

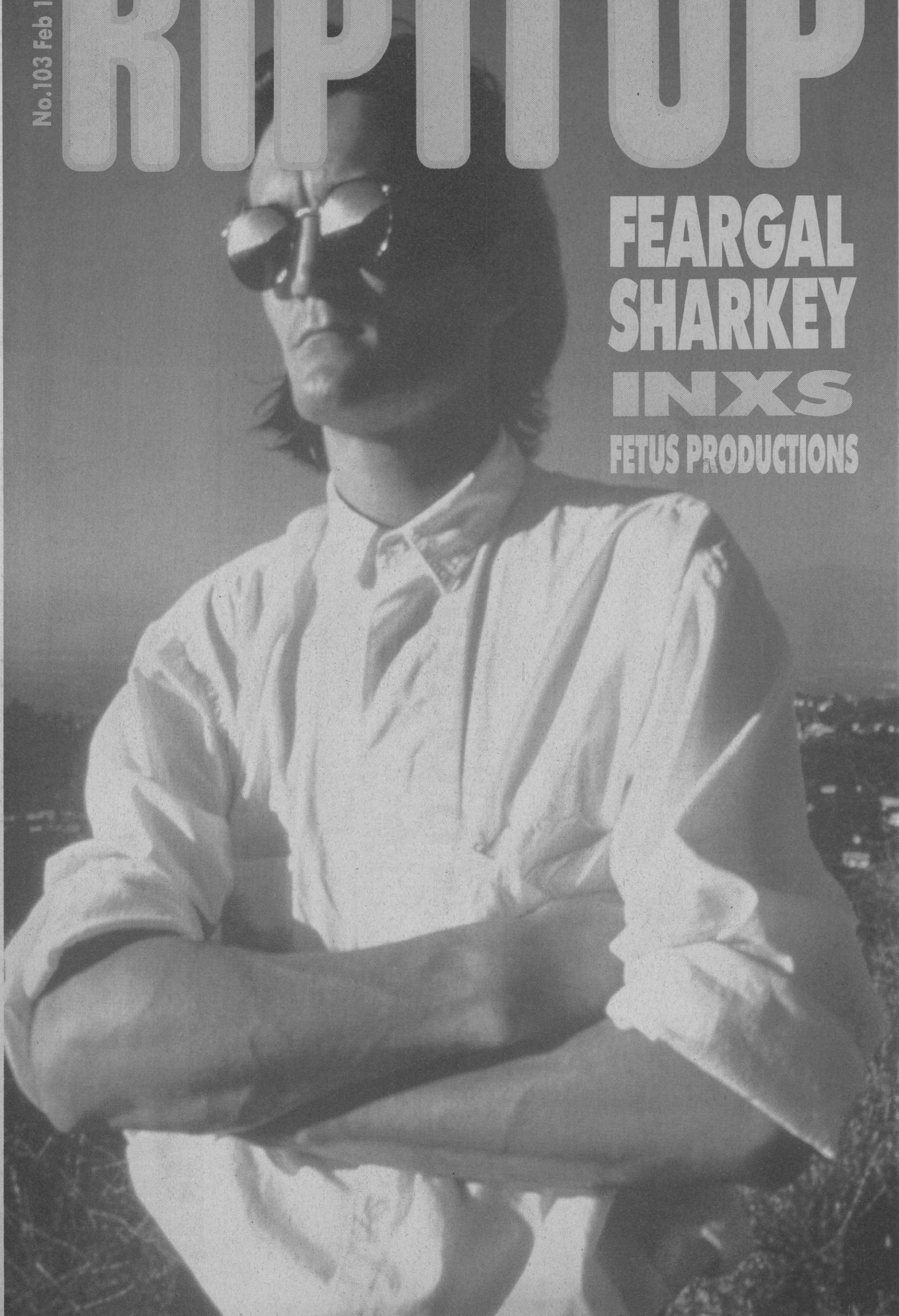
No.103 Feb 1986

RIP IT UP

**FEARGAL
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INXS

FETUS PRODUCTIONS



Stardom & Hutch

A Chat with Michael Hutchence of INXS

Michael Hutchence, the lead singer of Australian pop-rockers INXS, sips his iced lager and distractedly fingers a huge red welt on his lower neck. The band and their entourage have just returned from playing "war games" in the Riverhead State Forest — an activity which sees different teams stalking each other armed with guns which fire dye-filled projectiles.

"Huh, bloody stupid games, more like," grunts Michael. "Those really hurt," easing his body into the hard-backed dining room chair. He seems vaguely embarrassed, but whether it's at having let himself be roped into the event by the roadies, or being sprung as to what he does on his days off, he doesn't let on.

So how has it been coming back to play in larger, concert-style venues?

"Great. We didn't really know what the reaction would be like, and only recently did we think that it was worthwhile to come, as far as bringing all the big production and everything. You have, like the show here (Logan Campbell Centre) people in the upstairs that are really into just sitting there, really carefully watching. I've never seen an audience watch so carefully, and downstairs it's all chaos and the usual sort of thing."

If New Zealand audiences are alternatively observant or chaotic, what about our rock 'n' roll? Have you had a chance to hear any NZ music?

"Not much. I saw a promo for a band called the Mockers. I haven't really heard any of their songs."

That's interesting you should mention them, because their singer



(Fagan) is quite similar in manner to yourself.

"Yeah," he says laughing. "So people keep saying. No, they said I was similar to him, actually."

"I like the Herbs, they're a good reggae band. I'd like to hear some of the Drongos — they sound pretty interesting. I remember Hello Sailor and Dragon when they came to Australia, I used to go see them. Really, in Australia, the only New Zealand music you hear about is what's making it in Australia, you don't get too much picture on what's happening in New Zealand. Which is a bad thing, probably a prejudice in Australia against NZ music. Bands from New Zealand tend to get to Sydney or wherever and go into a rapid sort of burn-out rate. It's frightening, just terrifying. Whoosh! In one year's time they live 10 years. It's mainly been drugs ... and getting into a rut. I think Australia and New Zealand suffer from being too patriotic towards British and American music — and we don't really understand our own."

I'm guessing, but would Australia be your favourite place to play?

"Yeah, it's the place where you have your friends in the audience, thousands of friends from all over, the old inner audience."

Where is INXS's favourite foreign gig?

"It's getting a lot more exciting in America, we're starting to do our own big shows there, arenas and so on. Apart from that, France is good, Japan's pretty funny. I dunno, there's certain areas, little pockets here and there."

Do you still operate from an Australian base?

"Yeah, we all live in Sydney and it's all done from there."

Is being Australian important to you?

"I grew up in Hong Kong. I came to Australia as I was edging into my teens. When I first arrived I guess I despised the place, in fact to be honest, it just seemed so crass ... such a really different lifestyle. But it's really changed a lot since."

Around the time that Australia won the Americas' Cup yacht series, Men At Work were hitting the big time in the States. Suddenly there was this groundswell of interest in things Australian by the Americans. Were you able to pick up on that?

"Kind of. We still get asked if we're English. We didn't do a big flag-waving thing like Men At Work did because we knew what would happen in two years' time. There was a backlash against bands that were doing all that flag-waving because at the time there were lots of great American bands who never got anything. And the journalists there are really indignant about that sort of thing happening."

Would INXS rate as the most prominent New Australian band in the world marketplace?

"I guess if you look at facts, maybe. There's a bunch (of bands). I'm really just conscious of the fact that it would be great for a band other than somebody who's going to patronise American tastes to get somewhere from Australia. 'Cos really, most people just think of Air Supply, LRB, Men At Work. Somebody from the pubs would be a good change — although all those bands have done the pubs."

The release in 1984 of *The Swing* album marked a watershed year for INXS. The record was a No.1 smash across the ditch there and sold extremely well in Canada, Japan, America and here in New Zealand. The material was a hook-infested commercial pop-funk hybrid — catchy enough for the radio, thumpy enough for the clubs and raggy enough for the live crowd. The band have just released (late last year) a new album, entitled *Listen Like Thieves*. It's produced by Chris Thomas, a man who (according to M.H.) used to make tea for the Beatles, but who has spent the years since producing the likes of the Sex Pistols, Queen and the Pretenders, among others. Immediately apparent on the new effort is the dumping of the complex arrangements so evident on *The Swing*. Songs like 'This Time' sound like one-take rock 'n' roll, extremely simple.

"They are," says Michael, "maybe one overdub guitar or a harmony vocal. All the technology, all the toys in the studios are starting to dictate what you actually make out of music. Some people are really good at it, and I really enjoy it myself, but

there has to be another way of doing it. Half the music you hear on the radio, you're not really hearing what was played. It's nice to have a real drum sound, a real piano sound. People have said to me 'What's that? What's that sound?', and I say 'That's the piano' or 'That's a guitar'."

All the members of INXS contribute to writing your songs. There must be lots of diverse material cropping up. How do you decide what gets used?

"Well the majority of it comes from Andrew Farriss, our keyboards player and unsung hero. I write lyrics and also write with Andrew — he's definitely the most prolific — and everybody else is allowed to put in their 10 cents worth. We just use whatever we think is gonna work out on the whole album. Sometimes we have 35 songs to choose from, but *Listen Like Thieves* was more like a workshop kind of thing. We wrote two of the songs in the studio with everybody participating. We all work on the songs, regardless. Andrew's and my royalties are split half with the band."

You performed on the Australian segment of Live Aid. What was your opinion of the whole Live Aid spectacular?

"The 'thang'? Mmmm, I would have liked to have been at Wembley or Philadelphia more than at the Countdown set in Australia, but nevertheless, it was all to do with raising money, and it certainly did that. I thought it was very worthwhile."

What do you think of rock being involved in politics?

"If you're good at it, if you're good at getting across the message, it's a good thing. I don't like sort of stumbling, bumbling political messages, vague 'Well we gotta be political so let's write a political song,' and nobody else really understands what they're talking about anyway. Bands like Midnight Oil do it really well. There are so many politics, it doesn't just concern ideology. Sexual politics, social politics ... they all have to be written about and sung about. It's a sign of the times I guess."

Could you describe your musical roots? What did you listen to in your formative years?

"What my parents played, mostly. They used to like playing old music, a lot of old Motown, Supremes, Dionne Warwick. I used to listen to a lot of black music, basically. I remember the first album I ever bought was T Rex *Electric Warrior*. I've always been 50/50 black music and white."

Do you have a favourite performer?

"I like Marc Bolan. Dunno why, actually, I saw a film clip of him the other day and he was really terrible. But no, nobody that I'd have posters on my wall of or anything."

Later this year Michael Hutchence is set to make his big screen acting debut in an Australian movie with a musical theme. It will be produced by Richard Lowenstein, who has made videos for INXS and others, including Hunters and Collectors' 'Talking To A Stranger', and his own feature-length *Strikebound*, which, according to Michael, "got extremely good notes at Cannes". The new project sounds very interesting.

"It's sort of a dark musical. It's called *Dogs In Space* at the moment. It's sci-fi, I'm a daschund! No, it's set about '76-77 and it's about a household, an infamous household in Melbourne that turned out people like Richard and all these other different people. It's an interplay of characters, you know, it's a time when you've got punks and hippies, all these different types. It's a fairly sad story. I'm looking forward to it but I'm very nervous. Richard seems to have faith in me, enormous faith in me. There's some good people in it, Nick Needles is in it, so's Joe Candy."

Will INXS be providing any music? "We might if we can write a song in the style that's necessary."

Sort of a 10-year regression? "Yes! Very much a regression. We can learn to play really badly!"

How about progression? How's the future looking for INXS?

"Ummm, bleak. We're flying to Europe — it'll be freezing. I dunno, it looks like we'll be doing a lot of touring. We tour a lot 'cos it seems to be the only way to get into a place, to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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Able Tasmans a la the EP: (L-R) Peter Kean, Craig Baxter, Graeme Humphreys, David Beniston.



Tasmans Able . . .

The Able Tasmans have sort of grewed and grewed. Not just materially — from a bass-keyboards two-piece, to a three-piece and now four — but musically. They've made the leap from being regarded as a manic novelty dance band with a manic novelty keyboard player

to something more substantial, and the debut EP *The Tired Sun* shows still more depth and variety in new songs and the treatment of live faves.

The manic keyboard player is Graeme Humphreys, a shortish, hyperactive chap with an affection for quantum theory and Carl Sagan. "Doing the EP last April was a turning point," he says. "It was the start of a lot of different songs coming in."

The recording saw the inviting in of Peter Kean, who now sings and plays a bit of guitar on a permanent basis with Humphreys, bass player Dave Benniston and drummer Stuart Greenway (replacement for original member Craig Baxter, who has departed for Australia in search of work as a professional animator).

Kean and Humphreys met when the former was part of Raucous Laughter, one of those lineups which must be born, grow up and die all the time in the wilds of suburban Auckland. Somewhat "ahead of their time", RL really only ever got it together to record a rather good demo tape at Harlequin. The Able

Tasmans play two songs from the tape (and want to release the original recording of one, 'Michael's', as a single flip to their own 'Buffalos') and Humphreys and Kean are now writing together.

Other developments include Humphreys stepping back from the 'boards to play guitar sometimes, and an alter ego for the Tasmans, the Ogdens. The Ogdens indulge pre-pubescent musical imprinting with respectful covers of stuff like Michael Nesmith's 'Joanne' and Kenny Rogers' 'Ruby'. Right up your street, if you can stan' it ...

Until now the Able Tasmans haven't ventured south of Wellington, but a hiking holiday has left Humphreys full of enthusiasm for ventures across the Strait, probably in mid-March. They should go down a storm, because with all the musical developments, the basic infectiousness hasn't left the band — they've managed to keep the good bits whilst adding new ones. And last words from the man who loves both his own cat Nelson and Schroedinger's feline?

"A little Greenhouse Effect is a good thing ..."

Russell Brown

Tribunal Overrides Objections to Student Radio

Longer hours for Auckland's Campus Radio BFM will be the result of a surprise turnaround by the Broadcasting Tribunal last week.

The Tribunal decision represents a remarkable reversal of fortunes for Campus, which late last year was under threat from a BCNZ-sponsored objection seeking to severely limit its hours of broadcast. The objection seemed to be behind an initial Tribunal decision to refuse BFM permission to extend its hours (a move made possible by its new, dependable FM equipment). But Campus asked again and, surprise, it has now been granted permission to broadcast 7am-1am on weekdays and 24 hours at weekends — all year round.

And the new Tribunal decision is frank about the body's opinion of the Broadcasting Corporation and the supposed beneficiary of the objection, 12M. It notes the Corporation trying to back down on its initial objection with a later letter, but: "The BCNZ had clearly opposed the application and

still requests a shortening of hours ..."

It also commented on the way 12M had "eschewed" its assigned role to "provide public service broadcasting free from commercial objectives ... It is therefore surprising that it should seek to limit the student station, unless it was because of the embarrassment caused by the student station fulfilling some needs which ought to have been met by public radio."

Also contained in a frankly encouraging document is an acknowledgement of a large number of letters from listeners "which, to say the least, indicated a loyal and committed following which disdained much of the mass audience mainstream programming epitomised by other stations including 12M."

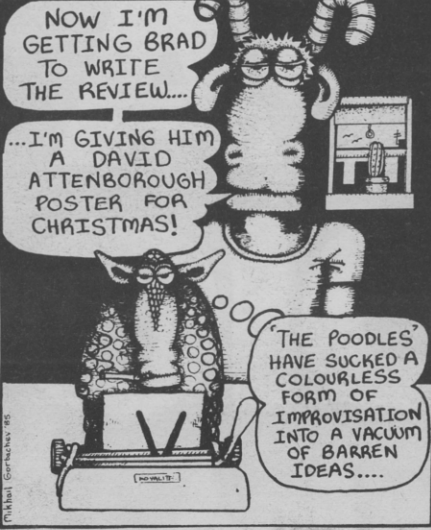
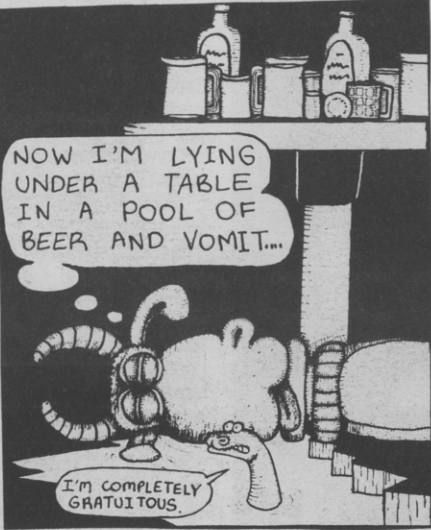
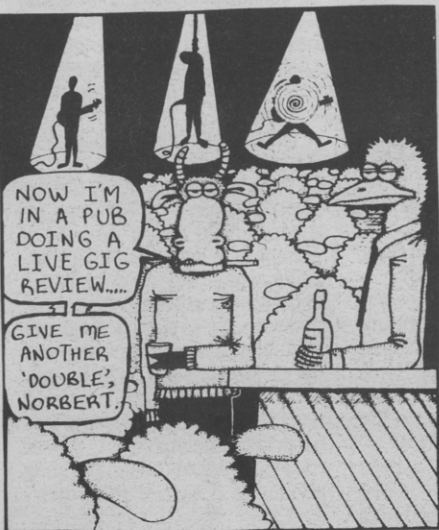
And as for the Corporation's claim that the station was no longer specifically student-orientated: "If the station attracts wider audiences by providing alternative music (as distinct from setting out to adopt a format and style directly competitive with commercial warrant-holders) we can see no result adverse to the public interest."

Two commercial stations had written expressing support for Campus, it said: "No doubt the applicant would be even more encouraged if the commercial radio stations in Auckland were actually to assist and support or even help finance the student station as an indication of their commitment to broadcasting outside their profit-centred activities."

All in all, a decision that bodes well for student radio as a whole.

RB

LAK 水牛



'INXS' FROM PAGE 1

get to 'matter'. We've got to the stage now internationally where we kind of matter in one way or another and from now on we'll just try and continue on that level. I feel good about what we've done already, what we are doing. It's not a *Spinal Tap* world domination trip, it's a really continued process, doing what we started doing in pubs, only now on an international basis. We're proud of being an 'international' band being based in Australia."

You had a big hit a year or two back with a song called 'Send A Message'. Does INXS have a message?

"We have many messages. Each time we do an album they change. On this album we've got songs about everything from smack to war, a bit of sex and love and lust in between. Most of the messages are about people, aimed at people."

"Ultimately, I believe in the individual."

Brendan Fitzgerald

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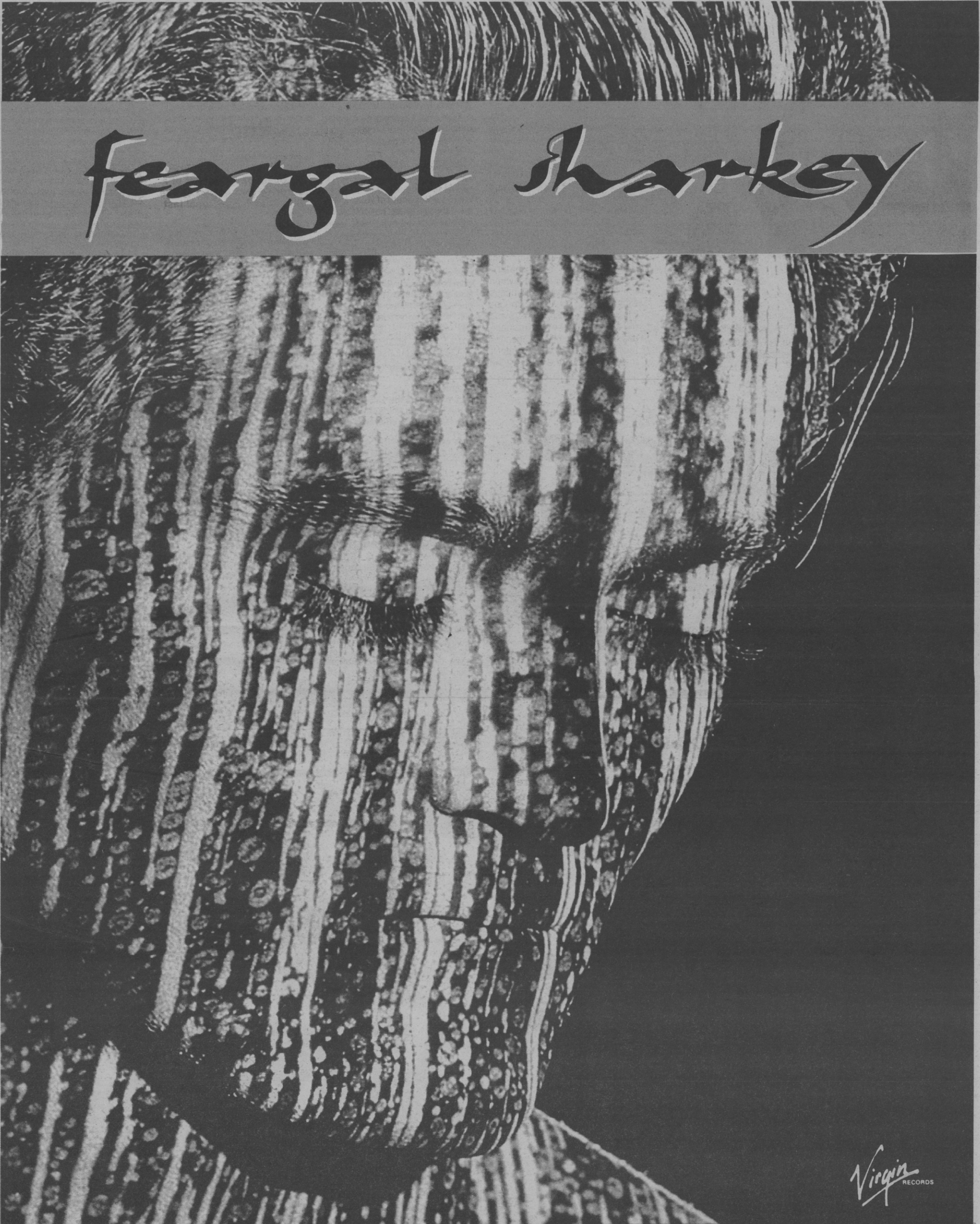
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A black and white portrait of Feargal Sharkey, looking slightly to the right. He has dark, wavy hair and is wearing a patterned shirt. The background is dark and textured.

feargal sharkey

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March 11, Town Hall

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March 12, Town Hall

Letters

Post to 'RIU' Letters,
PO Box 5689, Auckland 1.

