. Its follow up, *Should The Bible Be Banned* is, according to some religious McCarthy fans, a "hot potato" too — so, keep your trousers on vicar.

Malcolm: "Some people obviously just like the jolly music and guitars. But I think there's a fair percentage who appreciate that we are trying to say something different in pop music."

In other words — McCarthy are NOT the same as everybody else.

# S is for SOUL!

THE POWER OF THE FLARE DISCOVERED BY CHRIS MELLOR

S-Express have made one of those annoying crossover dance records that nearly everybody will dance to. It's being played by hardcore clubbers, jangly poppers and gurlies who dance round their handbags. It's in the charts, it's on the radio, it's impossible to ignore, and hard to resist. The S-Express has arrived, but this isn't what Mark Moore, DJ extraordinaire and the mastermind behind the project, intended.

"I just wanted to make something I could play in my clubs that would pack the floor. I didn't think it would be accepted because it doesn't follow the rules. I wanted to sell a couple of thousand and end up in five years time with a rare groove, but it hasn't worked."

The other thing Mark underestimated was the power of those flared trousers in the publicity shots.

"We reflect club styles, and that's one style around at the moment. But I never realised how much impact they would have; people seem to be outraged."



S-Express: lip curls and flares

But is it important to be a DJ if you want to make a dance record? There are a lot of them doing it at the moment.

"You don't have to be one, but it does help. You just have to go to clubs so you know what's happening, anybody can do it really."

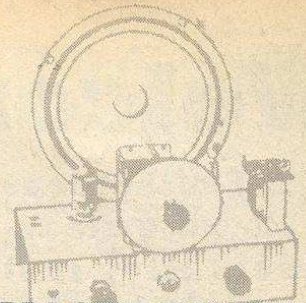
Theme From S-Express, is the tile of this most hummable tune, and it's one of those tracks that is perfect for a particular moment. It encapsulates every sound from the club scene. It's the sound of now, which means that in six months' time it will sound crap.

"Records tend to sound awful because they're so good everyone copies the sound and in six months it becomes a cliché."

So what do you do after you've made the perfect disco record?

"The follow up, Superfly Guy, is even better. It's a proper record, it took a whole two and a half days to record, whereas Theme... only took two."

Superfly Guy is another slab of sonic disco, bringing the flare groove right up to date, and S-Express assure us, there's plenty more where that came from.



## MASTERBLAST

What's happening on local radio?

**THE BOTTOM LINE: MONDAY TO FRIDAY 9.45-11PM. BBC NORTHERN IRELAND.**

Michael Bradley used to be an **Undertone**; now he presents **The Bottom Line** every Friday night. The other nights are presented by **Mike Edgar** or **Davy Sims**, but Michael's show is probably the most interesting.

"You have to remember that just a few inches along the dial is Radio 1, and I don't want to duplicate that. So I won't play the **Mary Chain** or **Morrissey**. Really I just play stuff that appeals to me. I don't care about names, just things with good tunes.

"It's mostly guitar music, but there's also some African stuff, other international things and '60s garage music. People often says 'why don't you play more of **The Cult**?' but the more mainstream indie/rock stuff is covered from Monday to Thursday on the other shows.

"It's important to remember that rock 'n' roll is just a burst of teenager poetry and you can still find records that remind you why you got into it in the first place."

You can hear **The Bottom Line** throughout Northern Ireland and in most of the Republic, plus Northern England and the west coast of Scotland. So check it out for an essential dose of that 'teenager poetry'. **Christopher Mellor**

Michael Bradley's Fave 5

- 1 Stop Your Crying **Chin Chin**
- 2 The Will Of One **Attacco Decent**
- 3 Release Me **Jerry Lee Lewis**
- 4 Football Story **Dominic Kenney**
- 5 Run Rabbit **The Palookas**

## BEST BEATS

Ug contributors' fave tracks: May

- JOHNNY DEE**
- YOUNG MANHOOD** The Wild Swans **WEA**
- JULIAN HENRY**
- THEME FROM S-EXPRESS** S-Express **Rhythm King**
- DAZ IGYMETH**
- CAT HOUSE** Danielle Dax **Awesome**
- ALEX KADIS**
- ALL THE STARS** Yeah Jazz **Cherry Red**
- CAROLE LINFIELD**
- CURRY COMMOTION** Bad Dream **Fancy Dress E!**
- DICK MESCAL**
- GIVE GIVE GIVE ME MORE**
- MORE MORE** Wonderstuff **Far Out/Polydor**

## Whiter than the rest!

"I don't think you could just sit there and let it wash over you. . . you either really get into it, I guess, or you chuck it in the bin."

Andy White passes judgement on his second album, **Kiss The Big Stone**, which, by his own admission, is in a different galaxy from his first, **Rave On**.

"I think the second album just opens up what the first one started. . . Your first album's always some kind of summation of everything which went before it, and the second one includes that, but it really starts off where the other one left off."

Experiences and travels since the first album have inevitably influenced. . . **Big Stone** — in particular a trip to Los Angeles, which inspired the track **Tower Of Babel Time**. The recording process (in Randalstown, near Belfast) was eased by not having to complete

everything in a fortnight (as with **Rave On**) and by the participation of many able and amenable musicians, including **Arty McGlynn** — Van Morrison's guitarist — as well as a couple of Costello's **Attractions**.

The relaxed nature of the sessions is reflected in the music and its sneaky tricks of disorientation — the sound of Andy White singing in German (**Go Tell Suzanne**) being one of the more unusual adventures.

Andy White is rarely less than interesting: all ten songs on **Kiss The Big Stone** are connected, and the last cut, **West Wind Blues**, climaxes with a medley of references to its predecessors. That may sound strangely like a concept album, but. . .

"There must be a better way of describing it. . . it's more of a story than a concept album. It's a bit obscure, anyway. You should let your imagination work on it anyhow, that's the best thing that everybody has." **Robert Cohen**



Andy White debates next step

# Welcome to the Green party

The Smithereens exploded, quite accidentally, last year. With ten minutes to spare they follow up their success with a new album, *Green Thoughts*. Tony Fletcher gets Freudian about the new album and the group's history.



Smithereens: furthering the cause of beard propulsion

So how do you follow up an album that you waited six years to make, then recorded and mixed in ten days and watched with wry satisfaction as it sold something silly like 500,000 copies? Well, if you've got any sense you'll repeat the formula, which is why cynics might suggest that *Green Thoughts*, the new Smithereens album, is in fact nothing more than *Epecially For You* part two, a rehash of their 1986 fairytale success.

Certainly *Green Thoughts* is a strong, solid album, with a healthy balance of powerhouse guitars and tenderness. To their credit as songwriters, there have been few albums that I have been able to hum every single tune on within three hearings, but to their detriment there is nothing on *Green Thoughts* as desperate as their *Strangers When We Meet*, nothing as truly romantic as *Cigarette*, and — most notably — no lyric as sharp as perhaps anything on *Epecially For You*.

Upon returning from 15 months of solid touring last autumn, The Smithereens found themselves in the traditional 'second album syndrome'. The songs for *Epecially For You* had been allowed to develop over several years, but now similar quality was expected in weeks. Doesn't a songwriter like Pat De Nizio — the man with the impressive goatee beard — feel pressure in these circumstances? His answer is quiet but self-assured.

"The only pressure that exists is self-imposed pressure: creating an artificial deadline and putting pressure upon myself to write within a certain timeframe, so that I could meet the recording deadline, which I also scheduled."

These timeframes would not suit the likes of George Michael: a month to write an entire album, and 16 days to record and mix it. Ouch! Did he find it easy to come up with the songs?

"I actually found it tremendously difficult, because I had never encountered a situation like that before. The material for the other albums was written over a period of time, almost at leisure and at given moments of inspiration. Whereas I had to be slightly more craftsmanlike about this — I couldn't just wait around for a bolt out of the blue. So I was pleased because I proved to myself that I could write on demand and I'd never known if I was capable of that or not."

And as for the short time in the studio, "It's just a natural reflection of how we've always worked. In the early days we worked quickly on very modest budgets, and then as the years progressed and opportunities opened themselves up to us, we found those work were the methods that still worked best."

Given such speed, you might think it a miracle that *Green Thoughts* is not an unmitigated disaster, but De Nizio is merely proving that the methods responsible for so much classic '60s material are not dead. And as *Epecially For You* had proved a significant breakthrough for uncomplicated guitar bands on commercial radio, why sacrifice oneself to state-of-the-art-deliberations just because the finance might be there?

But enough of the present; let's delve into the past. The Smithereens formed in New York in 1980, with guitarist Jim Babjak, bassist Mike Mesaros and drummer Dennis Diken, all of whom sing backing vocals, making up the quartet along with Pat De Nizio. They released an EP, *Girls About Town*, as a 'calling card' and began gigging. Taking up an offer to play part-time as backing band to Otis Blackwell (writer of such legendary tunes as *All Shook Up*, *Don't Be Cruel* and *Please Mr Postman*) meant they could become professional musicians, and they also got to record two now-unavailable albums with him.

In 1983, The Smithereens also recorded a five-song EP of their own, *Beauty And Sadness* (which, like their first effort, is to be rereleased in the next year), which not only sold well on the east coast but was picked up by the then fledgling Stockholm label Wire Records, enabling the group to make their first ever tour — of Scandinavia, no less — in 1984. But a year later, all pushing 30, they had to recognise that the future held little in store.

"It was a strange world that we had created for ourselves," reflects Pat. "Most of our original audience had got married, had kids and moved on, and most of the original clubs we'd started at had closed, reopened and closed again. But we never entertained the notion of giving up, and at that point, after putting half a decade into this one band, there was scant else that we could do with our lives."

But then every cloud has a silver lining. "Ironically it was after years of... well I wouldn't call it failure because I guess you only fail when you quit; but after hundreds of rejection letters and changes of regime at record companies, and still nothing happening, quite simply enough I sent a cassette of some demos to a name I had been given of someone at Enigma, with just my name, my phone number, the name of the band and the songs on it. About a week later I got a phone call asking if we were interested in doing a deal."

Interested? The Smithereens would probably have walked on hot coals to sign the deal with the west coast indie; as it was their ten-day recording session with Don Dixon not only turned the group from no-hopers to the success story of 1986, but established Enigma as a vital label, leading to a deal with Capitol in the States and the creation of their own (indie) office in Britain.

If success has changed De Nizio, it is only for the better. "I'm more cynical now than ever," he says of the industry that shunned his band for years. "There are just so many people who want to know you for the wrong reasons, who wouldn't give you the time of day before they thought you'd made it. You're a nobody who means nothing and then suddenly there's interest and you're 'cool', or at least you're made to feel like people think you're 'cool'. So I live with a healthy degree of scepticism as regards all of that, in the knowledge that this album might not make it, and then we're back where we started. I count my blessings every day that I'm doing this professionally, and doing fairly well at it — at least for the time being."

Humility in the American music business? Well there's a thing. Take some more care over those lyrics next time, Pat, and you'll be counting your blessings for the rest of your life.

EXTRA!

# EVOLUTIONS

Distribution initials are as follows:

- B** Backs | **C** Cartel | **Ch** Charly | **FF** Fast Forward | **Ja** 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.)

- **MEGA** A godhead uprising
- **LOTSY** Tasteful and tenacious
- **TACKY PLUS** Lacking in finish
- DRAF** No bullets, means no hope

## AND ALSO THE TREES

### The Millpond Years

Reflex **RT C** ●¾ An apt title, since the problem with this LP is its stagnation. While there are lots of nice ideas, a fine moody (without being doomy) vocal and clearcut instrumentation, this really has a bark worse than its bite. It does sustain interest, and even in places conjures up images of Gabriel era Genesis (meant as a compliment!) especially lyrically. But it's too one paced; a dynamic diversion would have added an extra contour, and the contrast would have made for a more appealing landscape. Still, nicely atmospheric and coolly worked, and I suspect, a grower. **Carole Linfield**

## ANTHONY ADVERSE

### The Red Shoes EI ACME 11 **P**

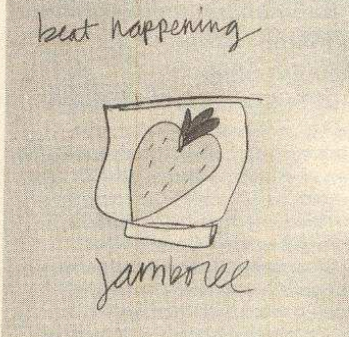
●●● If you're a devotee of Ealing films, Simon Dee, Lulu, Hanna Barbara, Pressburger and Lyttleton, then this album is made for you. If you're not, you should still find something of immense interest. The Red Shoes combines the sublime and the ridiculous, the funny and the sad, all wrapped up in a velvety, wispy coating, courtesy of the enigmatic and mysterious Anthony Adverse. All ten tracks are written by Louis Philippe, with a wholesome quality which one finds hard to knock or dislike. I challenge anyone to listen to the comic strip-styled Garden Of Eden without smiling, or Goodbye Again without shedding a tear. And if anyone doubts that London, My Town is the '80s Downtown, then I'm not Pet Clark. **Pet Clark**

## THE ARCADIANs

### Mad Mad World

Interior Music IM012 **RR C** ●¾ An imaginary cover for latter day el saint Louis Philippe, The Arcadians mustered one single for Crepuscule some time back. In retrospect this previously shelved collection of song sketches has been revived and minimally packaged. It's a dangerously quaint, understated set, demo-esque, beatnik and considered, with Louis keeping it close to his chest, jazzy and plainly unaffected. The Arcadians may not

change the mad world, but they can make it a little more wholesome for half an hour. **Dave Henderson**



## BEAT HAPPENING

### Jamboree

53rd & 3rd AGAS 2 **FF C** ●●● America's ability to produce alternative viewpoints of society, while living on a consumer-pleasing conveyor, is strange in itself. That these alternatives are as varied as, say, Black Flag, Public Enemy and Beat Happening is just plain weird. This trio from Washington seem to ignore their roots — while lying in wait in a pocket of resistance as wide as Richman, Wire and the Young Marble Giants — opting to concoct a minimal, cherubic noise that's immediate, intoxicating and intelligent. Pop music with feelings, a real sound for bedroom romantics. **Dave Henderson**

## BEAUTIFUL PEA GREEN BOAT

### Get Religion

Mr Slaughterback's Records/Third Mind Records MSR 3/TMLP 26 **RR C** ●●¾ A strange, ethereal sort of record that wanders through electronic pastures and into sleepy, jazz influenced melancholia. Babs' vocal is classically esoteric and clear, if a little one-dimensional, and the instrumentation well contained, while remaining atmospheric and, in places, even filmic (like on Nostalgia). Get Religion works because of its willpower; it owes its success as much to what they left out as to what's gone in. Tight, then, and convincing with it. **Carole Linfield**

## BLUMEN OHNE DUFT

### The Bedrock Massacre

Scratch And Sniff LP 02703 (Glashuttenstrasse 113, 2000 Hamburg 6, West Germany) ●● Blumen Ohne Duft play a strange brand of guitar rock. Falling into pits and chasms of Sham, getting heavy-handed, thrashing, then going into a Cramps-styled overdose, they've enough in their armoury to impress the most discerning of volume fetishists. They also like to throw in a few "artistic" diversions too, and on Blood Of The Lamb they opt for an Orson Welles-style *War Of The Worlds* interruption, some background chit-chat and a driving Stupids-style beat. . . the finest cut on a recommended album. **Nick Brody**

## THE CARDIACS

### A Little Man And A House And The Whole World Window

Alphabet ALPH LP007 **P** ●●● They may possess the ugliest bunch of faces you'll ever come across, and the music they perform cannot be described as beautiful or Sunday teatime listening, but The Cardiacs do have a favourable set of components. They have a style and brilliance which enables them to create an obscure, almost infantile sound, which in their own inimitable way remains utterly accessible and satisfying (not irritating as some have said) to listen to. Their jolting, Humpty-Dumpty rhythms and pretty detached lyrics are beyond comparison, and their love for prog-rockers, Genesis and Yes, isn't off-putting; there's no room for indulgence and pomposity between the grooves, or if there is, it's certainly well controlled. Admittedly, visually they're a more exciting proposition, but don't be distracted. This LP does repay a lot of listening. It's certainly worth the concerted effort. **Peter Mash**

## CIRCLE CONFUSION

### Meat Dept Lively Arts ARTY4 **P**

●¾ The triteness of the name, the austere graphics and the trudgingly industrial background of Detroit's Circle Confusion suggests that Meat Dept might just be the dancing alternative that Test Dept never made, or the writing minimalism that Meat Beat Manifesto over-indulged. In fact, this album is far more intelligent and energetic. Circle Confusion have a pedigree worth noting. Meat Dept may not be the greatest album, but it certainly is different. **Dave Henderson**

## CRUMBSUCKERS

### Beast On My Back Rough Justice

JUST 9 **P** ●¾ US grunge guitar with a blistering vocal action and some seering guitar forays. Crumbsuckers are close to heavy metal legend, looking like B Jovi but coming on like early Black Flag, but the taste of scorched guitar pyrotechnics might be a touch predictable for some. **Nick Brody**

## CURRENT 93

### Swastikas For Noddy LAYLAH LAY20 **C**

●● This is a surprising LP. Current 93 seem to have forsaken the expected excesses of noise and "hard" dance and headed for a hybrid of nursery rhyme/trad English folk instead. The end result summons up more than a few disturbing images of black cat witchcraft and Hammer-styled other worldliness. Like Ken Russell's vision of unpopular music, Swastikas For Noddy breaks the rules by playing within the rules and sounds quite remarkable in doing so. The cast for this incarnation of 93 includes a Strawberry Switchblade, Boyd Rice of Non, a Nurse With Wound, a Coil and a Death In June among others. Different just isn't the word. **Dave Henderson**

## DOG FACED HERMANS

### Humans Fly

Calculus KIT 001 **FF C** ●¾ Musical styles come and go — and most of them show up on this album. The Dog Faced Herman have a musicians' collective pedigree and, as they muscle through the more uniform anarchic hues of the aural world, they throw in the odd Spanish/Mexican meander, get punky, funky, hunky and more than a little unpredictable. This album has holes in its elbows but it smiles in the right places and will keep you enthralled for 41 minutes and 22 seconds. **Johnny Eager**

## THE DUSTDEVILS

### Gutter Light

Rouska CONCORD 8 **C** ●● The Dustdevils are in a cul-de-sac with the handbrake stuck on. Gutter Light is blaring from the stereo, it sounds great — like the Butthole Surfers stripped down, like mad people making farm implements from their guitars. But, the car won't turn around and take them from their trusted goth roots of old into this new, challenging thoroughfare. They have the right map, the way to people's hearts and heads scribbled on their cuff, but they'll keep turning

continued over

13 UNDERGROUND

# A



Wolpurgis Volta

## AMBIENT TIMES

**Nick Brody gets a listening block — and all in the cause of musical education and development**

Belgian duo **Sigmund Und Sein Freund** release their debut album on Antler (though the Cartel) with the rather memorable title *See Emily Play*. The title track, however, isn't the **Pink Floyd** familiar, but a floating piece of ethereal ephemera. These Belgians have moved on from their jagged 12 inch releases of last year, and are heading down a more structured, tree-lined avenue.

Virgin's Venture label has three new album cassette packages out — all of note, all completely different. **David Sylvian** teams up with **Holger Czukay** for two long pieces, *Plight and Premonition*, on which the minimal note flotation becomes so precious it's almost inaudible. By contrast, **Seigon Ono's** *The Green Chinese Table* is a lushly orchestrated set of ideas with east-meets-west stamped right through.

**Bill Laswell** has been funk-ing out for some time, getting jazzed, being time-structured, but his Venture venture, *Hear No Evil*, is more like a cross between **Ry Cooder** and **Ravi Shankar**. Very listenable — and the most accessible of these three new releases.

**The Oronies** are pretty moody and floating too, at least on the basis of their track *Aradia* from their latest 12 inch. The topside is more straightforward **Crass**-meets-**Hawkwind** stuff, with the **PTV**-esque title *The Woods Are Alive With The Smell Of His Coming*. Interesting stuff, though, from the Hiraeth label.

**Geisterfahrer's** *Stein And Bein* LP on *What's So Funny About* (Glashüttenstrasse 113, 2000 Hamburg 6, West Germany) came as a surprise, as word had it that they'd given up the ghost some time back. They seem to have mutated into a more orthodox, rockish (?) flavour which is hardly as inspiring. In fact there's a lot of this "rock" stuff emerging in Europe — take the **Walpurgis Volta** LP on *La Rage* through **Red Rhino**. . . a thrashing splash that lacks some of the conviction and diction of their contemporaries. Meanwhile, in Greece. . .

**Chapter 24's** *Tin Invaders* LP, on *Di Di* (4A N Kazantzaki Str, 15234 Haladri, Athens, Greece), is a stomping blast of beat muzak — with its hands squeezing unsuspecting organs through thrashing machines. The onus is on melodic tunes, spiced with a "grown up" set of sounds. The end result is stimulating, and possibly the most unique thing to come out of Greece for some years.

The Sub Rosa label is a constant source of expressive music from all territories and their *La Nouvelle Serenitie* is a handsomely-packaged gatefold affair with pieces from **Jon Hassell**, **Harold Budd**, **Gavin Bryars** and **Les Archives Sonores Sub Rosa**. It's, as you'd expect, a floating collection of ambient music varying from chorale hymns to tinkling keyboards, and it's available through the Cartel via **Red Rhino**.

from previous page that noise down and playing safe. These people are close. . . like **Blondie** in a mincer. **Dave Henderson**

### E.I.E.I.O. That Love Thang

Frontier Records FLP 1025 (now licensed to **Demon**) **P** ● ● Not a bad record this, taking things like brass, strong melody and rockin' guitars and layering them over a solid pop base. Though the influences occasionally veer into their compatriot **Bryan Adams'** rock horizons (most noticeably on *Where You Go*, but apparent often throughout), elsewhere the harder edge is tilted at a more contemporary angle. Some interesting moves, too, but then, what do you expect from a band with a track called **Andy Warhol's Dead But I'm Not?** Promising, then, if they can keep those **AOR** leanings in check, and instead steer further into the more rarified rock melody that's displayed on the likes of their best track, the lovely *Words Falling Down*. **Carole Linfield**

### FEARLESS IRANIANS FROM HELL

#### Die For Allah

Big Takeover TAKE 1 **Re C**

● 1/4 A teaser that's already a talking point, this LP features **Quinn**, an ex-**Butthole Surfer**, and it's very much an adrenalin-pumping thrust in the early style of the **Surfers**. A chugging, chunky noise that's not clever enough to persuade enough people to open the sleeve, while being more than hardcore in the downright, no-holds-barred mind assault stakes. Angry but a little directionless. **TC Wall**

### JOHN FELICE

#### Nothing Pretty

New Rose ROSE 141 ● 1/2 **John Felice** takes five from **The Real Kids** to work up a sweat on behalf of good old rock 'n' roll, the end result being a collection of competent bar-room songs that glisten with a squeaky-clean polish. **Nothing Pretty** might be construed as a stab at dirty rockerland, but **Felice** keeps it above board to produce a contemporary American rock record that's enjoyable, but as challenging as a bottle of dandelion and burdock. **Johnny Eager**

### FREDDIE STEADY'S WILD COUNTRY

#### Lucky 7

Heartland HLD 005 **C** ● ● A floating, relaxing album from an all-American boy singing all-American songs about deep rooted heartache. There's a tear-jerk in every voice inflection, a whimpering sigh as the pedal steel guitar floats in. **Lucky 7** recalls just enough of the **Burritys'** bar room magic, while staying the more accessible side of bluegrass etc to succeed. Soulful country music that's too tasteful to be ignored. **Dave Henderson**

### HANG THE DANCE

#### Ghost Bloody Country

Black Map LP 001 **RR C**

● 1/2 **Hang The Dance**, a Leeds

quintet with a penchant for **Spiritwalker** period **Cult**, debut with a spacious, emotive album which has some gargantuan high points, before slumming it in something that can only be described as 'going-through-the-motions-metal'. That this form of music has reaped such statutory support over the years bodes well for **Hang The Dance's** future, and there's enough in **Ghost Bloody Country** to suggest that they'll mature after they shake this dated **Cultist** colour. For now, take in small doses and savour your poison. **Nick Brody**

### THE HARD-ONS

#### Dickcheese

Vinyl Solution SOL-10 **P**

● ● ● Simplistic mind-imploding swear-in from **Australia's** sun-drenched, lager-handed comedians. From skateboard and surf to tales of personal excellence, girls and being anearily regular guy, **The Hard-Ons** are just **AC/DC** with an inaudible vocalist, no production quality and a guitarist who can strum twice as fast. Music of the moment that's about as essential as **The Beastie Boys** and twice as funny. The kids'll be going wild! Your parents will hate it. **Cultural. Les Patterson**

### HEAD OF DAVID

**Dustbowl** Blast First BFFP 18

**RR C** ● 1/2 Imagine you're given a couple of weeks in the studio with **Big Black's** **Steve Albini** producing. You wanna play metal, to get ass-kickin' hard, but you've broken three fingers. What do you do? Well, you hark back to **Wire's** **Pink Flag** and build a new hybrid. Well, that sort of happens on the middle section of the **Shadows** side of **Dustbowl**, while the **Rays** side adopts a more straightforward sludge approach. These tracks are memorable, magnificent, irreverent, effective and evocative. . . most of the rest is routine. **Dave Henderson**

### THE HELLCATS Cherry

**Mansions** New Rose ROSE 146

**P** ● ● All the right credentials for these four rockin' girls from Tennessee, their first gig having been with the **Panther Burns**, and with tracks already out on the immaculately named **Swamp Surfing** in **Memphis** compilation. The six songs here are in a sleazy, screwed up country vein, with only **Wall Of Death** being a rockabilly growler that stomps on the **Cramps'** bones. The rest are more like burned out barroom wallow that sounds as if it's looking through the bottom of an empty **Wild Turkey** bottle. The vocals, mostly by **Lorette**, are a little shaky, which adds to the atmosphere but occasionally needs beefing up if she's not going to sound too much like a 40 year old dipso. Or perhaps that's the point. . . these girls, tacky ballroom dresses, chequered tights 'n' all, sure are set to claw into town. **Carole Linfield**

### THE HELLMENN Herbal

**Lunacy** Waterfront DAMP 65

**Sh** ● ● What can you say about **The Hellmenn** that they haven't already said themselves? Their



130 Talbot Road LONDON W11 1JA.01 229 8541

first two bursts of ready shred herbal lunacy are called So Bad and Out Of Control, and really that says it all. . .

"Skate to destroy!" . . . "My blaster sets the scene, we all skate to Gang Green!" . . . "You wanna skate here, you better skate f\*\*\*ing mean!" . . .

