

Angel Mine Fever

Angel Mine — A New Zealand feature film with a musical soundtrack — will premiere with a concert by the Suburban Reptiles and the Plague at Auckland's Winter Garden Theatre on October 19.

The film takes its title from a commercial wonder drug for people with marital problems, a product of scriptwriter-director David Blyth's imagination with heavy implications for all the Lockwood housebound couples in Pakuranga.

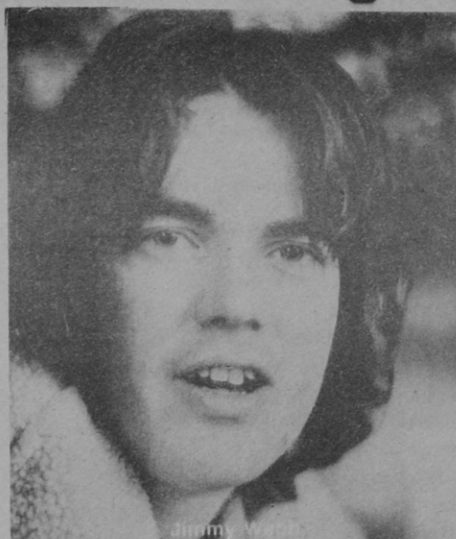
Both bands playing at the premiere are involved with the film. Richard von Sturmer, of the Plague, contributed to the scriptwriting, and two Suburban Reptiles' songs, "Saturday Night Stay at Home" and the previously unreleased "Razorblade Rosie", are on the soundtrack.

Angel Mine carries little dialogue "because New Zealanders don't speak that much," David Blyth says. Communication rests mainly with familiar commercial voice-overs — in *Angel Mine* the TV is always turned on — and expressionistic use of music linked to the visual images: The Reptiles for the suburban couple's sinister "shadows" in their fantasy sequences, funk bands Charisma and Urban Road for the soft sell fantasies the couple absorb from the ubiquitous TV commercials, "African gumboot music" for the sex scenes, with a score written by Mark Nicholas, an Auckland Music Conservatorium graduate, and played by the Auckland Youth Orchestra.



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Webb Untangled



BY W. DART

In a world of punk rock, new wave and disco, the very name of Jimmy Webb almost seems an anachronism. Perhaps because his early successes such as "Galveston" and "By the Time I Get to Phoenix" have become the tramping ground of the Val Doonicans of this world. And yet one of the most sympathetic assessments of Webb as a songwriter was written by Karl Jenkins of Soft Machine.

Webb started his career with a series of ambitious concept albums for artists such as Richard Harris, Thelma Houston and the Fifth Dimension. The latter's *Magic Garden* album is a gem, and will be an ear opener if you have been judging the group solely by the drek they have been vinylising over the past few years. The two Richard Harris albums, *A Tramp Shining* and *The Yard Went on Forever* have similarly proved to be the peak of that singer's career.

There are six Webb solo albums, if you count the rip-off *Jim Webb sings Jim Webb* which Epic records produced to coincide with the singer's growing popularity. But the Reprise album *Words and Music* was the first "official" release, so to speak.

Words and Music is a surprisingly raw and gutsy album, considering the lush romanticism of Webb's work with Harris and the Fifth Dimension. The singer himself plays everything from accordion to 6" power saw, and Tom Scott is amongst the three other backing musicians. Some classic songs about the throes and woes of the music business ("P.F. Sloan", "Dorothy Chandler

SINGLES

Listen, let's forget all the rules for the moment. In the world of the 45rpm single, time is everything. When a new song is played on the radio it's likely to be sandwiched between an ad for bigger blocks of cheese and whatever the John Travolta single is that week. These three or four minutes have to count.



THE FASTEST SINGLE OF THE MONTH

"Saturday Night Stay at Home" — Suburban Reptiles (2.26). Auckland's New Wave has lived and since died; the Suburban Reptiles were there to present both its worst and its best moments on record. Not a 12-inch single this time but, in losing five inches, the Reps have gained a million miles on "Megaton".

Indeed, this may signify the end of the Suburban Reptiles (as we know them). Former Split Enz Phil Judd is the lead guitarist, arranger and producer for "Saturday Night" and its flip, "45 Single", and his presence is no doubt the reason for the band's improvement. Buster Stiggs wrote "Saturday Night", providing five-star accommodation for Judd's fast-moving guitar riffs. And vocalist Zero can at last be heard. Aural stimulation is the key here; from metal machine to lounge lizards in one easy lesson.

RUNNERS-UP

"Two Tickets to Paradise" — Eddie Money (3.07) Eddie Money was once a New York cop but it's obvious that at heart he always wanted to be a rock star. He attacks this song with the gusto of a true fan and, in his hands, even a theme as well-worked as this sounds new.

"Like Clockwork" — Boomtown Rats (3.23) This could have come from any Sparks LP, but it's probably better off where it is.

"The Ladder Song" — Citizen Band (3.28) Their songs can be both frustrating and embar-

Blues", "Songseller") and a rather clever medley in which he combined "Let It Be Me", "Never My Love" and "I Wanna Be Free", but this must have been one of the floptests of all time in New Zealand, so there are lots of copies round to be pounced on.

The second Reprise album, *And So On*, never got NZ release which is a pity considering it had Larry Coryell on guitar and Webb's own versions of "Marionette" and "All My Love's Laughter", both of which eventually appeared on Art Garfunkel's recent *Watermark* album.