(Not) A Matter Of Gender

Dear Paget St Collective: If you are so concerned with the lack of women writing or being interviewed why don't you either write or join a band? Considering the number of women in the "industry", the proportion of quotes is probably pretty balanced. There should admittedly be more women in the business, but until such time as they come forward, such things have to be accepted. Why should an all-woman band be accorded a higher status than their male counterparts simply because they are women in a male-dominated area? Music is genderless and should be judged on its quality, not what sex its members are. Now that you've taken the first step and written, why not do something positive to even the balance. I as a woman would look forward to hearing something ... **'One of the Womb'** Christchurch

Thanks ...

One behalf of the 145 prisoners at the Auckland Medium Security Prison at Paremoro, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Wentworth Brewster and Willy De Witt for taking the time and trouble to come up here and Dec 15 and bring a little colour into our lags. As we are only allowed six concerts a year, and while our cell radios remain firmly locked into Radio Hauraki, we get precious little in the way of entertainment. Too often it seems that when bands are feeling charitable, they'll play Mt Eden because of its proximity, or Paremoro Maximum for its ghoulish glamour, and we, stuck in the middle, miss out. I imagine this kind of captive audience would not be easy to play to, and the ambience must be low on the desirability scale, but these guys displayed true professionalism, and they did it for nothing. They made a lot of fans here this afternoon, despite the average inmate's tastes lying somewhere between Randy Crawford and Herbs. We, the casualties of an imperfect society's concepts of right, salute you. Kia ora, **Spider**

James Brown Living In America (Scotti Brothers) 12"

James finally cracks the pop market with this patriotic funk homage to the "land of the free". Pure Brown magic, with pumping horns and guitars and up-front drums. And the Hardest Working Man In Show Business is on fine vocal form. Taken from *Rocky IV*, and it's worth sitting through all the muck just to see the greatest living soul singer in the world. You just have to work this sucker to death.

Haywood Getting Closer (CBS) 12"

Already a club smash and destined to be huge on the pop charts as well. Produced by the Princess team of Stock, Aitken and Waterman, and sweetly sung by Ms Haywood. Best dance record released this year.

Pet Shop Boys Westend Girls (Parlophone) 12"

Hung around the upper reaches of the English chart for weeks, and likely to do the same here. Sure sounds nice, with the drum machines working on a muted hi-energy beat and a catchy melody. But what are they talking about? My bet is on the alienated self in Western society — but I could be wrong.

New Order Subculture (EMI) 12"

Taken from *Low Life* and given a massive re-mix from John Robie. He produces a great wall of sound with some clever breaks, especially at the end of the dub, where all electro hell breaks loose. Best stuff since 'Confusion'.

The Smiths The Boy With the Thorn In His Side (Rough Trade) 12"

"Lordy, Lordy, we all so miserable now." This man is pain personified — not that I don't like a little despair once in a while, but at least 'Charming Man' had that Motown bassline, this has nothing. I think Morrissey should tackle 'Puff the Magic Dragon' — now that's true angst.

Starpoint Object of My Desire (WEA) 12"

I suppose you'd call this one steamy or torrid or something, with lyrics like "Passion fire burns on and on/Body screams 'please make love to me.'" Sultry stuff. Absolutely essential rhythm track and over the top soap opera lyrics. Dynamite.

D.C. Lee See The Day (CBS)

An attempt at the big ballad a la Dusty Springfield with all the rising strings and cascading chords. It comes off sounding like the theme song to a very bad 60s melodrama. Very little soul or style evident here.

Hoodoo Gurus Like Wow — Wipeout (Bigtime)

Track from *Mars Needs Guitars*, and it sounds better taken in isolation. Neat use of 60s sound and a real evil guitar break. The flip has a Guru classic with 'Bring the Hoodoo Down', which hasn't been available before.

Twisted Sister Leader of the Pack (Atlantic)

Dumb beyond belief, a remake of the Shangri-Las' teen death classic. But there's nothing better than a little schlock like this baby. A classic of its kind.

Kerry Buchanan

Shake Summation

Bird Nest Roys Whack It All Down (Flying Nun)

To hold in your hand and look at, this record has all the exuberance you'd expect from BNRs — colourful cover, silly name, a million thank-yous on the back ... unfortunately the record itself doesn't measure up as well. There's nothing at all wrong with the five songs, but somewhere between the studio and vinyl they've blanded out something wicked. It's all a bit clean and polite and unbrash — 'Ain't Mutating', being the sweetest song anyway, suffers the most, and 'Cresta' gets through the best because of that glorious guitar lick. Considerable volume helps, particularly on side two — but it just ain't the band.

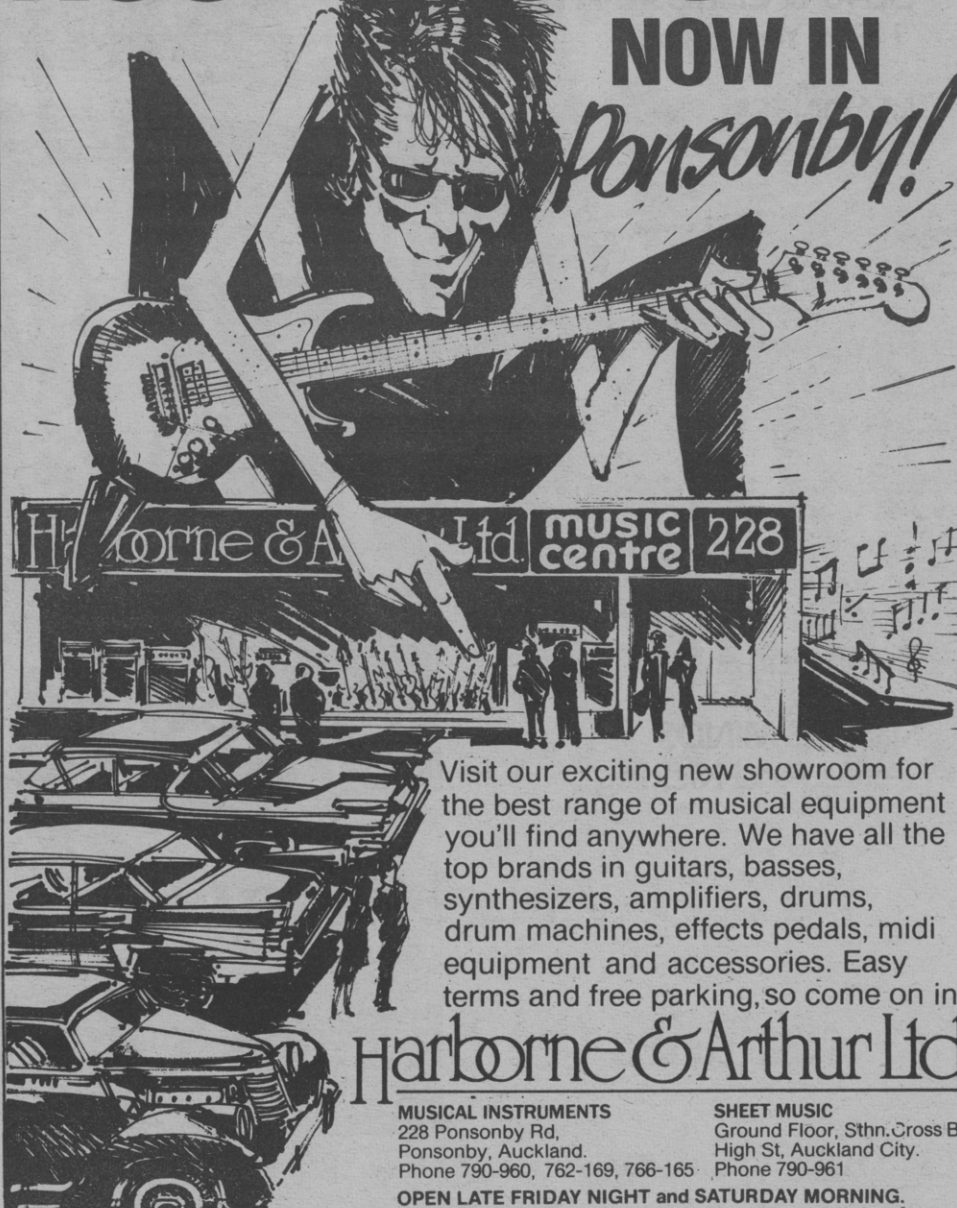
Able Tasmans The Tired Sun (Flying Nun)

The Able Tasmans went in and made a record — explored their songs and played around with 'em. And it's good — particularly the opening song 'Patrick's Mother' and the wild, Gun Clubby 'Tom Song'. The most ambitious song, 'Snow White Chook' doesn't work quite as well as it might, but its minor shortcomings are scooped up and tossed away by the (very) mini-anthem 'Nelson the Cat'. It's all helped out by a bright, bold, bumpy production. Yep.

Russell Brown

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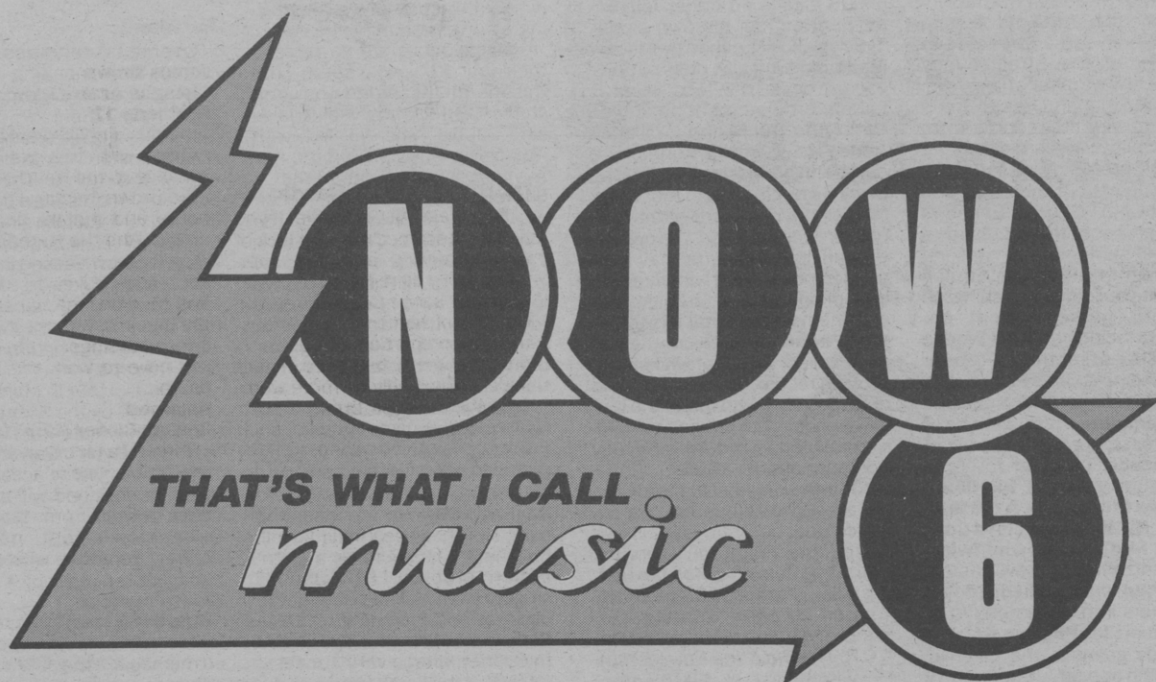


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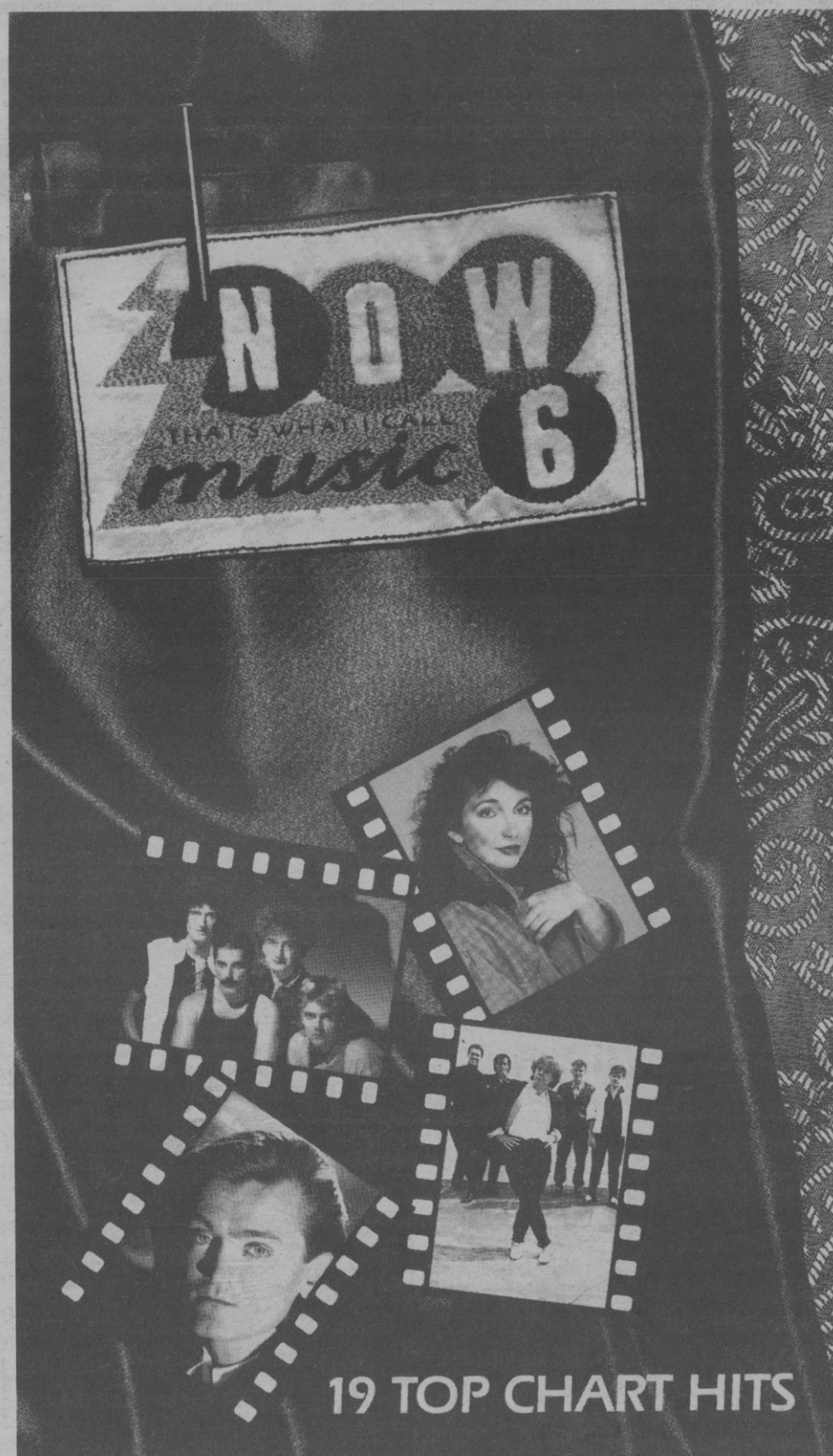
BALTIMORE
 "Tarzan Boy"

IAN DRURY
 "Profoundly In Love"

CLIFF RICHARD
 "She's So Beautiful"

UB40
 "Don't Break My Heart"

ARCADIA
 "Election Day"



Virgin
 VIDEO

Rumours

UK & USA

The **Sex Pistols** have been awarded 1,000,000 pounds in a High Court settlement against **Malcolm McLaren**. The money was the result from McLaren's two management companies, Glitterbest and Matrixbest in 1979. Sid Vicious' share went to his mother. The decision also gave the group the rights to the name Sex Pistols and the *Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* film ... meanwhile, 10 years on, **John Lydon** has a new **PIL** album called *Album* and drummer **Paul Cook** is apparently looking to make the big bid for success soon in **The Chiefs Of Relief**, along with various ex-Bow Wow Wow-ers. **Steve Jones** is presumably having a very good time spending 250,000 quid ... and **Dee Dee Ramone**, **Joe Strummer** and the **Pogues** have contributed songs to the soundtrack of the **Alex Cox** movie about **Sid 'n' Nancy**, *Love Kills*. All the songs on the soundtrack are called 'Love Kills', apart from a possible **PIL** addition called 'Love PILs', which seems to be a beery pun ... **Luther Vandross** sustained three broken ribs, head and facial lacerations and a cracked hip in the accident that killed the passenger in the car he was driving recently. It seems the car inexplicably went out of control and Vandross will definitely not face any charges as a result of the accident ... Jamaican musician **Patrick Alley** has filed suit against **Mick Jagger**, claiming he stole the song 'Just Another Night'. Alley says he recorded and copyrighted the song in 1982 ... new **Frankie Goes To Hollywood** LP is provisionally titled *Our Cheating Hearts*, apparently in deference to Holly J's growing interest in, surprise, country music. Bonus tracks on the first single will include a version of 'Smoke on the Water' ... more than 50 black and white commercial groups and singers in **South Africa** have grouped together and called for a boycott of Johannesburg's

centenary celebrations to back their fairly moderate demands for the release of political prisoners, withdrawal of troops from townships and the lifting of the state of emergency ... the **Street Group** (operator of the Streetsounds and Streetwave labels) has decided to join Solar and Rough Trade in withdrawing its records from the republic ... and amid growing musical protests in the USA against apartheid (including one in Nashville), George Benson's manager recently received a short jail sentence for "walking too close" to the South African consulate building in Washington ... other muso-political endeavours include the **Red Wedge** tour in support of the UK Labour Party, which includes **Paul Weller**, **Billy Bragg**, **Junior Giscombe** and **Jerry Dammers** ... and a series of big, party-style concerts in aid of **Greenpeace**, planned for April and including **Aswad**, **Big Country**, **China Crisis**, **Echo & the Bunnymen**, **Nik Kershaw**, **Lloyd Cole**, **Simply Red**, **Thompson Twins**, etc ... and **Nik Kershaw** has co-opted **Paul Young**, **Alison Moyet** and others into a memorial/tribute concert for **Phil Lynott**, with proceeds going to the 'Say No' anti-heroin appeal ... **Big Country** are out of a 14-month hibernation and working on a new LP ... **Motorhead** have finally cut their ties with Bronze Records, are now with GWR and are working on a new studio album ... the parents of a 19-year-old Los Angeles student who killed himself a year ago intend to sue **Ozzy Osbourne** in connection with the death, claiming the youth was affected by the Osbourne song 'Suicide Solution', on the album found on the turntable when the dead youth was discovered in his bedroom. Osbourne has refuted the charges, claiming the song is about the alcoholic death of ex-AC/DC singer **Bon Scott** ... the **Go-Betweens** have signed to Beggar's Banquet for a new LP, due by March, as is a tour here ... new Dario Argento horror pic has a soundtrack featuring **Motorhead**, **Iron Maiden** and **Andi Sex Gang** ... **Johnny Paycheck** has been indicted by a Grand Jury after an incident when he shot a man in an Ohio bar. The most serious of the

charges he faces is Felonious Assault ... **Todd Rundgren** has been doing a **Marvin Gaye** medley at his US gigs ... producer **Jellybean Benitez** has his own single, 'Sidewalk Talk', penned by ex-lover **Madonna**, who also does backing vocals, while the lead vocal is handled by somebody called **Catherine Buchanan** ... is **Rick James** really writing songs for a new **Donny & Marie** album? ... the **Damned** begin a world tour soon. New single is a cover of the Barry Ryan oldie 'Elouise' ... grown-up UK fanzine *Jamming!* has suspended publication with financial and philosophical problems ... and the new **National Discography Phone Service** in the UK gives callers details of who played on what record, when, where, and quite possibly who made the tea. It's open for both public and music industry use, but won't be fully operational until 1988.

Albums: Husker Du *Candy Apple Grey*, the Fall *Seeds of a Lullaby*, Joe Jackson *Big World* (live), Peter Dinklage *Premonition*, Steel Pulse *Babylon the Bandit*, Alan Parsons *Stereotomy*, Topper Headon *Waking Up*, Shockabilly *Shockabilly Heaven*, A.C.R. *The Old & the New* (comp), Exploited *Live In Washington*, Mayo Thompson (ex-Pere Ubu) *Corky's Debt To His Father*, Gap Band *Gap Band VII*, Don Cherry *Home Boy*, Sister Out, Augustus Pablo *Rising Sun*, Cocteau Twins *The Pink Opaque* (comp), Circle Jerks *Wonderful*.