Five unhealthy looking dudes swinging guitars like butchers' knives, they carve their side-of-meat riffs out of the flank of the still breathing, still kicking HM bull and them power slam a skatepunk meat hook through still warm flesh and hang it up to dry in the Sydney sun. When The Hellmenn bring the noise, you can see the blood seeping out of the cracks. The Hellmenn are out of control. **Holly Wood**

## HOUSE OF FREAKS

### Monkey On A Chain Gang

Demon Records FIEND 116 **PC**

●● 1/2 An interesting variation of influences merge into a pleasing whole on this innovative LP from two guys from Richmond, Virginia. Apparently, they're keen on dogs, which makes them OK in my book. And they write darn fine songs, too, which are carefully woven into a rock country tapestry that's both colourful and detailed. The best stuff is the more esoteric side, like 40 Years and Lonesome Graveyard which, with an eerie drumbeat, gets all minimalist and works well for it. Out come the Freaks, alright. . . **Carole Linfield**

## THE HOLLOW MEN

### Broken Stuff

Au-Go-Go ANDA 68

**Sh** ●● Countrified pop rock from the Antipodean Hollow Men, which presents a clean, uncluttered package that invites further listening. Occasionally they veer towards the pop end of the spectrum, like on Ten Foot Wide, which has a nice guitar line, then follow it with a minimal ballad like Margaret, which sweeps along with some very poetic imagery. Overall, there's no real feeling of time or place, which gives the LP width and accessibility; on the minus side, it's a floating, rather nebulous state to be in. With an absolute goal in mind, the effect could be dynamic. **Carole Linfield**

## INTO A CIRCLE into A

**Circle** Abstract **PC** ● 1/4 Into A Circle are definitely square pegs, insofar as their music sits uncomfortably between pop and a more alternative approach. The former is what they do best — their minor hit Evergreen, the Beneath Mikhail and Tender Skin displaying an acceptably catchy style and jaunty rhythm. For the rest, the vocal is too irritating and the songs too self-conscious for the results to be captivating. Stick to the pop, guys, and you'll be more likely to spin the wheels of fortune. **Carole Linfield**

## JEANETTE

### Prefab In The Sun

Survival SURLP 11 **BC**

● 3/4 Jeanette's progress through dance music, sleazy jazz and breathtaking vocal excursions has resulted in Prefab In The Sun — a

minimal but masterful album. Not that it's the glamorous, and ultimately soulful, croon that you'd expect! On this new set, Jeanette's still a little flaky, pale in foundation and, at times, a touch undirected with that powerful voice. Prefab In The Sun is sketchy, but there is enough going down to make it worth investigation. **Brenda Collins**

## THE JESUS & MARY CHAIN

### Barbed Wire Kisses

blanco y negro ●● The Mary Chain sound so (er) pedestrian at times you can forget just how good some of their records are. The new single, Sidewalking, is the best kind of reminder, a *Twilight Zone* meeting of Marc Bolan and Hazel Motes that draws the same gut reaction as their debut did four years ago. These two songs, it has to be said, are the highpoints of Barbed Wire Kisses, a clearing house for stuff that didn't make it onto the first two LPs, namely b-sides, out-takes and limited edition bonuses. It's not a completists set, though, since several of their less successful tracks have been left out. Several haven't. Closing the otherwise excellent second side is the most puzzling inclusion, a demo of On The Wall that sounds for all the world like U2's I Will Follow. Hyuck! Hyuck! Some joke. **Vachel Booth**

## JFA

### JFA

Fundamental SAVE 44 **RR C**

● 1/2 Thrash thugs from the US, with a whacko name and a screechingly rampant angle on the new rock dream. JFA were called Jodie Foster's Army, and perhaps if they'd retained some of that pre-pubescent wit they might have cleaned up in post *Taxi Driver* days. But this thrash is a bash too loud and they end up thumping their chests in a padded cell. Angry, but seemingly mindless, JFA are at a turning point, a new gust for punky types, but whether they've got their route planner at hand is another matter. **TC Wall**

## LITTLE BROTHER

### Champion The Underdog

Rouska **RR C** ●● 3/4 Mark Miwurdz, Craig Charles, Attila — you must all depart and make way for Little Brother, for he is king (John Cooper-Clarke, stick around). The Bard of Bradford hits out at everyone under the sun in this collection of poems, songs, and poem/song-style things. Unemployment, weather, game shows ('AND a girl in a bikini'), religion, BBC News, marriage, corporal punishment, and all aspects of life under the thumb of Big Sister attract Little Brother's scrutiny.

When 'Little old ladies behind lace curtains are linked to a central computer', it's mildly comforting to know that Little Brother is watching. **Robert Cohen**

## THE MILKSHAKES

### Live From Chatham

Hangman Records HANG-11 UP

**Re C** ●●● The Milkshakes were possibly the finest exponents of British rock 'n' roll to grace stages and vinyl in the earlier part of the decade.

The dynamism of their purist



**ICICLE WORKS** **Blind** Beggars Banquet IWA 2 ●● This LP is the second part of a series of three records, the first being the four track EP Numb, and the last part of which is another EP due out in three months. All this to avoid putting the whole lot out on a double album, presumably because no-one could stick them for four LP sides at one stretch! Just kidding. . . this is in fact a surprisingly varied and sensitively worked LP, particularly on the tracks that avoid overly heavy rock histrionics, like the lovely Little Girl Lost and the funky dancebeat of The Kiss Off (a Prince takeoff?).

Basically, this is a kind of exhibition piece, with the listener being taken in hand and led around to see what's on offer. On the negative side, this does occasionally make you wonder where you are, not knowing what's meant to be taken at face value and what isn't. After all, there's some pretty tacky metal and dramaticisms scattered throughout which demand you put a tongue in your cheek if you're going to accept it all. On the plus side, each track brings a new aspect, and the result is certainly never dull. **Carole Linfield**

artform coupled with their relentless enthusiasm made them a must live. This package goes a long way to proving that for posterity with a twanging, tasty 'n' trashy set dating from '83, and rounding up 14 nifty nuggets all bearing that unmistakable Milkshakes sound.

For the Milkshakes fan this is a more than satisfactory compliment to the collection whilst for the uninitiated I can't think of a better place to start. **Spike Sommer**

## THE MOSS POLES

### Shorn

Idea IDEALP 002 **PC** ● 2/3 After the inadequacies of their recent *Underground* single, The Moss Poles could have been the fastest sinking pop soufflé since Cava Cava (who?), but this debut album has a lot more in the brain cell department than those first few seconds suggest. Both sides start uptempo, thrashy and lyrically imbalanced but, as each progresses, a more intelligent songwriting style and some more refined performances roll out. The Moss Poles do have talent, they just need some better pacing. **Dave Henderson**

## PASSEPARTOUT

### Passepartout Live Empty Wien

PP1/1987 (Schellhamnergasse 3/24, A-1170 Wien) 1/2 A live LP from an unknown Austrian band has got to be of a limited appeal, particularly when that band is of a heavy, Germanic, rather ugly nature. Fortunately, the record is only live by name, since the sound and atmospheric are that of an average quality studio album. Some of the

ideas aren't bad, but the tracks outstay their welcome, all merging into a rather bloated whole, and the vocal gets too depressing to make continual listening worthwhile. **Carole Linfield**

## POESIE NOIRE

### Tetra

Antler 074 **RR C** ●● Through a series of one word titles, this minimal electronic dance outfit cultivate an infectious culture that's always capable of gnawing at your head. Poesie Noire have an urge to massage everyone's rhythm buds and, even though they occasionally stoop into dour-faced gothicism, emerge as a lovable conglomerate set on friendly persuasion. However, although this is state-of-the-art electronic dance music, the question of where the next step aims for is inevitably raised, and Tetra holds little in the way of answers. **TC Wall**

## THE PONTIAC BROTHERS

### Johnson

Frontier FLP 1026 (Box 22, Sun Valley, CA 91353, USA) ● 1/3 The Pontiacs' brand of new wave rock is like a Huey Lewis version of REM — somehow a little less credible than it should be, flourishing in a barrage of well-thumbed pop clichés. There aren't the distinctive songs here to make Johnson as coffee table as Lewis, just the gyrations from rock's hall of fame that many have already successfully blanched into a more tasty American pie. On the plus side it's a raunchier brand of rock radio, but in total, these brothers are the poor relation of Frontier's frontline. **Nick Brody**

continued over



### PORNOSECT

...Of Vibrations, Resonances And Divine Things

Produkt Korps PKLP 053 **RR C**

●● Subversive and minimalist rhythms that end up nagging at the back of your skull like a second hand migraine. Produkt Korps have the post-industrial pedigree, the pre-electronic beat and a simplistic approach to sound exploitation, and it's that approach to their work that allows them to be more refined and less frantic than a lot of their contemporaries. Unfortunately that neck brace numbing notation never really lets this albums-worth of beats really rip through. **TCWall**

### PSYCHE

Mystery Hotel

New Rose ROSE 145 **R** ●● 1/2 A Canadian duo, Psyche's brand of electronic extravagance hasn't really found a footing in this country. Always touted in the Depeche Mode school of thought, previous releases have always been short of zest and

commitment. Thankfully, this can't be said of Mystery Hotel. The ten tracks on offer here are pure, quintessential electronic pop with a heart and soul, and, more importantly, a beginning, middle and end. This hybrid of catchy, almost lightweight and fluffy tunes, along with harsher and beaty numbers, shows that the band can work from one extreme to another within the same medium, and still maintain a constant flow. Check it immediately. **Peter Mash**

### RATCAT Ratcat Waterfront

DAMP 66 **Sn** ●●● Ratcat are the curiosity that kills. The sound is Anglepoised scum rock but the beat is slow, the tempo full and the feel is deliberate glam punk rock. While the songs veer from the straight-forward to the downright perverse! Daughter Darling speaks for itself, She's Gone is the sound of a man whose cat will never come home again. And as for Car Crash, well...

"Sorry for the car crash, we hope you don't mind, we've killed all your loved ones and left their pieces behind!"

But best of all, Ratcat take their sense of fuzzy punk melody to the classic pop of I Think We're Alone Now and kick Tiffany's tail all the way from Sydney Harbour to the Golden Gate. Ratcat are go! **Holly Wood**

### RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY Nothing Wrong

Situation Two SITU 20 **RT C**

●● 1/4 Strangely, and thankfully, the Lorries manage to make their heavy-handed rock, a sometimes

dour and doomy genre, sound appealing and interesting. The vocal helps; its intonations are clear and full bodied, not droning and harsh. Best of all, though, the Lorries have put together here a fine collection of well thought out tracks which have a growing insistence and charming fatality about them. The beat is rock, intensely atmospheric but never deathly, and that's a tough balance to find. **Carole Linfield**



### SCREAM

Banging The Drum

Dischord 20 **SRD** ● 1/2 Last year's cult attention focused briefly on Scream, and their return to vinyl prominence suggests that they're hell bent on firming up their following. In an effort to appeal to a much wider audience the sound of Scream has veered away from the punkier aspects of their play, moving closer to a pop metal sound. There's still some raunch in there, but there are a lot of sub-standard metal clichés on show, the kind of thing that would be thrown off a Gillan And

Glover LP even. A touch twee with some climactic highpoints toppling over some shaky precipices. **Johnny Eager**

### SCREECHING WEASEL

Screeching Weasel

What Goes On **Sn**

● 1/2 Chicago's Screeching Weasel cling fast to punk rock attitudes. California Sucks, so does 7-11, Society, Sonic Youth. Cows rule, so does Ben's car and crap punk rebel anthems. They've got the inky fingers of *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll* enthusiasts but they're just too cuddly to be as challenging as hardcore demands. Their best splurge comes when they drop their attitude and get trashy. Their parody of Hüsker Dü, Experience The Ozzfish, is good and Murder In The Brady House is damn good. Oh, and that's Brady as in Greg Brady and the Brady Bunch, not Ian Brady. **Vachel Booth**

### SHACK zilch Ghetto

Recording Company/Epic GHETT

1 ●●● On first hearing this, LP, formed by the ex main men from the capricious Pale Fountains, appears to be lacking that affectionate punch. By the time it's spun round your turntable for the third or fourth occasion, however, it will be indispensable — you will wonder how you could ever have doubted its force.

While the brass and orchestration of the Fountains is less evident, the lyrics are far superior. At times humorous, like on the opening

## VINYL SOLUTION PRESENTS...

### THE CATERAN



LP — SOL 9

UK DATES IN MAY  
CHECK MUSIC PRESS  
FOR DETAILS

**NEW RELEASES:**  
THE MILK MONITORS  
"Dance With Me" 12" EP (VS-9)  
THE ABS  
"Turbosphinct" 12" EP (VS-7)

ALCOHOL-FREE ROCK 'N' ROLL



VINYL SOLUTION RECORDS  
DISTRIBUTED BY PINNACLE

**COMING SOON:**  
BOLT THROWER  
"In Battle There Is No Law" debut LP (SOL-11)  
PERFECT DAZE  
"Regular Jailbreak" new 12" EP (VS-11)

### HARD-ONS



LP — SOL 10

Still Available:  
HARD-ONS Compilation LP  
"Worst Of" (SOL 8)

Send S.A.E. to Vinyl Solution for free set of Hard-Ons Stickers

Vinyl Solution: 39 Hereford Road, London W2. Tel: 01-229 8010



Emergency — "What do you think of Mori polls? What do you think of Billy Cosby?" — or tearful as in the inner-city lament of Who Killed Clayton Square — "The town planners coming so terraces run for your life".

Oh, if only all LPs and comebacks could be as wonderful as this. Let it grow. I suggest you put the Morrissey and Woodentops LPs back on the shelf — save yourself a bit of cash and buy Zilch instead. **Johnny Dee**

## THE SMITHEREENS

**Green Thoughts** Enigma 8375-1

**RIS** ●● Gentle American guitar based pop with carefully arranged influences poking out. This quartet have a nice line in jaunty melancholia carefully wrapped in pop melody, which comes ready to savour. Despite hailing from New York, this is, as the title suggests, a pastoral affair, with the air on this LP being clean and the emotions fresh. Harder aspects, like the rockier *The World We Know*, works well too, showing off the band's clean lines, while *Especially For You* gets sincerely balladish and *Deep Black* is more like a transatlantic *Haircut 100*. Some may find it a little sickly, or even bland, but if you like your pop lush and sentimental, these are your men. **Carole Linfield**

## THE SPLATCATS

**Feelin' Bitchy**

Moving Target/Celluloid MT016

**RIS** ● 1/4 The Splatcats play good-guy rockin' music that's a little short on punch power, a little too straight to be downhome and a little too poppy to be rock. It's a unique sound that begs for really strong songs but there just aren't the tracks here. The group have some wild names — like, er, Shaggy Faust and Skeeter — but they're not lovable enough rogues to win through just yet. **Nick Brody**

**THE SURESHOTS** *Four To The Bar* ID NOSE 16 **RE C**

● 1/2 Accomplished, fairly gentle rockabilly from four Georgie boys, who have an appearance on *Saturday Live* behind them and surely plenty of acclaim in front. This is straight down the line stuff, there's no nonsense or any intervention with the tried and trusted formula, which of course also means there's nothing innovative. That's OK in itself, but personally I find this offering a trifle muted, lacking in atmosphere and drive, and occasionally (with *I'm Uneasy*) veering over onto the wrong side of MOR. Oh, it's foot tappin' stuff, best being the strummin' *Chinatown*, but with no real high kickers either. **Carole Linfield**

## TACTICS

**Holden Interview**

Red Flame RFM 55 **C**

● 3/4 Tactics aren't the easiest of Antipodeans. They have an accessible side, but within each song there's a kind of haunting folklore feel that makes the sleeve of this mini-album — sporting a bare chested desert nomad with a steer skull held up — a little yet more eerie. Close scrutiny of Tactics themselves reveals that they could all double as extras in a Stephen King film. Tactics' music has a rolling openness,

a soothing easiness that's like a mousetrap ready to slap closed on your ears. A thrill in every verse and a tasteful aftertaste too. **Dave Henderson**

## THIN WHITE ROPE

**Captain Long Brown Finger In**

**The Spanish Cave** Demon

Records FIEND 114 **RIS** ● 3/4 A lot of pretentious stuff has already been written about this Californian quartet, led by the enigmatic Guy Kyser. Their prolific output, released here under license from Frontier Records, has meant they've been acclaimed as first rate desert noisemakers, bringers of guitar induced frenzy and hard hitting rock 'n' roll. . . . Spanish Cave (is the title some smutty slang, or wot?) is a hit and miss affair, though, although when it does hit, like on the wee *Ahr-Skider*, or the gruff, countrified *Elsie Crashed The Party*, it certainly gets the nerve and pinches it tight. The rest is too overblown, being merely refried rock presented as a new dish. Perhaps a tad more quality control is in order; after all, less is more. **Carole Linfield**

## THE 3RD MAN

**Vienna**

**Underground '87** Wiener Meki

8708 (Ton Um Ton, Lindengasse

32, A-1070, Vienna, Austria)

● 3/4 A mixed bag from Austria, producing a range of ideas all found lurking round the post punk, sub Bauhaus school playground and all sung in English. Some tracks succeed, like the quirky *Morning Sun* by *Freak Weber & Die Sackratten*; others, like *Ronnie Urini's Catherine*, wallow in a rather doggy area that's gratuitous rather than sexy. Generally, there's a certain naivety and unsophistication, but occasionally (*Astaron's Little Girl Crying*, especially) that very simplicity makes it charming. The record comes with a booklet explaining all about the 13 bands featured here, too, if your German's up to scratch. **Carole Linfield**

## THE TRILOBITES

**Turn It**

**Around Live LP** Waterfront

DAMP 69 **SH** ●●● Some people, anthropologists mainly, contest that trilobites were primitive arthropods characterised by a three lobed body. If they were pushing their luck, those same people might even express the opinion that trilobites have been extinct for several million years. In Hurstville, New South Wales, lippy anthropologists are an endangered species on the very verge of extinction themselves.

Taking on the best aspects of the '60s (*Riot On Sunset Strip*) and the '70s (*White Riot*), *The Trilobites* have come up with a big beat bash which wraps Iggy's tongue round the *Small Faces'* tonsils, steals both *The Clash's* riffs, kicks *The Rolling Stones'* corporate arse all over the stage and generally does loads of good rock 'n' roll things. They're a riot. **Holly Wood**

## TOT TAYLOR

**Jumble Soul**

LPA TOTAL4 **RE C** ● 2/3 You can't deny that Tot Taylor is exceedingly good at writing quirky pop music, and he's a pretty prolific songwriter too. Compared to the



## STARS OF HEAVEN

**Stars Of Heaven**

**RIS C** ●●● OK, perhaps this is a little premature, but this debut album (they did a mini-thing last year) from Ireland's Stars Of Heaven is really something else. Following their first country-tinged steps into the contemporary music world with that *Clothes Of Pride* single, they've trodden a neatly defined Gram Parsons period Byrds groove, while adding a contemporary verve to their sound. The best part of all is their arrival at this chemical formula called pop. On this ten track set, the Stars opt for a sweet but succinct vocal style backed with some luscious melodies. *Stars Of Heaven*, even though they've created this mature sound, still radiate a youthful grandeur that bodes well for future exploits. For that, it's still an excellent LP, commercial, compelling and suggestive of yet more to come. **Dave Henderson**

singer/songwriter scrum consisting of Gilbert O'Sullivan, Billy Joel and Barry Manilow, Tot comes out as having a vibrant wit, if not the wherewithal to actually muscle his way through into daytime radio. *Jumble Soul* has a brace of worthy tracks that would brighten up the darkest DLT show; maybe this time around there'll be a gem in the jumble that'll shine through. **Nick Brody**

## VARIOUS The Fleshtones

**Present Time Bomb, The Big**

**Bang Theory** New Rose ROSE

137 **RIS** ●●● The Fleshtones in a series of incarnations, offshoots and disguises — under a string of names as diverse as *Action Dogs*, *The Mad Violets*, *Methedrine Ghosts*, *The Wild Hyenas* etc — presenting their own alternative listening guide. The end result is mighty stimulating and immensely diverse from track to track. Inevitably it's all tarred with that psychedelic hue, but there's more than enough sidesteps to make cuts like *The Mad Violets' Come Out And Play* sound as spine-tingling good as it does. **Dave Henderson**

## VARIOUS ARTISTS F\*\*\*

**Or F\*\*\* Off** Waterfront DAMP 67

**SH** ●● 1/2 The fourth sampler/compilation from possibly the best label bar none, FOFO is the hardest rock hump since the last one. But, just to confound your expectations, it opens up with a slowly swelling strummed piece, *Elizabeth's Father* by Glass. But from then on in, it's time to damn the torpedoes and hold on to your hairpiece.

*Primal Scream*, *Decline Of The Reptiles*, *Ratcat*, *Pummellsloth*, *Asylum*, *The Hellmenn* and the mighty, mighty *Hard Ons* all have different ideas about the optimum nature and speed of sound, but one thing's for sure, they all know how many beans make five. **Waterfront**,

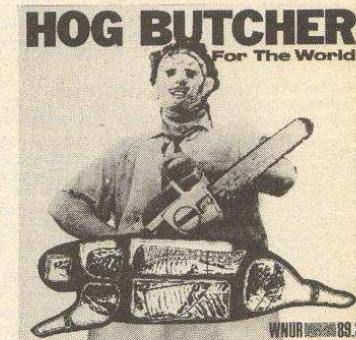
who regularly send us life-saving Red Cross parcels full of this monster, monster sound, are hot. **Holly Wood**

## VARIOUS

**Garage Kings And Junkyard Angels**

*Waterfront* WF 039 ● 1/2 "The only common denominator is the real spirit of rock and roll."

Not quite: the real spirit is present on five tracks here, but distinctly lacking on the remaining five. Half good; the *Cannibals* get groovy, *Russian Roulette* Jack adds scuz to a *Stones'* cover, *Wilko Johnson R&Bs* a Dylan number, *The Cobras* go twang with *Duane Eddy's Shazam* and *The Beatitudes* start mournful and end up rocking out to nice effect. The rest are too watery, lacking the necessary edge. They end up sounding tame. *Rhythm 'n' blues/rock 'n' roll* can be great and it can also be a real strain to listen to. This is the evidence, and on vinyl no less. **Daz Igy meth**



## VARIOUS

**Hog Butcher For The World**

*Mad Queen* LP87-001 **SH** ●● A sporadic selection from Chicago with little more than a place name tying these 13 combos together. There's something to whet the appetite for sure, from *God's Acre*, *Sapphires*, *Bloodsport et al*, and some wayward alternatives from

# listomania

## FOR AGAINST FIVE

- |                                     |                     |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 DEMO TAPE <i>Red Temple</i>       | Spirits             |
| 2 DEMO TAPE <i>Shiva</i>            | Burlesque           |
| 3 CRASH <i>The Primitives</i>       | Lazy 45             |
| 4 SONIC FLOWER <i>Primal Scream</i> | Elevations LP       |
| 5 RESIN <i>Abecedarians</i>         | South West Audio LP |

Compiled by Jeff Runnings from the hottest tracks in Lincoln, Nebraska

## KWUR FIVE HEAVY PLAYS

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| 1 HOUSE OF FREAKS <i>House Of Freaks</i>   | Rhino       |
| 2 FORTY FORTY <i>Blue Hippos</i>           | Twin/Tone   |
| 3 SMOKER'S PARADISE <i>Breaking Circus</i> | Homestead   |
| 4 BAD MOOD GUY <i>Severed Heads</i>        | Nettwerk    |
| 5 MARK STEWART <i>Mark Stewart</i>         | Mute/Upside |

Compiled by KWUR, Washington University

## EURO-ELECTRONIC BEAT

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| 1 THE HOUSE OF UNKINDS <i>The Fair Sex</i> | Last Chance |
| 2 I Von Magnet                             | Sculptured  |
| 3 REJEKTO <i>Robotiko Rejekto</i>          | TDI         |
| 4 LACK OF SENSE <i>Tribantura</i>          | TDI         |
| 5 SICKNESS TAKIN' OVER <i>Pankow</i>       | TDI         |

Compiled by Mickey at 101

## ANDY KERSHAW'S TOP FIVE VINYL ARTEFACTS

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| 1 SIYA KUBONGA <i>The Holy Spirits Choir</i>                            | Gallo            |
| 2 TEN WHEELS FOR JESUS <i>Elvis Hitler</i>                              | Wanghead Records |
| 3 YOU'VE GOT MY MIND MIXED UP <i>James Carr</i>                         | Blueside Records |
| 4 UCHANDIFUNGA <i>The Four Brothers</i>                                 | Gamma Records    |
| 5 ANDY KERSHAW'S GREAT MOMENTS OF VINYL HISTORY VOLUME 1 <i>Various</i> | Special Delivery |

## CKLN SINGLES AND EP PLAYLIST

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| 1 B BOY DESTRUCTION <i>Ron Nelson</i>                          | Peace Posse            |
| 2 I GOT THE FEAR <i>Meat Beat Manifesto</i>                    | Sweatbox               |
| 3 OUR SIR FRANCIS TO THE SEA <i>Our Sir Francis To The Sea</i> | Utility Grade          |
| 4 THE CRUMBL <i>Lydia Lunch/Thurston Moore</i>                 | Widowspeak/Rough Trade |
| 5 MISSION OF BURMA <i>Mission Of Burma</i>                     | Taang                  |

Compiled by CKLN from an on air survey

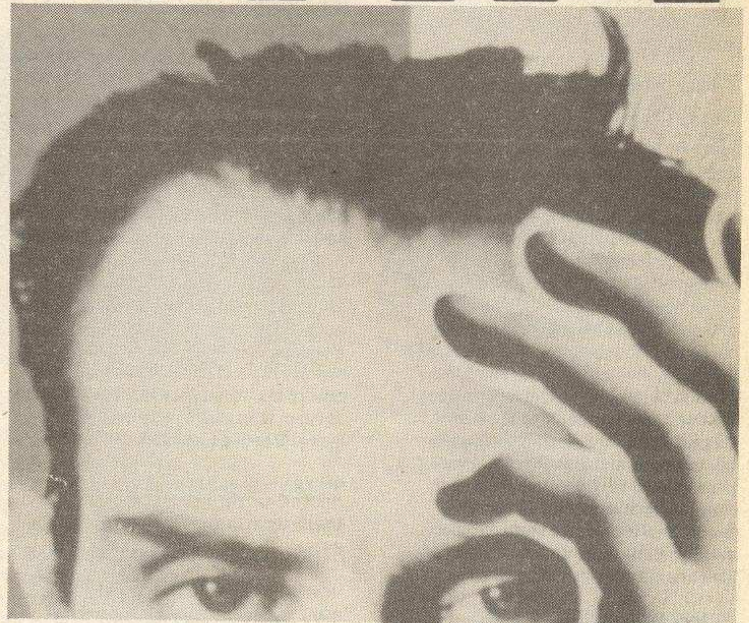
# UG STORE GUIDE

Not only can *Underground* be purchased from your local newsagent, but the following discerning record shops can also supply you with a copy. No browsing thru now . . .