1972's *Letters* got local release and after some of the harshness of the second album, showed Webb aiming at a smoother style — he sings his own "Galveston", redoes "Songseller" and offers a smooth version of Boudleaux Bryant's "Love Hurts". Webb's own "Campo de Encino" shows he can slash at the trendies when he wants to ("A chamber group playing without any clothes/Good for the oboes but hard on the cellos"), and Joni Mitchell lends her talents on one track.

Webb had still been busy as a producer of other people's albums — his album with the Supremes, for instance, is an absolute delight, Glen Campbell's *Reunion* and, more recently, Art Garfunkel's *Watermark*. The poor man even tried to cope with the Cher Bono/Allman monolith in the lady's *Stars* album.

1974 and Jimmy Webb had become one of the Asylum stable, together with Jackson Browne, Joni Mitchell et. al. His Asylum album *Land's End* is underestimated and painfully so. If you are a Joni Mitchell nut, you just have to hear her vocals on the infectious "Feet in the Sunshine". At the other extreme the orchestral pyrotechnics of "Land's End" recall his earlier lushness.

After a three year recording silence, Atlantic released Webb's *El Mirage* last year, which is now around New Zealand shops on import. This is no disappointment, produced by George Martin and featuring such sidemen as Lowell George, Larry Knechtel and Kenny Loggins. Most interesting is Webb's new version of "P.F. Sloan" with the Nixon reference updated for the post-Watergate generation and he also includes "The Moon is a Harsh Mistress", already recorded by both Joe Cocker and Judy Collins. Like the Art Garfunkel-Jimmy Webb *Watermark* the songs range over Webb's career — from 1970 to 1977 in this case.

If you find a copy of *Words and Music* (and you should both easily and cheaply) you will have one of the most important albums of the early seventies. If you can get hold of *El Mirage* you will see how you can write intelligent and craftsmanlike rock music in America today without throwing your lot in with the Linda Ronstadt stable.

William Dart

rassing but here the lads have got it all together, as it were. Shorter than the album version, Geoff Chunn's tale of broken ladders rocks with energy and suspense.

"Surrender" — Cheap Trick (3.39) in little over a year Cheap Trick has released three LPs and Rick Nielsen continues to write sure-fire hits with apparent effortless. "Surrender" is the best song on *Heaven Tonight* and, with its flip side "Auf Wiedersehen", combines heavy pop with often bizarre humour. More weirdness of this kind is to be encouraged.

"Are You Old Enough?" — Dragon (3.57) Dragon's worst songs are both simple and bland but this song is appealingly simple with enough good hooks to trip all but the deaf. One thing, however, still worries me: can Dragon become Americans as easily as they become Australians?

Jeremy Templer

Istanbul Horror Show



Coming to Auckland soon is a movie of more than passing interest to the rock audience. *Midnight Express* is a gripping tale of the dope smugglers who don't make it.

Based on the true story of an American kid who tried to smuggle two kilos of hashish out of Istanbul in 1970, it charts the agonies of five years in a Turkish prison.

Director Alan Parker (*Bugsy Malone*) develops an atmosphere that is almost palpable as we endure the horror that is the lot of the hash smugglers confined in Sagmalcilar Prison.

The cast never misses a step, with perhaps the outstanding performance coming from John Hurt (*The Naked Civil Servant*) as an English addict who has eked out seven years of imprisonment in a drugged oblivion.

Midnight Express (prison jargon for "escape") is a film of extraordinary power, definitely recommended to those who travelled the Hash Trail... and to those who merely knew it by repute.

Ken Williams

LETTERS

P.O. Box 5689, Auckland.

First off I'd like to say on behalf of every disco lover in New Zealand that punk rock stinks worse than month old yoghurt. Furthermore, to compare punk with disco is like comparing Phyllis Diller's hair-do with Farrah Fawcett-Major's hairdo.

May I say that never in my entire eighteen years have I heard anything as totally ridiculous as punk rock. This sweet'n'soulful message is intended to get those punks to come back down to reality and get into the funky-up sounds of the Bee Gees, Isaac Hayes, Parliament, Barry White, the Emotions and Earth Wind and Fire.

As sure as punk is a dying phase for dope soaked freaks, disco is here to hussle and bump to—until all eternity.

Boogie on Always

Donna Summer Te Atatu North

Mr Templer says in his review of *Lethal Weapons* (August issue) that, "Wasted Daze re-work the Who's 'Magic Bus' under its new title, 'Mona'! This is impossible as 'Mona' was written and recorded at least a decade before the Who's 'Magic Bus'".

"Mona" (and the other Wasted Daze track, "Road Runner") were in fact both written (as credited on the album) by one Elias McDaniel, also known as Bo Diddley.

G. Jordan South Canterbury

Last year I saw the new wave at its peak in London. It was exciting and mostly genuine. Back in New Zealand we have pseudo-punks doing hackneyed imitations of British bands. The social environment that spurred on the punk scene in England is totally irrelevant to New Zealand.

Originality is the most important trait for any new band. Split Enz and Citizen Band are to be admired for the unique New Zealand flavour of their music.

However, it is great to see that British punk has inspired many bands to at least put the balls back into their music. Let's also see more politically motivated bands (and less art school ones). There are a hell of a lot of issues, brought about by our fascist government, to get angry about. It shifts me to see people so apathetic. What better way to vocalise this anger and stir up reactionary New Zealanders everywhere than through high energy music.

Watch out Auckland! Dunedin's Enemy has got to be the most original (all their own songs) and gut-level-exciting band performing in New Zealand.

Dave Dunedin

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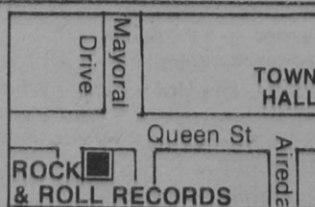
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