Singles: Elvis Costello 'Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood', Bangles 'Manic Monday', Soul Sonic Force & Melle Mel 'Who Do You Think You're Funkin' With?'

Christchurch

Blue Dolphins is the name of the latest venture to include Hamish Kilgour. Other members are Ross Humphries, Liz Wallace (cello), Lesley MacLean (flute, percussion) and Jenny Halliday (drums). Watch for them on the Orientation circuit ... also on the circuit are the **Bats**, who begin their farewell tour in March, before they head off to conquer England and Europe ... **Jean Paul Satre Experience** is back together now that Dave Mulcahey has returned from Australia. The band will be

supporting the Bats for their Christchurch dates and hope to get some airplay on Radio U (when it returns) as well as playing as often as possible.

Worlds Apart are to release their first 12" single some time this month. Recorded on Night-shift's 16-track last year, the A-side will be 'Time Will Tell', with 'You Never Knew Me' on the flip. A video is being produced ... **Scorched earth Policy** have their new Ep out on Flying Nun in the next few weeks. Title is *Going Through the Hole In the Back of Your Head* ... **All Fall Down** have lost Jason, who has decided to form his own band. Ex-drummer Brett returned to fill in on guitar, but has now reclaimed his position on drums.

Louie and the Hotsticks have had a rest from their residency at the Gladstone in order to allow new guitarist Mark Bradford and drummer Andre Jayett (ex-Ragnarok) time to practise. The band's EP has been selling well, but there appears to be a distribution problem. Ex-Hotsticks singer Helen Mulholland is set to do some solo recordings at ZM ... **Rick and Anthony** have returned to Sydney, after a very successful tour of the South Island, to audition drummers. Apparently part of their agency deal is that they have a drummer. They are also set to start recording their debut album which will be distributed by themselves through EMI ... under the billing of a 'Musical Extravaganza Party', the Aranui was host to a reunion (of sorts) of the **Blades**, who must be able to claim to be one of ChCh's longest-lasting cover bands, as well as having one of the largest turnovers of members. Although the band didn't quite practise for long enough, a large crowd turned out both nights for a bit of nostalgia.

The **Zetland** has re-opened after being closed for nearly a month. At this stage the pub will only be open on Friday nights and is tentatively renamed the **Friday Night Club**. Running Promotions have taken over the bookings, ph 61-274 ... **Peter Cooke** and **Anton Jenner** are presently enjoying the good weather whilst practising their new band ... the latest in comedy duos from Australia is

the **Ticks**, and they should be touring here around May. **John Greenfield**

Auckland

Overseas releases for NZ records are happening in a variety of spheres this month. **Peking Man** have their 'Room That Echoes' single released in Britain, Australia and Canada before the end of the month. They should have an LP completed by the end of March ... the **Chills** singles compilation LP *Kaleidoscope World* has just been released in England on Creation Records ... and the **Idles** pop up on UK release on Up-right Records, with the live LP-plus 12" package *Agroculture* on Up-right Records.

A 10-town tour in March will be undertaken by the **Stone People**, a four-piece featuring **Dave Dobbyn** and **Peter Warren** of DD Smash. They will be accompanied by a film crew and will play West Coast towns from Kaikohe to Queenstown, but no major centres. Repertoire will consist of audience requests plus new DD Smash material.

The **Chills** have still to settle on replacements for the two departed members, especially in the keyboard department. That was the reason for the cancellation of their Orientation tour. Negotiations are underway for another package to fill the gaps.

The **Rising Sun** in K Rd is now in the capable hands of **Paul Rose**, who is looking towards more interesting and innovative booking policies, including trial Saturday afternoon gigs. He can be reached during the day at Record Exchange, ph 790-812.

No Tag are recording several tracks for a demo which may turn up on record results are good ... and none other than the **Violent Femmes** spent the day after their Auckland show in Stebbing Studios laying down some live takes of their showstopper (which they didn't play the night before), 'Dance Motherfucker', for possible release as a single.

Wellington

Jayrem are belting out their usual varied bag of goodies, with **Peter Broggs** 'Rise and Shine'

and Freddy McGregor with 'Across the Border', which both fall into the reggae genre ... **Storm-bringer's** 'Life Sentence' is out ... **John Niland**, former Hulaman, releases his *Inside* album through Eelman Records ... also Jayrem have been responsible for the excellent American Hardcore and metal stuff that's been appearing in the import bins of your local record shop lately.

The **Pulse**, aka Clyde Quay tavern, is beating back into action for local and touring bands and promoter Leslie Thomas is taking bookings on (04)851-182 ... the Terminus has bitten the dust as a live venue ... the Boys In Blue have been showing up in huge numbers at the gigs of certain privileged Wellington bands and generally turning peaceful evenings into potential riot zones. Main victims are metal, reggae and punk type bands ... **Brothers Gorgonzola** are maintaining a high profile, playing as often as possible and recording material.

Frontier Studios are busy working on the new **Lionheart** album and have recently worked with **Tin Syndrome**, the **Primates** and **Tribes Of New Zealand**. Frontier intend to extensively update and improve their studio, which is just one of many factors contributing to a resurgence in the music scene here in the capital ... a number of new fanzines covering various aspects of the scene are circulating ... many interesting busking acts are about the city, including one pair of threatening looking people who call themselves the **Bankrobbers**, dress appropriately (even stockings over the head) and perform right outside the BNZ.

Compos Mentis are releasing a five-track EP called *Why Us?*. This release plus older material can be obtained from David at 637 Fergusson Drive, Upper Hutt. You can also get their punk anarchist mag *Communicade* ... the next few weeks in Wellington will be very busy with the **Flying Kiwi Arts Festival** including several excellent local acts and many others from around the country. The festival is being held in conjunction with the International Arts Festival and will be based in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

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Chris Roberts
Sounds



THE SOUND

HEADS AND HEARTS

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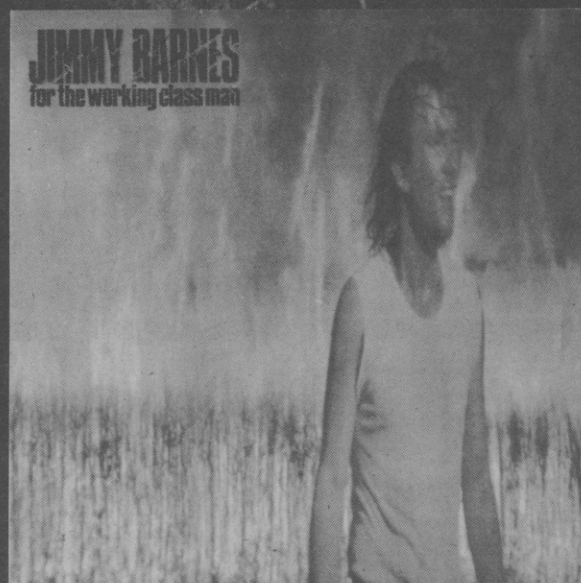
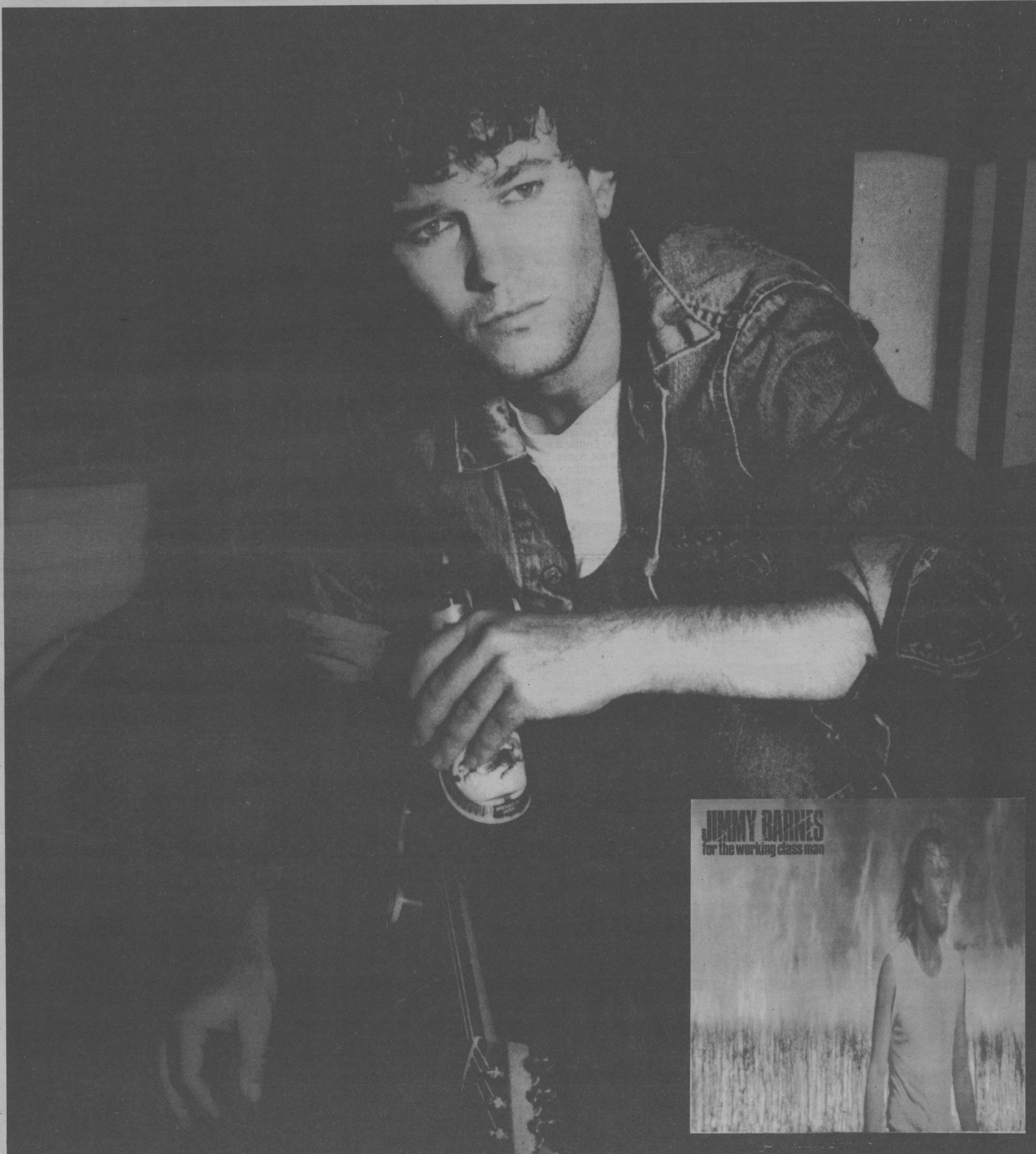


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Film

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN

Director: Hector Babenco

Two men share a cell in a South American gaol. Arregui (Raul Julia) is a tough and embittered Marxist whilst his companion Molina (William Hurt) is a prissy, effeminate homosexual. The clash between their two personalities is the pivot around which Babenco has fashioned this study of obsession, illusion and loyalty.

The director made his mark in 1981 with the startling *Pixote*, its Sao Paulo reform school providing a microcosm of the more general Brazilian corruption. *Kiss of the Spider Woman* is set in an unidentified Latin American country, much of the action taking place within the men's prison cell. The political oppression and violence of the outside world is revealed through the beatings and tortures administered by the prison authorities.

The claustrophobia of *Spider Woman* is inescapable. As in the original novel by Manuel Puig, it is the couple's verbal sparring match which provides the main momentum of the film. But claustrophobia is more than merely being trapped within the four walls of a prison cell. Arregui and Molina are caught within the limitations of

their attitudes and lifestyles: their passionate truce at the end of the film being all the more ironic when one considers the various betrayals that provide the undercurrent for the film.

The structure of the movie is an unusual one: the prison dialogues are punctuated with scenes from imaginary 1940s movies — the realisation of Molina's obsession with recounting of melodramatic film scenarios. The films-within-a-film provide an eerie parallel to the present situation of the two men and Sonia Braga's extremely arch playing as Leni Lamaison, the French cabaret singer caught between the Nazis and French resistance, is the perfect compliment to Molina's resolutely campy turn-of-phrase ("her petite ankle slips into the perfumed water" is one specimen).

The shock of the final moment of violence is considerable and much of the credit goes to William Hurt's superb performance as Molina, a performance that won him the Best Actor's Award at last year's Cannes festival. Unexpected casting for Hurt (his previous films have been Russel's *Altered States* and Kasdan's *The Big Chill*), he plays Molina with a fierce intelligence and admirable control, easily manipulating the audience's sympathies through his expert development of the character over the course of the film. Despite our initial misgivings, we end up feeling for this window-dresser drawn

against his will into a web of political intrigue, finally attaining his own sort of nobility.

AGNES OF GOD

Director: Norman Jewison

Things have not been the same at the convent since Mother Ignatius told it all ... John Pielmeier's original Broadway play *Agnes of God* played with the dualities of mystery and mysticism. Agnes, a young novice (Meg Tilly in the film) is investigated by forensic psychiatrist Martha Livingstone (Jane Fonda) for her part in the murder of a new-born child in the convent. Fonda struggles stoically, in spite of the protestations and obstructions put up by Anne Bancroft's Mother Miriam Ruth, a distinctly Jewish Momma Superior, and one who can kvetch with the best of them ("Dr Livingstone, I refuse," she quips to Fonda at one point in the film).

The original play was written for these characters alone, using the one set, and it worked as a dramatic piece of some intensity. Now, radically opened up with scenes in barns, towers, courtyards, it loses a lot of its former concentration. The move to Quebec seems to provide little purpose except to provide Sven Nykvist, Bergman's cameraman, with the opportunity for some rivetting images.

Jewison is still unable to resist the lure of pure corn — a shot of the sun bursting out from behind

the clouds after Agnes's confession or Jane Fonda's final wrap-up voice-over at the end of the film. The performances of the three actresses are what remain with one after the final credits. Not so much Jane Fonda taking her usual earnest stance, but rather Bancroft's bristling energy and mercurial mood changes as Mother Miriam Ruth and the glowing truth that Meg Tilly gives to the central role of Agnes.

WHITE NIGHTS

Director: Taylor Hackford

While one might almost forgive the embarrassing anti-Russian philosophies of *Rambo*, with its comic-book, outrageously biased approach to its subject matter, it is considerably less easy to accept the same sentiments in Hackford's new movie, dressed up with lashings of "culture" and a syrupy Lionel Ritchie theme song.

Mikhail Baryshnikov and Gregory Hines are, in their respective fields, superb dancers, yet *White Nights* gives them but little opportunity to display their talents in this area. By the same token, Geraldine Page and Helen Mirren are stylish actresses and yet the material given to them on this occasion is negligible to say the least. The lachrymose Isabella Rossellini takes far too much of the screen time and it is hard to believe what persuaded the Polish director Jerzy Skolimowski to play the heavy of the piece — the

suave Colonel Chaiko.

But, political issues aside, together with the criminal misuse of so many talents (cinematographer David Watkin and choreographer Twyla Tharp can be added to this list), a film which has some pretensions to being a thriller could well afford to have at least half and hour trimmed off its quite excessive running time.

WILLIAM DART

Video

Roadshow heads the list of recent video releases, with big Arnie Schwarzenegger as an android in *The Terminator* and Woody Allen as a bumbling theatre agent in his charming *Broadway Danny Rose*. Other releases include the horror movies *The Haunted Palace* (with Vincent Price, 1963) and *The Fifth Floor*, and *KGB: The Secret War*.

CBS/Fox offers *Turk 182*, starring Timothy Hutton of *The Falcon* and *The Snowman* fame. There's also the comedy *Smorgasboard* (starring Jerry Lee Lewis, Milton Berle and Sammy Davis Jr), *C.H.U.D.* (cannibals in the sewers of New York!), the romantic *Ladyhawke*, *The Baron and the Kid* (starring Johnny Cash as a pool player), *The Burning Bed* (Farrah Fawcett in a dramatic role as a battered wife), and the suspense-horror *Scared To Death*.

Palace video releases include *Blood Feast*, the work of cult horror director Herschell G. Lewis, and Britt Ekland getting tacky in *Erotic Images*.

The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai Across the 8th Dimension (Roadshow)

Wow, I wish I had written this one. A film hot on the trails to oblivion — just too wild and far gone daddy for words.

Here's the plot: Buckaroo Banzai is a multi-media star, comic book hero, scientist and brain surgeon. He breaks through to the 8th dimension in his jet car (a customised Ford) and discovers aliens. There are good aliens and bad ones; the good ones (sort of good, but not too nice) are black and the bad ones are white and racist. The "good" aliens blackmail Buckaroo and his followers (The Hong Kong Cavaliers) to help them, by placing an atom bomb above the earth, and if he doesn't stop them — bye bye World.

Now all the aliens are called John and came to Earth on Halloween 1938, the same day Orson Welles (well-known computer salesman) did his famous 'War of the Worlds' broadcast. You see, Orson was telling the truth, but the aliens brainwashed everyone. Wonderful stuff!

The aliens set up the 'Yo-Yo Dine' company as a front (Yo-Yo Dine features in Thomas Pynchon's book *Crying of Lot 49*, which has nothing to do with the film, but shows that the scriptwriters did English Lit. at Yale.) and attempt to use Mr

Banzai's "over-thruster" to break back into the 8th dimension.

Banzai and the Cavaliers fight the aliens and save the world. Lots of other things happen to make this one hell of a wild ride through the mind of a Hollywood scriptwriter.

Warning: Don't drink or take drugs before watching. KB

The Last Metro (Palace Academy)

Francois Truffaut died last year, leaving behind a body of work stunning and beautiful. From his early writings in *Cahiers du Cinema*, dealing with "la politique des auteurs", re-assessments of Hollywood directors like Ray, Fuller and Ford, and his first perfect films like *Tirez sur le Pianiste* and *Jules et Jim*.

He leaves us with *The Last Metro*, which carries all the familiar touches of his other films, the fine handling of the dialectic between genre and auteur, the concentration on the micro rather than macropolitical system, and that particular French sense of reserve and stylistic modesty.

In this film about the Nazi occupation of Paris, Truffaut tells a story about the love affair between a husband and wife, and the wife's lover, set against the struggle of a theatre remaining open against censorship and discrimination against Jews. The theatre becomes a metaphor for Truffaut's theme of resistance, be it against fascism or dangerous desires.

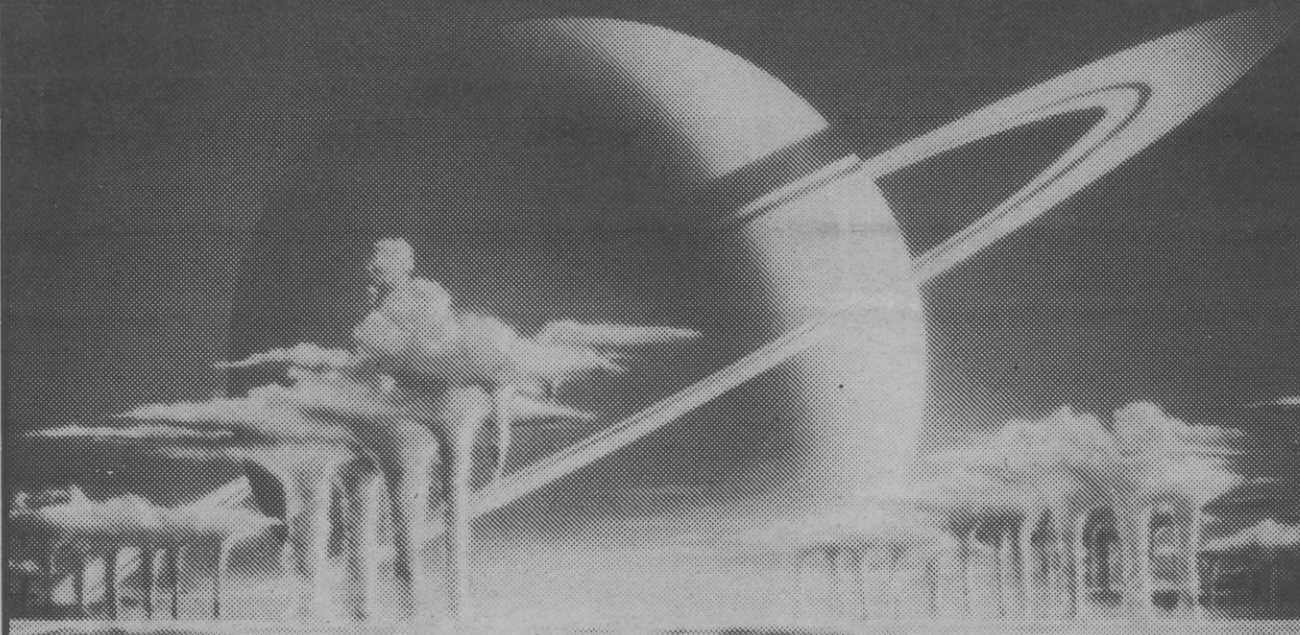
Both Catherine Deneuve (heroine of Bunuel's *Belle de Jour*) and Gerard Depardieu give wonderful performances in a rich and important film. If you think *Bolero* is a good example of French film-making, you're sadly mistaken. Watch Truffaut for his art and compassion and forget about that particular trans-continental soap opera. KB

'RUMOURS' FROM PAGE 6
the old Sheaf nightclub, which has been renamed the **Flying Ballroom** for the occasion ... the **Cricketers** will also have a very interesting programme running through the two week period of the festival, including **Roy Harper**, known for his session work with the likes of Jimmy Page and as a solo artist in his own right.