- BEAT ROUTE, 5A High Street, Congleton, Cheshire
- CAPTURED RECORDS, 130 St Stephen Street, Edinburgh
- EAR 'ERE RECORDS, 14 Market Entrance, Lancaster
- THE EUROPEAN SON, Unit F1, Kensington Market, 49-53 Kensington High Street, London W8
- GRIP RECORDS, Savoy Centre, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow
- HENDERSON'S THE VINYL WORLD, Fore Street Centre, Fore Street, Exeter
- JUMBO RECORDS, 402 Merrion Centre, Leeds
- THE LEFT LEGGED PINEAPPLE, 24 Churchgate, Loughborough
- MAGIC MIXTURE RECORDS, 31 Bedford Hill, Balham, London SW12
- MOVEMENT, Unit 7, Banbury Trading Post, Banbury, Oxon
- 1 UP, 4 Diamond Street, Aberdeen
- THE OOZE, 2190 W. Burnside Street, Portland, Oregon 97210, USA
- PICCADILLY RECORDS, 9 Parker Street, Piccadilly Plaza, Piccadilly, Manchester
- RAINBOW RECORDS, 80 Wyle Cop, Shrewsbury, Shropshire
- ROCK-A-BOOM RECORDS, 17 Malcolm Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FT
- ROCK SHOP, Strandem 1, Oslo, Norway
- ROUGH TRADE, 130 Talbot Road, London W11
- SELECTA DISC, 21 Market Street, Nottingham
- SIGNALS RECORDS AND TAPES, Shop Unit One, Cornhill Exch. Bldg, Cornhill, Lincoln
- SOUNDS AROUND, Rue Ecole De Medecine 6, 1205 Geneva, Switzerland
- SOUND WAVES, 18 Church Street, Monmouth, Gwent
- VIRGIN MEGASTORE, 14 Oxford Street, London W1
- VIRGIN RECORDS, 527 Oxford Street, London W1
- ZIPPO MUSIC, 39 Clapham Park Road, London SW4

And if you're an *extremely* badhead record emporium and you're not on this list • Get wise! • Word out (and up). Telephone Eric Fuller on 01-387 6611 and we'll make it easy for you (and make you some cash).

# WIN



# Murp

Yes, you've read the interview, you've heard the rumours, now win the LP! Your super, soaraway *Ug* has ten personally graffitied Peter Murphy Love Hysteria albums to give away to the first ten readers who can answer this question correctly:

Which of the following did Peter Murphy break in 1982? Was it a) His knee caps b) The world record for gurning or c) The sound barrier?

Answers on a postcard to *Underground/Murph Competition*, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1 7QZ, to arrive by May 10 — and there's a bonus picture CD for the first correct entry to arrive!

Those nice boys from The Shamen have given *Underground* five autographed mega mix 12-inch versions of their latest single *Knature Of A Girl* to give away. And those are just for the runners up, the overall winner gets a specially packaged *Shamen* Johnny Bag containing a host of Shamen goodies and paraphernalia (poster, badge, records, T shirt etc AND a copy of the exceptionally saucy *Knature Of A Girl* porno montage vid!) all put together exclusively for *Ug*! All ya gotta do is answer this vital question set by the band themselves: French author George Bataille wrote one of the most famous porno/sensual novels of the century. What nationality was he? Crazy guys huh?!! Answers to reach us no later than May 10 at *Underground/Shamen Competition*, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London, NW1 7QZ.



# The Shamen

some of the assembled teamsters. Big Black put in an appearance but it's live and premature, while others offer more intense, if less rounded, material. In total, Hog Butcher has a few names that are worth following up and is a good way to sample Chicago without spending out for the airfare. **Nick Brody**



**VARIOUS Hommage A**

**Duras Interior Music IMO11 RR C ●●¼** Always in danger of becoming amazingly pretentious, this Richard Jobson-motivated compilation centres around the writings of Marguerite Duras, but there isn't enough information present to tempt the semi-interested into the provocative soundscapes that are woven by Jobson, The Durutti Column, Winston Tong and Dislocation Dance. This is a very nice album, relaxing, viciously grand and expansive, but as to the whats and wherefores of Duras... well, your guess is as good as mine. **Dave Henderson**

**VARIOUS**

**The Idea Compilation**

**Idea LP3 P ●●●** That WEA should close this potentially lucrative label exercise now that it's grasped label motivators Chappell Publishing to its overpowering bosom is nothing short of criminal. The big label short sightedness once again strangles creativity at birth, and what was a great idea hasn't been allowed the chance to mature.

This catch-all compilation features all the acts on the label, focusing on songwriting (and some pretty dynamic methods of delivery). Automatic Dlamini, Jack Rubies, Wolfhounds, Wallflowers et al can quite justifiably expect some measure of success, but it's doubtful whether WEA will get many thank yous! **Dave Henderson**

**VARIOUS**

**Scream, The Compilation**

Geffen 924 177-1 ● A batch of bands that've been ranted about, to varying degrees of God-like status. These ten of LA's finest, however, prove to be amazingly one dimensional, lacklustre and lacking in original ideas. That the sleeve says thanks to The Cult in no uncertain terms shows which alley this is down, and few of these scrambling combos have the brains to miss the end of the tunnel — with all that pompous guitar. Of note is Francis X And The Bushmen, but on the negative side there's too little of a good thing and a few questions that need answering. Prime pig in the poke is Jane's Addiction and their Pigs In Zen... it's old fashioned and drab, yet JA have been heralded as something new in LA. Well, hey, compared to The Beach Boys I suppose they are! **Dave Henderson**

**VARIOUS**

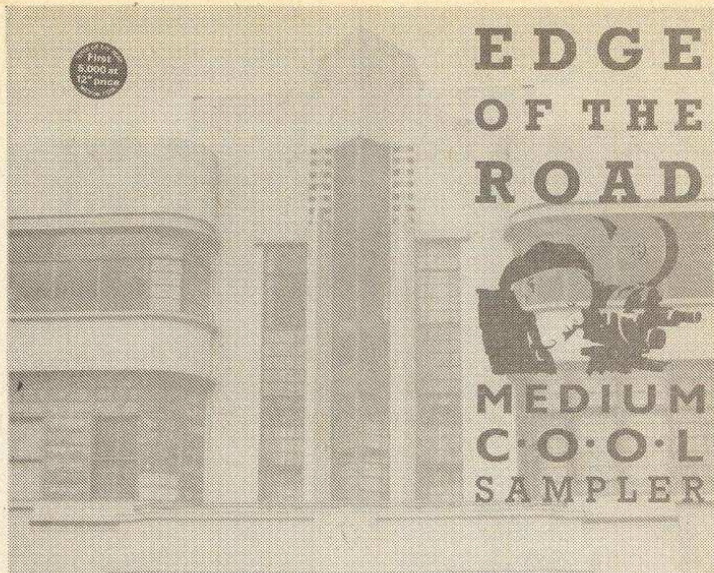
**Stomping At The Klub Foot Volume 5**

**ABC LP15 P ●●** There's something in the irreverent geared-up thunder of the bands, who make up volume five of this credible series, that really brings the whole spirit of modern day rockabilly and this kind of show into context. This is hi-power beat music, cover versions liberally thrown in for good measure, with the onus being on fun and tireless frivolity. This is a motivating, riotous platter with hot-footing wails from Skitzo, Long Tall Texans, Fractured, The Highliners, Sergeant Bilko's Crazy Combo, Shark Bait and Get Smart. **Johnny Eager**

**VARIOUS**

**Themes From The '60s**

**Waterloo Sunset WSR 002 P ●½** I wanted to be bowled over by this album — a mis-match of '60s TV themes by a selection of Sunsets — but there's just not enough here. The great bonus about '60s culture was the variety of musical styles and the creation of dynamic material; unfortunately this album is flat and totally one-dimensional. It all sounds like it was recorded by one group of sessioneers in a couple of days. There are a couple of highpoints, most notably Eleanor Rigby's You Only Live Twice, but there's a lot here that's instant miss material. **Dave Henderson**



**VARIOUS Edge Of The Road Medium Cool MC010S RR C**

●●● A cheap-at-the-price collection from the boys at Medium Cool that'll give every discerning cowpoke the chance to hear how we do it in the UK. For their sins, The Corndollies, Raw Herbs, Waltones and The Rain show what's best about guitar pop, while still managing to keep the melodies sweet and the rhythms instinctive. Medium Cool's part of the plan shows that they may still be in their infancy but they're more than capable of producing the sounds of the big boys. A vital collection that'll only marginally set you back, but set you up forever. **Dave Henderson**

**ANDY WHITE**

**Kiss The Big Stone**

**London ●●¾** The new album from the sole non-classical, non-dead occupant of the Decca label is by turns sad and funny, like his first one. But it lacks the downhill-train momentum of the Rave On songs, despite the presence of guest musicians such as The Attractions' Pete and Bruce Thomas. Widened influential horizons and intriguing aural tricks can't quite make up for this deficiency.

However, I've been listening to it for a couple of weeks now, and despite its flaws it's still brilliant. To quote those old Stiff labels, BUY IT. **Robert Cohen**

Live Without My Radio and on into new uncharted territory.

Highlights are their cover of Funky Town, in its own way as classic as the original; Ghetto Queen, which is so mangled it makes you think the machine has gone wrong (and so short you want to go back and start it again) and Bullitt Man, which is interstellar R & B for a new generation of noise fanatics.

Let's Play Domination — as much guitar as one record can stand. Everybody join in. **Christopher Mellor**

**ZERO KAMA**

**The Secret Eye of LAYLAH**

**Permis De Construire PER009** (26 rue St Julien, 54000 Nancy, France) ● Now, the thigh bone's connected to the... xylophone, the skull cap's connected to the... well, here's another mystical set of thigh bone tooting, skull thumping mysticism that's so intensely thought out that it leaves nothing to the listener's imagination or integrity. You can bet this guy never stands on the cracks in pavements. **Brad Manson**

**UNDERGROUND spiraling the plastic shards**

Behold the Underground Educational Entertainment Program, presenting two classic albums... Sure, you'll have to pay the staggering price of £3 a throw, but these are classics (no kidding)...

Albums are £3 each including postage (make cheques to Spotlight Publications) and are available from **Underground, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1 7QZ.**

**VOLUME ONE**  
Wire: Tapped  
Wire/Underground



with tracks from **The Leather Nun, Thirteen Moons, Man Klan, Sing Sing And The Crime, Master Twins, Dirty Work Work, All That Jazz, Tony Curtis and Houses And Gardens**

**VOLUME TWO**  
Ashes And Diamonds  
Ink/Red Flame/Underground



with tracks from **The Room, Phillip Boa And The Voodoo Club, The Moodists, Tactics, Ruby Blue, Patrik Fitzgerald, Slab!, C-Cat Trance, Charles Hayward, Pinkie MacLure, Severed Heads and Anne Clark**

TOWER RECORDS

## OVER 2,500 ROCK TITLES IN STOCK

TOWER HAS THE WIDEST SELECTION  
OF INDIE AND ALTERNATIVE TO  
BE FOUND ANYWHERE

SOVIET FRANCE

CRASS

M.D.C.

SLAB!

HEAD OF DAVID

A: GRUMH

POISON IDEA

SUBHUMANS

JACK DAW  
WITH CROWBAR

CHRISTIAN DEATH

BLACK FLAG

FLUX OF  
PINK INDIANS

PIXIES

THE METEORS

SUGAR CUBES

COCTEAU TWINS

METALLICA

SMITHEREENS

THE SMITHS

NEW ORDER

ERASURE

BIG BLACK

SONIC YOUTH

MONSTER

A GO GO  
(VARIOUS)

WHETHER IT'S ROCK, POP CLASSICS, JAZZ OR ANY OTHER CATEGORY, TOWER HAS OVER 1/2 MILLION TITLES TO CHOOSE FROM - 7 DEPARTMENTS  
SITUATED IN THEIR OWN ENVIRONMENTS - KNOWLEDGEABLE AND HELPFUL STAFF - THE LARGEST SELECTION OF IMPORTS ANYWHERE IN THE U.K.  
MAIL ORDER 01-434 2500

# TOWER RECORDS

Nº1 PICCADILLY CIRCUS W1 - 62-64 KENSINGTON HIGH STREET

# Schizo phrenia and sexuality

## The Sugarcubes on just why Life's Too Good! (the second time around)

Alex Kadis, for news at Ug, Iceland

The Sugarcubes are sitting cross-legged round a small tray of alcohol, matches and cigarettes, in the very centre of a large and characterless white room. They're bracing themselves for *yet another* interview, reconciling themselves to the impending questions of *yet another* "enquiring" journalist, with *yet another* bunch of nicely rounded preconceptions. They have, they insist, been prime victims of creative writing; no sooner had The Sugarcubes emerged than the press were hot on the story of a handful of Icelandic eccentrics/perverts. Well, we shall see. . .

Now with their debut LP *Life's Too Good* hatching on *One Little Indian*, the 'Cubes are front cover fodder once again. The first surge came as the band acquired that most supreme of accolades; recognition and a strong position in both the alternative and mainstream charts. Granted, it's a frequent occurrence in our present clime, but nevertheless, it's still a fantasy for the many left dreaming. An accident, maybe, but a fortunate one at that and not to be sniffed at, so how did it happen along The Sugarcubes' path?

Einar (trumpet and vocals): "You answered the question for us in the beginning. A lot of bands have dreamed of doing this. We have never dreamed of doing this. We don't have any expectations of doing this so everything that comes along our way is just fine."

Björk (singer): "You wouldn't be able to take this unless you realised that this is nothing to make a fuss over. Basically, it's like we are living two lives."

Which, then, is the reality?

Björk: "The lives we live here in England as The Sugarcubes is not real. It's totally different to the lives we live in Iceland. The Atlantic Ocean has helped us to keep a line between those two lives. I'd like it in print that we are very grateful to the Atlantic Ocean, we have a lot to thank it for!"

As is the case with almost every potential prodigy, the public at large sought the oddball element in the band and the A&R men consulted the curve of demand and supply, and here, at long last, was the perfect pop machine, uninformed, naive and without the essential contacts! Except that The Sugarcubes weren't as easily duped as one would have hoped and they weren't about to play ball. The band reckon it's all to do with levels of acceptance and expectation.

Sigtryggur (drummer): "We're not naive. We aren't at all business minded but we know what's going on."

Björk: "It wouldn't be a realistic view of the world if you thought that you didn't have to know about the business side of things. It's just like admitting to yourself that you need a certain amount of food every day."

Einar: "I can't understand where people get this idea about The Sugarcubes. They're expecting ten or 20 songs like Birthday when we play and they don't get that. They're expecting us to be a band who are striving to make very good pop songs but that's not our intention. I'll show you what it says my profession is on my passport and then perhaps you'll understand more." He opens his passport on the relevant page. It reads: OCCUPATION — MASS COMMUNICATOR.

"That," he says proudly, "is my profession."

I put it to the band that it may have been the essential childlike quality of their songs and their personalities which initially fuelled the misconceptions which they now disdain.

Björk: "Yes, but it's our choice. It's the way we want to keep it. To keep this feeling you have as a kid of playing games. If you lose you lose. I don't exactly know how to describe it but we are *playing*."

And the game goes on, strongly reflected in their deceptively simple music. Its guttural utterances and nursery rhyme antics only have an adult intention if the listener is more in tune with a state of experience rather than innocence, and the choice is left to the individual.

Sigtryggur: "That's probably the nicest comment we've had in a long time! Yes, our music can be for grown ups or for little children depending upon how much of the child you have left within you."

Einar: "No. There is no child within us, Björk is the only one who can have a child within her because she is female. We can have half a child!"

Thor: "No, more than that! We can have a whole kindergarten full of children within us."

I figure that this is either an example of Icelandic humour or a taste of the warped sense of logic which has given The Sugarcubes their reputation for odd profundity! Either way, it is from such statements that press weirdos are created.

Björk: "Oh, yes, everyone was looking for these mad Icelandic weirdos. We can do lots of crazy things if you like. Do you want us to behave like weirdos? We're not really up to it at the moment but we could try!"

I decline and instead settle for further conversation.

Björk: "Yes, that's something else that people expect of The Sugarcubes, they think that I am the front person."

Well, it's a common enough mistake, there are a few male bands with female vocalists who soon become focalists. Although The Sugarcubes realise that they fell victim to the same fate at first they're determined to put a stop to it now.

Björk: "You wouldn't believe how stupid and narrow minded people have been with regards to that. I am not the one who makes all the decisions in the group and I don't write all the songs."

Thor: "We're not her backing group. We don't use the girl's looks to make easy money."

This takes us conveniently on to The Sugarcubes' favourite topic of the day, sex. Einar clearly perks up, his waning attention revitalised!

Einar: "Sex, yes, let's talk about sex. No, let's *practise* sex!"

It's agreed that The Sugarcubes refuse to play up the more obvious elements of their sexuality. Björk's position in the scheme of things has already been settled and the boys deny themselves the lip-glossed-pouting which their natural good looks would so easily afford.

Sigtryggur: "It's just too obvious, isn't it?"

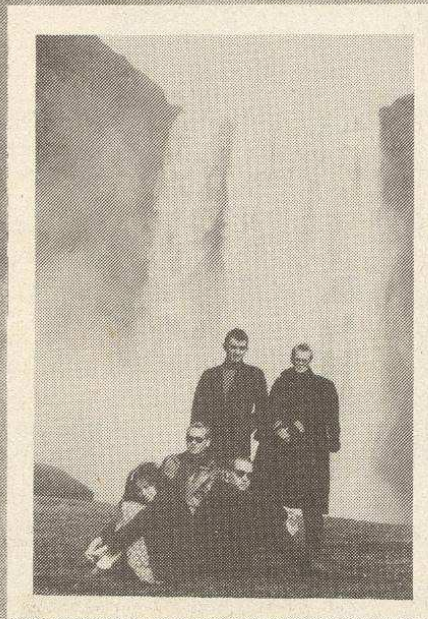
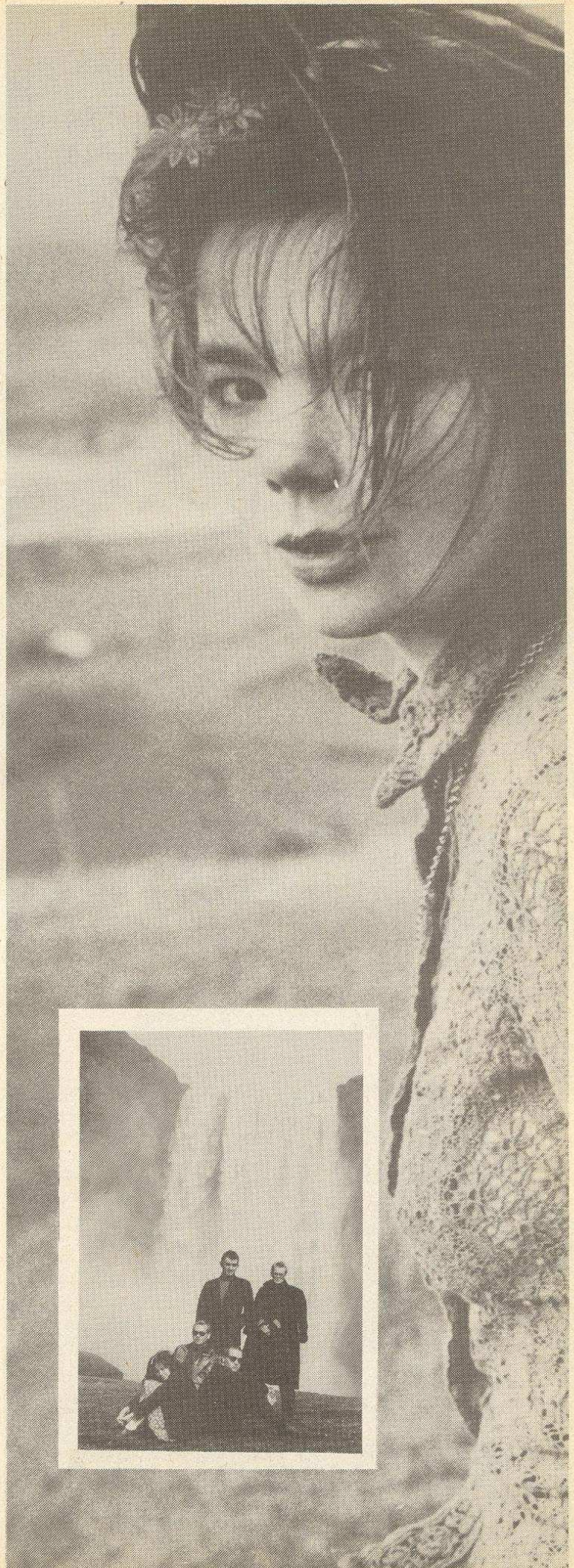
Einar: "It's not *sexual* with The Sugarcubes. It's *sensual*, it always will be sensual. Sexuality is a governing force but not sensuality. It's not something *dirty*. I could never understand why people liked having their toes licked when they are having sex. It must be something to do with their sexuality."

Björk: "But it's like so many people ask me about the eroticism of Birthday (their splendidly sexy first hit). I find it very difficult to be honest, to draw the line between what's erotic and what's sexual and what isn't. Einar was just stroking the carpet and it made shivers up my spine, it was very erotic. But it could have been done in a very clumsy, ugly way. Anything can be erotic, even farting. I once read a book on farting and it was the most erotic book I've ever read!" How very strange. . .

Einar: "No, not at all. It's like once, Bragi (absent member of the band) and I were in Spain and — and now you get another profound quote! — I said to him, 'I think that between a man and a woman, farting is better than f\*\*\*ing.' Because if you like that person's fart then you love that person. Rape is done by the act of intercourse. F\*\*\*ing doesn't mean it's love. How can you rape a person by farting? You can't! You must, therefore, love a person if you can accept their fart, therefore, when you are liking that person's fart it is better than f\*\*\*ing."

"And to add to that, there was this English guy who was listening to us and he started to talk about the time he had a serious case of diarrhoea in India! I was talking about this concept and he thought I was talking about shitting."

And therein lies the crux.



Cubism gone mad!

# Blue Monday

## Mix Master

### THE NEW ORDER INTERVIEW REMIX (A 'dub' feature)

**"We had one letter recently from a fan that asked, 'Who is the geezer called Dub that you keep mentioning? Who is Mr Dub?'. We all had a good laugh about that one, I can tell you."** (*Peter Hook, March 1988*)

They have gone and done it now. How can a band continue to be regarded as an 'alternative' when they employ Quincy Jones to remix their finest moment? If you have any doubt that New Order are presently surging into the international big league, then consider this. At the time when U2's *War* was invading the bedrooms of America, their manager, Paul McGuinness, bumped into New Order's Svengali, Rob Gretton, in a Stateside hotel.

"He was ecstatic," says Gretton now, "... because U2 had just sold over half a million albums over there. Now I look at *Substance* and that has sold even more."

Indeed. Anything can happen this year. As Joy Division are unleashed on a mainstream audience for the first time, New Order are reluctantly competing with the likes of Heart and Fleetwood Mac. The idea to 'Americanise' Blue Monday by allowing the precision genius of Quincy Jones to squeeze the song into a seven inch format is a concerted attack on the all important American singles chart. But the remix is to be released over here as well. Complete with a sparkling new video, Blue Monday is expected to fly into the top five. Factory boss Tony Wilson, incidentally, is hoping for a number one.

The flip side of the Blue Monday Remix is the Remix, Remix. Which may be taking things a little too far but at least it has provided the inspiration for this little feature. After all, this band, New Order, take great pride in their skill to remake, rehash, remodel and rejuvenate their sounds. So why not us? If Quincy Jones is allowed to twiddle about with a piece of supreme British underground history, than I'm damn sure that we can have a mess about as well. Nothing in the world of the remix is sacred. However, I hasten to add, everything featured here is taken from first hand experience.

New Order are, arguably, the greatest white dance band of all time. Mind you, they had one hell of a head start. This unique advantage went by the name of Joy Division. This feature remix begins, bravely, with an incident that adequately sums up the unique intensity of Joy Division, the band who were to provide the solid base for the New Order phoenix.



Backstage in New York in '83

# Monday er

by Dubmaster Mick Middles

## MAY 1979

The Factory Club nestles dangerously beneath the daunting shadows of valium city. (Actually, the Hulme estate, Manchester. A less than charming complex that at the time boasted the highest suicide rate in Europe. A fitting place indeed for Tony Wilson and cohorts to lay the groundwork for the image-conscious empire of Factory Records.) Attending a gig at The Factory involves a certain amount of personal danger. This danger becomes very real for one young lad, though he isn't attacked, mugged or sold a bag of dried privet leaves (like me). He is hit by an escaping taxi. In this collision, his arm is broken. However, despite being in severe pain he refuses to go to hospital until he has been in the venue to witness the performance by his favourite band, Joy Division. When told of this incident later in the evening, Joy Division singer Ian Curtis merely shrugs in disbelief and walks blankly backstage. The incident is swiftly forgotten.

## JULY 1983

We sit on the roof of The Paradise Garage, New York. Inside the club, in five hours time, New Order will pump dance rhythms into the audience, who are surely the most sussed dance audience in the world. Barney will sneer at the crowd and hurl words like 'Boring' 'Apathetic' and 'Lackadaisical' in their direction. He will introduce the band's sparkling new pulsebeat single, Confusion, with the words, "This is one for all you Funhouse bastards". (The Funhouse being the city's premier hip hop nightspot.) The relationship between band and country in general will seem strained, to say the least.

There's a similar attitude problem taking part in the blistering heat on this roof at the moment. Gillian Gilbert and Steve Morris have surrendered to the sun and lie in one corner, oblivious to the rooftop commotion. At the centre of this activity, as always, sits the supremely disinterested Rob Gretton. A *Rolling Stone* photographer, complete with umbrella and three stooges, is attempting to get Gretton to round the band up for a photo shot.

"Aw... piss off and let me sunbathe," moans Gretton, apparently unconcerned about missing out on a colour photo spread for the massively influential organ.

"Well, the singer said he'd pose for us at least," squeals the photographer. But Barney, typically, has sauntered off in search of an orange juice. The photographer is clearly desperate and he points towards me.

"You. Will you pretend to be in New Order? Nobody knows what they look like anyway."

"Rob, Rob, there's a man from Geffen on the phone. He says it's very urgent," screams the tour manager Ruth Polsky.

"Oh, tell him to sod off as well. I'm on holiday, you know." Gretton relaxes and all around him lies chaos, total chaos.

## DECEMBER 1985

We lounge in Yellow Two Studios, Stockport. The throbbing from the studio downstairs (actually their single, Shellshock) is barely interrupted by the noises emanating from the television set. Steve, Gillian, Rob, and Hookey are slurping away at the champagne while watching a run through of the band's newest Ikon video, *Pumped Full Of Drugs*. The band are talking about technology. . . . Actually, that's not strictly true. The band are laughing about technology or, at least, their attitude towards it. Techno wizard Steve Morris explains.

"We shot this video at a live gig in Japan. It was hilarious because the Japanese have this incredibly complex attitude towards the use of technology. They think that if it's been invented then they must use it. Now that is really the opposite of the New Order attitude. Of course we embrace technology but, quite often, in a very simple, childlike way. We use it to suit ourselves. In Japan we wanted to film this video on a single camera with no effects or anything. We kept trying to make the Japanese shoot it through an ordinary surveillance camera, that's all it would have needed, but, oh no, they turned up with all this mass of complex equipment, all of which was a complete waste of time."

Downstairs, in the studio, American producer John Robie wrestles with the highly complex mixing desk and attempts to pin down the song called Shellshock.

Later, in the studio foyer, a weary Barney attempts to speak about the high technology factor within New Order's music.

"We never, ever use tapes live."

