



Velvet Underground and Andy Warhol, 1966.

Up-Tight: The Velvet Underground Story
Victor Bockris and Gerard Malanga (Omnibus, \$20.95)

Every musical unit should have a book as good as this written about it. Very few in the past have. I can unreservedly recommend it to any of you, whether you like or have heard the Velvet Underground or not. It should be required reading for all those with an artist bent who feel like leaping headlong into the marketplace.

Why is this such a favourable review?

Because rare items ought to be not only preserved but shared.

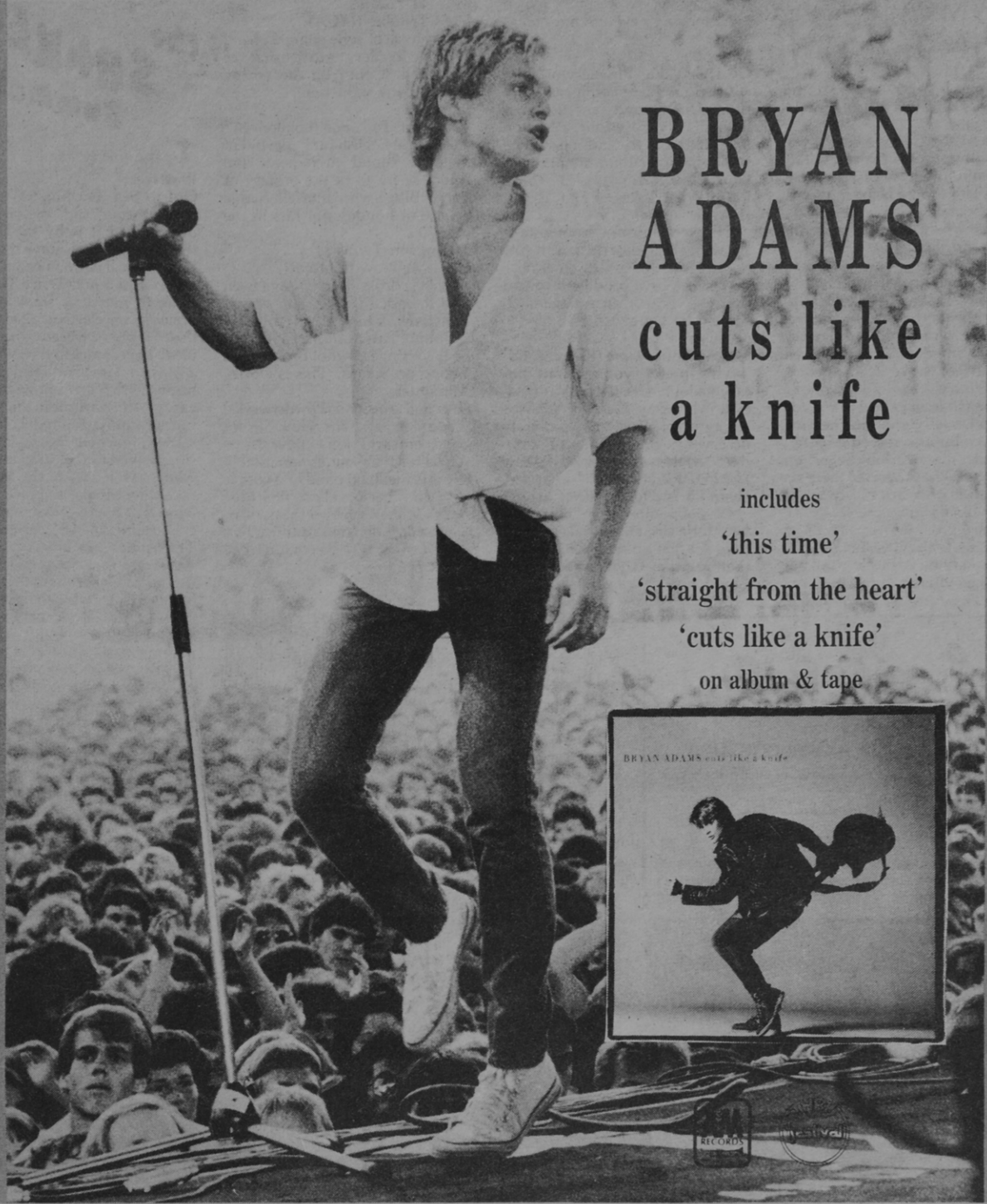
I dunno who V. Bockris is but Gerard Malanga was a part of the Exploding Plastic Inevitable that helped form and nurture the first album version Velvet Underground. He was there and as principal dancer of the Warwhole thing was an integral part of the Up-Tight story. It's a good story, constructed with infinite care by very judicious use of source material; interviews spanning two decades; previously unpublished photographs (several by Malanga) and unobtrusive, nicely balanced commentary supplying the necessary chronology.

The first half details (details!!) the formation of the EPI/VU and its weird life between late 1965 and May 1967, the second spans the recording years and slow disinte-

gration of the original band. It's a sorta sad story, but heartening in that it actually happened and lasted four years. Those of you who do not know of the VU may not think there's a lot to be said for a band *merely* surviving for four years but these people would have little chance of doing as much in the 80s and no chance of having the extraordinary long-term effect they have had since 1969, their last year. If that sounds like exaggeration consider that nobody has done all the things that Reed, Cale, Morrison, Tucker and Nico did in those years. Some have experimented with white noise, some have written tender, intelligent love songs, some have single-handedly distorted the evolution of our music but have any done *all* these things? Psychic TV are probably about the closest thing we have today and I'm sure they'd be the first to admit that they're slug shit by comparison.

So, search out this great book, buy it if you've got the money, borrow it off a friend if you haven't, but **DONT STEAL IT!** The people who put this together and the publisher who has faith in it deserve every cent they get.

With this and *The Velvet Underground and Lou Reed*, with its 24-page discography (Babylon Books, \$11.50) I doubt if you'd ever need anything more on the subject. CK



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