The **Manson Family** are a new band ... **Eye-Time Entertainment** have an ambitious two nights at the Student Union Hall, Victoria Uni. Fri-Sat 14-15 will see up to 20 different acts from around the nation, a diverse bag including **Dread Beat & Blood**, **Purple Si-ren**, **Go Go Yetis**, **Jungle Mice**, **Otis Mace**, **Primates** and **Flesh D-Vice**. Organisers see the event as a debut for Eye-Time and further events are planned throughout the year.

Flesh D-Vice have just completed their first independent video, made by a team of up 'n' coming film-makers and to be shown with the release of a new single ... the **Tombolas** will be busy playing various venues around the country and are to record new material.
Gerald Dwyer

The end of the world is just the beginning...



THE QUIET EARTH

A GEOFF MURPHY FILM



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LA Daily News

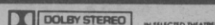


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THE ALBUM. OUT NOW!

Best Fetus Forward

Jed Town & Serum Fort
from A Womb with A View

It takes a certain turn of mind to live right in the heart of Auckland, a real determination. We're not talking about the "inner city" flats advertised in the paper in pansy bloody Grey Lynn or Newmarket, or even Ponsonby. We're talking within a sniff of the exhaust fumes of Queen Street, the White Lady for breakfast.

The council forbids it with bylaws, makes it increasingly unlikely by allowing old, cheap buildings to be slaughtered in favour of cold glass towers. Every now and then it trumpets its efforts in keeping the inner city alive by announcing the creation of half a dozen luxury flats to sell at 200 grand apiece to people who inhabit the city for the time it takes to walk from the Fuego to the offstreet door.

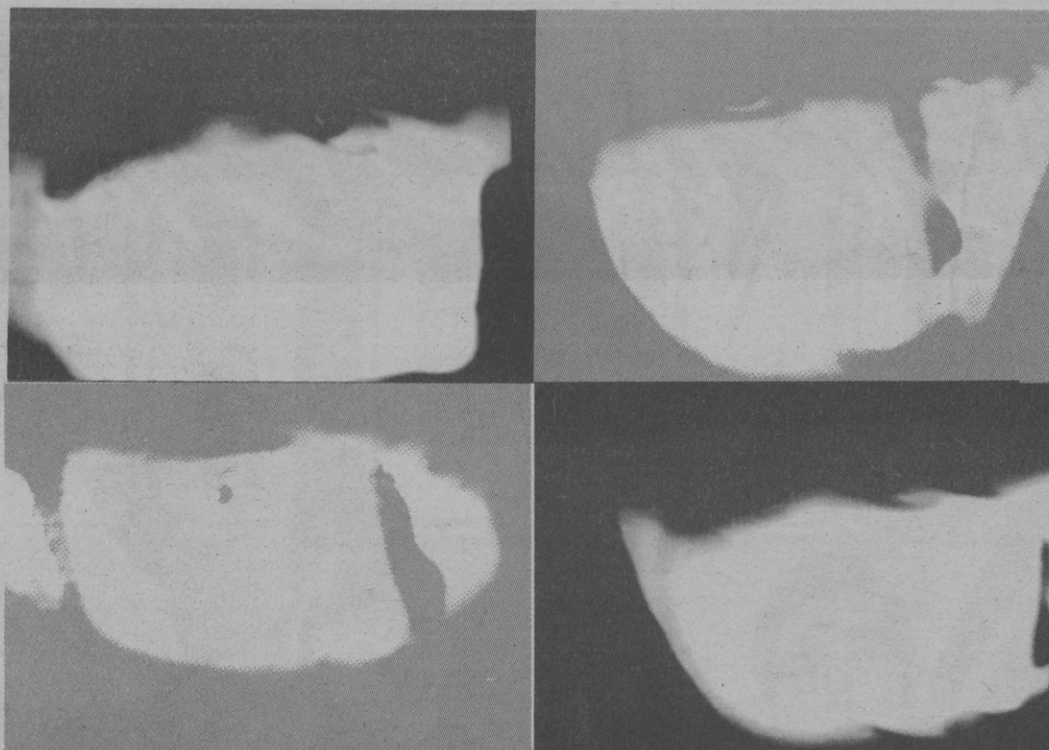
The soul of the city is the individuals who carve out niches despite landlords and bylaws and lack of plumbing and actually *live* in the place.

Jed Town's niche, Fetus Productions HQ, is two and a half rooms in an office building with bedroom-kitchen, lounge ... and 16-track studio. The walls are decorated with the paraphernalia of the F Prods career so far; pix, posters and artwork from Australia, Japan, Europe, the Windsor ...

"Fetus Productions? They're Australian aren't they?"

The current New Zealand end of Fetus Productions is Jed Town and Serum Fort. He was once in the Features and she was once a Snoid sister with precocious North Shore music/theatre group the Plague. They formed about four years ago in Sydney, with another NZer, Broxin. The fourth member, a woman called Pola, still lives in Sydney also.

Jed is tall and slim, not ordinary looking, but the only outwardly unusual thing about him is his two top front teeth, filed to points, a legacy of the first sojourn in Sydney. Serum is pale, with long



blonde hair and slightly distant eyes. She talks in a sing-song voice, with an accent from some imaginary foreign country. She can sometimes be hard to follow; her trains of thought seem to connect in different ways than most peoples'. They're both softly friendly, far from the forbidding figures some of the music might suggest.

Recorded output thus far is: Untitled LP (1981); *Fetalmnia* EP, 1982; *Self Manipulation* cassette (1982); *The Perfect Product* cassette (compilation of old and new material, packaged in Japan, 1983); *Environmental* LP (recorded on four-track, mainly by Broxin, 1984, as yet unreleased here); *The Perfect Product* EP (released late 1985); and the newly-released album, *Luminous Trails*.

There have also been various other film, art and writing projects under the Fetus Productions banner. As Jed says:

"I think everyone's got their own place in Fetus Productions. That's a point I'd like to clarify. I'd like it to be known that Fetus Productions is like a company name and within the company is different groups. There's the Perfect Product of course, and Environmental with Broxin. The three of us started the thing together and we've all gone in different directions for a while and contributed to different things which individuals have got together themselves. So there are other people besides us two in Fetus Productions."

The album is mainly Jed's work, and mainly

recorded at Sydney's Groovex Studios early last year. The songs were written as they were recorded, Jed working closely with the studio's owner, a chap named Groove:

"I basically come up with an idea and record it on four-track, just to get the structure. Then I just like to spend time trying different things out and after three or four months come up with a finished product."

As well as Jed's guitar, the recording uses sampled sounds from an Emulator, and a DX7 synth. Tracks were digitally mixed at another studio and then transferred onto a 1950s vintage Revox tape recorder, "to bring back a bit of warmth". The process began to get hurried after Groovex started folding as the result of a letdown on a costly film soundtrack deal. So two tracks for the album, 'It's Alright' and 'Sparks Fly' had to be done in the home studio in Auckland. Strangely enough, they attain almost the same sparkling recording quality. And a warmth uncommon to electronics-dominated music ...

"Yeah I think a lot of electronic music does sound cold — mainly because all the instruments are very similar, there's only one tonal quality."

It's also unusual for music methodically put together with what are normally considered "cold" instruments to make such unashamed plays on the emotions as Fetus music does.

"Yeah. I think that sort of happens naturally. When you're working on stuff you don't know how or why you're playing it and it's coming out and if you're satisfied with it, it must have rubbed off from the last few months that you've worked on it and lived. It was a strange time back then ..."

... and Kicking!

Fetus Productions shows in Auckland this year have been two-parters. There's the Perfect Product, which brings in Simon Alexander on Emulator and keyboards and plays music similar to the new album — and the Fetals, with Deberly from Bird Nest Roys on second bass guitar, a wild white-noise punk band (Ian Gilroy drums for both lineups). Was the Fetals thought up in an attempt to show the songs could work in a very direct, immediate way?

"Yeah, you don't have to think about it on stage, whereas with Perfect Product there's a lot of things happening when you're playing. You've got to be aware that *this* is going on, and if you don't it won't be there, and I'm just getting used to that now. The Fetals were like a release in a way, you didn't have to worry about what you did — those songs are quite easy to play and you can just forget about playing and do what you feel at the time. It's something I really like. It's as important to me as the Perfect Product.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

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SOME FINE TRASH

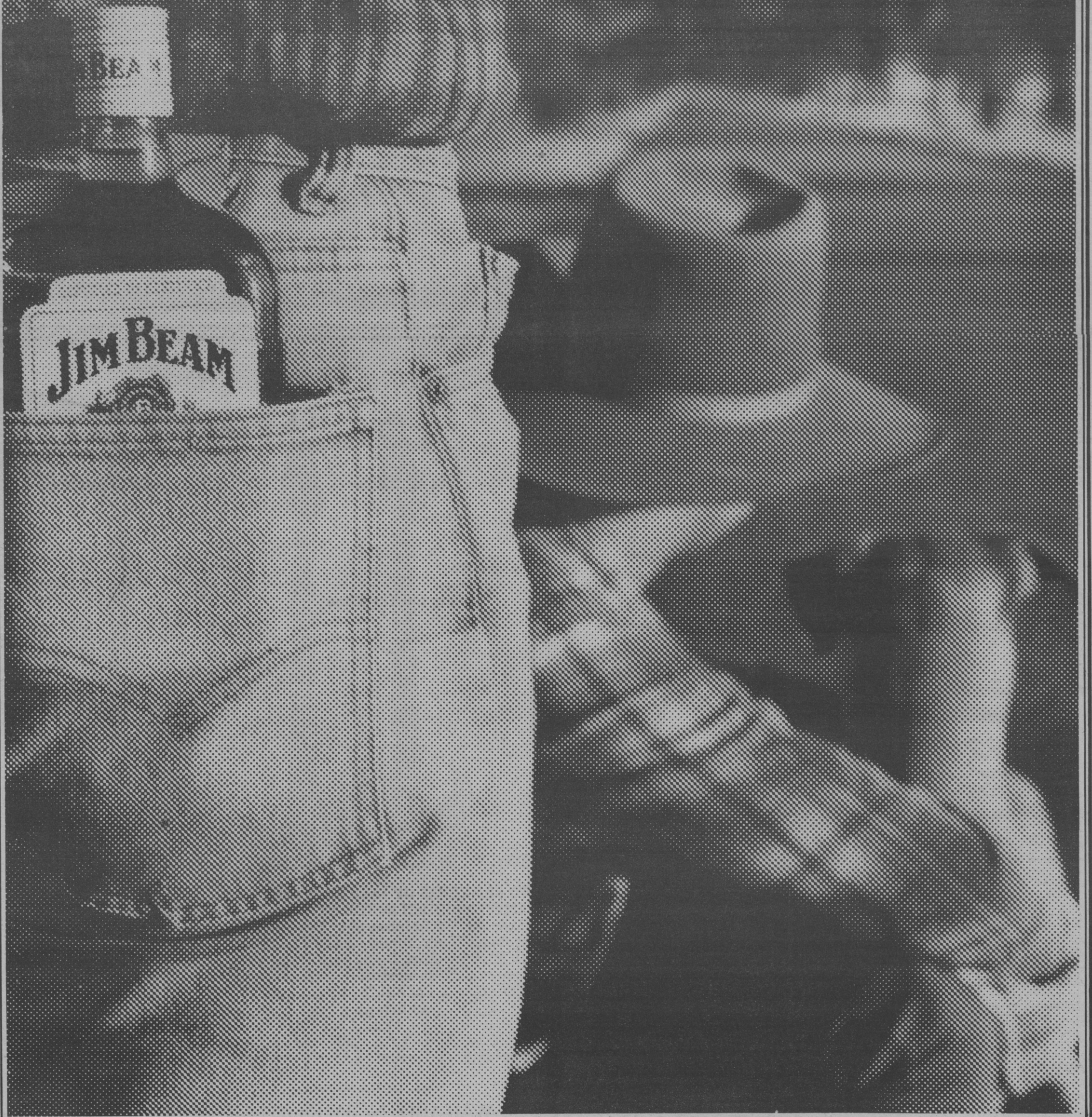
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: Off The Bone Pic Disc
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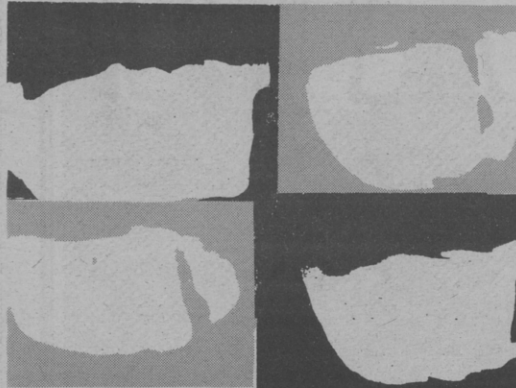
FETUS' FROM PAGE 10

"I would like to maybe introduce, rather than just having straight drums, some metallic-sounding things, just to make it sound a little bit different than an everyday punk band."

It'll be fine ...
you'll get it right sometime ...

Live performances with the Perfect Product took some time to get together after you returned to NZ.

"Yeah. I had to work out how the hell we were going to do it. Because a lot of that stuff, *Luminous Trails*, is 16 tracks — and I like the idea of making something sound better than the record. So I want to be able to use all these instruments and, as time goes on, try to mix live on stage or something. Like mixing in the stu-



dio, to be able to use all those instruments and have control over them, so you're actually inventing new things as you go on. It's really hard at the moment because we've never had a mixer who's been with us longer than a day before we've played. So there's never been any organisation on that part, which I'd like to rectify soon."

How much sequenced and pre-recorded stuff are you using?

"There's no sequencers at all. It's just recorded stuff, onto a QX1 digital thing, so it's almost like it's played as it's played on the record. The basic track, the bass and rhythm and a few certain subtleties, with the guitars and keyboards played on top of it and the drums bringing out more of a live sound, rather than that stale drum machine sound."

"I've got to get it right some time. It started coming together towards the end, because we were a bit more relaxed. But I'd still like to have a bit more control over it, rather than not knowing what the hell's going on. When you're on stage you're going 'Where's the bass? Where's the echo on this?' and it hasn't sounded half as good as it should."

One of the things that made the last Windsor gig — the good one — work was the sheer atmosphere of the place that night.

"Yeah, that's the whole thing. If you don't have the atmosphere it's pointless playing."

... and Vision?

Fetus Productions performances used to be as notable for the films and slide shows as much as the music. Why have you cut the visuals out?

"It was a kind of test, just to see what it would be like. And our stage presentation sometimes is fairly stagnant, we don't move very much sometimes. And I can't stand watching bands playing where there doesn't appear to be much involvement — it's like they're reading music or something. And I think I'm realising now that the visuals are an integral part of the Perfect Product, they convey a lot of emotion as well, and we don't have to worry about much apart from getting the music right, so it gives us a lot more freedom and retains that kind of visual enjoyment."

Is that why you sometimes use the blood capsules and so on? I know some people who really hate that ...

Jed looks surprised and Serum chimes in: "Yeah, it's funny! It really makes you notice it — I've had about three people say that."

"I haven't had one ..." says Jed. "Why do they hate it?"

"I think there's lots of angles you could hate it from," she says. "One is that if you want to see violence or something like that, you should really cut yourself, or it's not extreme enough, so it's a wal-ish thing. And then it's 'how dare you put yourself in such a wal-ish position?'"

I think some people don't like it because it's theatrical.

"I don't actually act. When I'm doing it, I don't act — I just like doing it. I'm not really trying to be theatrical. I mean, people have got their own ways of getting a kick out of things, this is my way of doing it."

The Beatles Ethic

You write some kinda pop songs. Do you think Fetus Productions have the ability to be really popular, sell lots of records?

"Yeah, definitely."

And still make really good, interesting, maybe weird, records ...

"Yeah, I wouldn't sacrifice the music to do that, definitely not. I would have done that a long time ago if I'd wanted to."

Serum: "It's funny really, because when you see films, people accept really strange music from films. Lots of soundtracks can be quite musically interesting."

People accept weird films more readily than weird music too.

"Oh yeah — films like *Brazil*. The equivalent of that in music ..."

Jed: "I think the idea all along has been for us to get into doing films anyway."

Does that thing of popularity without compromise constitute the Beatles Ethic?

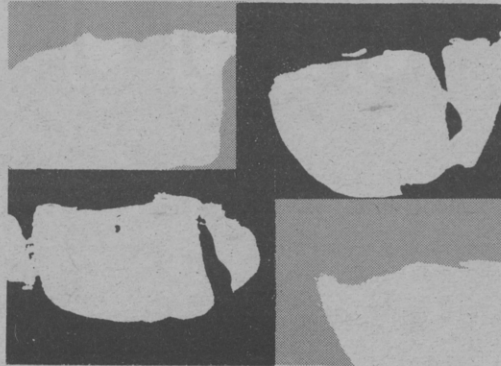
"Yep. I don't think they ever compromised at all."

Think it could still happen?

"It depends on how weird you are I suppose. Everyone wants something different to come through, so I suppose you'd have to be really different to be that big."

You're a bit of a notorious Lennon fan ...

"Notorious ... everyone reckons I sound a bit like John Lennon and I admit I've been a Beatles fan since I was about seven, so I suppose you pick up something. But I don't regard him like a hero or anything. He's just another human ... but



I feel very close to him, I'm sure there's been some kind of connection there, a very small connection."

SHOCK

Does it concern you that a lot of people still regard the name and the earlier visuals (of babies born deformed, etc — the idea being to emphasise that Everything has beauty, not just the conventionally aesthetically beautiful) as shock tactics?

"Not really, no. My father often accused me of that being the whole idea of doing it, but I didn't really worry about it. But he's come around to it now."

Serum: "Jed's good at defending it to people, but I find it harder, because the level at which they've thought about it is totally different to the level I've thought about it. Usually I find that if I've been shocked by something, not necessarily in a nasty way or anything, but by something I can't comprehend, I tend to carry it round for a while and look at all aspects of it. Whereas I can see that immediate reaction too — which is really suspicious, suspicious of peoples' motives."

Jed: "Yeah, that's right. It's like the film *Eraserhead*. When I first saw it, I wasn't shocked by it, but I was definitely impressed by it. And then after seeing it three or four times I liked it even more. It's different every time — you see it in a different way."

"Because everything's got a story hasn't it? And some stories are so simple they can be amazing or completely boring because you've seen it a thousand times. It's only where the story kind of loses itself and you have to pick up the pieces together ... I think that's where I'd like to keep heading, that kind of direction. It's quite a discovery sometimes."

Serum: "But you've gotta be rough. That's why you've got to not worry about peoples' reactions like that. There are some things that you hear and that are so designed not to have any controversy in them or anything at all that makes you think. There's excellent stuff and there's really good bad stuff — that's why I even like bad stuff. Something that's quite astoundingly bad, at least there's something in it. Things like Duran Duran, when I hear it I can't even think that I don't like it, because there's nothing you can pick out and say 'oh, wanky drums' or something. It's like it's just designed to try and offend as little as possible."

To Come

The Perfect Product won't be appearing live again for two or three months, but a tour by the Fetals, possibly for Orientation, is a distinct possibility. Jed and Serum also want to finish the film they're working on together (you got a glimpse of their handiwork with the video for 'Flicker' from the EP). While Jed concentrates on the music, Serum has also been working on another film with Richard Von Sturmer and some of her own writing. And Jed wants to ...

"Just develop the sound that's coming out now. This group's been playing this type of music for years and it's got to diversify a little bit. The production in particular I'm interested in, trying to find that. Songs like 'Anthem' and another song called 'Me', which isn't on the record, the guitars are creating, harmonics I suppose is the word, so that everything's got a ring to it — it's almost like a whistling. I'd like to get a really strong pulse, so the harmonics and the whole sound are ringing together. Just get this really powerful pulse happening."

"Have your motivations changed?"

"I think the main motivation has just been to be more in the atmosphere that I enjoy. Rather than going out to fulfill something, I've basically found what I want to do and I'm just continuing it. So I think the motivation's still the same."

Russell Brown

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The Great White Sharkey

From the Undertones to the *Top of the Pops*

"So you think you're so clever, never in doubt," ('Family Entertainment') was the first line I ever heard Feargal Sharkey sing. It was the first song off the first Undertones' album, 13 songs that weightlessly and innocently lifted the pop crown from the Ramones and the Buzzcocks. That was in 1979, and even then it was obvious that Sharkey's rasping vocal was the ideal means for conveying the pathos and sense of tragedy that lay beneath the surface of many of the O'Neills' songs.

This perfect marriage lasted for four albums and 13 singles, each record being more serious and more ambitious

than its predecessor, an evolution Sharkey was more than happy with:

"I think *The Sin of Pride* was the best album the Undertones ever made. It came as a great disappointment that it wasn't as successful as its predecessors. I felt that we had done a helluva good job on it and I can remember vividly that it was very hard work. We deliberately tried to go off on a completely different direction by writing deeper songs and we set ourselves a long list of tasks and I felt we achieved all of them. But not everyone seemed to agree with it."

Salad Days

The release of Sharkey's first solo album prompted this phone interview a week before Christmas. Entitled simply *Feargal Sharkey*, the



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album leaves his Undertones' past well and truly behind, not only in styles, but in the fact that he's co-written half the songs with the Eurythmics' Dave Stewart. Didn't you have the desire to write songs with the Undertones?