You do, I tell him.

"We don't," he states adamantly, "We use sequencers, not tapes."

Sequencers then. I've seen them carry on after you have left the stage.

"You can't ignore technology and, more importantly, you've still got to play these things. It really doesn't matter if you play a Fairlight or a saw. It's the tune that matters. A strong melody was always the most important thing, and always will be. However easy it is to play, you have still got to produce that melody. That's the art."

Flashback to 1983 where, by the side of a Washington swimming pool, Steve Morris touches upon the same subject.

"Of course we love experimenting with machines. We used to leave the sequencers running after we'd left the stage just to wind the American audiences up. It always gets them, that one. They thought we were cheating, but in a sense we were being more honest. All bands use tapes of some sort on stage. We just don't see why we should cover it up."

Blue Monday initially entered the British singles chart in March 1983. The impact of the record was deadened somewhat by the band's insistence on playing it live on *Top Of The Pops*. It sounded dreadful.

Peter Hook: "I don't know about that. We would have felt silly miming and we always felt more comfortable playing live. Nowadays, we just laugh at all the bands on *Top Of The Pops* and *The Roxy*. When we played True Faith live, everyone was in awe of us. It did give us a tremendous feeling of supremacy, really."

## DECEMBER 1987

By accident I find Rob Gretton lurking in the background at an Alison Moyet gig. He is strangely jovial but what, I swiftly ask, on earth is he doing here?

"Er. . . I can't tell you. . . er, can I? No. I can't possibly tell you what I'm doing here."

Whatever the reason it takes Alison four songs to send myself and Gretton into the pub at the back of the venue. I ask him if he enjoys the trappings of band management as much now that New Order are entering the big league.

"I suppose not. I think I am looking for a way out really. The trouble is that you always need more money. I'd like to move into architecture. To build beautiful buildings in Manchester. Like The Hacienda but from the outside. Tony (Wilson) has the same dream as well. To build something solid and worthwhile. But in order to do that then we are going to have to make an awful lot more money. It's a never ending cycle. We can't do this forever, can we? I do enjoy some of the aspects of, say, touring though. I own an Audi Quattro but I don't like driving so Hookey takes over. On European tours he just takes control. He's good, he would have been a racing driver had he not fallen into this. The rest of the band are too scared to come with us, they take the tour bus. But we break records through France. We constantly outrun patrol cars. Hookey reckons it's the best road car in the world."

## MARCH 1988

New Order are fronted by the most disinterested, apathetic, cynical anti-performer in the history of rock 'n' roll. Barney Sumner. A highly creative and intelligent songwriter, certainly, but the most reluctant pop star ever to yawn in front of an audience. Outside of his craft, Barney has little to say. Why should he say anything? For promotion? This is where we meet New Order's Catch 22. Barney is interested in houses and cars. In order to pursue this dual interest to the full he has to continue his job. He has got to, reluctantly, agree to the remix of Blue Monday. But so far, Barney, Hookey and the whole damn crew have merely dipped their toes in the whirlpool of American superstardom. Should that record succeed in hurling this band into the full, violent hyperbole of true international mainstream success, then reality could begin to fade. At this point we could lose New Order forever. It's frightening really. Bring on the llamas.



New Order's classic rockist pose



Discjockeys, record columnists and record programmes get early greetings to keep the public in touch with the latest releases.

### ALTERED STATES Lowlife

Ediesta **RR C** Faceless goth monster that waddles into oblivion without managing a gear change. Cumbersome and not cute. **NB**

### ANTHONY ADVERSE The Red

Shoes Waltz **EI P** An exquisite confection that's straight from the "babedah" filmic soundtrack style of, say, *Breakfast At Tiffany's* or the latter day Fonda/Redford *Barefoot In The Park*. Horns run wild, harmonies keep it clean and AA holds it together with a sweet vocal line. **DH**

### AMBASSADOR 277 The Pop

Up Man **EI P** Slurpy brass-riddled pop from this energetic trio of would-be radio stars. The

# SINGLES

strength lies in the verse/chorus play off that would unashamedly trounce any Eurovision competitor (Sandie Shaw included). **DH**

### APPLE BOUTIQUE Love

Resistance Creation **RT C** An ex-Servant/Biff, Bang Pow!/Felt person formed AB, and it would be nice to report that the shifting, whispering pop of Love Resistance was reminiscent of the potential of that triad. But no, there's a commercial edge that's frolicking but weeping. The Ballad Of Jet Harris on the flip has charisma though. **BC**

### AWARE! EP Double Trouble

**SH** A six track EP from this American outfit. They start slow and moody but thrash into the inevitable metallic show of aggression. Somehow you can't help but feel they'll be doing better than this in a couple of months or so. **DH**

### A WITNESS One Foot In The Groove Ron Johnson

**NM C** Allegedly moving closer to a hard dancefloor sound, A Witness still bear enough of the raggedy, dog-eared trademarks to impress the tattered jacket brigade. This kind of music has always been cumbersome, if reasonably endearing, but where next for A? **JE**

### EDWARD BARTON Belly Box Brother Gob Wooden

**RR C** Four more versions of terminal tragedy from this singing lampost (in turmoil). Barton's an eccentric and he takes joy in colouring English life into a piece of patchwork paranoia that's understandably left-field. **BM**

### BLOOD ORANGES Beautiful Thing The Great Purge (150

Queen Alexandra Mansions, Judd Street, London WC1) Pert jangly stuff with a classic construction and some mighty melodies for effect. Blood Oranges have some good ideas and some precocious hooks, but it's still a bit empty and needs to be better directed. **NB**

### BLUE AEROPLANES Janice Long Session Night Tracks

**P** More artistic dancealongs, with the Aeroplanes daubing canvas after drum skin with their endearing performance-meets-post-structuralist method of song construction. Sculptured sound with a pop leaning. **NB**

### BMX BANDITS Figure 4 53rd

& 3rd **EE C** Four tracks with an eccentric pop edge. The Bandits sound like a working men's club version of Richman at his squidgiest. Wholesome fun that just about avoids being lumped in with the twee section at Ibrox Stadium. **BM**

### THE CHAMELEON'S DAY It Won't Be Long SPLIFF

**SH** The Chameleon's Day appear to be French in origin but they're firmly rooted in the '77 New York punk scene — Television and The Heartbreakers at CBGB's etc. Both sides of this debut single are forceful, with guitar shards spinning off the wired vocal line. A classic. **DH**

### CHWYLDRO Tu Oil'r Sgrin

Pop Positif (£1.20 from 52 John Morris Jones, Ffordd Y Coleg, Bangor, Gwynedd) I may be a little sketchy on Welsh, but I can tell you that this rock-pop debut is rampant and enjoyable. Pop music, for sure, but rippling with affection and charm. **DH**

### CLOSE LOBSTERS Janice Long Session Night Tracks

**P** From 1986, this four track collection from Fire faves the Lobsters proves that they're more than worth their weight in surreal comic books. Andy Burnett's lyrical aplomb wanders casually through the group's awesome tunefulness, illustrating their warmth, depth and unique personality. Catch them quick. **DH**

### COCO, STEEL & LOVEBOMB The Sound Of Europe

Instant **RR C** One of those dang cut-up affairs that's just fit to pop as it blends all the best dance bits, then broadens its scope with some more intelligent tempered lifts from further afield. Wah! **NB**

### CRIME AND THE CITY SOLUTION On Every Train

Mute **RT C** Expressive strumming from these ne'er do wells who're on the edge of rock's excess-o-meter. A keen rhythmic bowing pulls it all together, and that wandering vocal style makes it really bite hard into the memory banks. **DH**

### CRAIG DAVIES Jennifer Holliday Rough Trade

**RT C** A strange lull in the conversation of pop from Salford's answer to Tom Waits. It sounds like an old 78 rotating at 33, but don't let this put you off. If you're into boozing from *Newsnight* through to *Good Morning Britain* this record could certainly find a place in your heart. That wild man of rock 'n' roll — Ben Watt — guests on guitar, but fails to lift the energy above a snooze. A charming record, with a Penguin Modern Classic in its breast pocket. **JD**

### CUMBERSOME Billy Sexy

Flexi (56 Clyde Road, Brighton BN1 4NP) Snappy and light of foot, potential top 40 pop song from the oddest couple in town. The closing refrain — "She was all alone at the disco" — will have you

Reviewers this month are Nick Brody, Dave Henderson, Brenda Collins, Johnny Eager, Johnny Dee, Ripley, Carole Linfield, TC Wall and Holly Wood

breaking down in tears, the tinny drum machine will make you soft shoe shuffle as you do the Shake 'n' Vac. This is what flexis should be about — disposable, lovable, fun and cheap — 50p plus s&e if you wanna know. **JD**

### DANIELLE DAX Cat House

Awesome **C** Dani plays the Gary Glitter game and comes out sounding like the bastard offspring of Toyah and Marc Bolan. What a concept! Market it! **NB**

### DEFAULT Inspiration First

Strike **SRP** First release from this new label, by a Peterborough band who've been aligned to the positive hardcore elements from the States. A twitchingly incessant sound that reaches overdrive without raising a sweat. **DH**

### FINI TRIBE Make It Eternal

Wax Trax **SRP** Intense dancefloor rhythms, bell-ringing samples and growling vocal lines make Fini Tribe's latest a clang-muzak re-assertion of their potential. A well-orchestrated step up from their I Want More Can cover. **TCW**

### THE FIZZBOMBS Surfaround

Calculus **EE C** Riotous Beach Boys with fuzzed-dinosauric Mary Chain guitar barrage. Happy melodies with a sting in the tail. **BC**

### F\*\*\* GEEZ EP Jungle Hop

International **SRP** Japanese punk with a '76 beat, some buzzsaw raunch and a lot of swearing. Maybe ten years out of date but chortle-worthy and high on novelty value. **DH**

### THE FUZZTONES Nine

Months Later Music Maniac **RT C** The Fuzztones maintain the psychedelic overcoat and slip in a few nifty keyboard melodies for good effect. The gruesome cover hardly tells the upbeat 'Tones tale, but fans won't be disappointed. **DH**

### THE GATHERING Rant Final

Records **B C** A solid, driving tune that summons up memories of The Monochrome Set's finest musical constructions, aided by a whining guitar and a grief-stricken vocal. The Gathering have been hiding in the wings for some time. This sounds like the perfect method for their cultural development. **DH**

### GREATER THAN ONE Now Is

The Time **K=K RT C** A Martin Luther King cut-up over a throbbing dancebeat from these former industrialist screamers. Slightly more angst-ridden than your run of the mill dancefloor material, and well worthy with it. **R**

THE GROOVEYARD At Home With... Playroom **RR C** A

## Vinyl Solution

### The shop

BEST SELECTION—  
NEW-WAVE—  
HARDCORE-BEAT  
SOUL-U.S. 60'S—  
ROCK'N'ROLL—  
70'S PROGRESSIVE

### The label

OUT NOW!  
Grimm Death (hip-hop)  
Milk Monitors 12"  
The Cateran LP  
Birdhouse 12"  
Hard-Ons LP  
Stupids LP  
Les Thugs

OUT SOON ABS 12"  
Bolt Thrower

### The mail order

WRITE FOR OUR  
CATALOGUE OF NEW  
AUSTRALIAN-UK-US  
SWEDISH-FRENCH  
GERMAN ROCK &  
HARDCORE BAND  
Vinyl Solution.

tel 229 8010  
39, hereford rd. london w2.





five track 12 inch which throws The Grooveyard into a tub of wayward guitar play that'll be sure to impress Byrds, Buffalo Springfield and Love fans. Off the wall psychedelia that isn't too tripped-out to care, The Grooveyard's finest blast is a crushingly capable debut. **DH**

### THE GUN CLUB Breaking Hands Red Rhino

**RR C** Jeffrey Lee with reverb, ambience and depth — courtesy of a rather fine production job from Cocteau Twin Robin Guthrie. Somehow, you just never thought that GC had it in them, but it certainly floods out in an emotional tide here. **NB**

### ANNIE HOGAN Each Day

**Dinamo RR C** Annie's solo flight — after time spent rolling fingers for Marc Almond, Yello et al — sees her opt for a rather subdued, laidback tune which does her voice few favours. Annie Hogan is bigger and better than this. **NB**

### HORNY GENIUS Man And Beast Pooter Records (Box

2731, Iowa City, Iowa 52240, USA) These guys sound like Pere Ubu with their head in the microwave. Probably the most offensive record this month due to its continuous riff and swirling noise patterns. This is the kind of thing that'll make the world great again. Remarkable! **DH**

### HORSELAND Love Dies Again Red Rhino

**RR C** Ex-Red Guitars and Nyam Nyam members team up in a "return to independence". And pretty eclectic it is too. Horseland wander in on a waft of guitar and simplistic rhythms. Half way between wistful charm and the heavens above. **TCW**

### LAUGH Time To Lose It

**Remorse RR C** After some notable interest, Laugh plug in and screech it up for their most radiant 45 to date. A fervent, effervescent burn out, Time To Lose It shakes the dancefloor without ever slipping into the predictable throb. **DH**

### LONG TALL TEXANS Should I Stay Or Should I Go? Razor

**P** Carbon-coated cover of The Clash's bolshy anthem that might just click in these troubled times of revivalist punkism. Decent but monosyllabic. **BM**

### LOVE AND ROCKETS No New Tale Beggars

**Banquet Minimal T Rexisms** from the trio in the L&R contingent. Breaking into safes as diverse as The The, Jethro Tull and Slade, Love And Rockets make a new sound from old that's comfortable and reasonably balanced, if a little sluggish in delivery. **NB**

### LYDIA LUNCH The Crumb

**Widowspeak RR C** Intense as ever, Lydia teams up with wayward Soniclifer Thurston Moore for a Clint Ruin-produced noise overdose. Occasional verbal intersections make The Crumb one of the most tasteful insults for some time. **NB**

### MCCARTHY Should The Bible Be Banned?

**September RR C** It's about time someone stood up and noticed how consistent McCarthy are. This, their sixth single, displays all their usual hallmarks — cunning melody, coy guitars, devious lyrics, and a title that's bound to get up someone's bottom. And with 45 revolutions a minute no less, it's £3.29 well spent — ask for McCarthy by name. **JD**

### THE MEKONS Ghosts Of American Astronauts

**Cooking Vinyl RR C** A carefully crafted ode to northern life and its tie-in with US achievements (or some such analogy) which gives Meke Sally Timms the chance to let her twitching larynx do the talking. Coy but chaotic. **DH**

### MIRRORS OVER KIEV Different Girl Playtime

**C** From Manchester with a tasty riff and some nice singing. Yes, Mirrors are purveyors of that cute, well played pop vibe that's laced with guitars and, although not decidedly politically-motivated, there's a soulful Housemartinsy feel to this one. Whimsy! **DH**

### PAILHEAD I Will Refuse/No

**Bunny Wax Trax SRD** A marriage made in heaven between a Revolting Cock, a Furniture and God knows who else. Pailhead grit their teeth in the cause of heads-down thrash, cast down the iron glove with a noble dancebeat and rap it all up with a rant of quality. An album is mooted and it can't come too soon. **DH**

### PLAYGROUND Seeking The Truth Fourth Dimension (£1.60

from 7 Wentworth Gardens, Bullockstone, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 7TT) A tape of some uninspiring waffle breaks down, an unfettered bass and drum sound catches breath and someone screams for three minutes in a relentless frenzy. Screeching and intense to the point of collapse. **DH**

### RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY

**Nothing Wrong Situation Two C** There's nothing wrong

with mood music, but this Lorry epic is so numbing and one-dimensional that it's difficult to discover the point. Fact is, there isn't one. Nothing Wrong sounds like a tumble dryer on half power. All background and no kachunga. **DH**

### ROTE KAPELLE Fire Escape

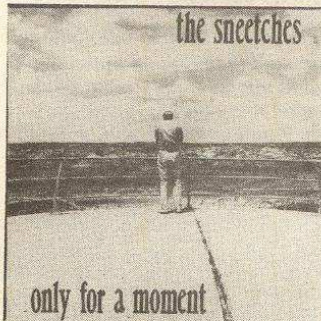
**In Tape RR C** Bestest yet from this Scottish multi-national corporation. The first part of a Rote onslaught busts with charm, wit, tape loops and a melody thrown over their shoulder. Grand... just grand. **DH**

### RUMBLEFISH Medicine

**Summerhouse RR C** Punchy brass, and a mid-'70s Bowie-paced vocal line makes Rumblefish sound dangerously essential. Better pop arrangements than The Soup Dragons and twice as sexy. **R**

### SAD LOVERS AND GIANTS

**Cow Boys Midnight Music RR C** Floating in on a sea of sheer guitar rattle, Sad Lovers And Giants leapfrog their clumsy name and play seedless pop that's as hummable, if as mindless, as the next lot. **BC**



### THE SNEETCHES Only For A Moment Kaleidoscope

**RR C** Within the harmonious world of The Sneetches there's a pop-boiled version of Byrdsian Beach Boy music. Only For A Moment is a fleeting introduction that'll swiftly be followed by their debut LP. Get in now and hope the summer comes around this year. **BC**

### THE TIER GARDEN No

**Pasaran Cogent (9 Orchard Gardens, Barrow-In-Furness, Cumbria)** Political posturing on Nicaragua and South Africa from the northerly strike-torn wastelands. The Tier Garden play burgeoning rock music that demands attention but will always struggle to succeed, since they're caught with commercial sounds, outspoken views and only a micro-lite method of powering through with their self-financed label. **DH**

### TONGUEMAN You Crooks

**Tryin' To Get Your Hooks On My Meat Drunken Swan (£1 from 1 Sheppard House, High Trees, St Martin's Estate, London SW2)**

These guys mean it, man! Flaunting sexual convention, biting the pricks that feed them.

This three track 12 inch has a sound that's fresh, guitar-heavy and of a confident grinding quality that's not been heard since Killing Joke's debut or PIL's Death Disco. Colossal sounds... every home should vibrate to this! **BC**

### ULTRAVOX Peel Sessions

**Strange Fruit P** Primal electronic stuff, when the method included a song, a verse and a chorus, as well as a motivating beat. Includes the excellent Young Savage and My Sex (plus the rather embarrassing Artificial Life). To think, they went on to become Vienn-o-philis! **DH**

### UV POP Music To Yeah To

**Extra C** John White — he is UV Pop — has built a group and sound around himself that takes him far from the Cabaret Voltaire copy jibes, and right into the divergent pop market. Ultra-violent pop — with the emphasis on pop. Fine. **DH**

### VAMPIRA AND SATAN'S CHEERLEADERS I'm

**Damned Living Eye SR** Wild and bedraggled, this messy message disc features off the wall vocal embellishments over voodoo backbeats, eventually building into crazed swamp rock. The flipside includes a similarly abandoned Tribute To Elvis. Demented. **BC**

### VARIOUS Dyma'r Rysait Artists for Animals

**RR C** Welsh punk gone electronic from the mightily improved Eirin Peryglus kicks off

continued over



## The Driscolls

NEW 3 TRACK SINGLE

GIRL I WANT YOU BACK

GROOVY LITTLE TOWN

ANDREW

£1.50 inc p&p & FREE Burger Fanzine!!!! JOHN, FLAT 4, 20 Marine Parade, near the Pier Clevedon, Bristol, BS21 7QS.

RESTLESS RECORDS



**YET MORE SINGLES**  
from previous page

this disc, and there's something of a good groove starting here — and all for the right cause — with fellow record mates Crisialau Plastig, Datblygu and Y Gwasgwy all providing excellent performances. **DH**

**THE VULTURES** Good Thing EP Narodnik **FF C** Best band of the month, The Vultures (three tiny beauty school drop outs from Hollywood or Glasgow) beat up on the history of rock 'n' whatever with sledgehammer guitars and juggernaut drums. This is the sound of Eddie Van Halen's guitar collection being thrown from his penthouse apartment's rooftop gardens onto passing rich bastards below. **HW**

**THE WEATHER PROPHETS** Hollow Heart Creation **RT C** The Prophs return to

Creation with a rattle and roll of brash bar room bravado. Peter Astor trades his whining star-in-cahoots-with-manic-depressive strain for a more upbeat offering that offers some real menace. Plausibly the group's best since the melodramatic tearfulness of *Almost Prayed*. **DH**

**THE WILD SWANS** Young Manhood **WEA** This is just the sexiest, peachiest, most awesome release of the year. Thank God the success of their Peel Sessions EP made them reform — how I've lived without them I do *not* know. This song will get you cuddling the speakers, rolling about on the floor, screaming with joy and bringing back that needle to the beginning again. Who said that Swans were an endangered species? **JD**

**WMTID** Sheik Your Money Rouska **RR C** Quasi NY-Euro disco bleach-out with that distinctively obscure edge of *WMTID*. Like *Level 42* with their big end caught in their flies. A kind of easy listening for deadbeat dancetroopers. **TC W**

**THE WOOD CHILDREN** Happens Everyday **Cat & Mouse P** Pert pop with a vocal/guitar interchange that'd impress any daytime radio programmer. The Wood Children are tunesmiths with more than a pinprick possibility of success. **DH**



**THROBBING AND CUT**

**What ties M/A/R/R/S to JAMMS, Colcut to Bomb The Bass and T-Coy to WMTID?**

**Chris Mellor stubs his toe to the beat**

Certainly, the surprise hit of last year was *M/A/R/R/S'* Pump Up The Volume. Consisting of half a group and a couple of DJs, a brilliant bassline and a few bits from other people's records, it made number one, and suddenly everybody was talking about new British dance music. The short-sighted said it was a craze that would die in a few months, terrified that the public might find out that you don't have to be a muso to make a record. The more enlightened saw the *M/A/R/R/S* hit as the drawing of a new era, as revolutionary as punk rock was in its time. The difference being that now the people making the music had no intention of becoming boring bloated rock stars. They were making a genuinely modern sound, not just more rock music with a different attitude, or rock at a different pace.

Pump Up The Volume brought it to the attention of the world, but British underground dance music has been around for a lot longer than six months. London, Manchester and Bristol have been buzzing to the sound of homegrown hip-hop, house, funk, soul and every mutant in between for the last couple of years.

**Johnny J and Mc Buzz Bee are part of the Rock The House Crew from Manchester.**

**Johnny J:** "In America, hardcore hip-hop around '79/'80 was a reaction against disco music. Street people were finding beats you *couldn't* dance to and rhyming about real life. In this country the music always had to be danceable to be big."

**Buzz Bee:** "I was involved in the break dancing scene until it got really commercial — when the *Rock Steady Crew* came over and it was on TV every five minutes. I wanted to stay involved in hip-hop, and I'd always written poetry, so I started rapping."

The media killed the first wave of hip-hop, but perhaps there was too much emphasis on dancing, relying too heavily on the Americans for the soundtrack. After initial interest rap went underground and, especially in the midlands and the north, house music (again an American music form) took over the clubs. When *Run DMC* and *The Beastie Boys* hit the charts last year club interest in hip-hop was rekindled, and this time the British crews were ready.

**Johnny J:** "The great thing is, now you don't need a major label to make records, independents like *Rhythm King* and *Music Of Life* can have hits too."

And these labels are going from strength to strength (finally being taken more seriously) with recent hits from *Derek B* (*Music Of Life*) and *Bomb The Bass*, *Beatmasters* and *S-Express* (*Rhythm King*).

At the moment *Rock The House* are producing an LP of Manchester hip-hop, to be released on an independent label. It includes a track by *Baby Di*, who can't remember much of the original breaking scene, or anything else, but that's because she's only 12 years old. The ages of the participants on the LP range from 12 to 21. It's young music made for young people, *not* for producers at Radio 1.

**Johnny J:** "We can produce a non commercial record and put it out on an indie label, or do something really commercial, like with the *Wee Papa Girl Rappers*, the possibilities are endless."

Hip-hop isn't the only type of British dance music that's thriving, there's house too. The first big British house track was *Carino* by *T-Coy*. An underground dance smash, it's a Latin-tinged track with some wild piano. At first many people thought that it was American, which probably increased its sale potential. Since then *Krush*, *Beatmasters*, *Jack 'N' Chill* and *Coldcut* have all had big *pop* hits with UK house, in a sense beating the Americans at their own game.

RHYTHM KING

7" LEFT 21      12" LEFT 21T

OUT      NOW

LEFT LPI

**"G.B. BOYZ"**

OUT NOW

**WIZE**

**3**

**MEN**

*Gwen McCrae*

7" MELT 7 + 12" MELT 7T      OUT NOW

**All This Love That I'm Giving**

# T I N G

Buzz Bee and Johnny J

Nineteen year old rapper, **Overlord X**, who has a single out on Morgan Khan's Hardcore label, knows why.

"The British stuff is more inventive, not just a beat and a bassline, it's got more stuff in it."

But there's still a lot of snobbery. Some people still won't take British material seriously.

"That's because the Americans seem more glamorous, because of their accents and their image. They're not in the country very often, so when you see them it's something special. But that's changing now. I did a jam in Tunbridge Wells with **Derek B** and everybody was going mad. They all had the gear, so they were obviously seriously into the music, and it was a really mixed, half black, half white, audience. It's really happening now."

The ultimate masters of getting "more stuff in it" must be **Jonathan More** and **Matt Black** of **Coldcut**. Doctorin' The House is the only house track they have released so far. Before they were kings of the London bootleg scene. Inspired by the classic US cut-up tracks — Lessons 1 To 3 by **Double Dee and Steinski**, and the much used **James Brown** breakbeat record **Feelin' James**, they created Say Kids What Time Is It? using JB breaks and huge chunks from *The Jungle Book*. It's totally illegal, completely brilliant, and now, of course, impossible to get hold of. Various other hardcore mixes followed including *Beats And Pieces* (which was eventually also released through the Cartel), *The Music Maker* and *Kick Out The James* (a nod to the **JAMMs** with no James Brown in earshot).

All these records are more than just mixes. They use old records to create a new sound. This is not a new idea to hip-hop, where breakbeats from old records have always been used to rap over, but it has been taken a stage further by Coldcut and other London DJs.

Mixers and bootlegs circulating at the moment include constructions by **Richie Rich**, **Greedy Beat Syndicate** and **Scam**. All stretching the boundaries of music, copyright, and burning a hole in other DJs' pockets, as they usually masquerade as imports and sell for £4.99 a go.

The one danger is that these mixes will stray into the very dodgy Stars On 45 territory, ending up as no more than edited highlights with a backbeat, which is what has happened with the over-commercial Payback mix of James Brown done by Coldcut recently. But, Coldcut have turned down further remix offers from **Krush, Bros, Was (Not Was)** and many more, opting to concentrate on their next project which should see a return to form. Their label is called **Ahead Of Our Time**, and that's the way they should aim to stay.

The most successful cut-up record so far this year is *Beat Dis* by **Bomb The Bass**, which uses many now familiar samples. If I hear another record with that screechy noise from **Public Enemy's** *Rebel Without A Pause* I think I'll scream. The vultures are waiting with their "all this sampled music sounds the same" line, and they do have a point. It does get really boring hearing the same bits taken from the same old record, again and again.

Johnny J: "After M/A/R/R/S and Coldcut you're getting the rent-a-sample remix, throwing everything into the record, and the sooner that dies the better."