"No, it was something that didn't fascinate me at all at the time. Plus there were a couple of guys in the Undertones who were doing quite well for themselves without me interfering. At that stage I was more interested in learning about production and that sort of thing."

So what influence did you have on the Undertones' music?

"Quite a big bit. The Undertones were unique, five very different characters and if you'd taken away any one of them it wouldn't have been the same."

"What we did was we would go into the rehearsal room and someone would come in with a chord structure or an idea for a chorus and we'd battle it out for days on end and produce a finished song."

Being Irish, the Undertones were often compared to Stiff Little Fingers, whose ham-fisted barbed wire descriptions of the Irish troubles contrasted with the more subtle personal politics of the O'Neills at their best, as in 'Life's Too Easy', 'You're Welcome' and the title track from *The Sin of Pride*.

"Politically, I don't think it does any good trying to ram things down peoples' throats," explains Sharkey. "I think it's more important that people make their own decision on a particular subject as then it has a more lasting effect. If I get up and start shouting that this and that are wrong people may listen but in a short space of time they're gonna turn around and say 'Who the hell are you,

telling me what to do?' I would prefer to open peoples' minds and make them more aware and maybe then they'd try to find out for themselves."

Since the Undertones split in May 1983, the O'Neills have formed the more explicitly political That Petrol Emotion and Sharkey has gone the other way, into the vast mid-Atlantic marketplace. Was this division a reason why the Undertones split?

"No, sorry to disappoint you. I left as there were other things I wanted to try and I felt I had done as much with the Undertones as I possibly could. And in actual fact 'Ghost Train' (on the solo album) is about politics but in a very subtle sense."

After leaving the band did you find it difficult settling on a musical direction?

"Yeah, that's why I haven't. I decided I didn't want to write just one good song and then carry on and do 12 different variations on that and call it an album. I try very hard not to have one musical style and that's why the album covers such a broad range of material."

So with the Undertones you felt you were being trapped in one style?

"Yeah, I felt a little bit like that."

And that was probably because you weren't writing any of the songs?

"Yeah, probably."

Testing the Water

Feargal (pronounced Fur-gul) Sharkey was born into a large working class family in Derry, Northern Ireland, 27 years ago. He was blessed with a voice that could strip paint and the stereotyped Irish temper that I was to be on the receiving end of before the end of the interview. So he's sensitive and sometimes garrulous and some-

Do da Coruba.

One taste is all it takes.



times clipped and abrupt in his answers. It's tough getting to the top and that's why he's taken two and a half years to release his album:

"I decided I wanted to be able to do as much of the album as possible, and that meant not only making the record itself, but doing the cover, the videos, ads and t-shirts. Everything. And there were a lot of things I didn't know anything about, like directing videos, lighting video sets and the difference between a red-head and a blonde-head. I felt I had to go and learn about these and that's what I've spent the two years doing."

And this meant you had to move to London three years ago?

"Yeah, there's not too many graphic design schools in Ireland, and because I'd made a list of stuff I wanted to learn about it ruled out staying in Ireland. I could've moved to New York as easy as London. It just had to be a big media centre."

Despite this careful planning, Sharkey's first record was an accident.

"Vince (Clarke) had left Yazoo just after I'd left the Undertones and in the gossip column in one of the music papers it said we were working in the studio together and at that stage that was complete and utter lies, as I'd never even met Vince Clarke. But Daniel Miller, who runs Vince's record company, Mute Records, and who was a big Undertones fan, read it and thought bloody hell, that's a good idea. The next day Vince rang me up and said he'd written this song and he'd send me a tape of it and if I liked it we could do something in the studio. It was all fairly easy. Timewise I got the phone call from Vince on a Thursday, the tape on Friday, I worked on it over the weekend, I flew into London on Monday and we did it on Tuesday."

'Never Never' is a typical quality Vince Clarke ballad, spare, melodic and genuinely moving. A song ideally suited to Sharkey's vocal style.

"It's a terrific song. To be honest, at the beginning I was a bit suspicious about the whole thing until I heard the song. It's brilliant, I hate him for it (laughs). I'm jealous. The record was good for both of us as it was enjoyable because there was no pressure to do a follow-up single or album. I've a lot of fond memories of that period."

Before he tackled his album Sharkey had two further warm-ups, the first with Madness on 'Listen To Your Father' and the second the mawkish 'Loving You' with Queen's Roger Taylor producing and Sharkey sharing the writing credits with the Human League's Jo Callis (who, incidentally, wrote his best songs with the Rezillos, a band who had more than a passing influence on the Undertones).

So, three singles of no fixed approach paved the way for an album that is the result of whim and meticulous deliberation, contradictory qualities inherent in Sharkey's character.

Feargal Sharkey seems to be American in character?

"I shouldn't think so. (Pause) I'm not American so how can I make an American record?"

I must ask Costello that. But your covers are mainly American and there's an R&B feel to the songs you've written with Dave Stewart:

"For me a good song must have a little bit of blues or emotion in it but on my songs it's subconscious blues on my part if it is, it's purely accidental. I make records purely by instinct, I don't sit down with a little piece of paper and contrive a song or anything. I go into the studio and make noises on tape and when I get a bunch of noises that are interesting or pleasing to listen to I turn them into a song."

After I left the Undertones my eventual aim was to write songs and I felt that if I managed to write one or two for the album I'd be quite happy. A long term aim was to have a Feargal Sharkey album written by Feargal Sharkey. So there's six songs (five by my count Feargal) on this album and I've beaten my own target. So that's alright."

The Americanization of Feargal is further enhanced by the fact that the album was mixed by Tom Petty's engineer, Shelly Yakus, in LA. Miles from Derry.



Feargal Sharkey in Undertones days.

"Dave (Stewart) and I had been doing the backing tracks up in North London and we decided that it would be nice just to go away somewhere to do the mixes. And, quite honestly, we got a map and we picked a place where we'd both been and liked and that place was LA. It was purely because we felt that we would have a pretty good time there so there's no deep, meaningful musical reasons for the choice, it was just a whim on our part."

The reason we used Shelly was that once we got him there we wanted the best engineer and a lot of people recommended him and as it turned out he was totally brilliant. He's an amazing guy."

The Little Thief

"To be perfectly honest I pinched 'You Little Thief' and 'Good Heart'. Dave had been in LA finishing the last Eurhythmics' album and he'd gone around to to visit Maria McKee (Lone Justice) and she'd just about finished writing 'Good Heart' and so she played it to Dave on piano and he recorded it on his walkman. A few months later Dave and I were just sitting around talking and he played it just to get a second opinion and the basic song just knocked me out. It was a big challenge for me to take a song that I essentially loved and take it in a direction that Maria could never imagine it could have gone in. Originally it was a very C&W or bluegrass type of song and Dave and I just wanted to turn it into a great pop single."

By no stretch of the imagination is 'Good Heart' a great pop single, unless great means successful as it spent two weeks at the top of the British charts. Believe me, neither Stewart, Sharkey or McKee are capable of creating a Great Pop Single.

Yet Tom Petty's keyboard player Benmont Tench comes closest with 'You Little Thief':

"Ben has been a very good friend of Dave's and mine for some time and he's been getting into songwriting and so he sent us this tape with three or four songs on it. When Dave and I got 'You Little Thief' it was a slow, melodic ballad, but we felt that the basic song was good enough to turn it into what it is now, much to Ben's horror. It's a really clever lyric too."

With 'You Little Thief' you get the impression that the singer is only as good as the song, an old cliché that might cause Sharkey to send Christmas cards to the O'Neills.

A Chrissie Hynde song, 'Made To Measure', also gets the Sharkey treatment:

"I've known Chrissie for donkeys and every so often Dave, me and Chrissie and a few others get together and mess around playing songs. It was during one of these sessions that she played 'Made To Measure', a song she had written a while back but forgot she had. Again, it just knocked

me out, so I said 'give it to me Chrissie, I want it,' Sharkey concludes with mock lewdness.

Feargal Sharkey signs out with a respectful version of Womack's 'It's All Over Now', a song so well known that it's become a standard. So why do another version?

"A pure accident. My basic motto in the studio is anything can happen, and a record isn't finished until it becomes a piece of plastic and then I can't do anymore to it. Dave was playing some chords and it reminded me of 'It's All Over Now' and they weren't even the right chords and started singing it and it started to sound interesting. So then we had to go out and buy the record to work out the proper chords and lyrics. And we did it literally within 40 minutes. The verification of that is at the beginning of the song there's a thunderstorm that's well mixed in as at the time of recording there was a thunderstorm and we stuck the mike out the window."

Jaws

When Sharkey was in LA galavanting around town and waiting for the album to be mixed, NME's Gavin Martin made the pertinent observation that when "his jaws stop chopping like a speedy railway barber ... it becomes obvious that he's credibility conscious."

Credibility turns out to be a touchy topic with Sharkey, probably because he's been critically roasted since the release of his album. With the Undertones he enjoyed endless press raves and the band didn't go hungry. Now, with an album as safe as milk and a single that spent two weeks at the top of the UK charts, he's commercially entered the Young-Moyet league.

"I hope not. (Silence) For fuck's sake, if what you're getting at is the fact that I've gone and copped out and made a commercial album then you're talking complete and utter crap, okay? For the songs on this album are as good as any songs the Undertones have ever done. A song like 'Love and Hate' is as left of centre as you're gonna get. This copping out is complete and utter bullshit and I'm getting really fed up with hearing it. Why don't you go and have a listen to it and just open your ears?"

Sharkey is a mite pissed off, obviously provoked by the unfavourable comparisons between his past and present and by being categorised alongside Young and Moyet:

"I would find it very narrow-minded of people if they did, I would object to being categorised with them. I don't want to be regarded as an 'entertainer'. I write damn good songs and I want to gain respect for what I do. Can I help it that people actually like what I've done and have gone out and bought it? Should I be ashamed of that? But I don't want to be a singer. If I wanted an evening chat show on TV I would go and do it."

George Kay



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Records

The Clash
Cut The Crap
CBS
Big Audio Dynamite
This Is Big Audio Dynamite
CBS

With these two albums, the truth finally emerges about the schizophrenic nature which destroyed the great band that was once the Clash.

The split was inevitable, with two giant egos vying for dominance. Joe Strummer's voice sang the Youth Anthems, the Hit Singles, while Mick Jones provided the light and shade and some of the best moments of *London*

Calling, *Sandinista* and *Combat Rock*. Strummer became obsessed with the Clash Image, the streetwise rebel, the latterday James Dean. He showed just how much this vision controlled him when the Clash toured here a few years back, avoiding the press conference which Jones so deftly controlled to go out busing in Auckland. So what did that prove? Not much, as the new Clash LP shows.

Even the title lacks shock value, because it's so obvious. About all it will achieve is the dubious distinction of not being mentioned on mainstream radio. The sleeve is just as much a pose, a hybrid of the debut LP and *Black Market Clash*. The music is mostly the same old thrash, dated and sometimes frankly embarrassing (no way would Jones ever have been



Big Audio Dynamite (L-R): Greg Roberts, Leo Williams, Mick Jones, Don Lettes.

associated with a pathetic breast-beater like 'We Are The Clash'). Strummer's voice has become more off-key and raucous, while the rest of the New Clash provide only token support.

Give Mick Jones credit, he's trying to expand on the ideas hinted at in the last two Clash albums. *Big Audio Dynamite* ventures into electrobeat territory and comes out intact.

Jones has a more subtle approach, although his message still parallels that of Strummer. He gains the edge on melody and manages to create a New Dance in the process. His sound is definitely funky, definitely militant, perhaps more American than British. But at least he wears his influences like a new suit rather than an old raincoat (which has certainly let Strummer down).

'The Bottom Line' is one great song the Clash never recorded, along with 'E=MC²', both of which logically follow the patterns of the second side of *Combat Rock*. On 'A Party', which starts out as a reggaeified disco number, Jones seems to reflect with some bitterness on the Clash Years:

*White Knight write our wrongs
Lyrics for the protest songs
Number one, top of the charts
Rock 'n' roll bleeding hearts*
Strummer's problem is that he still believes he's the White Knight. Jones (despite his terrible LP cover) seems to have dismissed the myth. He's also writing better songs. No future? Depends on who you believe.

Duncan Campbell

Tom Waits
Rain Dogs
Island

Waits has always been a wild card, a queer fish. Claiming to have been born in a moving taxi, he grew up in California and grew out of the American tradition of

songs you'll hear all year.

And with this in mind it's not hard to see why *NME* ranked this album as being first equal with *Psychochandy* in last year's stakes. Is it that good? Well, it doesn't come up to the genius that shone on *Swordfish-trombones*, but its best has some weird heart that makes Waits pretty well indispensable.

George Kay

Various Artists
Krush Groove
Warners

Rapping has been a vital part of Afro-American music throughout its history. From the rhythms of Africa, stretching through the blues, be-bop singers, Cab Calloway, Bo Diddley, the Last Poets, right up to the hip-hop of Afrika Bambaataa and the metal attack of Run DMC. Now we have *Krush Groove* — the movie and soundtrack which will hopefully make rap a popular form in New Zealand.

It includes some of the true heavyweights of rap, in the Fat Boys, who talk about food and things on 'All You Can Eat' with a fresh beat, but not quite as tough as their monster 'Jailhouse Rap'. But if you want tough, meet the Beastie Boys, a nasty bunch of white boys who used to play hardcore until they discovered the beat of the Bronx. With 'She's On It', they take the strangely hip influence of AC/DC and hop it up — a big sound and definitely Def.

LL Cool J, the 16-year-old master of the rhyme, has a great rap on modern living with 'I Can't Live Without My Radio', which beats the old master Kurtis Blow's declaration of 'If I Ruled the World'.

The rap apocalypse comes in the combined 'Krush Groovin',

Unlike Springsteen, for Waits reality is only a base for his imagination and in the few recent interviews he's given he flits in and out of the real world mixing fact and fantasy in the same way that his songs often exaggerate the human condition.

Musically, *Rain Dogs* follows the lead of *Swordfish-trombones*, with the bastard blues of 'Gun Street Girl', 'Union Square', 'Blind Love' and 'Walking Spanish' and the orthodox approach of ballads like 'Hang Down Your Head' and the Springsteen-ish 'Downtown Train' being some of the best

with the Fat Boys and Run DMC trading lines with Kurtis Blow and Sheila E. Sadly, that's the only appearance of Run DMC on the whole album. I hope there's more of them in the movie.

The non-rap tracks just die in comparison, with Debbie Harry being particularly weak and the lead track sung by Chaka Khan there for purely commercial reasons.

This is an important album for the commercial visibility of rap in New Zealand and, by the sounds of it, a great movie.

Kerry Buchanan

Tom Petty
and the Heartbreakers
Pack Up the Plantation
MCA

Double live albums have long since been the accepted format for conveying the live performance in totality. Gone are the days of the sharply edited single explosions of the Who, Stones and MC5; the double barrel is here to stay and like its studio counterpart it has drawbacks in an idiom (pop, rock 'n' roll, funk, soul; call it what you like) where the attention span is ideally geared to the three minute single.

Petty's *Pack Up the Plantation*, predictably enough is a stack of his five minute singles backed by some faithful blasts of past standards like the Animals' 'Don't Bring Me Down', the Isley Brothers' 'Shout' and Petty's own career booster, the Byrds' 'So You Want To Be A Rock 'n' Roll Star'. Nice and sweet, and although it avoids the pitfalls of his studio albums (bum songs) there is an overall sickly feeling that Petty is playing to the converted, consequently the performances lack the desperation or keenness that makes great live music.

So we've got to settle for the precise playing of his greatest hits and the preciousness of audience adulation when they take over the vocal of 'Breakdown'. "You'll do me out of a job," sighs Petty and 10 years ago that would've been a threat, now it's a promise.

Like most double live albums (notable exceptions are the Doors and the Ramones), *PUP* is the result of Having Made It, the end product of Success. If only these guys made double live albums when they were starving.

George Kay

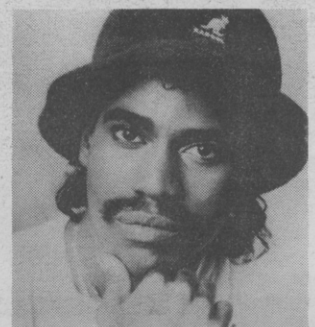
Tom Waits

beat poetry and dustbowl blues. Since 1973 he's made eight albums and been involved with Rickie Lee Jones before being dropped by Asylum. Legends have been made of less.

His first album for Island, 1983's brilliant *Swordfish-trombones*, was an odyssey through human wreckage, the losers who populate Waits' imagination, his literary world. *Rain Dogs* is a sequel to this netherworld, this maggotty underbelly. From the one-armed dwarf of 'Singapore' to the family portraits of 'Cemetery Polka', Waits' characters emerge larger than life; ugly parodies trying to avoid the stereotype.

Unlike Springsteen, for Waits reality is only a base for his imagination and in the few recent interviews he's given he flits in and out of the real world mixing fact and fantasy in the same way that his songs often exaggerate the human condition.

Musically, *Rain Dogs* follows the lead of *Swordfish-trombones*, with the bastard blues of 'Gun Street Girl', 'Union Square', 'Blind Love' and 'Walking Spanish' and the orthodox approach of ballads like 'Hang Down Your Head' and the Springsteen-ish 'Downtown Train' being some of the best



Kurtis Blow

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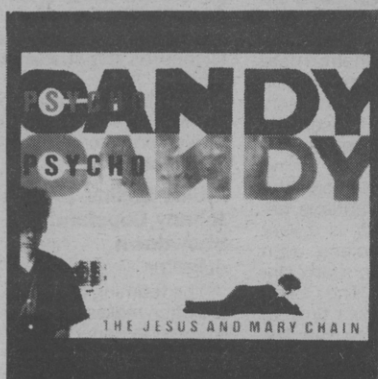
The Jesus and Mary Chain **Rock** Ry Cooder **Rap** Pete Townshend **Country** Cold Chisel **Hardcore** Philip Glass **Funk** Twisted Sister



Pete Townshend

White City — A Novel

The new solo album from The Who's legendary guitarist. The music also features in a long-form video film written by Townshend and directed by Richard Lowenstein. First single is the attention-grabbing 'Face The Face'.



The Jesus and Mary Chain

Psycho Candy

From the UK indie scene the most impressive debut in years — a remarkable album — includes singles 'Just Like Honey', 'Never Understand', 'You Trip Me Up'. The NME writers' Album of the Year!



Repo Man

Movie Soundtrack

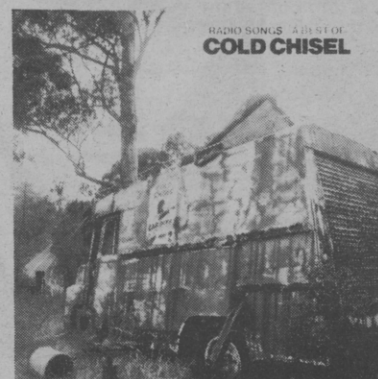
A tough Hardcore soundtrack with tracks by Iggy Pop, Black Flag, Suicidal Tendencies, Circle Jerks, Plugz, Juicy Bananas, Fear and Burning Sensations. Tracks originate from the USA indie San Andreas Records.



Twisted Sister

Come Out and Play

The latest from Twisted Sister with imported pop-up LP cover, the single 'Leader of the Pack' plus 'Be Chrool to Your Scuel', 'I Believe in Rock'n Roll'. Rated "H" — this record contains some words and phrases that require a sense of H-UMOUR.



Cold Chisel

Radio Songs, A Best Of

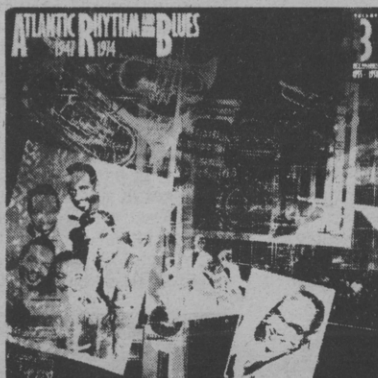
12 of the best from Cold Chisel — includes classics 'Cheap Wine', 'Breakfast at Sweethearts', 'Khe Sanh', 'You Got Nothing I Want', 'Forever Now' etc.



Krush Groove

Movie Soundtrack

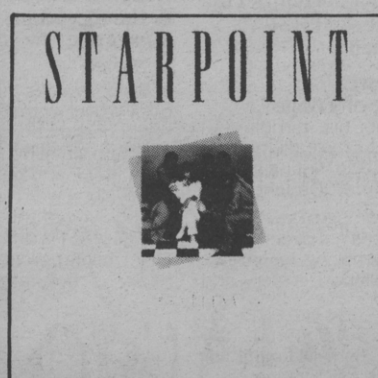
All the hip rappers on one record — LL Cool J, Kurtis Blow, Fat Boys, Beastie Boys, Force MD's plus Chaka Khan, Sheila E, Gap Band and Debbie Harry.



Atlantic Rhythm & Blues

1947-1974, 14 LP Set

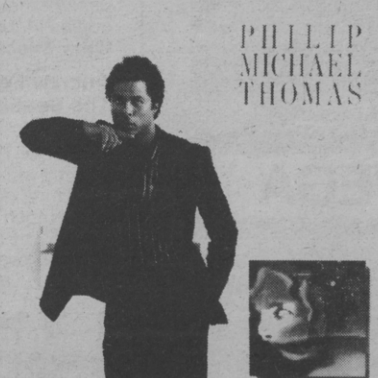
A deluxe collection of the best of Atlantic labels' R&B and soul music — 186 classic songs on 14 albums, remastered, excellently packaged with extensive sleeve notes. From pioneers Joe Turner etc to stars of soul, Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding etc.



Starpoint

Restless

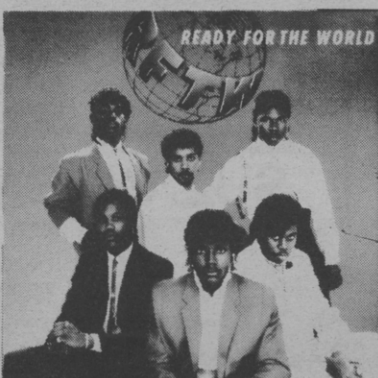
One of America's leading funk bands is now on NZ release. The hot dancefloor track is 'Object Of My Desire'.



Philip-Michael Thomas

Living the Book of My Life

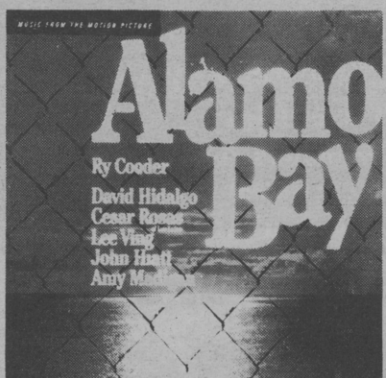
From the 'Miami Vice' star, 10 songs all written by Thomas himself, which range from reggae to R&B, from rockers to ballads. The first single 'Just The Way I Planned It' makes you want to take Thomas home and turn him on.



Ready For The World

Ready For The World

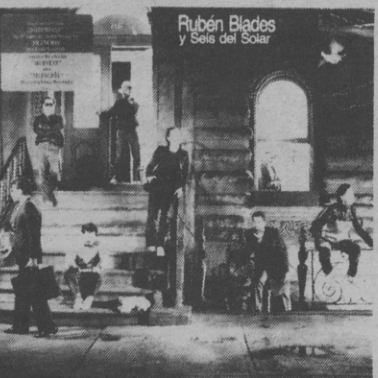
More modern post-Prince funk from the 'Oh Sheila' aggregation. Next hit on their list is 'Digital Display'.



Ry Cooder/Various

Alamo Bay Movie Soundtrack

Cooder once again works atmospheric magic with musicians such as Van Dyke Parks, David Lindley and Jim Keltner. Vocals are by Ry Cooder, John Hiatt, Los Lobos' Cesar Rosas and ethnic singers Lee Ving, David Hidalgo.



Ruben Blades

y Seis del Solar

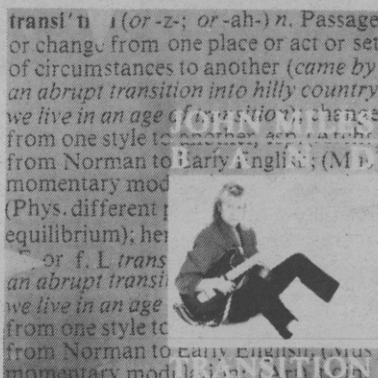
They call him the Spanish Springsteen. Blades is taking America by storm with his skilful political songs with Caribbean rhythms. The premier salsa artist in the world, exploring the cutting edge of Latin-American music.



Phillip Glass

Mishima Film Soundtrack

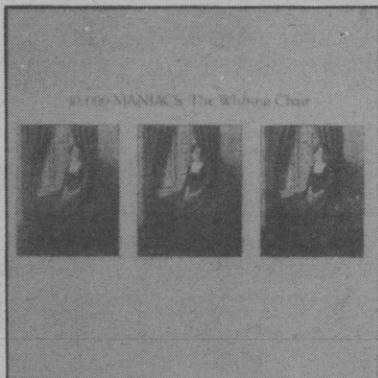
Phillip Glass takes minimalist music to the Max in this highly rated soundtrack from the Francis Coppola & Lucas film production.



John Miles Band

Transition

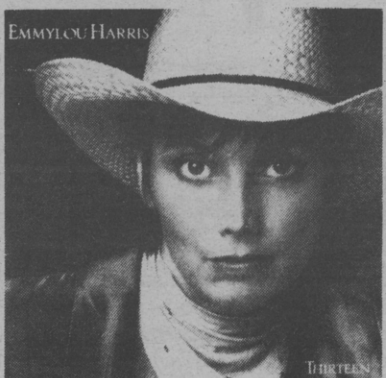
A fiery guitarist, fluent keyboardist, gutsy singer and talented composer, this Englishman is a multi-faceted talent. Musos on the album include Jethro Tull drummer Barriemore Barlow — producers include Trevor Rabin (Yes) and Pat Moran.



10,000 Maniacs

The Wishing Chair

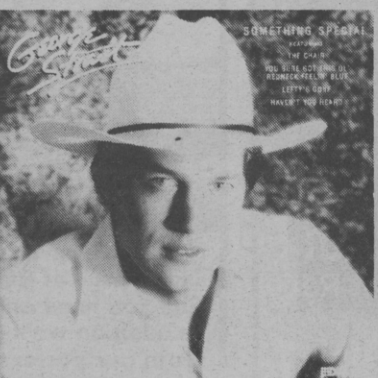
Named after a 50s horror flick, this band hail from Lucille Ball's hometown — Jamestown, New York. Lead singer Natalie Merchant is the compelling poet/singer fronting this critically acclaimed band. They recorded this debut LP in London.



Emmylou Harris

Thirteen

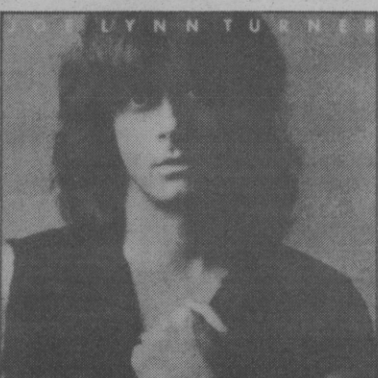
The second album since she relocated in Nashville so the feel is classic country but the songs are diverse in origin — from Springsteen's 'My Father's House' to 'Mystery Train'.



George Strait

Something Special

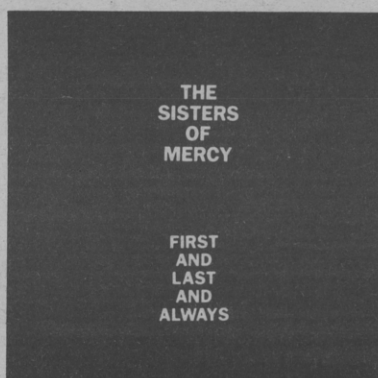
New album from country star George Strait. Hot takes include 'Blue Is Not A Word', 'You Sure Got This Ol' Redneck Feelin' Blue' and 'Dance Time In Texas'.



Joe Lynn Turner

Rescue You

His voice melts ice — those who know his work in Rainbow know of Turner's intense vocals. Veteran rock producer Roy Thomas Baker pulls together a taut balance as voice and instruments duel to a glorious death.



The Sisters of Mercy

First And Last And Always

Another gem from the British indie scene. With 'First And Last And Always', Sisters of Mercy establish themselves as a band of considerable importance.



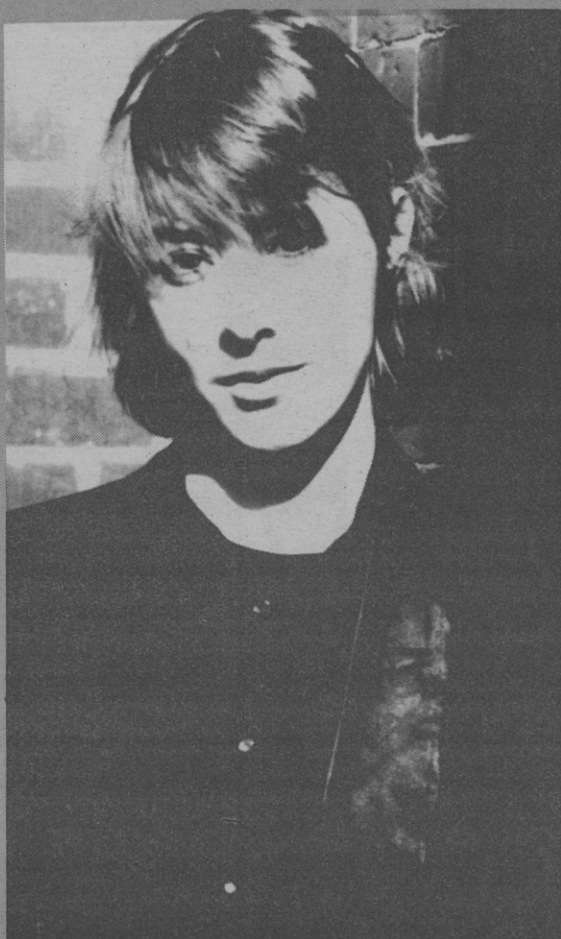
New Edition

All For Love

Once again the popeteers of funk strike the right chord with a new album 'All For Love' and once again it's packed full of singles.

Look out for ... a fabulous funk album from Col. Abrams (produced by Richard James Burgess) ... a new album entitled 'See Through Spirits' from jazz-flutist Herbie Mann ... neat reissue is Bobby Darin & Johnny Mercer with Billy May & his Orchestra plus don't forget SOUL best ofs (in stores now) from Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, Sam & Dave, Joe Tex, Wilson Pickett and Booker T & the MGs ...

NEW ARTIST PROFILE



SUZANNE VEGA

The New York Times has called her "potentially one of the most powerful poet singers since Bob Dylan", and "one of the most promising young talents on the folk music circuit". The Boston Herald claims she is "an absolutely original talent, a mesmerising performer".

The lady is Suzanne Vega and though the accolades are somewhat overblown, there's no doubt that her work is both refreshing and gently captivating. Vega belongs with the traditional folk-poet adventurers and she couldn't object to comparisons with Joni Mitchell and Rickie Lee Jones but, like Laurie Anderson, she takes traditional forms and updates their structures into something very personal and just a little different.

Unlike Anderson, she shies away from avant-garde distortion. Her songs are straight and pure and true to strict folk construction. Yet synthesisers and electric guitar merge with her acoustics without seeming incongruous and, with one or two of the tracks (notably 'Neighbourhood Girls'), she lapses into a rapping freestyle that's most attractive.

Suzanne Vega's greatest gifts are an oddly affecting and pure voice and an eye for the small details of life — or romance and mental health, as she wryly categorises her material — which can speak volumes.

Produced by Lenny Kaye, ex-Patti Smith guitarist, this record has been hailed as a masterpiece by New York's cognoscenti, Suzanne Vega is quite a talent and if you're prone to this kind of thing, this record is an unexpected find.

AVAILABLE ON ALBUM AND TAPE



Records

Various Artists Repo Man

MCA

Hard core independent American music from a hard core independent American film. *Repo Man* stars Harry Dean Stanton (*Paris Texas*, *Alien*, etc) as the numero uno car reposessor getting involved in the LA band scene and mixed up with something extra-terrestrial. The film came out in 1984 and died, until midnight showings developed it into a hot item.

The soundtrack has some great moments and works better than the comparable *Return of the Living Dead*. There's Iggy Pop's nifty title track and hardcore fun with Black Flag's 'TV Party' (a different version from the one on *Damaged*). Circle Jerks contribute 'Coup D'Etat' and a surprise acoustic number called 'When the Shit Hits the Fan'. Suicidal Tendencies have done better songs, but their 'Institutionalised' fits the mood of the movie, as does Fear's 'Let's Start A War'. The most interesting tracks for me are the Chicano tracks by the Plugz, with 'El Claudy La Cruz' and a version of 'Secret Agent Man'.

Other than the Dead Kennedys, this is the first local release for American hardcore — hopefully it won't be the last. Things like Husker Du and the Meat Puppets deserve more coverage than a few copies in the import bins.

Kerry Buchanan

Andrew Poppy The Beating of Wings

ZTT

Andrew Poppy does not deal directly with things. Like his classical forebears, to whom he pays some much homage (Bach in particular?), he does not directly comment on love, smoking, hangovers, infidelity, vacillation, misery and

the dozen or so other emotions that plague humankind, nor does he inspire one to dance or sing or kiss someone. On these points, even Wham! are ahead; is Andrew Poppy the product of naive academicism, or merely positive thinking?

This thing called *The Beating of Wings* (including the title's strange and meaningless attached "formulae" of S/B/Ch and K/W/Th) consists of four pieces, each some 20 minutes long. They are no more complex in structure (and no less accessible) than Mike Oldfield's *Hergest Ridge*, or Nina Simone's recent and sublime 'Vous Etes Seuls, Maisje Desire Etre Avec Nous' (not as weighty as it reads); it is their stylistic *origin* that is the source of their newness and austerity to Pop ears, rather than the thinking behind them. There is a "serious" attempt to combine "modern" and "classical" in 'Listening In', and it fails miserably; 'Listening In' is all reason and no purpose.

After stalking up and down the room a bit, some emotions become clear. 'Cadenza' is a very pretty and delicate piece, even ending as it does on a sharp, single and grating note. 'The Object Is A Hungry Wolf' takes time to make its point of sombre complexity; like much of the album, you wonder if it could not be achieved in slightly less time.

So this album made me think. But would I be so eager if I did not have to review it? I'm eager about a lot of music, as are countless others, and that is the crux of the problem; Andrew Poppy does not need you to be so.

Chad Taylor

Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians fegMANIA

Bigtime

Boyoboy, does this Robyn Hitchcock deliver a great line in Syd Barrett impersonations! He's been doing them since his Soft Boys days back in '77, and he still sings 'em in '86, along with running off a fairly nifty lyric in the Barrett vein.

fegMANIA is unmistakably English, mildly psychedelic and non-heavy ... but rather uneven. It

opens pleasantly enough with 'Egyptian Cream', then 'Another Bubble', before really taking off with 'I'm Only You'.

Then it's 'My Wife and My Dead Wife' with an immediate tune and great silly words: "I'm drilling holes in the walls, I turn round and my dead wife's upstairs, she's still wearing flares, she talks out loud but no-one hears ... am I the only one who sees her?" 'Goodnight I Say' closes side one (and, sadly, most of the fun) with a bashing chorus that works just fine.

'The Man With the Lightbulb Head' contains as delightfully corny a lyric as you'd expect, but apart from 'The Fly', side two merely slides pleasantly by without living up to the promise shown on the first side. The lyrics are all simple and neat, but the musical inventiveness is not sustained all the way ...

fegMANIA's highs are high, and the whole thing's nice, but it just misses on catching me fully.

Paul McKessar

Albert Collins, Robert Cray, Johnny Copeland Showdown

Alligator

The teaming of individual stars too often makes for dull records in which one dominates or all withdraw slightly; seldom do the participants give more than one would expect (or hope for). In the blues context, the B.B. King/Bobby Bland collaborations are notably disappointing.

However, *Showdown* exceeds all expectations and is one of the most exciting of modern blues albums.

Producers Bruce Iglauer and Dick Shurman have brought together three of today's big blues stars, only one of whom (Collins) is contracted to Alligator. The three guitarists are old collaborators in on-the-road jam sessions and perhaps it is this experience that gives the album its backbone.

Collins is the principal soloist, but only by a fraction, because all three get to sing and play plenty. It's a pleasure to say that not only do they not get in each other's way, but in fact drive each other to new heights. They're aided and abetted

by Collins' old Icebreakers rhythm team of Johnny B. Gayden on bass and Casey Jones on drums.

From the opening kick of 'T-Bone Shuffle' to the climactic closer 'Blackjack', *Showdown* flexes muscle at all times. Especially good is Robert Cray's pleading 'The Dream' with Collins demonstrating that he can provide sympathetic support as well as flamboyant leads. Highly recommended.

Ken Williams

John Cale Artificial Intelligence Beggar's Banquet Nico & the Faction Camera Obscura Beggar's Banquet

John Cale has been in this business for over 20 years and it's beginning to show. Whilst avoiding the depths so ungracefully graced by the truly awful *Caribbean Sunset*, *Artificial Intelligence* dribbles with Cale clichés (Artificial Beligence, etc) that these days sound tried and tired, sometimes insipidly uninspired.

The idiot sinking in his own idiosyncrasies? Not quite. But you get an inkling that Cale's mining through his backlog with the nuggets long gone and only sludge to be dredged up. We don't need to be bogged down with it and Cale doesn't need to sink in it.

Leaving it up to you, John-boy ... Old buddy in arms Nico is at least charting more adventurous paths with the Faction on the Cale-produced *Camera Obscura*. But as one who prefers blood 'n' guts to blips 'n' thuds, the electronic eeriness here doesn't quite gel and the Faction do little to change my ever-so-biased opinion that synthesiser bands usually result from people playing with their organs for far too long.

Still, there's enough in Nico's performance to suggest her shows here could be worth investigation, and, who knows, with favourable, close to raveable reports floating across from the UK, we could even be in for a surprise.

Validity over posterity, anyone? **Shayne Carter**



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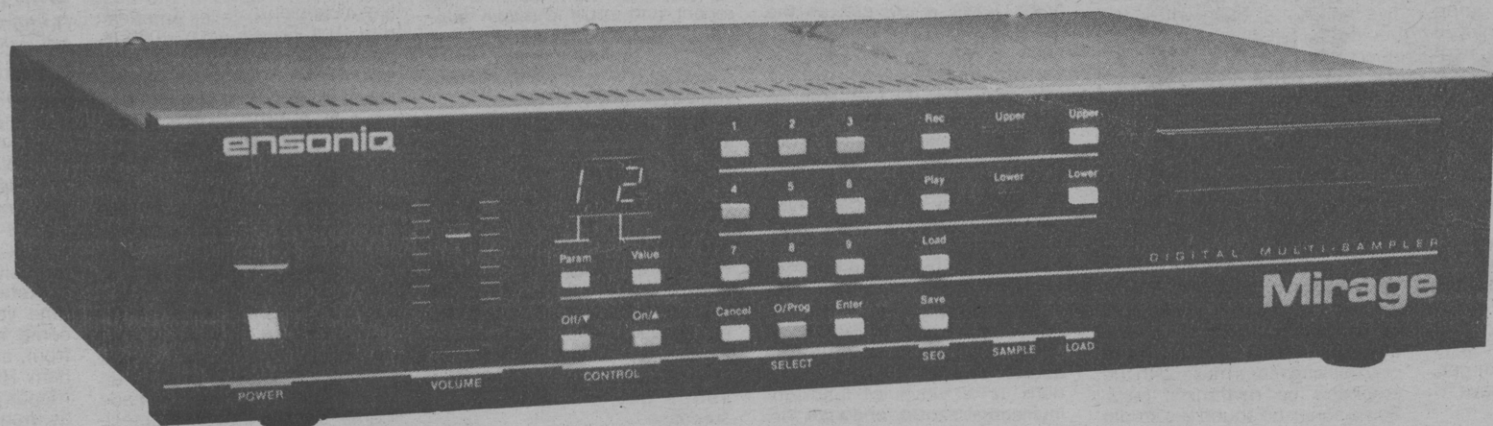
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D I G I T A L M U L T I - S A M P L E R



Ensoniq Introduces New Mirage Digital Multi-Sampler

The Mirage digital multi-sampler, a new eight-voice, polyphonic, MIDI-controlled sampling instrument, has been introduced by Ensoniq Corp. This rack-mountable unit features all the sound generating and sampling capabilities of the Mirage digital sampling keyboard—without the keyboard.

The Mirage digital multi-sampler can be connected to any MIDI synthesizer, keyboard, or other controller. In addition to offering the sound of real acoustic instruments, it also responds to pitch bend, modulation, after-touch, and breath control effects sent over MIDI channels.

The Mirage adds digital sampling capabilities to any MIDI setup. Unlike some sampling expanders, it is designed for live performance as well as sampling. It has a 61 semi-tone range

(five octaves) and can be programmed with over 30 playback parameters, including filter and amplitude envelopes, modulation, and dynamics. It also features an on-board sequencer with overdub capabilities.

Sounds and programs are stored on 3½" diskettes and loaded into the Mirage with the built-in disk drive. The Ensoniq Sound Library currently consists of over 100 sounds and programs featuring keyboard, string, brass, reed, and fretted instruments, plus many special effects.

For musicians interested in sampling their own sounds, the 128K memory of the Mirage digital multi-sampler can accommodate up to 16 distinct samples at one time. These samples can be played back polyphonically through the Mirage's eight voices. Each voice features two digital oscillators.

According to Rob Weber, marketing director, "Following the success we have had with

the Mirage digital sampling keyboard, this was the logical next product for Ensoniq to introduce. Better than half the buyers of the Mirage already own two or more instruments. This new product is aimed at the musician who wants a full function sampling instrument, but who doesn't need another keyboard in his setup."

The Mirage differs from many "add-on" sampling devices in many ways—the most important of which is its ability to multi-sample. Weber explains, "Synthesizers use simple waveforms which transpose up and down the pitch scale with relative ease. Most acoustic instruments, however, are made up of very complex waveforms which can only be raised or lowered in pitch by a few semi-tones before losing their character. Multi-sampling allows instruments to be sampled in small pitch increments, preserving the character of the sound over a number of octaves."

Included with the Mirage digital multi-sampler are EIA standard 19" rack mount brackets, allowing the Mirage to be mounted in a standard audio rack for performance or studio applications. Also included are two Ensoniq Sound Library diskettes which contain the special Mirage digital multi-sampler operating system.

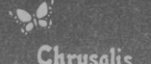
The Mirage digital multi-sampler's estimated retail price is \$3400.