But never fear, there are a lot of people around with a more adventurous ear for cut-up selection, including **Stereo MC's**, who had a record out on new London-based independent **Gee ST**, which has now been picked up by **4th & Broadway**.

"We're inspired by beats," reckon the MC's, "it doesn't matter where they come from. We get records from junk shops, anywhere. We like '70s *Top Of The Pops* compilations, Western themes, there's so many different records to use we could go on forever."

Stereo MC's and their label are firm believers in the old DIY punk ethic.

"You don't need to do stuff on an expensive 24 track. Our record was done on 16, but you could do it with eight or even four. It's all about ideas, if you've got a good idea and a good beat you can make a record."

Gee ST: "It's not about acts, it's about tracks, people don't want eight album deals, that's ridiculous, it doesn't work like that any more."

There's a lot of action in London. **Warrior Records** have just released a UK acid house compilation and are currently working on a hip-hop compilation. Rhythm King and Music Of Life are always busy, but it's not just the capital and Manchester where things are happening. Each region has its own label and its own sound.



**Smith And Mighty** are from Bristol and they have a surprise underground dance hit with their hip-hop reggae version of the **Bacharach/David** classic *Anyone Who Had A Heart* released on their own **3 Stripe** label.

"There's a lot going on here, but no organisation, no way of getting stuff heard. We thought the best thing to do was just release something, because we knew that if people heard it they would like it. It was made for a British audience, and now it's doing well. We want to keep it on a small scale though, so it carries on being fun. We're not interested in America yet, it all needs time to develop."

Still in the West are **Liwaebyr Llaethog** who, apparently, made the first ever Welsh hip-hop record called *Dyddiau Braf* (Lovely Day). Their latest record *Tour De France/Yo!* has some of the most brutally noisy scratching ever.

"We use a broken old Garrard deck", admits an LL, "you don't need anything flash. Our favourite records to scratch are our own, Welsh speeches, and *Blancmange*. Whatever's about, we'll use."

Another strain of dance music that's been neglected for too long is Eurobeat, Euro-electro, whatever you want to call it, which seemed to die with the demise of **Deutsche Amerikanische Freundschaft** (DAF to you mate) and the backlash against the northern industrial gloom of the descendants of **Cabaret Voltaire**. **Rouska**, the Leeds based label, are fighting back with recent releases by **Son Of Sam** and **WMTID**.

**Richard** at Rouska: "People think all northern white dance music is post-Cabs-minimalist-industrial-leather underpants funk. It's just not like that anymore."

Yes, and just maybe, in the fullness of time, electro will be back in vogue again after the recent hit for Music Of Life boss **Simon Harris**, with another crossover groove, electro-house-hip-hop being the closest definition.

The great thing about all this new British dance music, and there's plenty more than just the people I've mentioned, is that it is music for everyone, multi-cultural, a mix of sounds and styles. Black, white, brown, yellow — house, garage, hip-hop, electro, there's a bit of everything thrown in, and nobody knows what's going to happen next. The only rule is that it's got to move those feet. Do it!

# I

El's most recent press handout with Mike Alway in the background



There's been a flurry of releases from the consistent *él* stable, culminating in a lavish collection of ten inch singles. But what lies behind the screens? **Carole Linfield** examines the wonderful world of its Svengali supremo, the eccentric and endearing **Mike Alway**

# want to create A FANTASYLAND OF POP. . .

Arguably, there's no other record label boss who's stamped his own mark on his product as much as Mike Alway has on *él* Records. His own subsidiary of Cherry Red, every act on the roster bears the indelible hallmark of Alway. The constants are immediately apparent — throughout, there's a quintessential Englishness, almost Dickensian in its lovable eccentricity; a certain lavish charm and boyish naivety, all wrapped in opulence and hinting at indulgence, like a Rococo easter egg, all rich, dark chocolate inlaid with pearls. And, best of all, there's quality pop oozing from the tracks, all relying on old-fashioned values like tunes and lyricism and originality.

Mike Alway is, of course, the embodiment of all this. A tall, gangly figure dressed in black jodhpurs and greatcoat, his pasty complexion perhaps harbouring a Miss Haversham complex towards daylight, he strides purposefully into the Italian Bayswater café and waves a hand towards the mouthwatering pastries.

"This is what *él* Records is about. . . confectionary. The small things in life which may not be important, but that people are really interested in. We want to be edible. . . ten inch records are really edible, don't you think? Packaging is so important, too, because people buy with their eyes. You see, *él* is the Marks & Spencer of pop, not the Wavy Line."

Proof of the pudding, so to speak, is the most recent batch of *él* releases, consisting of a compilation LP, London Pavilion Volume II, which rounds up *él*'s 1987 output, and a set of five ten inchers from a selection of artistes on the label. In accordance with *él*'s thematic quality, releases are always designed as sets, all carefully packaged with extensive detail and romantic nonsense written on the sleeves, giving the label an immediate identity as well as instant collectability status.

The five to hit the streets this time are *Always*, *Ambassador 277*, *Anthony Adverse*, *Bad Dream Fancy Dress* and *Marden Hill*, with music ranging from the pouty adolescent curry commotion of the *Fancy Dress* girls to the instrumental wandering of the *Marden* mob. Each act has its own characterisation, its own carefully staged persona. But why? What is the ideal of *él*? What theory lies behind this intricate sales pitch?

Mike Alway, 32 year old Cornish son of a trade unionist, stirs his expresso and explains.

"What I really wanted with *él* was to bring records of quality back to the charts. But not from a careerist point of view; I want to recreate the feeling I had as a child about The Beatles. I don't want anything from it personally, except to be able to do it more.

"Who are the next Beatles? Well, you can't really put it like that. . . we're aiming more to have the next Edison Lighthouse. The idea of one hit wonders really attracts me. I love the idea of, say, Louis Philippe having one hit and then disappearing altogether, reappearing as this hammy cabaret act."

Mike's formative years were spent shuttling between London and Falmouth, listening to "a lot of Radio 1. . . bands like *Cupid's Inspiration* and *Honeybus*. I think I did buy one *Steely Dan* record. I haven't kept it or anything". It was then that his interest in obscurities developed.

"I collected records by default because I bought singles without any musical guidelines, but always the absolute classic white melodic pop."

It was after being a manager ("with a small m") for *The Soft Boys* and running a club in Richmond that Mike came into contact with *Cherry Red*, being taken on as an A&R man.

"The first group I signed was *Eyeless In Gaza*, at a time when all the label had was *The Dead Kennedys*. See, by employing me they knew they were going to get something more strange. I'd just sign up bands I thought were good and would sell, or who I'd read about in the press from people like *NME's* Paul Morley or *Sounds'* Dave McCullough. But clearly there was nothing in common between the bands, between *Felt* and *The Monochrome Set* or *Eyeless*. The theme quality of *él* is a step on from that."

But Mike made a detour before stepping into the *él* persona, first setting up *blanco y negro* with *Geoff Travis* (*Rough Trade* entrepreneur), *Dave McCullough* and *Michelle* (from *Disques du Crepuscule*).

"I had realised there was a limit to what I could do at *Cherry Red*. It was run as a democracy, and I thought there were things I could do better. . . we sold 5,000 of *The Nightingales' Pigs On Purpose* LP, and I thought we had to move on from there, to get more backing. So I did an unprecedented thing. . . I got the best lawyer in town, broke all the contracts, and signed all the groups myself. But the groups were already leaving. . . I was only a step ahead, I was anticipating."

Unfortunately, things didn't go quite to plan.

"You can imagine what happened. . . all these people used to running their own show, all big headed, myself as much, so we all just argued over everything. The groups' attitude changed towards us, too. I thought it was God getting me back for what I did to *Cherry Red*. All I wanted to do was get out of it. I had shares, I had thousands of pounds invested, and I just gave it all back, said here, I don't want anything else to do with it."

Help came when *Cherry Red* heard the *Momus* LP which Mike had been involved with, offering a licensing deal for the record.

"I was amazed. I went up and said you can license it if you'll let me make a label of it. And *él* was born. So you can imagine what I think about the people at *Cherry Red*, when any other label would probably have had my kneecaps removed."

Important lessons were learned, though, which have made *él* a more solid concern all round.

"Now I won't accept anything less than complete control. I also realised when I conceived *él* that I had to make it attractive but integrate quality into it, and humour, and a certain Britishness, things which would be unique to me, without dissipating the essential entertainment value. The perfect thing is to get a lot of uncommercial ideas that together sound commercial."

"See, a lot of labels get it wrong. On the one hand you've got the indies saying, we've got to make it difficult to show people it's good, and on the other hand the majors are saying the public won't buy anything unless it's kept simple, and they're both wrong. The fact is that classic '60s pop had things in it that were uncommercial by default, and they've acted as

preserving agents. So ambiguity and breadth of language and uncommercial things actually make things more commercial if they're in there in the right proportions."

Mike admits there have been mistakes.

"Yes, it's a question of trial and error to make sure it doesn't become whacky. Eccentricity is a bonus, but whackiness is a danger, because it's not sexy for one thing. Sexuality is important, in a naughty, playful way.

"Is it too much to suggest that perhaps *él* is a label for the single person? I'm just thinking this now. . . it's a soundtrack for the single life, like for myself, although it's by default because I prayed these girls would come along and want to marry me but they wouldn't, they just wouldn't, but I've come to know better now, to know I don't want it. So because I've avoided babies and houses and all of life's great burdens I can be more free to do what I want.

"All I do is go home and conceive these pop ideas. I order records by mail — and they're not free, it's not the same if you don't pay — so every other day there's a parcel of records waiting for me. So tonight I'm going to go home and listen to all these Four Seasons records. . . I can just indulge myself, and imagine what ideas I can steal from The Four Seasons to integrate into my pop records. Because we're just charlatans really. . . there are no new ideas, just combinations of a minimum of two old ones."

Mike, then, is a man living out his own fantasy. A true enthusiast, a film buff, a cricket freak, a man who loves reading the alternative football press, he overlays his character on the records he brings out. But what makes an *él* band? And what does he look for in prospective *él* cohorts?

"Increasingly it's becoming hard to find them, and please, if there's anyone out there, get in touch with me! Latterly I've signed people independently and swapped them around to give the impression of bands. Though the demarkation is improving, it's less incestuous than it was a year ago.

"The attitude has to be right, they have to think beyond records and the fact that it's an idea about themselves. Each band is a characterisation, but I don't say to Fred Smith, go and be an Arab, because if Fred Smith hasn't got it in him to be an Arab, he never will. Simon Turner is the King Of Luxembourg, because he's encouraged by this Ian Carmichael figure, slightly incompetent, forever juvenile, more the Peter Pan thing, that's really Simon's character. All we're doing is taking that part of his character and blowing it up out of all proportion."

As a case in point, the two Bad Dream Fancy Dress girls came to the label as complete novices.

"They said they'd do anything to make a single, and when I met them they had excellent attitudes, playful and strong, and had done some acting so were very confident. I gave them the characterisation and told Simon Turner to write a song for them about Indian food, in the way Mickie Most or someone might have done. I'm increasingly coming to view Simon and Louis as house writers, like Chinn and Chapman, writing to a specific brief.

"Lyrically, I want songs that are as good as those by The Carpenters, but not limited by language. I look at the biogs and see what people like to decide what the songs are going to be about. Now, Kevin Wright (Always) likes football, so how do we do a football song which is credible? For that, we've got the inspiration of the alternative football press doing something unique and different for the first time, moving away from the horrible of image of football fans.

"Jessica of The Would Be Goods, who is very middle class, with a seriously good education and a first at Oxford, is a really good songwriter because she sees it for what it is, as good use of language. And because she knows nothing about pop (she's an opera buff) there are no intrusions."

Despite the insistence on autocracy, Mike does admit that bands are never forced to do anything they don't want to. Problems are mostly avoided by Mike's screening process before signing them up, knowing then that their ideas will lie roughly along the same tracks as his.

Ambassador 277 are a cause in point. "They were completely paranoid about what was going to happen to them. I took care over their sleeve and they were delighted with it, and they initially wouldn't trust me one inch over that. It was all, 'what'ya gonna do? We don't want to dress up as pilots!'. I said look, if it's good enough for Dirk Bogarde it's good enough for you."

*El*, though, is a label intent on improving itself. Mike doesn't want to see it lumber on indefinitely without ambition or results.

"These ten inch records should solidify our visual attitude and really show people finally what's different about *él*. The next lot, starting with the new King Of Luxembourg one, will really go on the offensive. . . and therefore I think we'll have a bit more of a go at it. I don't think there's any point now in constantly restating our attitude; what people want now are results.

"Nothing could be better than *él*, how could it be? With goodwill, we'll carry on with *él* because we can survive just on overseas sales, we're huge in Japan, and if it works, CBS or whoever can come and offer us a million quid. That will be just a token, it's not 'cos we want a million quid, but with that I would get control, and then force them to do what I wanted to in marketing terms. The possibility is a long way off, though. . .

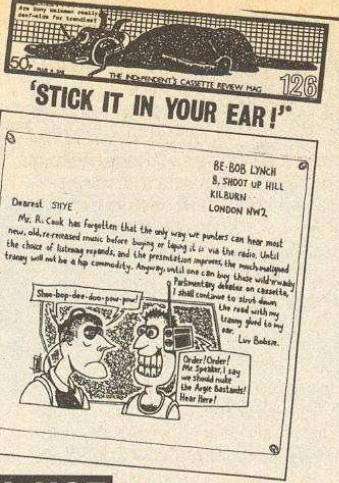
"Now I've got to see whether or not it can be done."

*El*'s current crop of performers: from the top, Anthony Adverse, Ambassador 277, Bad Dream Fancy Dress and Always. Pictures by Nickolai Wesolowski; concepts by Mike Alway (of course)



Prospective *él* artistes should send tapes, photos, witty remarks and eccentric oddities to Mike Alway at 53 Kensington Gardens Square, London W2 4BA.

# THE



## REVOLUTION WILL NOT BE RECORDED

Cassette-only releases haven't always fared as well as they should — let alone been given due care and attention by Joe Public — but, with the advent of both the cassette single, the success of New York's ROIR tape-only label and the arrival of Liverpool's Bop Cassettes, perhaps that's all about to change.

It's been ten years since the magazine *Stick It In Your Ear* began and now it's reached issue 126. For 50p (from Geoff Wall, 5 Sunvale Close, Sholing, Southampton, Hants SO2 8LX) you can find out about an extremely wide variety of music that's only available on cassette, while simultaneously tracking down the oddest collection of stuff that's available under their own banner. The music here is the message.

Far from being a cheap and minimal release project, SIIYE's label, Color Tapes, is an alternative. While the majority of cassette labels haven't really succeeded, like the alternative video labels, there are highpoints in these areas.

The problem is that the majority of groups end up using cassettes as a step between demo and record. Some people, like SIIYE, take it all a lot more seriously, but some sadly do not.

For example, Thule's double-pack four-track set is neat, but we don't know where the sub-industrial fuzz-garage came from. . . then there's **The Salty Sea Dogs'** braindeath! A live cut-up making pointless listening. The noise itself is, er, well. . . different. As is Perfect Gesture by **The Violent Playground**, comprising 11 sketches in mind-numbing strangeness (from plinky-plonk to fuzzy noise). The groove continues — but this time on acoustic, spoons, harmonica and chantalong drone from **Psycho Ken And His 23 Concrete Pipes**. And, with that, the medium realises why it can't be seen as a credible force.

But there are reasonable tape-only ideas. For instance, Lakeland Records, who brought the world various Icelandic things, now has **91 Vibrations'** Radio Free Albania — a distorted vocal rant with electronic support — and Snarl, a compilation with tracks from **SH Draumur**, **Muzzolini**, **Parror** and more. Both tapes are of interest and can be obtained from 69 Leamington Road, Southend-On-Sea, Essex.

The Primitive label (28 Larke Way, Leagrove, Luton, Beds) also has a compilation — The Trance Compilation — with a more esoteric/left-field collection of acts in tow. Featured are **Shiny Two Shiny**, **Len Liggins**, **Ex-F Explains**, **Jesus Couldn't Drum** and a bundle of others.

Jarmusic in Berlin (Limastrasse 18, 1000 Berlin 37 West Germany) specialises in independent tapes and records (boasting a more than healthy catalogue). It's a good place to start your journey into ferric funland, especially with their Berlincassette 3-87, which boasts tracks by **R Stevie Moore**, **Webcore**, **Schwefel**, **The Hardy Boys**, **Attrition**, **Idiot Sideshow** and a load more.

Some acts, however, stay close to the alternative ethic, producing quality music that defies categorisation. For instance **The Cleaners From Venus** (who've had recordings on vinyl, CD and numerous cassettes) have a new cassette EP, the infectious four-tracker *Mind How You Go* out on Jarmusic (address above).



Veteran cassette pets, The Cleaners From Venus

# RE-RE-RE-REWIND

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

Albums reviewed by Dave Henderson

## ANDY ANDERSON

### One Man's Rock 'N' Roll

Union Pacific UP006 Andy Anderson is something of an enigma. Looking a little like John Travolta circa *Grease* — but more original, of course — he adorns the front of this retro collection which spans '57 to '65. Steeped in car wax and Brylcreem, Anderson's development through those rock 'n' roll times had a raunchy edge, a few classy, cheeky licks and the usual tales of girls and motors. The most interesting cut here is *Chop Suey*, a timeless piece that's strangely stimulating with its unorthodox construction and shaky rhythm. An intriguing groove.

## THE EDGAR

### BROUGHTON BAND Sing

**Brother Sing** BGOLP7 Men in serious sore throat threat. The Edgar Broughton Band strain and boogie on this sub-Beefheart album which was changing hands for 20 notes till recently. That their underground status in the '70s allowed them to shake their influences and produce tracks like the included *There's No Vibrations But Wait!* suggest that they were prone to mega ideas — this one with funk rhythms, megaphone vocals, taped speech interruption — but sadly most of the rest of this album doesn't hold a candle to that track. A timely re-issue that's worth checking for innovation at least.

## ROBERT CALVERT

### Captain Lockheed And The

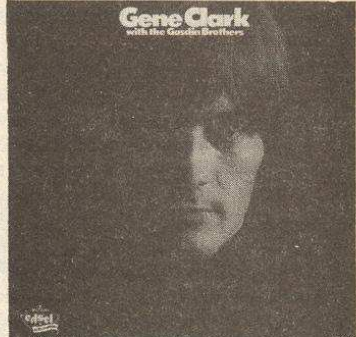
### Starfighters BGO LP5 7

Another service to collectors from BGO, with this metal/rock/post-Hawkwind oddity from Calvert. Employing spoken passages courtesy of Viv Stanshall and Jim Capaldi, Calvert gets into concept mode with some instrumental muscle from Lemmy, Twink and all the old faithfuls. It's really a routine mix of UK rock that's given that weird hue due to those spoken parts, the only problem being their humorous nature and the inevitability of it all wearing a little thin.

## GENE CLARK WITH THE GOSDIN BROTHERS

### Gene Clark With The Gosdin Brothers

Edsel ED263 Side one of this album ranks high alongside any piece of Byrds or Byrds-related paraphernalia — well on a par with the electronic interludes of Notorious Byrd Brothers or Gram Parsons' influential input to the legendary *Sweetheart Of The Rodeo*.



This is classic '60s music with ex-Byrd Clark teaming up with former cohorts Chris Hillman and Michael Clark, with the Gosdins, Doug Dillard and Leon Russell on keyboards and orchestral arrangements. A bittersweet, melodramatic view of life is something that seems to have disappeared from modern contemporary music which, in retrospect, is a great shame.

## CLEAR LIGHT

### Black Roses

Edsel ED245 Clear Light's one and only LP was released in 1967, in a climate vibed-up by The Doors' *Strange Days* and Tim Buckley's *Goodbye And Hello*, the double drumming and offbeat style resulting in instant prominence, great reviews and comparisons with Grateful Dead, then. . . nothing. Members departed for a variety of outfits leaving the perfect cult item. In retro, Black Roses has some fine songs and moves in the direction of high gloss strangeness. As a first LP it's fine, but just think what they might have done if they'd kept their heads together.

## THE GROUNDHOGS

### Blues Obituary

BGO Records BGOLP06 Originally formed in the '60s to back visiting US blues players, The Groundhogs eventually became synonymous with facial hair, "boogie music" and the like. Pre-empting Quo and ZZ Top and post-dating Cream they had the style, if not the image, to become a major band. *Blues Obituary* is a 1969 offering which lacks something in terms of songs, even if it succeeds in showing off Tony McPhee's distinctive guitar and vocal style.

## THE HOLLIES

### Stay With

### BGO LP4

### In The Hollies Style

BGO LP8 The first two Hollies albums, which have been hawked around for vast sums in recent years, are rife with cover versions. Both feature the unmistakable vocal style of Allan Clarke who, probably quite by accident, seems to have influenced a lot of today's

03 UNDERGROUND

jangle-handed UK guitar bands. Graham Nash's backing vocal embellishments further enhance the proceedings, lifting The Hollies out of the '60s UK pop bracket spiced with US pop covers and closer to the American sounds which they eventually exploited through Dylan, Byrds and country covers. Over 20 years on, these albums mostly sound strong, with the occasional twee legbreak.

## ALBERT KING

**Albert**

Charly R&B CRB 1173

**CA** Classic Albert taken from a Tomato US release circa '78. With a gratefully supportive band behind him there's more than enough quality playing going around to warrant a good earful. Albert does get tacky at the start though, on Guitar Man he's oh-so '70s and oh-so kitsch, but his string-bending blues style wins the day in the end.

## PHIL OCHS

**All The News That's Fit To Sing**

Edsel Ed 247 **P** Politically aware strums from Ochs from '65, that sound as potent, if just a little thin in muscle tissue, today. Phil Ochs went through some serious personal traumas, a few self-questioning bouts and eventually died a premature death. These first steps capture him before he realised that even though he could sing the news and make political motions, there were few giants that the protest song could actually fell. A nice acoustic feel all the same.



## THE SEEDS

**Evil Hoodoo**

Bam-Caruso **Re C** The sporadic greatness of The Seeds strained and sifted into a massive 45 minute block of energy. Bam-Caruso have picked through The Seeds' catalogue, albums and singles and come up with a compilation that'd be hard to beat, a monument to '60s

## RED CRAYOLA

**The Parable Of Arable Land**

Decal LIK 20 **CA** Further raves from the free-from-freak-out grave, with the Crayola's earliest incarnation — headed by Mayo Thompson — whooping up a nightmarish stream of sub-consciousness. The Crayola later went on to become more time-change/jazz-orientated, Mayo followed that by being a tricky little producer. In retrospect this album sounds politely arrogant and reasonably offbeat. Underneath it all, it's a little self-indulgent, but pretty damn lovable nonetheless.

## WARREN SMITH

**Real Memphis Rock 'N' Roll**

Sun CDX23 **CA** From Mississippi country to hillbilly rockabilly, Warren Smith's back catalogue at Sun makes up two sides of this double. His singles, with alternate takes and B-sides, ably display the neat guitar style and vocal slur of Smith, while the second album features a wealth of unreleased Sun material — again with various versions and mixes in some cases. Somehow, the clarity and minimal instrumental set-up seems unbelievable, but the sound produced is succinct and powerful.

## THE SONS OF CHAMPLIN

**Marin County Sunshine**

Decal LIK 21 **CA** Fully paid up members of the Summer Of Love circa '67, The Sons Of Champlin recordings here come from '68, '69 and '71 when their brand of brassy soul had developed into a Blood,

Sweat And Tears meets Traffic kind of accessibility. There are some superb songs here, revolving around Bill Champlin's distinctive vocal, but there are also some of those hesitant dippy hippie moments that might have been better left to slumber. Still, The Sons Of Champlin are a little jewel worth dusting off.

## VARIOUS

**Ferry Cross The Mersey**

BGOLP10 **P** A 12 track film soundtrack LP which majors on the emergent Liverpool scene around 1965 — with little or no mention of The Beatles. The main tack is taken by Gerry And The Pacemakers, who of course sing the title track, with additional takes from the George Martin Orchestra, a youthful and throaty (in the nicest possible sense) Cilla Black, and The Fourmost. The Pacemakers' embodiment of Mersey beat is a touch overpowering, but this is mostly a decent album, and the George Martin instrumental is excellent.

## VARIOUS

**Major Bill's Texas Soul**

Charly CRB 1167 **CA** Yet another collection of US labels that've been uncovered in an attempt to gain wider exposure for an obscure, but essential, band of soulsters. Major Bill's Texan triad featured the Charay, Shalimar and Le Cam labels and, while he was having pop success with Paul And Paula and Bruce Channel, he was also releasing some fine soul music. This set boasts some excellent cuts from Willie Hobbs with Pic And Bill, Johnny Copeland, Willie Hobbs and Sons Of Moses, but the finest track must be Ede Robin's haunting ballad Dead, which is a disturbing, suicidal tune with an exotic twist in the tale.

## VARIOUS

**Peacock Chicks And Duchesses**

Ace CHD 233 **P** Early '50s material taken from the Duke and Peacock labels, featuring an array of caterwauls and croons from a selection of female performers. Backed by the Duke and Peacock house bands, this collection also features five cuts that have previously only laid in the archives of mother label MCA. From the tongue-in-cheek explicit sexiness of Mildred Jones' Mr Thrill to Bonita Cole's perspective Life Is Like That, this is a period classic that is so adverse to the rock 'n' roll revolution that followed a mere two years after some of these recordings.

## VARIOUS

**The Unsung Heroes**

Unicorn PHZA 17

**NM C** Post-Jam mods lurking beneath the glimmer in Secret Affair's eye and the barbed explosion of The Purple Hearts, these 12 renegades of button-down bravado play pop with rough edges. There's lyrical and creative verve present but none of the assembled can sing their way out of a zipped-up Parka, being more adept at citing their style than their feelings. There are some high points, but without the Hearts, Affair, The Chords, The Merton Parkas or Squire, this movement sounds a little shallow.



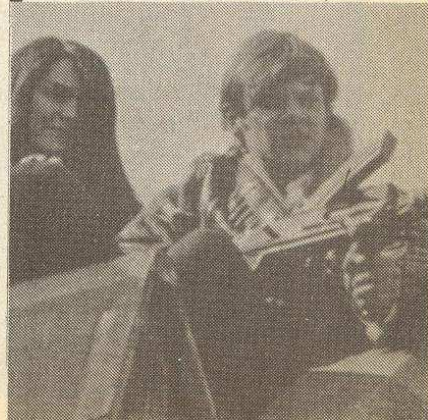
## THE REVOLUTION WILL BE TELEVISED

Channel 4 looks back 20 years to 1968, the year when the love generation got serious.

Even though this is the May issue of *Underground*, you'll be glad to hear that it comes out the third week in April, so you'll be ready for April 29 when **C4** climaxes a series of programmes looking at 1968. That was the year when students took to the streets in Berlin, Paris and Chicago (and it wasn't for a Branson-esque litter clear up, either).

Included in the week are several reportage and hindsight views of the events and their resultant effect on society, while musically there's two films of the time, *The Stones In The Park* (May 2) and the legendary *Woodstock* (May 5). The Stones footage is a unique documentary of their Hyde Park show, while Woodstock mixes America's awareness of Vietnam with festival hippiedom and slots from *Country Joe And The Fish*, Jimi Hendrix, Arlo Guthrie, Jefferson Airplane and many more — suitably attired — purveyors of "vibes".