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Simply Red Picture Book

Elektra
From the six-piece British ensemble whose radio hit 'Money's Too Tight (To Mention)' brought to our attention the soul-soaked voice of Mick Huckhall, we have a five-a-side debut album. The band, which took its name from Huckhall's shock of red hair, brought in Stuart Levine (whose credits include Randy Crawford, the Crusaders and BB King) to produce. They gave the songs and he gave them a hit single with the Valentine Brothers song 'Money's Too Tight'. If you enjoyed that track, sample this mixture of white soul and jazz. There's the bouncy funk of 'Come To My Aid' and 'Look At You Now', the swing jazz feel of 'Sad Old Red' and the cruises 'Holding Back the Years'. There's even a great version of David Byrne's 'Heaven', slowed down to suit.

This band has a reputation in the UK and Europe as an exciting live act and this was verified to me by a friend who saw them live in Paris — but to be awarded the opening spot for James Brown's London season (at the Hammer-smith Odeon) you would have to be good.

Hot live and hot on vinyl, so don't let this album slip into ob-

scurity. Discover it now. It's great music. Simply Red ... Simply Marvellous.

Simon Elton Louie & the Hotsticks Stickability Radar Vague Secrets Radar

Two mini-albums released through the new Christchurch label Radar. First up is a 12" 45rpm offering from the long-running Christchurch sextet Louie and the Hotsticks. It comprises five songs — four written by vocalist/guitarist Alan Park, plus a re-arrangement of the old standard 'Hit the Road Jack'. The competent musicianship shines through, with the standout track being the ska-flavoured 'Living On My Heart'. The "live in the studio" sound gives this an air of honesty which should be welcomed by the band's fans.

The second album is an eight song presentation from fellow Christchurch band Vague Secrets, who are equally as at home playing to a pub audience or with underground theatre. This four piece play thinking man's music with the emphasis on rhythmic feels. Some songs do sound like studio jams and consequently tend to ramble, but the lyrics are above

average. Best tracks: 'Headlines' and 'People Fly Away'. Good effort for the first time around.

Simon Elton Wynton Marsalis Black Codes (From The Underground) CBS

Want to hear an opinion? Try this one: the quest for intellectual stimulation in jazz is threatening to destroy the music. The fact that Wynton Marsalis is so revered is proof positive.

Jazz has walked a long road since Louis Armstrong played in a band at an orphan's home in New Orleans. Shunned as low-class and tainted by racism, it only climbed out of the mire through sheer virtuosity after the Second World War, when nothing else was ever the same again and some of its finest practitioners had been consumed by the vices which plague the music industry more than ever (the anti-heroin campaign came three decades too late for Charlie Parker and Billie Holiday, to name just two).

The refinement of the 1950s and 60s which spawned Hard Bop and the Free movement brought with it a wave of pseudo-intellectual claptrap and a split between the Miller/Ellington nostalgia freaks, the Parker/Davis bop-

pers and the potpourri of music fans who listen with interest to the new sounds coming out of both America and Europe.

What all this boils down to is that the word 'Jazz' has come to encompass a huge range of musical styles under a very broad (and vague) collective term, and that too many people are now forgetting what the masters of music were doing, ie: following their instincts, speaking from the heart, seeking new directions.

Wynton Marsalis is a musical scholar. Look at the cover of his new LP. Read (if you can stay awake) the ostentatious sleeve notes of Stanley Crouch. Then listen to a record which simply tries, probably with excellent intentions and with state-of-the-art equipment, all lovingly detailed, to recreate the feeling of music already played better by others, many of them long dead.

Marsalis is classically trained, and if there's one thing his music reflects, it's discipline. Emotion doesn't come into it, no matter what Crouch's gushy sleeve notes say. Marsalis is simply imitating, in very academic tones, music which was progressive in the early 1960s but which has been surpassed.

As an example, try Archie Shepp's *Down Home* New York, a

performance by a man who was a contemporary of Coltrane and whose current music breaks new boundaries and takes the breath away. Shepp is a professor of music, Marsalis is a talented pupil.

Duncan Campbell Philip Glass Mishima Nonesuch

New Yorker Philip Glass is the sort of contemporary composer who's considered hip even when *Time* does devote four-page articles to him. Glass is the best knowing of the so-called American "minimalists" (though from the little I've heard I prefer the work of John Adams or Steve Reich). Minimalism is readily accessible to pop listeners through its repetitive, hypnotic rhythms and often melodic use of electronics. (Glass in fact has had considerable influence on both Brian Eno and David Byrne — eg Byrne's *Catherine Wheel* album.)

Glass's greatest reputation currently rests with his composing for opera and it is therefore not surprising that he should have also recently begun writing for film. *Mishima* is the soundtrack to an as-yet unreleased American-made drama on the life of Japanese novelist Yukio Mishima who committed hara kiri in 1970.

Firstly dismiss any thought that Glass would be remotely drawn to approximating those crude sounds that are often presented as westernised "orientalism". He also almost totally eschews electronics, relying instead on various string sections, including the traditionally European quartet. (Interestingly, Glass's previous soundtrack, 1983's *Koyaanisqatsi*, was dominated by electronics.)

The nearest we get to anything vaguely "rockist" is the use of electric guitar against strings on two of the 14 tracks. And it is precisely these two tracks I find the least satisfying, but then maybe it's got something to do with the way the guitarist sounds as if he's been recruited from a second-rate reception lounge.

What does the rest sound like then? Well the strings can create both vigorous rhythms and sweet, soothing sounds. In fact while this stuff is enjoyable to listen to you can also safely use it as fairly unobtrusive background music and still retain your credibility. So next time you're out to dinner and some bozo puts on something from, say, that griffawful Wyndham Hill label, introduce your friends to *Mishima*. Philip Glass as avant-garde MOR — and why not?

Peter Thomson

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Records

Feargal Sharkey
Virgin

Just over two years ago, Feargal Sharkey left the Undertones, the World's Greatest Band, to carve out his own immortality. Since then the one-off magical collaboration with Vince Clarke on 'Never Never' and a couple of other singles ('Listen To Your Father' and 'Loving You') were left to pay the bills while Sharkey planned his strategy for his first fully-fledged solo album.

And strategy it is. Recorded in London but mixed in in LA by Shelly Yakus (Petty's engineer), it features songs by the new hyped-up female sensation, Maria McKee (the OK hit single 'A Good Heart'), Benmont Tench's pushy 'You Little Thief', a plodding gift from Chrissie Hynde, 'Made To Measure', and another version of Womack's 'It's All Over Now'.

Get the (mid-Atlantic) drift? With the Undertones, Sharkey never put pen to paper, so producer, the Eurhythmics' Dave Stewart, provides the music styles for four of Sharkey's lyrics. 'Love and Hate' tries the blues with a little bit of venom almost climbing above the production, but on the R&B of 'Ghost Train' and the disco swish of 'Ashes and Diamonds' Stewart betrays his true hand as only a competent stylist.

Being charitable for a moment, it's gotta be said that Sharkey's voice still cuts to the quick and whatever he does now is bound to look dim beside the genius of the Undertones at their best. But hiring a cast of thousands of radio priests can only ensure commercial, not critical favour. At the moment he can't have it both ways.

George Kay

Newcleus
Space Is the Place
Sunnyview

Space Is the Place is hardly the new frontier (even the name seems familiar); more a case of beaming down for a giggle. Newcleus's last album remained in my memory for its great sense of fun and this album possesses the same.

'Let's Jam' is the champion track by far, similar to the Funk Fusion Band in its busy, grinning bustle. 'Why' might hold your attention on a big club system but I doubt it; the goods remain undelivered until side two's 'I Wanna Be a B-Boy' and 'Teknology'. Kraftwerk are a huge influence and a few riffs from *Computer World* creep through, which is never a bad thing.

What is a bad thing is bad rapping, and the remaining tracks are full of it. After hearing L.L. Cool J and Doctor Jeckyll & Mr Hyde, this stuff *crawls*; only on 'Let's Jam' is the phantom MC saved by slick musicianship. Pop may have taken 40 or so years to arrive at its present position of dull retrospect and indecision; Rap has done so in about two. Even a passing mention of 'Sucker MCs' or Wavin' your hands in Thuh air makes heads whirl in exasperation. To get away with rapping, you have to be damn good.

But despite their cliches and plagiarism, Newcleus have just the right slap-happy silliness to escape the galaxy unscathed. The world may be swathed in hopelessness and struggle, but it moves to the beat of cheerful crooners like Luther Vandross, waiting for Muh bu-bu-bu-bu baaaybee or wondering whether or not to take home that someone they've been dancing with all night long. Irresponsible but true. *Space Is the Place* should keep you happy enough.

Chad Taylor



THE WATERBOYS

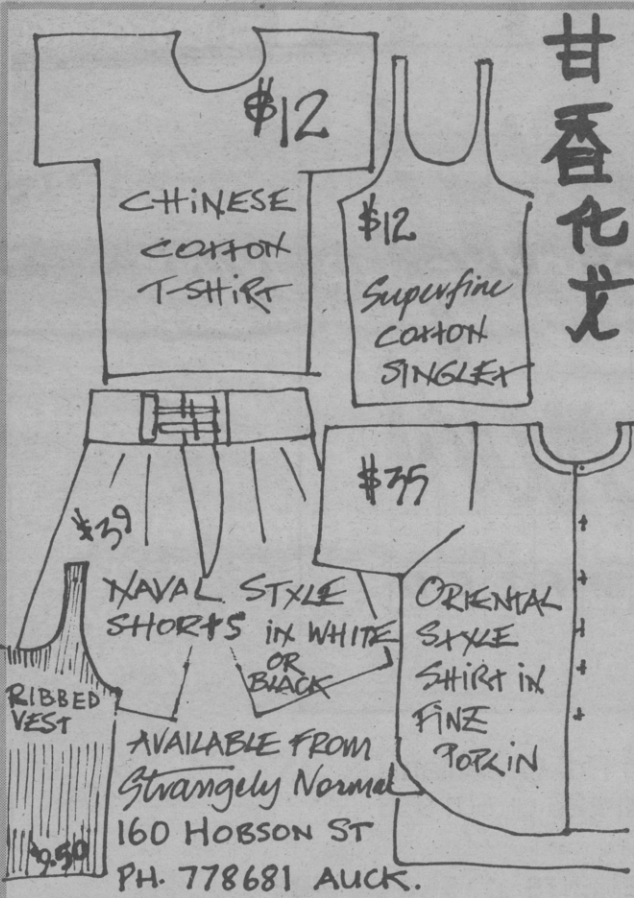
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**Joni Mitchell
Dog Eat Dog
Geffen**

Over 13 LPs since 1968 Joni Mitchell has produced a truly remarkable body of work that ranges across folk, pop and rock, jazz and orchestral, and includes both risk-taking experiments and a number of genuine masterpieces. Now, at 42, an age when many artists are content working their chosen seam rather than seeking new lodes, Joni Mitchell is ... doing both!

What's familiar includes her vocal delivery, the controversial verse style, the loose-limbed melodic lines which are all, if not yet mannered, at least comfortably familiar. What's new is found particularly on side one in the aggressive production and almost angry directness of some lyrics. The album's co-producers include Thomas Dolby and it may be he who is responsible for the treated ambient street sounds that pervade the music. 'Smokin', for example, moves to the rhythm of a cigarette dispenser.

As for the lyrics, Mitchell has long abandoned the coruscating density of her most tightly structured poetry. She always retained however the ability to express her feeling with subtlety and felicitous phrasing. It is hard to find much of either here. Mitchell almost harangues the listener on a track like 'Tax Free', a diatribe against religious politico-fundamentalism that is in danger of taking on the coarseness of those she attacks.

It's probable that side one of *Dog Eat Dog* is aimed at a new audience for Mitchell, today's teenagers brought up on video clips and super-tech production values. She may well find her target. But for those of us who've

been with Joni Mitchell for many years, who've measured out parts of our lives with her songs, it's side two we'll be playing. Not that the title track, 'Shiny Toys' or 'Ethiopia' are necessarily among her best work, but they nonetheless make worthy additions to her catalogue and give us confidence to keep attuned to her muse.

Peter Thomson

**Rick James
Glow
Motown**

The street is a dangerous place. Gooks, junkies, bag ladies and stick-up kids. Trouble's everywhere. Easy getting in and hard getting out. Rape, murder, gang war and poverty. You can't blame a guy for wanting to get off the street. You can't blame Rick James for preferring to drive rather than walk. Rick's got expensive jewellery and that leather rig he's wearing didn't come cheap either. When you're a star somebody's got to protect you from your fans who will stick you up for your wallet and then ask for your autograph.

Rick knows the street. Grace Jones is scared stiff. Melle Mel gets on edge, Run/DMC have a hard time and even George Clinton, an urban guerilla himself, only goes out in a mob. George, who keeps mistakenly referring to lck James on his album covers, would do well to take note of this new offering *Glow*.

Like Clinton, Rick uses an invented mythology as a vehicle to develop a lucid modern metaphor. The glow, a power that can only be found in the Kingdom of Light, is a magical force which, in Rick's fable, a young boy seeks, finds and uses to combat the evil force of the Dark Wizard, King Luto. Very nice too. Suffice to say that Rick wore himself out writing that and

then made an album that makes the *Miami Vice* Theme look startlingly innovative.

Rick James used to be a Funk Heavyweight. Up there with the big guys and the guys who are still, more or less, down there on the street. Berry Gordy may have plans for James to be a movie star like Prince. But Prince made people like his music, he didn't tailor his music to fit the Hollywood sound. Rick James has put out an album that sounds like every other West Coast/Miami Vice soundtrack this year. And take it from an old Rick James fan, he's blown it.

Peter Grace

**Lonnie Mack
Strike Like Lightning
Alligator
Roy Buchanan
When A Guitar Plays The Blues
Alligator**

Chicago-based Alligator Records goes from strength to strength. These albums restore to prominence two guitar pickers worthy of the attention.

The music of Lonnie Mack is hard driving rock-blues with a gospel edge in his vocals. He was a big influence on Texan Stevie Ray Vaughan, who produced this high energy album, Mack's best since his seminal 1964 *The Wham Of That Memphis Man* (now reissued by Edsel).

Mack's direct roadhouse style melds perfectly with that of "pupil" Stevie Ray, who also contributes guitar (they do a hot remake of Mack's already incendiary 'Wham', his best-known tune after 'Memphis'). This is an album of high-wattage excitement. But once the amps are switched off, Lonnie, Stevie Ray and Mack's brother Bill turn in what may be the best track,

'Oreo Cookie Blues', a three-way acoustic guitar conversation.

Buchanan's record is simply his best. Undoubted as an expressive guitarist with a penchant for screaming harmonics, Buchanan has remained a cultish but ultimately uninteresting hot player. His records either have featured routine bar bands with inadequate vocalists (Buchanan is even more inadequate) or have made a misguided bid for pop stardom.

At last Buchanan takes control of things, surrounds himself with solid Chicago blues musicians, good singers (Otis Clay and Gloria Hardiman) and seems to find a context (most of the time) for all that technique. Especially nice is the album closer, 'Hawaiian Punch', which explores the Elmore James 'Shake Your Money Maker' theme, with Buchanan playing his Telecaster as if it were a lap steel.

Footnote: The album is dedicated to the late Jimmy Nolen, who was with Johnny Otis (those great guitar licks on 'Willie and the Hand Jive' and others) and with James Brown from 'Papa's Got A Brand New Bag'.

Ken Williams

**Morris Day
Color of Success
Warner Bros**

Morris Day is a schmuck. It's a strong word, and perhaps you'd never have thought of it outside of addressing your little brother, or in a moment bullying the office junior. But schmuck has got a whole lot of star-quality, and you're going to hear an awful lot more from schmucks in the near future.

Morris is going to be a real big star. He's not on the tall side, but he makes up for it by thinking big. On this, his first solo album, Morris starts by telling us how much better he is now he's left his old

group, the Time. And that meant losing his bodyguard, so you know he's serious about this.

In the *Purple Rain* movie, which Morris saved almost singlehandedly from Prince's gross stupidity, he spent a lot of time being dastardly and making indecent suggestions to Apollonia, Prince's squeeze. He had a rather manic giggle, like you'd imagine Vincent Price would after sniffing embalming fluid. I think Morris got sick of being nerdy, but when you've got schmuck that deeply ingrained it's hard to convince people you're a regular guy. So Morris spends a couple of songs on this album driving it home that it's just an image and he doesn't want us to think it's the real him.

Whether it's the real Morris Day or not, he has a keen ear for good, hoof-grinding funk. If you know the last Time album, expect less theatrics and more of that deadly groove. If you don't, think James Brown with the sweat and grime masked by Givenchy aftershave and shiny silk suits.

Morris deserves your undivided attention. Check it out.

Peter Grace

**Olivia Newton-John
Soul Kiss
Interfusion**

Extracted from an interior dialogue.

the Tacky: Wow! get a load of Olivia's new image. The cover photos — they're by that kinky Helmut Newton — are a promise of seduction and discipline. And the songs! In 'Culture Shock' she's proposing a threesome, and there's another one called 'You Were Great, How Was I?' — 'Overnight Observation' is about a different kind of medical examination, and then when you listen it becomes pretty obvi-

ous the title song's really about fellat...

the Taste: ... Oh stop the slaver-ing you jerk. Offensive soft-core like this is nothing more than a shoddy disguise for lack of talent. Beneath that make-up she's just the same old Ollie. She still can't sing with genuine emotion; she still bleats on the high notes. Listen to the coatings they've given her voice fergriffsake!

the Tacky: So there's a lot of gloss, so what? I like gloss. And don't wave that soulful schtick at me either. You're the sort of boring purist who wouldn't dance to an Abba record. Well I reckon there's a stack of songs here that Agnetha and Annafrida would've sold their Swedish smiles for. 'Queen of the Publication' for starters. In fact every track on the album's catchy. Can't deny that can you?

the Taste: OK, but then so is measles. Besides, John Farrar's gone and produced everything to hell and back. I mean the gimmicks thrown in here are ridiculous: typewriters, revving cars, radio noise, Ollie's embarrassing monologue, the obvious Beach Boys approach to her duet with Carl Wilson, the damn synth that sounds programmed by some Wagner on acid.

the Tacky: So we're ridiculing the musicians now are we? People like Larry Carlton, Lee Ritenour, Tom Scott, Abe Laboriel, aren't the tops in their field for nothing — but then I suppose a snob like you would call them "studio hacks". Carlos Vega's drumming alone is a thrill.

the Taste: That walloping! What about finesse?

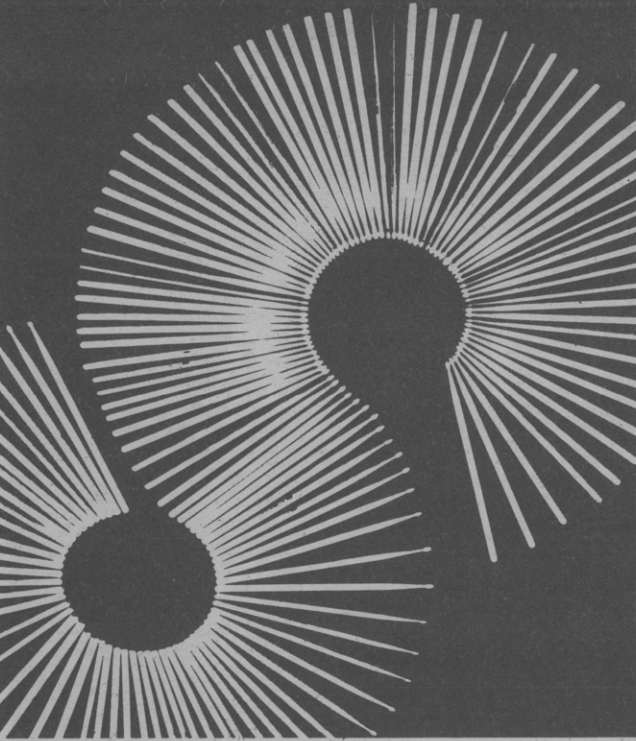
the Tacky: What about finesse?, (The dialogue continues unresolved.)