However, the highlight of the week's activity is the long overdue screening of *Lindsay Anderson's If...* (screened on May 30), in which Malcolm McDowell leads a gaggle of public schoolies in a pre/post '60s generation game, taking the school with the power of the gun. A powerful piece of footage, it also contains the legendary "we ran out of money so the last reel's in black and white" ploy. A classic in the cult sense, on a par with *A Clockwork Orange*, and something your education won't be complete without. Dave Henderson



Malcolm McDowell enforcing the law in If...

# 100% PROOF



Meteors circa '88 Fenech in front

## The Meteors play pure psychobilly

Paul Fenech tells Spike Sommer why they're still flying after all these years

"Whatever I do is psychobilly, it's The Meteors and it's what's in my head. I can't really think of any other way to put it."



Paul Fenech, vocalist and guitarist in The Meteors since their formation in the spring of 1980, shrugs his shoulders and lights yet another fag. He's sitting backstage in Leeds' Astoria opening his mind on all forms of Meteor madness, including the current Only The Meteors Are Pure Psychobilly album.

That record title says it all and, coupled with the psychotic selection encompassed on the vinyl, only goes one step closer to proving a point — a point which Fenech takes great delight in making.

"All these other so-called psychobands wanna be so different but they're all doing exactly the same thing, the same thing The Meteors have been doing for years, only The Meteors did it first and they do it a lot better.

"If it wasn't for The Meteors these other bands wouldn't exist. I've tried to tell them this, 'cause without us they'd all still be teddy boys fighting punks in the King's Road.

"I wish anyone luck who does have a go but right now it seems that the first thing you've gotta do when you form a rockabilly band is rip off The Meteors and then slag 'em off. It's really stupid."

Fenech's contempt for the puerile pale imitations who've sprung up in the wake of his band is well justified. For The Meteors' eight years and 13 albums hasn't seen them reduced to such unmitigated plagiarism.

Fenech recalls the early days fondly, quickly admitting that he's been lucky to be in a position where he can do what he wants and get paid for it.

"Everyone always goes on about how good the first album, In Heaven, was. I mean it was good, but I think we've made better ones since, I think Don't Touch The Bang Bang Fruit and Stampede were *much* better.

"There have been worse ones though, like Wreckin' Crew. I didn't like the sound on that, the production wasn't right. I wasn't really that pleased with Monkey's Breath or Sewertime Blues either. There, again, it wasn't the songs that were bad but the production. The feeling wasn't quite right.

"Out of all the albums Stampede and Bang Bang Fruit are my favourites because that's exactly what I figured I wanted to sound like on record."

And the live album?

"Well, the first one, Live, wasn't really authorised as such. It was just that as our old manager was leaving he came up with this idea and put it out.

"The idea of a live LP is to capture the essence of a gig on tape or record but you can't really do it. It doesn't work, that's probably why that first live one, *and* Horrible Music, don't come across so well.

"Night Of The Werewolf? Well, I never knew about that one till I saw it in a shop in Paris, and I had nothing to do with Live And Loud, which sounds like it's been taken straight off a cassette, the quality is so bad.

"Those bad quality live albums are annoying 'cause someone who's never heard The Meteors before might

listen to them and think that they're a true representation of what we're like. You can't get a fair idea from a Walkman recording that's been stuffed in a jacket all night."

Fair comment, but for the ardent collector such items do fill the gaps in their collections, especially with the otherwise unavailable material that's on those records.

"That's right, we do do a lot of covers live, we've got a heavy duty repertoire of songs and it's impossible to put them all on the albums. Originally I did intend to put them on the B-sides of singles, but the record company is always coming out with some other idea just as good, which is why I've not got around to it."

The subject of the band's ever changing line-up brings a wry grin across Fenech's face. He laughs as he recounts tales of those who've come and gone.

"Originally Nigel Lewis and me had the idea to form The Meteors. Aside from Nigel, everyone else who's been in the band I've never really liked. I think Nigel got lead astray by some other people. It's not his fault. I mean I've heard some of his other stuff but he always seems lost, like he doesn't know what direction he wants to take.

"I suppose other people have left because I can be a bit of a c\*\*\*t at times. Every time someone new joins I really try to make it last, but usually we've edged people out. Y'see they all start full of good intentions, like 'Meteors Forever' and all that, y'know all that about money not mattering, but they taste a little success and start changing. I've seen it happen so many times."

The line-up changes have marked a progression in the music, a result of Fenech's ever-improving songwriting. The charged blend of rockabilly nervous twitching beneath the often insane horror of the lyrics creates a wild 'n' wicked sound that's something a lot more special than yer run of the mill rock 'n' roll. It's more of a burning wreck 'n' roll on a road to hell and back.

"This band will carry on until I've had enough. If ever I go completely off the rails and starting making the band shitty, I hope someone'll tell me I've gone wrong somewhere so I can do something about it."

Fenech's commitment to the band is beyond doubt. After all, you don't trundle your wares around the globe if you don't reckon much to what you're doing, especially on a shoestring budget with no strings attached. No the man firmly believes what he's doing is right and he's proud of it.

"The Meteors has given me loads. It's given me good friends and I've had a brilliant time. I've been all over the world and I've been paid for it, and I think I can keep it going for at least another ten years.

"If I give up now all those people who say that The Meteors are wanker will be right, and I won't let them be right, 'cause Paul Fenech's *not* a wanker and, to quote an old song, a friend of mine once wrote... you can't keep a good man down."



# TIP SHEET

NEW TAPE DEMOS

FLORA ANDREWS is the researcher for *The Chart Show*, and it's she who decides which videos are screened on the Channel 4 programme each Friday night.

Flora says that she has a bias towards independent and new groups and points out that *The Chart Show* is the only place where you're likely to see the unsigned and the radical jostling alongside all the usual chart biggies.

*Tip Sheet* supremo Julian Henry took notes as Flora delivered her verdict on this month's contenders. (Less of the supremo, Henry — Ed.)

The numbered system after each review refer 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 7QZ.

**TWENTY THREE PERSONS** (29 *Blaycourt, Orchard Park Estate, Hull*) sent us several letters, badges and magazines with their cassette, all of which Flora found a bit much. "There's so much here I hardly know where to start," she said. "I like their music a lot though, it's acoustic, but powerful — if they had a decent video to go with this we'd definitely think about showing it." A glance through their letter reveals where the name comes from — 23 persons are the maximum allowed in the lift at their college. Fascinating.

6 7 8 6

**BILL** (74 *Egerton Street, Middlesboro, Cleveland*) appears to be about three years old. His biography goes on about the Bogley Factory, and his music sounds like the theme tune to *Bill And Ben*. Great stuff. "I think this is really sweet," blushed Flora. She looked

embarrassed. "The music is very simple and his handout is funny, there's obviously some good ideas here."

3 5 7 5

**FOLLOWERS OF THE VALE** (137 *Longwood Gate, Huddersfield, West Yorks*) are young (around 17) and sound like they've taken a bit of acid — which bit we're not sure about. They ask us for a donation for their tape. Bloody cheek! What do you think Flora? "If the quality of recording was a bit better I would like it. As it is, you have to listen quite hard but there is potential here."

5 5 4 4

**A GLURK TROLLING** (317 *Hazelwood Road, Northampton*) make a horrible meaningless noise that we listened to for around 20 seconds. Is it Art? I don't think so. "They come from

The Penny Arcade: a Flora find



a musicians' workshop," commented Flora. Around ten years ago this would have sounded pretty bad. In 1988 it sounds completely worthless and you can only wonder why they bothered sending it in.

0 0 0 0

**THE SMOKING MIRROR** (86 *Abbey Road, Bearwood, Birmingham B67 5LH*) did not impress Flora with their middling rock effort. "I find this a bit dirge-like," she says. "On *The Chart Show* you have to have quite broad tastes and be able to appreciate everything from good noise to trash metal, and from new American funk to everyday chart stuff. But this lot don't really do anything for me at all, I'm afraid!"

3 4 2 4

**THE RIVER DWELLERS** (5 *Sherwin Grove, Old Lenton, Nottingham*) sent us a tape of jazzy, happy-go-lucky songs. "The music is great," says Flora. "I'm not too sure about the singer's voice though, it sounds a bit weak. With stuff like this you really need a strong vocal to sit on top. A good name though! They sound a bit like the Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band."

6 5 5 6

**DE DAGDA** (01-349 0763) sent in a tape of four songs that sounded very quiet, introspective, maudlin and, unfortunately, ordinary. "There's not much here to get worked up about," said Flora. "Really too low key for my own tastes." The band say that they only came to know *Ug* magazine because they've written a song of the same title. How sad that we are unable to say anything more positive about their efforts.

3 3 2 4

**THE PENNY ARCADE** (122 *The Willows, Colchester, Essex*) made both Flora and myself leap for joy. Their letter tells us that they like Abba and Prince, and that they like to watch TV. So they're normal! "The music is great, really commercial, you can tell within 20 seconds," gushed Flora. We looked at their picture. They look about 12 years old (slight exaggeration). "They deserve to sign a major record deal immediately," said Flora. So quick boys, make yourselves a video and get on the phone to Flora!

7 7 6 8

**THE ICONS OF NOISE** (128 *Dobbin Hill, Sheffield S11 7JD*) are unhappy at being compared to early Cabaret Voltaire. They sound different to any of the other tapes thanks to a violent and slightly demented approach to their songs. "I don't like it," says Flora. "There's too much of this sort of thing." The *Ug* view of the band is more charitable and concludes some promise.



5 6 5 6

**HERMANOS GUZANDOS** (c/o 23118 *Vanowen, Canoga Park, California 91307*) make a wonderful Jimi Hendrix-style dirge that sounds totally long-haired and laid back. They also sent us some fantastic cartoons. "I like this," said Flora. "You can start conjuring up what they look like even though there's no picture. If they used the same approach for making a video, I bet it would be great. This reminds me of Frank Zappa and Beefheart."

6 6 7 5

33 UNDERGROUND

**PANIC STATION** Presents For your Listening Pleasure **MAYHEM ALL DAY**  
 Mon 2nd May  
 12pm-6pm DINGWALLS, CHALK FARM ROAD, CAMDEN 8pm-2am

**THE JAZZ BUTCHER**  
**THE FLATMATES**  
**boys wonder**  
**THE BRILLIANT CORNERS**  
**THE MAN FROM DELMONTE**  
 THE STITCHED BACK FOOT AIRMAN  
 THE MOSSPOLES  
 in Conj. with **SOUNDS**  
 guest DJs Janice Long, Tony Smith

**PRIMAL SCREAM**  
**THE JASMINE MINKS**  
**THE CHESTERFIELDS**  
**THE BLUE AEROPLANES**  
**BLYTHPOWER**  
**MOTORCYCLE BOY**  
**MOMUS**  
**THE HEART THROBS**  
**THE WOODCHILDREN**  
 Jon Fat Beast & Capt Pugwash

Adv £6 Morning, £7 Evening, Round Ticket £11. Advance Tickets Available from Dingwalls, Rhythm Records, Rough Trade Records, Keith Prowse & L.T.B.

**TOTALBEATFACTOR**  
**Big Noise In Archgate** presents a non-stop hardcore electronic dance mix featuring **PORTION CONTROL**, **SCATTERED ORDER**, **POESIE NOIRE**, **FRONT LINE ASSEMBLY** and **SMERSH** plus thousands of unidentified samples

**BIG NOISE IN ARCHGATE**  
 a 10 inch mini-LP for the price of a 12 inch single, available from **Red Rhino** and the **Cartel**, or direct from **Savage International**, Box 244, York YO1 1ZQ  
**CRUNCH!**

FIELD USE ONLY

# TIP OUT

... and the tapes just keep on rolling! We've had so many entrants to the Tip Sheet sweepstakes that we've decided to extend the service and cast a bleary eye over even more ferric frenzy. Dave Henderson lets his ears do the bleeding. . .

**SAME** stands for Sensual And Mentally Efficient and it seems they're from London (01-950 1514). Their demo tape is a tad grainy — recorded live onto two track — but there's enough to suggest that, with time, SAME could develop into something quite palatable in tempered rock terms.

**Oblivion** (Maesyllan, Boncath, Dyfed SA37 0HR) are mental. They sound musically debauched on their six track thrash but have a guitarist who can "burn it" given the chance. Required quality is so bad it's difficult to tell what they're on. They cover Louie Louie and have fun though.

**Heroin And The Needles** (20 Victoria Street, Sawley, Long Eaton, Notts) suffer from their name but have the knack to lift a few worthy riffs into a pseudo-rock middle ground. The demo is a little hesitant, the vocalist sounds a bit rocky, but there's promise in the arrangements.

**Mosc** (21 Tankerville Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne) claims to be a wreck of a guitar player with a voice to match. What's more he's got a broken heart and a lyrical style that could breathe fire if his humble accompaniment was increased. Mosc has a touch of charisma.

**The Pyromaniacs** (14 Marmon Close, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS25 1UH) have Smithsitus — and are quite convincing with it. With Mr Morrissey at number one that can't be a bad thing.



**The Church Grimms** (041-889 2035) are Scotspeople and they burst forth with a folksy James-styled sortie that's more than pleasant to behold. Excellent stuff with a penchant for commercial success.

**The Pale Saints** (0937 63701), from the Leeds area, almost jangle but they don't quite have enough muscle to fill out their sound. They almost make up for that with some commendable harmony lines. Bear this lot in mind.

**Big Bang Theory** (0603 633161) offer a decent six-track selection that'll certainly make you wonder about the wisdom of their name. As they slip into a bespectacled Smithsean intelligence, their commercial roots show through, but these Bangs need a little more preening before they can go all the way.

**The Ramp-Antz** (0602 603272) are one of those groups who only appear in a comic strip — but these nutters are a bit weirder than The Archies. Instead, The Ramp-Antz play thrashy metal on Skate To Skool and electro-reggae on Test Tube Baby. The editing is awful, the final is wobbly, but the noise is magic.

**Millions Of Brazilians** (0634 40919) sound destined for a big label. They have grand schemes and carefully orchestrated songs. Daytime radio possibles with a very capable female singer.



**The Ogdens** (01-274 2329) play dangerously commercial rock/pop in the gawky manner of Proclaimers-goperatic. Their potential is never realised due to production finish. They strive to sing something like Love Is Contagious while chewing gum.

**GT Clean** (021-454 1686) offer the world a fragmented offbeat vibe that's been seen as jazzy funk, and waves more than a hat at Ron Johnson's pop vision. The GT stands for Giant Treads and these Wolverhampton sons have a kind of cuddly cabaret version of performance rock in their wallets.

**The Waiting List** (0636 812346) have an almost unfinished sound. They write songs of character but don't seem to have the clout to push them through just yet.

**Aitch** (0742 580769) offer the next Sheffield funk wave, and it's more commercial than Cabaret Voltaire but not as immediate as ABC. Aitch sound like a Virgin signing on their third single, they beg for a big producer and an appearance on *No 73*.

**Cold Vietnam** (81 Ashorne Close, Matchborough W, Redditch, Worcs), somewhat inevitably, play churning guitar noise with belched lyrics. Politically outspoken, emotional, but still rather retrogressive.

**Dreamtime** (01-998 9504) already have a Janice Long session to their credit and their four track demo is taken from that. In a way, the female vocal line and pubescent jangle is what you'd expect, but Dreamtime have songs of style and a vocalist with range and presence. Expect more (hopefully).

**The Big Boat** (01-423 2601) have been busy flaunting their talents to the press and playing a brace of gigs. They're rough-hewn and down to earth. . . a little like The Psychedelic Furs with none of the polish. Good songs though.

**Into The Storm** (0742 721410) are from Sheffield and have some of the ideas but not many of the tools to craft the final statue (or something like that). They end up sounding like Dire Straits without a distinctive vocal and guitar style. This is a vision in search of time and effort.

**The Psychbombs** (39 Medway Street, Highfields, Leicester LE2 1BR) have adopted a playful stance, spiced with bedroom humour, a straggly guitar and a drum machine. They sound incredibly Mary Chain-esque at first, later developing into an admirably credible pop sound.

**Power Dressing** (0923 54108) threaten a single and they're nearly there when it comes to being "tempting". The lyrics really suck, but Power Dressing's drive and well-played music — like Split Enz in their formative glory, with a touch more modernism — may well succeed.

**Martin Bestwood** (Flat 5, 15A Villa Road, St Anns, Nottingham) is a part-time member of Clint Bestwood And The Something Or Others, but this three song tape is a spark more enticing than barrelhouse whisky-sodden fun. The three tracks throw everything from John Martyn to Buffalo Springfield into a contemporary sound that's exceptionally potent. Very impressive.

**The Australians** (051 708 7921) are not Australian at all, in fact they feature Pale Fountains and Yeah Yeah Noh's and play a milky waft of melody that's difficult to tack. There's a potential signing here, with rewards not lurking too far over the hill.

**The Resistance** claim to be from the armpit of Britain. . . Oswestry (0691 773613) but they transcend their provincial status by playing a brand of swirling rock music that's tastefully edgy, a few steps closer to the real world than U2 and reminiscent of latter day SWA.

**Portrait Gallery** (01-567 9447) are a duo playing inoffensive strums. They have a melodic ear but there's no dynamics and presence on this understated set of popish sketches.

**The Terminal Twist** (15 Heathland Road, Stoke Newington, London N16) have a sophisticated pop style but none of the finish. Their demo has a brace of "funky" ideas that try hard but lack feeling — almost perfect for a post-Yes/It Bites comparison.

**The Melroony Daddies** have brought their confident psychedelia to London (01-200 5447). With a snatch of Cavern-style Beatles, a slivver of manic playing and some pretty short songs, they're a welcome thrust of feedback.

**The Audience** (0744 29386) present a demo of a million songs and simultaneously come from St Helens. Their influences (Severed Heads, Stranglers, Dead Kennedys and The Passage) make interesting reading, they have a keen keyboard player, a quite acidic guitarist and a nice line in monotone vocal delivery.

**Lawnmower Deth** (44 Church Drive, Ravenshead, Notts NG15 9FF) play thunderous instrumental rock music that strips Black Flag and Gore down to the bone as it heads for a brand of brain-numbed madness that's not been heard since, oh, you know when.



**Ship Of Fools** (01-799 2343) waft in on an ambient hue, then prick the conscience with some truly deep lyrics. Feeling and emotion run rife, but there's just not enough going on to make it vitally gloomy.

**Death By Milkfloat** (0482 46717) are certainly the noisiest band to come out of Hull and they display this talent (including a bent for thrashing funk and offbeat lyrics) with great style. DBM sound as if they'd be more than at home doing a Peel session — and they may very well do so in the not too distant future.

**Crawfish Daddy** (Great Yarmouth 858454) undoubtedly get their aquatic name from their sea-faring exploits. And, with tracks like Down By The Sea and Drowning, their location has obviously influenced their pert strum. Perhaps there's not a gargantuan A side here, but they're moving along the right road.

Noise Noise: leather and haircuts



Noise Noise (01-602 0012) have a hardcore electronic image, but their vocal style is a little too reminiscent of uptempo Numan. After that realisation it all seems to be a little pompous. Reasonable quirky pop, but nothing new.

Ha-Ha the Electorate (Top Flat, 11 Pitville Crescent, Cheltenham) are shaky and underpowered — but they do have a spirited thrust in their neanderthal minimalism. They're like a bluesy nightclub Nick Cave with Wire in attendance. The idea is sound, the execution just needs a little more care.

Throb Gut (8 Ashwin Street, Dalston, London E8 3DL) play buzzy-punk through a sweater. Crass-styled metal with theatrical anti-yuppie sentiments. Throb Gut are nothing new and not very convincing at what they do. "Fe, fi fo, fum, I smell the blood of yuppie scum." Yes, I should coco.

Jeffrey Roag and Le Sex (01-769 3739) play inoffensive electronic cock-rock (complete with guitar solos and funky bass). Tastefully presented, professionally performed but ultimately soul-less. Virgin, please copy!

The Golden Dawn (041-427 3639) are from Scotland and have more than a passing resemblance to the TV Personalities in their use of harmonies. Their eight tracks here suggest that they could soon be cleaning up their sound and oiling their throats on the proceeds of vinyl outing.

The Real Apartment (36 Grass Royal, Yeovil, Somerset) have an affinity with cider and opt to supply a wonky tape. Or maybe they just play wonky? Either way, their folky fiddle-driven air, spiced with echo OD and other effects, is interesting if not totally endearing. They are good at art though.

The Marinello Incident (51 Devana Road, Leicester LE2 1PJ) have a guitar that's untamed, some Stockhausen records in their pocket and some very loud shirts. Their three track trick is swirly and quite appealing.

Mel 'n' Kolly (15 Watson Avenue, South Shields, Tyne & Wear NE3 34 7Q) write great sleeve notes, have grand titles — For The Love Of A Marine Girl — but flatten out and flounder on their strummed depresso session. Shame.

Poor Fred and The Butcher (01-806 0228) claims his demo took 15 minutes to do, was recorded onto his Auntie's cassette and the blank tape was found in a dustbin. Yep, it's tinny. . . but it sounds like a cross between Barney New Order and Neil Young! Pretty twangy, well played and just think what he'd have done given half an hour!

A Distant Garden (061-764 2839) are Bury's answer to alternative music. Recorded cheaply, this tape still manages to sound decent as there are a few good song ideas riding over the tinny drum machine and the occasionally over-powering keyboard lines.

The Visitors (03955 77441) play chiming pop music that just fails when the harmonies don't quite click. This is the group's second tape and it certainly sounds as if they're scurrying towards a brighter tomorrow.

The Pyramid Curve (Flat 1, 5A Great George Street, Weymouth, Dorset) start admirably — breaking into the Wire/effectuated pop/Manicured Noise market, but by track three they've lapsed into chirpy pop with few redeeming factors. More of the earlier stuff, more danger, more challenge, please.

# agog

This month we carry into rock's rich tapestry and say, "B-b-b-b-b-beh!"

**BACKS:** Cartel member involved in the manufacturing and distribution business for some time. Based in East Anglia, they've enthused over everyone from The Higsons to The Boonierats (via Survival Records).



**BAD BRAINS:** SST fusion of thrash and reggae which developed into a fusion of metal and reggae. . . seek out their excellent debut LP *Against I*.

**BAUHAUS:** Former home of Peter Murphy and Love And Rockets. This Northampton quartet started with lipstick and lace as Bauhaus 1919, got culty, invented goth and still sell lorryloads of their single Bela Lugosi's Dead.



**BEACH BOYS:** Brotherly harmony and tales of surf and sand. Did you know they were accused of nicking one of their songs from a Charles Manson idea?

**BEASTIE BOYS:** Commercial axe-grinding point for terror-through-hip-hop. Space-age kids rolling into the film biz after using music as a stepping stone.

**BEATBOX:** Drum-machine's trendier name. . . but remember the tackier the beatbox sound, the better. . . and never make it sound like real drums.

**THE BEATLES:** Pop icons as yardstick for everything new for an uncaring public. Featured Ringo Starr who went on to narrate *Thomas the Tank Engine* and Paul McCartney, who Johnny Marr recently played with. Of the other two, one is dead and the other is daft.

**BEATNIK:** Hey cool, wow. Term best associated with '60s film versions of trendy '50s jazz-life. Goatee beards, stripy T-shirts and "vibes" are essential (berets optional).

**BEETLE:** Trendiest car in the editor's street! But only if it's a convertible.

**BELGIUM:** Schizophrenic country (both class and language) with music varying wildly. Notable imports are Tuxedomoon and The Weathermen who love Brussels, while Play It Again Sam releases lots of records and Bene Gesserit lives in the backwaters.

**BEN SHERMAN:** Essential skinhead fashion shirt that's often revived in its checked, box-pleated and button-down-collar look. A must for latter day casuals — see *Ug* publisher for details.

Next month: more B

# B

# CLASSIFIEDS

## PERSONAL

**QUIET MALE** 19 moving to Chester soon. Seeks Female 18+ for Friendship, Love? Please Send Photo. Emotions a must. Into most Indie music. Box No. 25 **U150**

**STRANGE SOLITARY INTERESTING PENFRIEND REQUIRED** BOX No. 26 **U151**

**WHICH GIRL** from the North wants to write to/read from and perhaps meet tall boy from the South? Box No. 27 **U152**

## RECORDS FOR SALE

**A BARGAIN** Pot Luck Assortment (our selection) — send £35 for 500 used 7" singles or £12 for 100 used LP's and 12" singles. (Postage included). Music & Video Exchange, 28 Pembroke Rd., London W11 (01-727 3538) **U15**

**PUNK/NEW-WAVE** Record finding service & auction. SAE/IRC: Elista Records, (U) 157 Common Rise, Hitchin, Herts. **U142**

**ALL INDEPENDENT** label releases, imports, Punk & New Wave rarities. SAE or 2 IRC's for latest catalogue. 'Rhythm' 172 Gwydir Street, Cambridge (0223) 60981 **U58**

**MAGIC MUSHROOM BAND.** New album 'Bomshakar' £6 inc. p&p. Aftermath Records, 119 Metrostore, London W3 7QS **U140**

**PUNK, THRASH, Oi!** Rare, Mod, Indies, Thousands of titles all artists SAE 11 Beresford Road, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh, Hants SO52LU **U145**

**CURE, FALL, Mission, Smiths, etc.** Doors, Hendrix, Who, Rare Tapes. Cheap. SAE for list: E. Mason 56 East Budleigh Road, Budleigh, Salterton Devon. **U146**

**SMITHS, MORRISSEY, Primitives, Housemartins, U2, W. Present, S. Dragons, Bunynmen, AA Eve, J. Division, Pogues, REM, Primals, Fall, Balaam, Mary Chain, Nephilim, Sisters, Posters T-Shirts, Rarities, Massive list.** SAE Dept UG. 885 Chester Road, Erdington, Birmingham B24 0BS **U147**

## RECORDS WANTED

**ABSOLUTELY ALL** your records, tapes, CD's, videos and books bought/sold/exchanged — also ALL Hi-Fi, musical instruments, computers and cameras — NONE REFUSED!! Bring ANY quantity in ANY condition to Record Tape and Video Exchange, 38 Notting Hill Gate, London W11 (open 7 days 10am-8pm Tel 01-243 8573). Or send them by post with SAE for cash (none returned — we decide price) Quantities collected ANYWHERE **U16**

## FOR SALE

**UNDERGROUND SHOES** Alternative Footwear. Over 100 styles available. Send 30p Stamp for free catalogue. Unit D2 Conway House, 10 Little Lever Street, Manchester M1 1EF **U19**

**BALAAM, FALL, Fields, G.B.O.A., J.A.M.C., Mission, N. Order, P.W.E.I., Smiths, Zodiac rarities for sale, Hundreds more, Large SAE 37 Emerald Street, Cardiff, CF2 1QA. U113**

**THE PENTANGLE, 126 Sheffield Road, Barnsley, S.Yorks S70 1JB.** Alternative and original clothing, afghan skirts and tops, shoes and boots, studded belts, baseball and bomber jackets, printed trousers, concert t-shirts and lots more. Shop open 10am-5pm, Mon-Sat. For extensive catalogue send 3 first class stamps plus full address. **U123**

## GROOVY HAPPENINGS

**STOATER PSYCHEDELIA** Oronoos 12" "Woods are alive with the smell of his coming" £2.99 inc P&P Osric Tentacles Oronoos Ullators and more tapes SAE list B.D.D. 1 Woodmans Hill Berkley Frome, Somerset. **U148**

**VOICES OF WONDER RECORDS** Sister Rain (LP: £7.50 inc P&P). "Psychedelic howls from the Norwegian Woods!" Available from: VOW, Torvakkgt, 2C, 0550 Oslo, Norway. **U149**

## MUSICAL SERVICES

**WE CAN** supply you with all your promotional needs, from T-Shirts to Badges in quantities to suit you at prices you CAN afford, Contact V.A.D. Promotions, 16 Ovenden Green, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 5ER **U153**  
**BADGES! PRINTING** T-shirts. The '63' Press Gang, 15 Autumn Place, Leeds (0532) 784438 **U144**

**INDIE PRESSING SERVICE** THE CHEAPEST, BEST QUALITY 7" + 12" DISCS.  
Picture, Shaped, & Coloured Discs. Flexi Discs, B/W and Full Colour Sleeves and labels. Free help in Artwork and Distribution. We are the cheapest for sure!!!!  
500 7" Singles from £250  
500 12" Singles/Albums from £412  
**VAT & ORIGINATION COSTS INCLUDED**  
**IPS SPECIAL**  
One track on 500 7" EPs  
Your own designed sleeve & printed label. **Only £250 inc VAT**  
**CALL FOR FREE QUOTE**  
**01-358 0058**

## RECORD FAIRS

**"UK'S BIGGEST & BEST" BRIGHTON RECORD FAIR**  
Brighton Centre, Kings Road, Brighton.  
**SUN MAY 29TH & JUNE 19TH**  
Admission 50p, 12.30pm-5pm.  
(Preview £1, 10.30am-12.30pm)  
Over 100 Stalls Buy & Sell Bargains, rarities & new releases, Records, Tapes, CDs, Tour Merchandise & Music Memorabilia.  
Stalls/Info (0273) 608806. **U143**

# NEXT MONTH in Underground

**ADRIAN SHERWOOD on On-U Sound the THRASH bash crashed STARS OF HEAVEN**



T Muses: In Ug next month

**THROWING MUSES and YELLO BIAFRA** at a new agent's near you on sale May 20

# UNDERGROUND

the hip pocket guide to alternative listening

## CLASSIFIEDS

HEADINGS AVAILABLE:  
PERSONAL  
RECORDS FOR SALE  
RECORDS WANTED  
FOR SALE  
WANTED  
FANZINES  
FAN CLUBS  
VIDEO  
MUSICAL SERVICES  
SPECIAL NOTICES  
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)  
ALL HEADINGS INCLUSIVE OF VAT  
20p per word  
ALL WORDS IN BOLD FACE AFTER  
FIRST TWO 30p PER WORD  
PLEASE NOTE: IT IS ILLEGAL TO  
ADVERTISE BOOTLEG RECORDINGS  
FOR SALE.

**CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS MUST ARRIVE AT THIS OFFICE BY THE 4TH OF EACH MONTH FOR THE FOLLOWING MONTHS ISSUE.**

THE PUBLISHERS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO RESERVE OR WITHDRAW ADVERTISEMENTS AT THEIR DISCRETION.

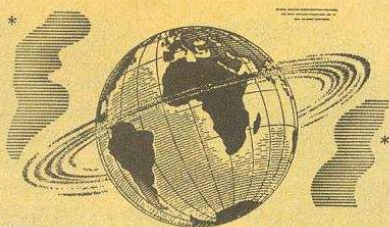
To: CLASSIFIED AD DEPT  
UNDERGROUND, Spotlight  
Publications, Greater  
London House, Hampstead  
Road, London NW1 7QZ.  
Tel: 01 387 6611

SIMPLY SNIP FORM AND SEND TO ADDRESS BELOW ENCLOSING CHEQUE/P.O. MADE PAYABLE TO SPOTLIGHT PUBLICATIONS:

HEADING ..... NO. OF ISSUES ..... FIRST ISSUE COVER DATED .....  
I enclose Postal Order/Cheque value £ ..... for ..... (no of words) at ..... p  
made payable to Spotlight Publications. All classified ads must be prepaid by PO or cheque. CASH WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.


NAME .....  
ADDRESS .....

Box Nos. £1.50 extra per month  
Name and address, when included in advert, must be paid for



**In Italy, the indie scene is a burgeoning mass of excitement. Vittore Baroni introduces the hottest names to spout. . .**

At the top of all the indie playlists and readers' polls in this first part of 1988 is the firmly established Barricada Rumble Beat, the second album from **The Gang**, a group that does not bother to hide in any way the fact that they choose The Clash for spiritual guidance (they even dress like their idols); yet, they aren't soulless copycats. They have their own personality and the right beat.

- Politically uncompromising, The Gang refused offers from many established labels and self-produced the LP on their own label, **G.C.D.** (distributed by Supporti Fonografici, Viale Coni Zugna 63, 20144 Milan).

- Their honest brand of ballads and reggae spiced combat-rock will satisfy any young street warrior, an extra incentive being the presence of **Billy Bragg** as special guest on a couple of tracks.

- Another band that have built a solid reputation on wild gigs of good-ole r'n'r, played at street level and maximum volume, is **The Kim Squad And Dinah Shore Zeekapers** from Rome. Their first release, *Young Bastards* (**Caesar Records**), tries hard to document on vinyl the raw energy of their stage show, through eight shots of the classic beat-psycho-garage cocktail. The singer is French, the guitarist is crazy, the bass and keyboard are played by two nice looking gals in mini-skirts, the platter is distributed (internationally?) by Virgin.

- Even better for my taste is the debut LP by **Pikes In Panic**, *Keep It Cool And Dry* (**Contempo Records**, PO Box 1369, Florence), an amazingly competent six-piece that carries the '60s revival thing to unusually creative heights. Timeless roots-garage, if you prefer. Any fan of The Fuzztones or Chesterfield Kings should hear this one.



The Difference with Infant psyche

- Also on Contempo is the first work by **The Difference**, a sort of super-group formed by musicians active in various bands in the Turin area. Though the cover of *Is* smells of '70s progressive rock and the sound abounds in psychedelic little tricks, the band hides a subversive bluesy soul. Dig the folksy Country Gay song, and the Braineaters coming at ya through a maze of cryptic verses. Teenage Captain Beefheart on dope. *Different*, indeed.

Bob Dobbs: at your service



# Church of the poisoned mind

Welcome to the sacred portals of the World's First Industrial Church Of Love And MONEY — take a pew, vicar!

In a country like America, where freedom of religion is guaranteed by the constitution, anything is likely to develop. Enter the Church Of The SubGenius, a group of musicians, writers and performance artists who make a hobby of inventing new mythologies tailored to the demands of life under the Reagan administration. *What do these people believe in? Virtually everything. Whom do they believe in? A mysterious character known only as Bob Dobbs, who, they claim, "is actually a pretty regular guy, just very rich and possessed by forces greater than man".*

The SubGenius cultists operate from a base in the Redneck stronghold of Dallas, Texas. Over the past few years they've had a field day dreaming up new explanations for the mysteries of the universe — everything from UFOs and psychic phenomena to the Kennedy and Lennon killings. (Lennon, they claim, wasn't assassinated at all; he actually died of a drug overdose a split-second before being shot. "So in the end Chapman's bullets were wasted.") They derive much of their pleasure from the reactions of their victims — mostly baffled normals — and the inevitable resulting publicity.

Their activities include a weekly radio slot (**The Hour Of Slack**), plus regular conventions, street demonstrations, road-rants, multi-track studio seances and weird 'anti-music' concerts at which the Church's resident 'doktorbands' and performance artists are unleashed onto the public at large. The purpose of all this activity is not just to recruit new disciples, but to ensure that they're the *right kind* of disciples. As the Church's 'Sacred Scribe', the Rev Ivan Stang, once explained: "This church deliberately pulls the rug from under the preconceptions of 'follower' types, thus separating the wheat from the chaff. It uses shock value. We're often too sardonic for those smug hip types who thought they were already as sardonic as you can get."

Perhaps the Church's most impressive achievement to date is its back catalogue of cassette albums, containing somewhere in the region of 50 hardcore releases. Some are taken from SubGenius conventions and radio phone-in shows; others fall under the 'Media Barrage' heading. Those in the latter category form what is surely the world's most complete archive of

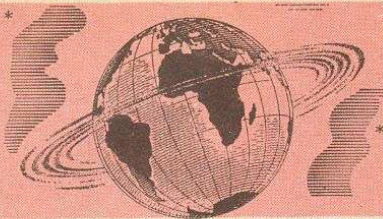
'found voice' material. Each contains hundreds of bizarre audio clips juxtaposed at random. Christian fundamentalist radio broadcasts are intercut with vintage horror movie soundtracks; tub-thumping Evangelists vie for attention with sincere UFO cranks and obscure beatnik poets; small-time local politicians are constantly shouted down by card-carrying SubGenius trance-spouters. Intense and challenging, hip, funny and grotesque, the Media Barrage tapes defy all attempts at classification. Every home should have at least one.

At the other end of the spectrum from all this lunacy lie the Church's notorious 'anti-music' cassettes. The earliest of these were relatively simple, almost innocent-sounding hymns to abnormality. Later releases have pushed back the tolerance barrier to new and previously undreamt-of frontiers. Artists featured include **The Band That Dare Not Speak Its Name**, **Glassmadness**, **Blue Marmalade**, **LIES**, **The Swinging Love Corpses**, **D K Jones**, **The People's Temple**, **Puzzling Evidence** and many more. The resulting tapes fall predictably into the same see-saw, hit-or-miss pattern as most conceptual/experimental stuff. You either get a good or bad song now and then, depending on the ebb and flow of the various bands' creative juices. On balance the material is, in every sense, an extreme manifestation of the human creative impulse. Recorded and trance-mixed under the most adverse conditions, it represents the Church's filthiest, most juvenile, least excusable contribution to popular culture.

Like all the Church's products, these 'archetapes' (a typical SubGenius play on words) are sold at hiked-up prices. The SubGenius Foundation is, you see, a profit-making body — "the World's First Industrial Church Of Love And MONEY!". Humour, wild irreverence and scabrous rock music from the bedrock on which it is built. Guilt, traditionally the mainspring of organised religion, has no part in the scheme of things. As the Rev Ivan Stang once explained: "The only time Dobbs'll lay a guilt trip on you is when you don't send him enough MONEY!".

**The Rev Ian Blake**

The church of the SubGenius contact address: PO Box 140306, Dallas, Texas 75214, USA. Send money. Lots of it!



Vachel Booth gets the blast



Butthole's psychedelic excursion

# Breaching the peace

What beverage do you think Texas's prime Mexicali grunge quartet would favour to wet their whistle? Mescal? Black Cat beer? No, here they are in Mute Records' recording studios and they're supping Yorkshire bitter! Talk about perverse. Yep, I think we're on the right track. . .

The Butthole Surfers have come to London to trace their favourite British comedian Jerry Arkwright, "the Northern Industrial Gay" (no, I've not heard of him either), to buy some cheap Doc Martens and eat bucketloads of Indian food. There's also work to be done; a collaborative recording project

under the guise of The Jack Officers; a recording for Euro-MTV; two live shows and some promotion for their new and very groovy album *Hairway To Steve*.

The Butthole Surfers are, clockwise from my left, Theresa (drums), Paul (guitar and vocals), Jeff (bass), King (more drums), and Gibby (vocals and Gibbyness).

Their live shows have become almost legendary and are notoriously difficult to get into. This visit took in two small venues and at both the punters were turned away in droves. The same thing happened last year when they played the Clarendon and, even with heavy fire restrictions enforced, it was jam packed and steaming hot.

Hotter than their equipment could cope with.

Theresa: "It was like a million degrees. . ."

Gibby: "The stuff got a little bit hot and it f\*\*\*ed the phasers even though we had power convertors. It made our digital equipment just choke."

Theresa: "The drums were the only thing working by the end and even then you couldn't hold onto the sticks 'cause everything was so sweaty."

Even the walls and ceiling were dripping sweat.

Gibby: "Yeah, I was gonna say, it was amazing 'cause you think you're getting spat on from out of nowhere like 'how are they hitting me on my back?'. Then you look up and see a guy spitting in circles, shwoo! And it comes shooting right back into his mouth."

King: "A closed ecosphere! Y'know, like how oceans evaporate into clouds, the clouds raining over the land and the land goes back into the ocean, the ocean evaporates back into clouds. . ."

Paul: "Cool, we had our own little world going there!"

Jeff: "If only we'd had a couple of hedgehogs or something to go with it."

A couple of hedgehogs is about all they had missing. Despite all the technical difficulties they still managed to throw the audience way off balance. Not long into the set the stage was obliterated from view by swathes of dry ice, two flaming discs flared up and, with a monstrous cymbal crash, leapt up to the ceiling. When the smoke cleared the group's dancer, who'd previously been regaled with flowers and long blond tresses, now stood naked, sporting a shaved scalp and posturing aggressively at the audience. The atmosphere was electric, a mass hallucination where no-one knew quite what was happening or what was coming next. All the while a montage of filmic madness played through the dry ice, over and behind the group; coral reefs; kaleidoscope swirls; battling insects; household hints and, most disturbing of all, gruesome on-the-scene inspections of accident victims by the Ohio State Highway Patrol.

The Mechanised Death footage was topped at their recent ULU gig by a 'penis reconstruction move', close-up footage of a penis being skinned, impaled, trussed up and finally dressed in a stitch-up corset. Most of the audience were squirming, fascinated but repulsed, not wanting to look at that damn screen and not wanting to look away. The Buttholes hammered on regardless.

Talk turns to hospitals and incredible medical survivors, men with iron rods removed from their heads, bullets lodged between the hemispheres of the brain, that kind of thing. The band's own experiences of hospitals are less sensational.

Gibby: "I had to have some stitches after the Mean Fiddler show. . ."

Jeff: "Yeah, some asshole threw a glass at Gibby and it gashed his head open."

Gibby: "It didn't cost a cent, that was the good thing, had to wait around a good while but it didn't cost a cent."

Theresa: "King has a kernel of corn in his ear."

King: "I got this kernel of corn trapped in my ear when I was a kid, I went to the doctor and he told me it'd be too tricky to get at and it'd probably work its way out or rot away. But it's still there! I can still feel it sometimes."

The Buttholes are just regular people, you sonuvabitch

# mad dog

Originally inspired to form a band out of a love for the electronic sounds emanating from Europe in the early '80s — our own Cabaret Voltaire, Portion Control and Chris And Cosey, plus SPK and Liaisons Dangereuses — Canada's Skinny Puppy have risen, phoenix-like, from the red sands of time to currently rank alongside Front 242 and maybe one or two others as leaders of the post-post-industrial dancefloor sequencer disco resurgence. Or something like that.

Now signed direct to Capitol in the UK, I met up with vocalist and onstage self-flagellator Nivek Ogre in Vancouver shortly before the start of their current European tour in support of their third full album, *Cleanse Fold And Manipulate*. How did he and fellow Puppys Cevin Cey and Dwayne Goettl feel about visiting the UK for the first time?

"We're really excited by the prospect, although it's really impractical to have expectations — whatever happens happens. We're just going to put on a show and hopefully people will accept what we're doing and think of it as something they can relate to."

I know other electronic bands like Front 242 have strong reservations about playing in the UK.

"When we toured Europe last time that was a complete culture shock for me, with so many different languages to cope with. At least the British speak the same language as me if nothing else!"

Is playing live necessary — many electronic bands don't bother and if they do they are often really boring to watch?

"I know what you mean, but personally I love performing live, and our show has developed into something very unusual and different and totally at odds with many

other electronic groups. We feel that you have to play live for credibility's sake — we've lost a lot of money touring, but at the same time it has helped us to sell a lot more records, particularly in America. We still use tapes on stage, but we are performers — live drums, keyboards, guitar, vocals. After all, we're playing for the people who put us there in the first place, so we want to make it something worthwhile for them, as well as for ourselves."

Your personal onstage theatrics seem pretty intense, judging from the films I've seen, with enough blood and gore to make even King Kurt wince.

"I just think there's too much pussyfooting going on in the world today. This whole singer dancing to the music trip has its place I guess — it's just not my place! As far as the blood and stuff goes, it's mostly cosmetic I'm afraid, although if there was some way of cutting myself on stage and healing by the next show I'd do it!"

Do you think there is now an over emphasis on the 'clubability' of a record in the main area you are working in?

"We like making dance music, but I don't think a lot of our material is that danceable. Adrian Sherwood's 12 inch remix of *Addiction* is though, he was great, a real breath of fresh air. Working with him was another dream come true for me, and hopefully we'll use him again for future mixes."

And with the corporate muscle of Capitol behind you, it must be easier to reach people. Did you need them or did they chase you?

"I see it rather that they have us rather than we have them. I think we are their integrity in some ways, and each year we are progressing a bit more, so they are pleased. And there are people at Capitol who are really into our whole project..."

Skinny Puppy to sweep next year's Grammy Awards? Capitol's current rising star Jody Watley to move over and die? Maybe not, but if you're from the post Cabaret Voltaire generation and haven't yet heard Skinny Puppy, then you should. *Cleanse, fold and investigate*. **ALEX BASTEDO**



## GREECE: LIBIDO BLUME

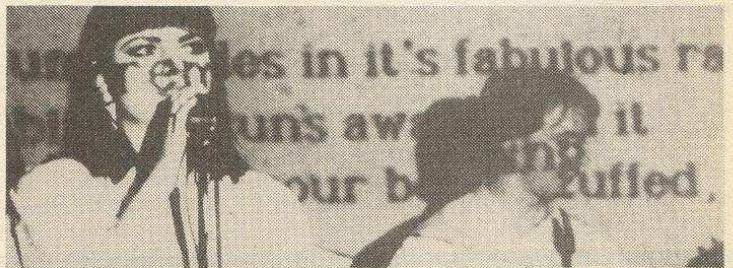
Libido Blume believe that they can live outside of pop music's western world. Emerging from Greece with their third album, *Liquid Sensation*, they've astonished their native fans by being able to attract a foreign producer, and that has given the LP a much bigger, more robust nature. The producer in question being Mekon/Three John Jon Langford.

The album is brimming with different sounds. Pop melodies, strong guitar riffs, whispering and screaming voices, it's a noise with a cutting edge. Libido Blume are convinced that people can succeed without speaking English, citing Minimal Compact, Les Thugs, The Ex, Young Gods, Phillip Boa and a brace of others. What's more, they're right. **Anthony Fragos**



## USA: THE KRONOS QUARTET

Formed in '73, this US quartet have rewritten the string quartet pamphlet. Apart from Neil Young's use of the genre, followed ten years or so later by Marc Almond, that squeaky, stringy sound hasn't been bowed too often, but **THE KRONOS QUARTET** (no, not a metal band) offer a variation of interpretation — from Hendrix to Bartok, from Glass to Cage. Their Warner Brothers LP, *White Man Sleeps*, offers their view of a selection of misfits and should be savoured. **Essential education.** **Dave Henderson**



## USA: ALGEBRA SUICIDE

Originally formed in 1982, Chicago based **ALGEBRA SUICIDE** have just released their first LP (a joint release between the RRRRecords and DOM labels) entitled *The Secret Like Crazy*, which contains no less than 20 slices of the duo's engaging poetry set to minimal guitar and drum machine backing.

The tracks include rare compilation appearances — the best known of which is probably their contribution to ROIR's cassette *The Best Of America Underground* — selections from their previous hard to find single releases, plus many unreleased songs.

Perhaps the nearest musical comparisons for husband and wife team Lydia Tomkiw (words) and Don Hedeker (music) would be either Laurie Anderson or perhaps The Young Marble Giants. Have they always kept things this simple?

Don: "When we got together at first Lydia had been doing poetry readings for quite a while and I had been working in various rock bands, so it made sense to combine our two main skills. We're used to working as a duo now, although for live performances we also incorporate a film show. **Alex Bastedo**

(Algebra Suicide's debut LP is available from RRRRecords, 151 Paige Street, Lowell, MA 01852, USA)



Skinny Puppy: clinical but cute



**CANADA: PSYCHE**

Darren and Stephen Haas are better known as Evan Panic and Anthony Red, and they're better known as **Psyche**, from Edmonton, Alberta. They've lived in Paris for the last year and go down a storm in Holland and Germany, a pretty cosmopolitan bunch all round! Unfortunately, they're still relatively unknown in Britain, but their third LP, *Mystery Hotel* on New Rose, could change this situation.

Darren: "Mystery Hotel is everything we like electronically. It contains elements of the old synth-wave, OMD and Tangerine Dream, along with more diverse styles like The Doors and John Carpenter."

The album's successful mix of top 40 material with meaty, beaty, alternative dancefloor fillers, should turn a few doubters' heads, and the current rebirth of interest in European-styled electronic music might just let Psyche pummel those ears that they've been searching for. Peter Mash



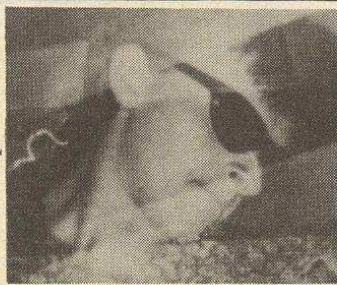
**WEST GERMANY: DIE SACHE**

An exciting three-piece from south Germany (Tübingen), Die Sache combine '60s garage sounds with pure C-86 guitar pop. A few of the songs on the current album, *The Girl Who Stole the Eiffel Tower* (out on FAB through Backs in the UK), sound as if they could have been released by Subway.

Their best release however is *Who's In My Garage*, a self-released 12 track tape that came out in 1986. Try anything you can to get it, it's fantastic! FAB Records, Eislebener Stieg 6-8, 2000 Hamburg 50, West Germany. Jan Cux

The Great Fire Of London is a 14 track compilation LP containing selected Fire acts from the past, present and future. **Blue Aeroplanes**, **Colenso Parade**, **Close Lobsters**, **Pulp**, **1000 Mexicans**, **The Rose Of Avalanche** and newest Fire artists **The Parachute Men** and **The Royal Assassins** are among the gems to be found on this damned fine quality record. All you have to do to win one is answer the following question set by a token Fire man: How many members make up The Blue Aeroplanes? Not as simple as you think, this one.

Blue Aeroplanes



First ten correct entries get a copy of the LP. Answers, if you please, to *Underground/Fire Competition*, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1 7QZ to arrive by May 10.

# Life is

Lydia Lunch is a freelance conceptualist and creative exhibitionist. At present she's exploring the avenues of the lyrical, verbal, structured assault of word power. In London, she strides on stage, clad as only an ultimate feminist can be — sexy, knickerless. . . kind of 'abandoned'. She spits, snarls and cooes, it's a relentless barrage of clichés and home truths. The audience are non-plussed.

*"The American way of life-death. . . prisons, penitentiaries, abortion clinics, shooting galleries, murder and arson and shooting and rape. . . born to a set of perpetual pervers in a pigsty-catholic style. . . I'm a man possessed! I did it ALL for Jesus. . . I'm just here to SPREAD the disease because the disease is the cure. . . now that's something we ALL have in common. . . annihilation. . . I don't wanna know NOTHING that I ALREADY don't know — YOU wouldn't know the truth if it slapped you in the face. And that's why I'm here. . . 'cos I LOVE slapping you in the face."*

"In the past 27 years I have never compromised myself intellectually"

This is the shit flying back at a society provoked by anger, the contempt and frustration thrown against the kind of oppression induced by ignorance, censorship and perversion, the bulk of which inevitably forms the cross of bondage that the fairer sex are forced to bear, a continual assault to fight against.

"I had to move away from Brooklyn because it got to the stage where I hated going out on the street. . . there's always someone hassling your ass. It's a violation of basic personal rights!"

So you don't think women really ever got what our great aunts fought for?

"Freedom, equality, acceptance? That's BULLSHIT. This system still advocates and adheres to a phallic, patriarchal society, and that gets me. Ours is still a society where *men* have the largest slice of power, which they inevitably abuse. Men have the ultimate say. How many women still get beaten? Raped? How many are dominated, submerge their personalities, forsake their rights in the face of a male? How many women in power are there? Not enough by far. OK, so in this country a woman gets the chance to run the country, but just look at her! Censorship, something I'm really against, is getting worse, not better — in fact this whole country is stagnating rather than progressing. . . what an embarrassment to the female race!"

Lydia's pursuits since *Teenage Jesus And The Jerks* have taken the road of vinyl and literature, but more recently she's been involved with cult director Richard Kern in several videos. It's obvious that whatever limitations she comes up against she has the versatility to explore new mediums.

"There are two videos, *The Right Side Of My Brain* and *Fingered*. . . guess they're probably censored over here. . . I acted, co-wrote and co-directed them. They contain fairly 'explicit' scenes, but not for the sake of seedy sensationalism; it's to present things in a way that will make people think. . . to look into the true nature of what goes on and react."

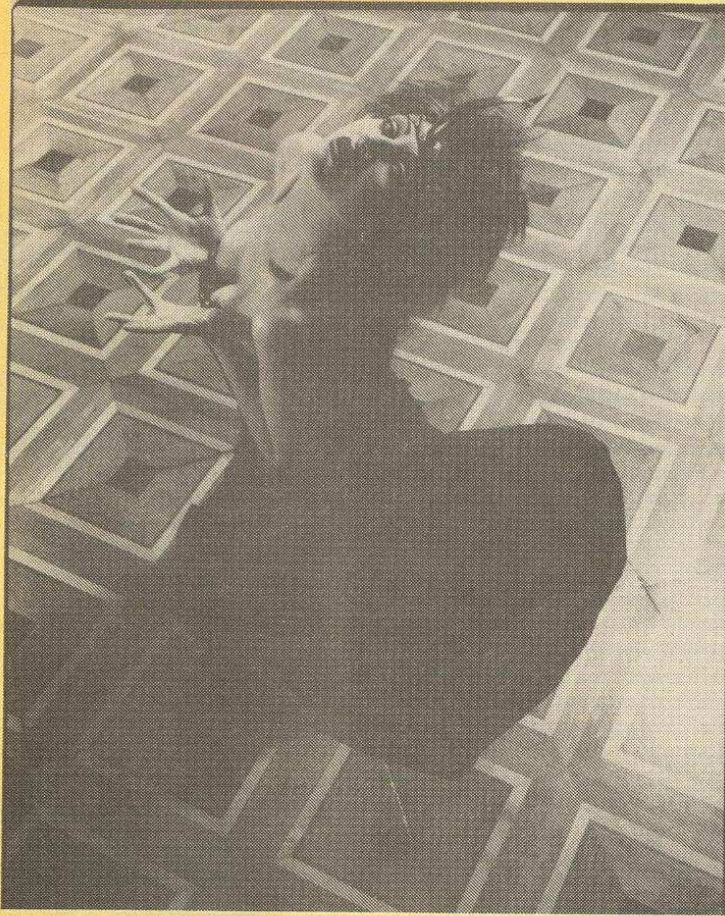
These aren't exactly mainstream pieces, so how do you make money?

"I don't lead the kind of lifestyle that demands a lot of money. For instance, I have no expensive ritualistic habits. In the past 27 years I have never compromised myself intellectually, physically, or otherwise. So there is no realistic way of making cash without wasting my energy against my nature. Though I did have an idea for Lydia Lunch sex aids. . .!"

Those unaware of Lydia's chequered musical career are advised to



# porn



Lydia gets the thrust

check out the LP *Hysterie*, a compilation of her past work that's out on Widenspeak (through Rough Trade). Releases just around the corner include *Honeymoon In Red*, an LP she recorded with those masters of the soil, The Birthday party (RIP), preceded by the 12 inch *The Crumb* featuring Sonic Youth's Thurston Moore and Stinkfist, "done" with genial Jim (Foetus) Thirwell.

Currently under discussion is an 'anthological comic book', an idea which sprang from shared brainstorming with iconoclastic Nick Cave. A tape, featuring Jeffrey Lee Pierce's prose on one side and Lydia's 'therapeutic onslaught' on the other, shall also shortly be available from the ULU.

So you're not actually giving up music?

"No way! I will continue to use as many avenues as befit the various ways of expression. There are two other major forces on my label Widenspeak, namely the bands Mars and DNA."

Two bands that, musically speaking, are coming from the same place as Lydia, aka the NY 'no wave' movement circa '77... a movement akin to punk which destroys to build.

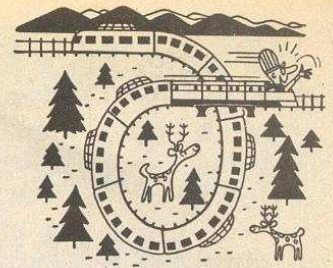
Do you see yourself as part of the so-called 'new flesh' movement, along with artists such as Swans, Sonic Youth, Henry Rollins and Neubauten?

"There's a strong link with Sonic Youth — the others more or less evolved around the same time, but the connection is really coincidental. What all those names do have in common is that we are all extreme, and therefore cannot but be individualistic."

Amid the free enterprise of the '80s, the misunderstood are often repressed — an obvious political example of this is the threatened reintroduction of clause 28, which intends to send homosexuality back into its closet, and against which there was a mere wave of disgust as opposed to an uprising.

Lydia: "Although we are extreme and in the minority, we are not powerless unless we make it so. That is one issue I stress again and again; it is up to us to turn around the cycle of abuse!" **Beata A Burnska**

## letter from america



### TONY FLETCHER IN TEXAS

First impressions can be misleading. Within half an hour of reaching the Lone Star State, we had witnessed a trouserless driver in a highway rest area scouting for

male company, and a petrol pump attendant with a gun! But the reality is that

Texans are some of the friendliest people you can hope to meet.

Where were all the JRs? Certainly the Dallas skyline, its skyscrapers' outlines lit up at night like icing on a wedding cake, remains an impressive monument to the '70s oil boom, but it is just a facade to a city of empty office space and bankrupt businesses.

Deep Ellum is the name given to the hip area in Dallas, home of enough intriguing music for Island to release a 'Sound Of Deep Ellum' compilation last year. And just in time: needless police paranoia forced many clubs to close and even succeeded in turning one hedonistic young night club entrepreneur to religion: The Prophet Bar is now strictly non-alcoholic! At Club Dada, further proof of the hippies' revenge reared its bearded, stoned head. Remember New York State's **Mambo-X**, from this page, three months ago? Well, **The New Bohemians** aren't quite as close to **10,000 Maniacs**, but again the female singer has been studying **Natalie Marchant**, and again the musicians are perfecting sub-calypso. But The New Bohemians are definitely hippies, as was their 200-strong crowd: the only merchandise available was tie-die shirts and, like **The Grateful Dead**, the show went on all night. You think this is irrelevant? The New Bohemians are now on Geffen and celebrated by recording in the Druids' homeland of Wales. Do not take the threat of the hippie revival lightly.

And so to Austin, home of the biggest music scene in the south and to the second South By South West Music And Media Festival. Over four days, this regionalised convention played host to around 350 bands of all persuasions and over 100 singer-songwriters in some 27 venues around town. Almost all this musical talent was from the south, giving the event a healthy localised feel, yet it still proved important enough to entice industry executives from both coasts.

There was **Eric And The Offbeats**, **Eric Hokkanen** cutting a swathe, like a shorter **Hank Williams** in a double-breasted suit, cowboy hat and twintone shoes, beginning his show with some mediocre honky-tonk country. But as the evening progressed, Eric swapped from guitar to fiddle in a blink of the eye, his partner **Danny** doing likewise with the fiddle and the keys, and when the two dueted on the bowed instrument, it was magical. Already something of a local celebrity, time will hopefully make him a legend.

Austin has thrown up some intriguing groups in the last few years — **Timbuk 3**, **The Reivers** and **The Butthole Surfers** being three very different examples — and from what I saw, **The Wild Seeds** are the next name to watch. At first sight your standard indie rock band, live they took on a potent threatening force. Occasionally aided and abetted by a strong-lunged girl (who I don't think is trying to be Natalie Marchant but you have to be careful these days) and on two songs by **Richard Lloyd**, they have a new album on Passport Records entitled *Mud, Lies And Shame*. You'll be hearing more from them.

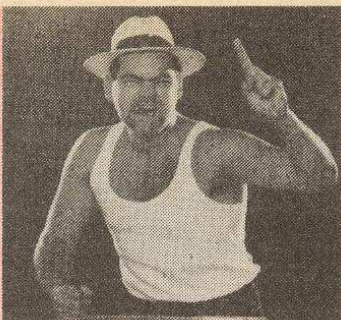
Which can't be said of over half the bands to grace Austin over these four days of aural madness. So it was nice to see the odd quirk and peculiarity. Like **The Fortune Tellers**, whose singer sported a long-haired perm, a pencil moustache, a loud shirt with wide lapels and for all intents and purposes should have been a coke dealer in a 1975 episode of *Hawaii 5-0*. He belted out muted blues like **Nick Cave** on acid and attracted a dozen or so 'chicks' (as they are called here) in black leather to brighten up the dance floor.

Or, **Band From Hell**, whose hard-core-metal was forgettable, but whose **Sid**-styled bass player's destruction of his instrument at set's end was anything but. He let out a big grin when there was nothing left of it to break: there were too many guitars in Austin that weekend anyway.

**Dash Rip Rock** may not become world famous, but I wouldn't bet against it. From New Orleans, they are an eclectic mixture of comedy, power and obscenity. Though I only caught half their allotted 30 minutes, it was enough to witness a drummer with a voice like heaven, reworkings of spirituals and **George Harrison's** I've Got My Mind Set On You ('I'm gonna shit on you... an it's gonna smell funky!') and fresh-from-the-grave insults to **Andy Gibb** and **Divine**, all performed with military precision.

Perhaps the most humbling event was the Tallahassee showcase, six bands who had journeyed 850 miles from Florida to play a Saturday night pool hall only to be shunned by the convention-goers and ignored by the pool players. The group members took the image of the wide variety of tribal styles they performed — a longhair here, a skinhead there, and a fat man with a goatee beard in the corner. Did anyone care? Perhaps not, but for the 20-odd band members, it meant telling the world that Tallahassee was 'not just swamps and 'gators'. If we never hear of any of them again, at least they tried.

# SHEND ON THE RUN



## CONFESSIONS OF A POP ICON NO 10: BROWNE OFF WITH BIMBO

**FACT 1:** Hot sun, San Miguel lager at 25p, the seaside and a relatively stable socialist government does not lead to angry spiky top discontents blasting out songs about the misery of life. Misery here seems to confine itself to the tardiness of the traffic lights changing from red to green. Even the **Lords Of The New Church** would have difficulty getting an LP out of that one.

The first strains of tune to caress your ears upon arrival will be one of two horrendous varieties. Either **Julio Inglasias** will be singing some dreary ditty about why his love ran off with a Bohemian goat herder. Or you'll discover the dubious delights of the more famous Bimbo music. This style of music takes its name from a make of stodgy, tasteless bread bought cheaply anywhere. Yes, with **Snot, Aching And Wateringdown**-like mixes of cretinous songs such as *Sexy Girl*, *Hot Girl* and the stupendous *Give It Me Big Boy*, *I Need It Bad*, *Bad, Bad*, silly teenagers with a mammary deformity prance about in their underwear and drive pot-bellied, macho, impotent retarders into a frenzy of inactivity.

The worst factor of Bimbo is that after the British 18-30 holiday hooligans have returned to this island with their sombreros, sick-stained T-shirts and strangely spotty public regions they will propel aforementioned crap high into our hallowed charts, thus ensuring doom and despondency in the rest of us till at least October.

So, is there any sign of hope in the heat? Yes, I believe there is, but it takes some finding.

Being forever on the lookout for freebies, my companion and myself accepted an invitation to view timeshare huts at Cakasuzuki (the pretty fluffy flower set in the heart of sunny loveland). Because, by doing this simple thing, we would be able to pick a free gift from a selection which included such wondrous articles as rides for two on the Whirling-Gerbil fairground ride in Malaga, a poster with a photo of your own head superimposed onto the body of some murderous bastard who, dressed as Gary Glitter, was sticking pointed sticks into a bull, or two tickets to see an independent music knockout contest at The Rigor Mortis Disco complex, just outside Marbella.

We chose the latter, and left Cakasuzuki clutching our contract for a week ownership of an unbuilt super-hut which our swarthy guide, **Ricky Ace**, had convinced my hypnotised companion she could not live without.

We arrived at the fluorescent giant marshmallow erection that was the Rigor Mortis at the opening time for many of these fun palaces, midnight, and ensconced ourselves in the only seats that remained untouched by the retina-shrivelling laser beams.

Here, we sipped our five quid a throw rum and Cokes (cheap drink prices do not exist in any of the world's tourist traps) and sleepily watched the pretty young things undulate to the "best" of Bimbo.

At 2am a frantic DJ introduced the competition and while exhausted dancers fled the floor in search of a vacant urinal, **Side Car** hit the stage.

Hailing from a village half the size of Croydon shopping precinct and situated in the mountains, these lads grappled with rockabilly as though it was a supplementary benefit form. Not knowing which song to do first they spent a third of their time quota arguing and adjusting their shades, but when they did burst into life it was as sweet as **Adolf Presley's** first gig. It was a big, joyous, discordant mess that left the Bimbo lovers reeling and frightened.

They got my vote, but, as the next band reminded me of **The Police** with **Benny Hill** on vocals, and the third band were called **99 On** and sounded like **Genesis**, I left not too sure whether Spain was ready for entry into the record collections of *Underground* readers.

The sack of petty cash nearing emptiness convinced me to accept another free ticket to the next round of the contest from the organiser who, believing me to be the **Mad Maxwell** of pop Fleet Street, was foisting favours onto my undeserving shoulders. Before the big night, I wandered into Marbella harbour and, having explained to the scruffy man who leapt into my path that I was not in the least bit interested in buying a lump of Moroccan boot polish for £10, my gaze was filled by a thousand diminutive teds jiving to old '50s discs, with chewing gum sneers and **Eddie Cochran** quiffs. Hells' teeth! **Side Car's** audience had multiplied hysterically in only a few days. By the time I returned to England they would be more popular than **Bobby Davro** and *totally* unstoppable.

One may laugh arrogantly at others' attempts to create innovative music when they suffer from blanket broadcast Bimbo, and their knowledge of independent music ceases somewhere between **The Communards** and **Samantha Fox**, but the record must be straightened.

The folk I met provided first class PAs, looked after the bands with true kindness, paid the groups more than any small combo in Britain could ever hope to earn and laid on a half hourly bus service free of charge to and from the concert. Can you see The Crowbar Fun Palace in Rotherham providing such goodies?

The next round of the contest contained a band from Gibraltar called **Devoid Music** and their dancy-**Depeche**-stuff was only spoiled by the singer's frequent demands for the audience to "get Funky".

As the spectators had no idea where "Funky" was, they went outside to search, and never returned.

**FACT 2:** At Heathrow customs they got a highly trained Alsatian to bite my suitcase several times. . . they said he could smell boot polish. The dog was a bloody liar.

I hope everyone saw **Ken Russell's** fabulous *A B C Of British Music*. I particularly admired his ingenious way of illustrating complex subjects with nude women. . . "S is for Scotland" (some Scottish-type music and a stripper). . . a Noel Coward song and some tits! . . . a piece of music about Norfolk and — oh, a pair of tits! Etcetera.

And so to radio, where the latest big story was "DJ Janice leaving the 'sexist' BBC" (*Daily Mail*) versus "Janice Long is to expand her coverage of 'alternative' bands on Radio 1" (*Melody Maker*). Would she? Wouldn't she? Did she? She said not; Fleet Street said 'rot'. However, at the last report, she was still hanging out at Broadcasting House.

April marked the 20th anniversary of the murder of **Martin Luther King**, whose 'dream' speech now features on a sampled dance track by **The MLK Project**. *NME's* report didn't specify whether this would be a cash-in or a tribute. However, they revealed to me an interesting fact about *Star Trek*, in the course of their TV O-D feature: apparently one episode was banned (and presumably remains banned) because of a romantic encounter between **Captain Kirk** and **Lieutenant Uhura**. I guessed the 23rd century wasn't such a liberated time after all.

On the subject of liberation, **James Brown** recently drew a lot of flak for his endorsement of the South African government in a *NME* interview. **DM Elbourn** of London wondered if Mr Brown was "several sandwiches short of a picnic", one of the few excuses not used by **Status Quo** in defence of their trip to Sun City. Despite having 'apologised' to the UN for their action (thus escaping the dreaded blacklist), they mysteriously maintained to *Sounds* that they'd done nothing wrong:

"So, what the Australians have done to the Aborigines, that's OK, is it?", pondered **Francis Rossi**. "What the 'Yanks' did to the 'niggers'? What they do over in Ireland? . . . If you're in Ireland and you're a Catholic, you can't get a f\*\*\*ing job. . ."

**It's all true — the old 'hypocrisy' routine — and it might even hold water if Status Quo were in the forefront of campaigns to recognise Aboriginal land rights, or to find a solution to the troubles in Northern Ireland. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I don't think they are.**

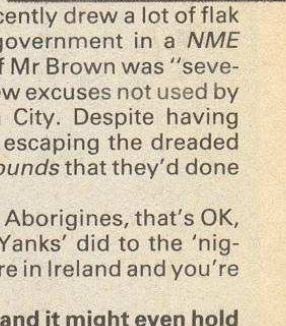
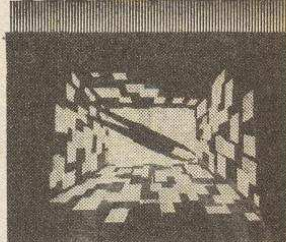
Nevertheless, this summer looks like being the summer of unending benefits (except for the unemployed — yes, thank you **Mrs Thatcher**, I'll be sure to pass that on). **Whitney Houston**, **Simple Minds**, **Sly And Robbie**, **Dire Straits** and others will be celebrating **Nelson Mandela's** birthday at Wembley in June. On a slightly smaller scale, **Joe Strummer's** taking to the road in August, to help **Rock Against The Rich** attack the 'gentrification of the inner cities'.

Joseph will also lend support to Amnesty International's festival at Milton Keynes in June, along with **Aswad**, **The Wedding Present**, **Spear Of Destiny** and **Motorhead**. That's assuming the event doesn't get banned: AI recently provoked rage in the ranks of the Tory party by requesting an inquiry into the Gibraltar shootings of three IRA terrorists. The possibility of 'extra-judicial executions' should be profoundly disturbing to anyone who remembers the near-murder of **Stephen Waldorf** a few years ago. Personally, I don't feel like getting shot and pistol-whipped in the middle of the street — but Britain is a nation which has always been more keen to expose human rights abuses in other countries than to acknowledge its own.

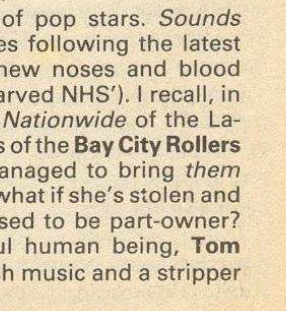
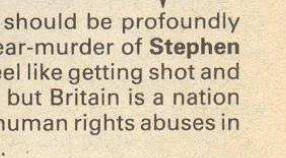
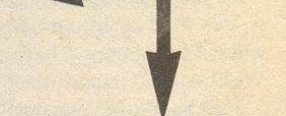
Still, at least Britain respects the rights of pop stars. *Sounds* reckons they'll come back to settle in droves following the latest budget's tax cut (though they warn that 'new noses and blood changes are hard to get on the financially-starved NHS'). I recall, in the mid-'70s, being frequently informed by *Nationwide* of the Labour government's worst sin; forcing the likes of the **Bay City Rollers** into tax exile. Well, Maggie hasn't quite managed to bring *them* back, but she can have my vote any time: so what if she's stolen and flogged most of the industries of which I used to be part-owner? She's lured back that warm and wonderful human being, **Tom Jones**. Tom Jones? Welsh! Cue some Welsh music and a stripper with a Welsh hat — Oh shut up, Ken.

# AFTER

## the fact



Joe: yer rich! I hate 'em!



## NAG NAG NAG

Being a staunch Cabaret Voltaire fan, I'm in mourning. Mourn, mourn. Could you rustle up some kind of article on them, something for their 15 years? — **John Wood, Sandbach**

Sure, why the hell not. Our ed seems to have interviewed the CV's every year since their inception, so let's see if we can't do an intelligent (?) resume in the next issue.

## OBSCURIST FRENZY

A few facts for people who heard The Vandals on your recent tape. The Vandals are American, not Australian, and their first release was Peace Thru Vandalism, a six-track mini-album on Epitath. Their When In Rome LP was originally released in the States on National Trust, then it was licensed to Hybrid for the UK. In my opinion, Ladykiller is the worst track ever done by The Vandals. Apart from that, how about some more hardcore info? — **Richard Kilby, York**

Richard takes over as tape compiler next week. Yes, we thought America and Australia were so culturally similar that we made that location error, although we knew the rest of that stuff. . . we just didn't have any room to print it. Still, we here think that Ladykiller is their finest and the reason for using it was because it's a lot more accessible than

their other tracks and hopefully new Vandals fans might be sucked into their way of thinking.

As for h'core info, next issue sees thrash perspective by the honchoes from *Grim Humour* mag and they'll be following that up each month with the beat of what's burning.

## ANGRY

I am shocked and disappointed at *Underground's* insistence on tackling subjects above its status. Robert Cohen's *Big Comment* is nothing but a cheap stab at the "Inky weeklies", something that *Sounds*, *MM* and *NME* already do enough to bore us all silly anyway. And now *Gush* is slagging anything which isn't indie. This smacks of ignorance and inverted snobbery. I was under the impression that *Ug* was there to communicate the merits of specialised music to the public at large. This sort of thing only succeeds in ghettoising the alternative scene even more. Please, *Underground*, be more positive in future and stick to what you're best at — good interviews and hard facts. — **Richard Gossington, Leyton**

Robert Cohen's *Big Comment* is about to be enlarged rather than dissolved. The idea is to place the

Got a gripe? Want to vent your spleen? Or give someone a pat on the back, even? Write to us at *Underground*, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1

music that we write about in a bigger perspective and *not* to ghettoise it. Just because you don't like something, it doesn't mean you should just ignore it — although in the case of the weeklies it might be a good idea.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT SO FAR?

The Flatmates interview (*Ug* issue 13) was pathetic, merely confirming that they are the village idiots of the indie scene. I don't know who's more stupid, The Flatmates, their fans, or you for wasting the centre spread on such worthless rubbish. I really can't believe that you feel your readers want to read this sort of thing! **Simon Le Bot, Clevedon**

Sure, the group didn't really come out of the feature looking like *Mas-termind* contestants, it was conducted on a reasonably flippant level, but that's the kind of image they have nurtured. The Flatmates are a 'happening' act in as much as they've just toured with The Wedding Present, their most recent single scraped the bottom of the national charts and they have the potential to break much bigger. Personally, I thought it was quite funny.

# NEXT MONTH

the **THRASH** bash

**STARS OF HEAVEN**

**THROWING MUSES**

and **JELLO BIAFRA**



at a newsagent's near you on sale May 20

# NEXT

# MON

## C\*O\*M\*P\*E\*T\*I\*T\*I\*O\*N



## PTV

Everybody's favourite subversives, **Psychic TV**, have just released the final cut in a series of Live LPs. Number ten arrives in the form of a limited edition (1,000 only) picture disc which is only available to diehards who've collected the previous nine. **Genesis P Orridge**, however, has kindly offered to give one of these rare items and a DJ's promo copy of the next PTV single to two *Underground* readers who can answer his question.

Genesis speaks: "Welcome to The House Of Fun. The new PTV

single is an acid house dance track titled Love War Riot and features throughout the slogan 'turn on, tune in and drop out'. It was an (in)famous statement made by a respected (?) American luminary. Who was it?" Answers on a cosmic postcard to *Underground/PTV Competition*, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1 7QZ. No later than May 10, please.

## SHACK

A dozen Shack LPs for the taking and all you have to do to win one of these illustrious items is tell us what it's called! A dead giveaway we know, but that's the kind of guys we are. Send all answers to *Underground/Shack Competition*, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1 7QZ to reach here by May 10 or else!



## PRIMITIVES

Wanna win a **Primitives** album? The first dozen correct entries out of the cupboard will receive a spanking brand new copy of *Lovely* by Tracey and the gang. Just answer us this: Which Primitives 45 preceded the current *Crash* single? Answers on something interesting to *Underground/Primitives*, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1, by May 10!

## WIN OUT! COMPETITION WINNERS!

So amazingly overwhelming was the response to our **Corn Dollies** competition in issue 12 that it's taken the *Underground* team two months to sort out the winners. Well, that's our excuse and we're sticking to it! Still, after slogging hard through literally sacks of mail we've managed to whittle the entries down to five lucky winners who all knew that there were four Corn Dollies. So, **John Pinnington** from Oxon, **Clive Fenwick** from Cheshire, **Debbie Ghant** from Stowmarket, **Kevin Keenan** from London and **Roy Barks** from Penn, each get a Dollies seven incher and a T shirt.

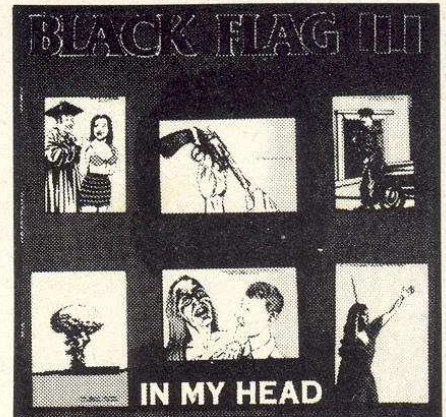
# BLACK FLAG III



**Wasted Again.** Imagine if your favorite Flag party tunes of all time were put together in a room. Then, the room was filled with hundreds of your best friends. Before the cops come, you better slap on Wasted Again, a collection of all the songs that make you want to party. Six Pack, T.V. Party, Wasted, Rise Above and twelve more festive Flag tunes. SST 166



**Who's Got The 10 1/2?** This release catches the Flag unfurled one night in Portland, Oregon. LP, 40 minutes; cassette, 70 minutes. Either version has enough Flag fury to raise the dead. Contains My War, Loose Nut, and Louie, Louie. SST 060



**In My Head.** Nine new Flag songs. Produced by Greg Ginn, this 1985 release of crunching rock tunes like Drinking And Driving and Retired At 21 destroys. Cassette features three bonus tracks. SST 045



**Annihilate This Week.** The ultimate party anthem of all time is backed with Best One Yet and Sinking on this smoking twelve-inch by Black Flag. These three are available only on his disc and the cassette (SST 060). SST 081



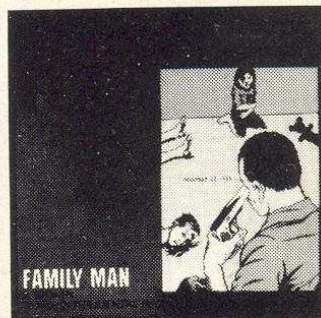
**The Process Of Weeding Out.** Greg, Kira and Bill combine on this 1985 recording of four instrumental cuts of pure Flag fever. Screw The Law, The Last Affront, Southern Rise, and the title track. SST 037



**Loose Nut.** 1985 saw this release of nine slabs of Flag's potent blend of metal and madness. Greg, Kira, Henry and Bill combine to create classics like Bastard In Love, Annihilate This Week plus seven. SST 035



**Slip It In.** Released in 1984, this Flag album has Kira, Bill, Henry and Greg working through eight pile-driving songs like Slip It In, Black Coffee, My Ghetto and You're Not Evil. SST 029



**Family Man.** 1984 saw the release of this stunning record that showcases the diversity of Black Flag. Side one contains nine riveting readings by Henry of his poetry. Side two has four instrumentals with bassist Kira. SST 026



**My War.** This pivotal 1984 release features nine blasts of primal power. Henry and Greg are joined by Dale Nixon (Greg Ginn) on bass and Bill Stevenson on drums for My War, Nothing Left Inside, I Love You and six more. SST 023



**BLACK FLAG: Everything Went Black.** A compilation released in 1983, this record examines the eras of Flag before Henry. Johnny Bob, Chavo and Dez plus outrageous radio ads. Songs include Gimme, Gimme, Gimme (three versions), My Rules and Louie Louie. SST 015



**Damaged.** Recorded in 1981, the songs on this LP defined an era. Dez Cadenas has moved to guitar, and Henry Rollins takes over as vocalist. Stunning dual guitar Flag on: Rise Above, Damaged I & II, and 15 others.

**The First Four Years.** Sixteen classic BLACK FLAG aural riots. Originally appeared on SST 001, 003, 005, PBS 13 (infamous Louie Louie single) and two cuts from New Alliance compilations. SST 021

**Jealous Again.** It's 1980 and Greg, Chuck and Robo have a new singer named Chavo. Together these four produced an american classic. Tracks include title song, Revenge, White Minority, No Values and You Bet We've Got Something Personal Against You. SST 003

**Nervous Breakdown.** The breakdown heard around the world in 1978. Greg Ginn, Chuck Dukowski, Brian Migdol and Keith Morris sing and play the title track plus Fix Me, I've Had It and Wasted. SST 001

**Live '84.** This is an amazingly accurate portrayal of Black Flag live in concert. The Flag roar through Six Pack, My War, Jealous Again, Slip It In, Black Coffee and fourteen other incomparable Flag tunes. SST 030

**Six Pack.** Yet another vocalist for Flag, this time in the person of one Dez Cadenas. Joining up with Greg, Chuck and Robo, Dez lends his vocal talents to Six Pack, I've Heard It Before and American Waste. SST 005

**TV Party.** The dual guitars of Greg and Dez fuel these three songs recorded in 1982. Bill Stevenson and Emil share drum duties on TV Party, My Rules and I've Got To Run. SST 012

P.O. BOX 1, LAWNSDALE, CA 90260

SST