Peter Thomson

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- 54 Dave McCartney & Pink Flamingos, Go-Gos interview, Sunnyboys, INXS,
- 56 Teardrop Explodes, DD Smash, Mick Jones Part 2, Neighbours,
- 57 Clean, Pretenders, South Island bands, Joan Armatrading, Mental As Anything, Chaz Jankel,

- 58 Blams, Teardrops, Hall & Oates, Bill Wyman, Kottke/Redbone interviews,
- 59 Human League, Men At Work, Chills, Tim Finn, Motels, Elvis Costello live,
- 61 Graham Brazier & Harry Lyon, Fall, Jim Carrol, Daggy & the Dickheads, Hip Singles, Dropbears,
- 63 Simple Minds' Jim Kerr interviewed, Split Enz Part 2, Renee Geyer, Nocturnal Projections, Willie Dayson Blues Band, Hunters & Collectors,
- 65 Yazoo (Alison Moyet interview), Joe Cocker, Zoo (ex Pop Mechanix), Guriz, Jo Jo Zep,
- 68 Herbs, Culture Club, Bauhaus, Kiwi Animal, No Tag, Sharon O'Neill, Thompson Twins, ChCh Special (Wastrels, Flying Nun, Bill Dreen, etc.),
- 69 Joni Mitchell, Dance, Exponents, Who, Neighbours, Dire Straits, Talk Talk, Miltown Stowaways, Blond Comedy,
- 73 Wham, Dead Kennedys, Coconut Rough, Angels, Marginal Era, Grammar Boys, Fishschool, John Cale,
- 74 Malcolm McLaren, Heaven 17, Joan Armatrading, Sharon O'Neill, Children's Hour,
- 75 Tim Finn, John Cale, Jonathan Richmond, Hammond Gamble, Dick Driver,
- 80 Police, Paul Young, Motown feature, John Peel Wastrels, Bryan Adams,
- 81 Smiths, Mockers, Def Leppard, Violent Femmes, Miltown Stowaways, Chills, Doublehappys, Marvin Gaye,
- 82 Billy Idol, Pamela Stephenson, Four Tops, Temptations, Verlaines,
- 83 Elvis Costello, Thompson Twins, Netherworld Dancing Toys, Mockers,

- Paul Morley,
- 84 Style Council (Paul Weller interview), Echo & the Bunnymen, Midnight Oil, Kiwi Animal, Sneaky Feelings, Depeche Mode,
- 85 Mockers, Special AKA, Motorhead, Icehouse, Great Unwashed, Coconut Rough, Neil Finn, Fixx,
- 87 DD Smash, U2, Bill Dreen Pt 1, Nick Cave, Stevie Ray Vaughan,
- 88 Herbs, Talking Heads, Aztec Camera, Narcs, Car Crash Set, Axemen, SPK,
- 89 Frankie Goes To Hollywood, Beatles, Deep Purple, ZZ Top, Twisted Sister, Aotea Riot, Eurogliders, Rip, Say Yes To Apes, Look Blue Go Purple,
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- 93 Dance Exponents, Huey Lewis, Robert Palmer (Power Station), Peking Man, Circus Block 4, This Kind Of

- Punishment,
- 94 New Order interview, Iron Maiden, Stranglers, Johnnys, Michael Winslow, Plans For A Building,
- 95 Chills, Killing Joke, Dazz Band, Expendables, Jason & the Scorchers, Last Man Down,
- 96 Netherworld Dancing Toys, China Crisis, Robert Plant, Doublehappys, Kiwi Animal, Nils Lofgren,
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Harper plays his way up the South Island, including the West Coast ... Ausies the **Hoodoo Gurus** finish off their second visit here with a night at Victoria Uni Feb 13 and the next two at the Gluepot.

The **Go-Betweens** tour is confirmed. Dates are March 18 Dunedin, 19 Christchurch, 20 Wellington, 21 & 22 Auckland.

This year's Flying Nun Orientation package is the **Strawberry Sound Tour**, featuring **Sneaky Feelings** and **Look Blue Go Purple**. Both bands stop off for

FEB 13

Billy Connolly Invercargill
Hoodoo Gurus Victoria Uni
Dr Feelgood Mon Desir
Jacqui Fitzgerald, Last Man Down, Gotham City Express, Tommy Adderly Trio Gluepot
Bluebeard Windsor
Peter Gabriel is 35.

14

Thompson Twins Western Springs
Hoodoo Gurus Gluepot
Dr Feelgood Rotorua
Sneaky Feelings Invercargill
Members Exhibition Party, Alpaca Bros Chippendale House
Chippendale House Guitar Orchestra Octagon
Farrelli Bros Performance Cafe

15

Hoodoo Gurus Gluepot
Dr Feelgood New Plymouth
Sneaky Feelings Invercargill
Alpaca Bros, Weeds Chippendale House
Farrelli Bros Performance Cafe
Nat 'King' Cole dies, 1965.

16

Dr Feelgood Exchequer Club
Z Team Performance Cafe
Sonny Bono is 51.

17

Dr Feelgood Palmerston North
Billy Connolly Wellington
Texas Rangers Performance Cafe
Gene Pitney born 1941.

18

Dr Feelgood Napier
Texas Rangers Performance Cafe
Yoko is 52.

19

Dr Feelgood Gisborne
Cadzow Band Performance Cafe
Comedy Windsor
1968: Dave Gilmour joins Pink Floyd as Syd Barrett begins to disintegrate.

20

Dr Feelgood Metropole
Cadzow Band Performance Cafe

21

Dr Feelgood Gluepot
Sneaky Feelings Oriental
Blues Busters Performance Cafe
Nina Simone is 53.

22

Nico His Majesty's Akld
Sneaky Feelings Oriental
Dr Feelgood Gluepot
Engine Room, Lifeboats, Sing Sing Maraetai Beach
Blues Busters Performance Cafe

23

Nico St James Wgtn
Dr Feelgood Windsor Park
Z Team Performance Cafe
Handel born 1685.

20,21,22

Dance Exponents Windsor

24

Nico Carlton ChCh
Sneaky Feelings, Look Blue Go Purple Otago Uni
Rubber Men Performance Cafe
Buddy Holly records 'That'll Be the Day', 1957.

25

Nico Dunedin
Roy Harper Carlton ChCh
Rubber Men Performance Cafe
Limbs Maidment Theatre
George Harrison is 42.

26

Peking Man Otago Uni
Limbs Maidment Theatre
Johnny Cash is a mean 54.

27

Roy Harper James Hay Theatre

28

Sneaky Feelings, Bats Lincoln College
Peking Man Canterbury Uni
Headless Chickens, Chris Knox, Selwyn Toogood Rising Sun
Roy Harper Teachers Coll, Dunedin
Katy Soljak Performance Cafe
Glen Matlock sacked from Sex Pistols, 1977.

MARCH 1

Peking Man Carlton, ChCh
Headless Chickens, Chris Knox, Selwyn Toogood Rising Sun
Roy Harper Teachers Coll, Dunedin
Katy Soljak Performance Cafe
Jim Morrison shows his willy on stage, 1969.

2

Dire Straits Mt Smart Stadium
Limbs Maidment Theatre
Syd Barrett leaves Pink Floyd, 1969.
Limbs Maidment Theatre

27,28,1

Seven Deadly Sins Windsor
Limbs Maidment Theatre

3

Sneaky Feelings, Look Blue Go Purple Massey Uni
Peking Man Lincoln College
The Batmen Performance Cafe
Buffalo Springfield formed, 1966.

4

Dire Straits Athletic Park
Sneaky Feelings, Look Blue Go Purple Victoria Uni
Roy Harper Greymouth
The Batmen Performance Cafe
Bobby Womack is 41.

5

Sneaky Feelings, Look Blue Go Purple Waikato Uni
Peking Man Victoria Uni
Roy Harper Westport
Last Man Down Performance Cafe
Stalin dies, 1953.

6

Stevie Ray Vaughan, Fabulous Thunderbirds Logan Campbell Centre
Peking Man Massey Uni
Sneaky Feelings, Look Blue Go Purple Auckland Uni
Boys of the Lough Michael Fowler Centre
Last Man Down Performance Cafe
Doubting Thomases Windsor

7

Dire Straits Addington Showgrounds, ChCh
Peking Man Waikato Uni
Roy Harper Takaka
Look Blue Go Purple Windsor
Black & Blue Performance Cafe
Pistols sign to A&M Records, 1977.

8

Stevie Ray Vaughan, Fabulous Thunderbirds Palmerston Nth
Look Blue Go Purple Windsor
Black & Blue Performance Cafe
Frazier whops Ali, 1971.

9

Roy Harper Brook Fest, Nelson

10

Stevie Ray Vaughan, Fabulous Thunderbirds Dunedin
Just Us Roadshow Performance Cafe

11

Stevie Ray Vaughan, Fabulous Thunderbirds Christchurch
Just Us Roadshow Performance Cafe
Limbs Memorial Theatre, Wgtn.
Gene Vincent born 1935.

12

Stevie Ray Vaughan, Fabulous Thunderbirds Wellington
Roy Harper Suter Gallery, Nelson
Lifeboats Performance Cafe
Limbs Memorial Theatre.
1955: Charlie Parker dies, age 35.

13

Lifeboats Perf Cafe
Naked Resolution Windsor

14

Sneaky Feelings Windsor
Roy Harper St James Wgtn
Limbs Memorial Theatre, Wgtn.
Einstein born, 1879.

15

Sneaky Feelings Windsor
Flying Kiwi Opening Carnival Cuba Mall
Limbs Memorial Theatre, Wgtn.

16

Limbs Memorial Theatre, Wgtn.
'Dock of the Bay' No. 1, 1968.

pub gigs along the way and afterwards ... **Dance Exponents** make their first North Island appearance for some time, with three nights at the Windsor, Feb 20-22 ... the **Headless Chickens, Chris Knox and Selwyn Toogood** get together for two nights at the Rising Sun, Feb 28-March 1 ... **Limbs** begin a national tour with dates in Auckland and then in Wellington.

Coming Up ...

Laurie Anderson makes her only NZ appearance in Wgtn, March 17 as part of the International Festival of the Arts. It's already sold out, apparently ... likely tourists for late March are the **Johnnys** ... another month on should see the **Damned, Peter, Paul & Mary** and, possibly, **Sting** ... the **Saints, Shriekback** and **Renee Geyer** for May



... **John Cale** with band in July? ... **Simple Minds** still set for September ... a spectacular lineup for the **Reggae Sunsplash Tour**, featuring **Sly 'n' Robbie, Dennis Brown** and **Judy Mowatt** is very likely for Oct-Nov ... and look out for American hardcore virtuosos **Husker Du**.

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Records

Phantom, Rocker and Slick EMI

From the remnants of the Stray Cats come rhythm section Slim Jim Phantom and Lee Rocker, to join forces with fast guitar hero and one-time Bowie sideman Earl Slick.

Their debut album is not as inspired as one might have hoped. The songs just don't quite make it. Both melody and vocal delivery are all too often forced and uninspired, particularly on the two slower numbers.

Indeed, the singer often seems like an intruder in a band that is

only truly happy when the pace is full on, the amps are full up, and the lead guitarist is in full fury. They do, however, capture a good live feel on record and, like a good pub band, they know their rock 'n' roll. There's guitar solos galore, if that's your thing, and at times it sounds as if Keith Richards is helping out on more than just the one track for which they give him credit.

I wonder if such an observation would bother them? Probably not. They sound like they're having too good a time to care.
Grant Scott

Tony Baker Scandinavian Suite Tartar

Tony Baker is currently a musi-

cal director for TVNZ. He is also a talented and prolific composer/arranger and a very fine alto saxophonist (whose live performances are not nearly as often as we'd like these days). Last year he was commissioned by Radio NZ to write a work for saxophone and orchestra. The result is the 30 minute suite commemorating the contribution made to New Zealand by early settlers from various parts of Scandinavia. The work is in five parts and features Colin Hemmingson on tenor sax, a large selection of the string and woodwind sections of the NZSO and a fine jazz quartet.

Attempts to combine the intricately wrought European structures of orchestral music with the American improvisations of jazz have been going on since the 1950s. The usual results of such attempts at a "third stream" have been unsatisfying to both traditions but *Scandinavian Suite* fares better than most. Baker has avoided jarring juxtapositions of style and achieved many passages of evocative beauty, both in passionate intensity and in tranquil reflection.

Hemmingson, a member of the NZSO as well as a leading jazz musician, is in his usual exemplary form, as is that marvellous guitarist Martin Winch. Moreover the whole performance has been

remarkably well recorded. (The album is completed by three other pieces featuring Hemmingson and orchestra though at times these veer close to cosy MOR.)
Peter Thomson

Gregory Isaacs Slum Dub (Serengeti)

Another intriguing release by Jayrem, this one dating back to 1978. To my knowledge, it's the first dub album to gain local release, so it must be considered a breakthrough. Prince Jammy and the Channel One Posse weaving spells on track which originally appeared on the *Cool Ruler* LP. Buy, and give encouragement. DC

The Best of the Sir Douglas Quintet (Bigtime)

This set brings together material from the most fertile period (late 60s-early 70s) of Doug Sahm's long and varied career. His ability to create a cohesive blend of rock 'n' roll, blues, Texas border music, country and other influences is, at its best, unmatched. There may be better single albums (*1 Plus 1* etc, *Together After Five*, perhaps), but the newcomer would do well to start here. Included are 'She's About a Mover', 'Mendocino', 'Dynamite Woman', the wonderful country lament 'Texas Me', and, especially, a sinuous 'Wasted Days and Wasted Nights'. KW

Shriekback Oil and Gold (Arista)

The sound of the computer age meets funk meets turgid English eccentrics meets black humour not gold. What was that about oil and water? Shriekback are intelligent, 'Lined Up' proved that. But on their fourth album, obliqueness, humour and the allegorical deadness of 'Malaria', 'Fish Below the Ice' or 'Hammerheads' can't save the mechanical emptiness of much of the music. Their best songs like the undulating 'This Big Hush' or 'The Only Thing That Shines' develop from the soundscape of Eno's *Another Green World*. That's where their real potential lies. GK

Stevie Nicks Rock A Little (Modern)

Third solo album from the ex-Fleetwood Mac sex symbol, who has kept her profile up with her solo work, her duets (both live and studio) with Tom Petty and her constant presence at many benefit concerts throughout the US. What we have here is more of the same: the stadium rocker ('I Can't Wait') and the lovely ballad ('Rock A Little (Go Ahead Lily)'). The epic poem ('The Nightmare') and the Tom Petty flavoured rock 'n' roller ('Imperial Hotel'). More songs for lovers and other strangers. No immediate hits but gets better all the time. SGE

Paul Kelly Post (White Label)

An album in the true singer-songwriter tradition, from a critically lauded Australian who usually fronts his own band, the Dots. Kelly writes about his life experiences, and uses basically acoustic guitar, occasionally embellished with piano, sax, piano accordion and bass guitar. His themes are his childhood days in Adelaide, schooldays, love lost and drug addiction. A rare look into another's soul ... dedicated to Paul Hewson. SGE

A-Ha A-Hunting High and Low (Warners)

Take three photogenic Norwegians, put them through the Ultravox-Duran Duran easy listening course and presto you've got a band with 'Take On Me', a single that's been cleaning up the pop charts in the Western World. Catchy fluff and harmless plagiarism from the dying vestiges of British synth pop seem to be the prerequisites for overnight stardom. GK

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Live

Bob Dylan with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers
Mt Smart, Feb 7

The thrill has gone and I'm wondering who is responsible. Partly, of course, I am. The days when Dylan formed an essential part of my life, when each new album helped shape the way I viewed the world, are long since past. Moreover I haven't been too excited by one of his records since *Blood On The Tracks* and that was ten years ago. Nonetheless I remain in awe of the man and his extraordinary influence. I was looking forward to the concert.

So I think those guys up on stage must take some of the blame too. As recent interviews have shown, Dylan is becoming more and more the aging cynic. (The most admired person in his life is apparently his accountant!) Where he once came on like some hoarse foreman of the apocalypse, now there's an easy flippancy that showed up in his performance. It wasn't simply that he barely spoke half-a-dozen sentences to us in 2½ hours. It was there in his singing. Notes were tossed away rather than held, the high ones often barely attempted. (After all why bother when you've got four full-throated back-up singers to reach and carry properly?)

The major exception came in his two numbers alone. With no-one else to rely on Dylan found a measure of his old commitment to 'It's Alright Ma' and 'The Times They Are A Changin' '. His ensuing acoustic duet with Petty was virtually as strong.

But the lacklustre performances returned with the band. A half-hearted attempt was made to get us to sing on 'Just Like A Woman' and then abandoned. Obviously the whole show was under-rehearsed. Faltering tempos in some early numbers were evidence of that. Surely his hitching up with the Heartbreakers afforded Dylan plenty of scope to rearrange some material. After all he's done it before — on the 1978 tour or instance. However the nearest we got was an, admittedly majestic, 'Positively Fourth Street' and a raging 'To Serve

Somebody' that was undermined by a poor sound mix. Otherwise it was an unexceptional plod through the well and the little known.

Dylan's choice of stage repertoire is famed for its quirkiness (as he again showed by covering such standards as 'That Lucky Old Sun' and 'Lonesome Town'). But not to perform his biggest single in years, 'Tight Connection To My Heart', especially with four fine back-up singers in attendance, almost smacks of contempt for his audience. As it was the evening's loudest applause went to none of his songs but 'Refugee', one of only four numbers allotted to Tom Petty with his own band.

Which brings me to another culprit. Surely the concert promoters are guilty of misrepresentation. They must have known that the concert wasn't to be shared equally. (Petty even said as much in last month's *Rip It Up* interview.) Yet they deliberately advertised to catch Petty's following as much as Dylan's. No wonder so many people lost interest two thirds of the way through the show.

Unfortunately there is one more factor that accounts for my disenchantment: some of the audience itself. When I recall Dylan's 1978 show at Western Springs it's obvious how much things have deteriorated.

There's always been violence and animal behaviour of course but at that earlier concert there was also a large, compensating commitment to the music. It was as if more people cared about it then. They *listened*. For large sections of the crowd at Mt Smart all that seemed to matter was the big rock noise. Dylan's acoustic solo numbers were an excuse to barge forward, or back to the food vans, or start a fight, or fall over from excessive indulgence. When, during 'It's Alright Ma' we got to the line about "Even the president of the United States / Sometimes must have to stand naked" I would have thought we nuclear-free New Zealanders, bullied and beleaguered by our Anzus partners, would all cheer heartily. Not a murmur. There was a fight going on near me though, Dylan's failed singalong on 'Just Like A Woman' was undoubtedly not all his fault.

Perhaps big stadium concerts have become like dinosaurs trun-

dling toward their own extinction. Returning to the car afterwards, picking my way over smashed bottles, comatose bodies and the odd pool of vomit, I pitied those who had come to work in these streets next day. I also reflected that it would take a helluva lot to draw me to another stadium concert in Auckland.

Peter Thomson

Violent Femmes, Otis Mace & the Psychic Pet Healers
His Majesty's Theatre, Feb 5

Otis Mace and the Psychic Pet Healers opened — and nearly stole — the show. Otis's humour is

neatly balanced by the serious abilities of the band and his own underrated ability as a guitarist is backed up by a rhythm section second to (nearly) none; the last bass-guitar-drums set-up I enjoyed as much belonged to someone called the Swingers. "Don't shoot down the only woman who ever loved you," sang Otis and co-vocalist Sarah Franks; if they'd continued their set beyond its all-too-short 30 minutes, they could well have shown up the Femmes' song about pushing "your lovely daughter down the well" as being a tad silly.

But no-one's going to out-foul

the Femmes, right? Country boys with a big city sarcasm, one can't help but feel that the crowd got away on them. Gordon Gano thought it was great; Brian Ritchie got a little uptight. "Don't you think we know what we're doing?" he snaps. "Don't you think we know how to *entertain*?" But the audience knew all too well; at 10.45, Gano stands laughing as the audience carry on singing the next couple of verses to *his* songs.

Like Tom Waits in 1981 and Elvis Costello last year, the Femmes were treated to an audience that was loud and autonomous. Fast and old songs went down the best

('Jesus Walking on the Water', 'Gone Daddy Gone'); many booed the fabulous jazz/R&B numbers which introduced the two guest band members, on sax and keyboards, as dazzling musicians. The possibilities of jazz and R&B seem to suit the Femmes and they won't, apparently, be lured by the ease of old favourites.

The energy and atmosphere drowned out a lot of other small things; Victor De Lorenzo's brush drumming, Gano's occasional fret-hopping, his little finger so carefully crooked as he drank his tea. But this is a concert, and the *CONTINUED ON PAGE 26*

"RHYTHMATISM" is the study of patterns that weave the fabric of life, with this speculation in mind, a black clad figure is on his way across the so-called Dark Continent. He meets Lions, Warriors, Pygmies and Jungles before stumbling across the ROCK.

This record is a curious blend of musical snatches from Tanzania, Kenya, Burundi, Zaire, The Congo and Buckinghamshire.

With all this recording of African music I couldn't help but add some drums of my own and a little electric guitar even.

STEWART COPELAND
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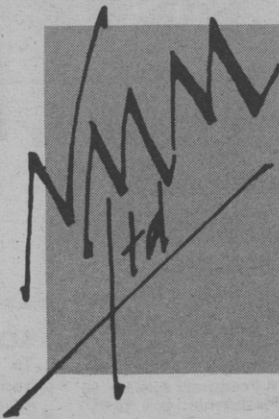
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Live

'LIVE' FROM PAGE 25

prizes go to spectacle; a conch-shell *duet* by Ritchie and the keyboardist, a jaw-dropping version of the *Batman* theme, the feats of sudden tempo-change like a jet pulling out of a nosedive. "We got our first gold disc ever in this country!" announces Ritchie. Whaaaay ...

Afterwards, the air outside His Majesty's was not significantly cooler than it was inside and the crowd left smiling and calm; the several pairs of police standing outside were just standing, thanks.

The only thing more heartwarming than a good performance is an audience that can have fun and still keep its head. There was no alcohol at the gig either; now isn't life full of strange co-incidences? **Chad Taylor**

The Chills, Bird Nest Roys, Headless Chickens Gluepot, Jan 31, Feb 1

So ... the last sight of Chills No.9, a lineup that achieved a hell of a lot materially whilst flying on clipped creative wings. Also the first NZ gigs since departing for England in early November. Really good Chills performances had become a rare item in the months preceding the big venture — and at the end of Friday night, it seemed things, if anything, had

gotten worse. Martin Philipps typically bust a gut and a string or two and there was the odd highlight (notably a buzzy 'Leather Jacket') but the Chills ran a clear, flat third to their support bands. The next night was a wholly different story, but for now:

The Headless Chickens: Chris Matthews, Michael Lawry and Johnny Pierce, do their homework. Ticked off with taped drum tracks (presumably Matthews' handiwork), their songs travel precisely over little novellas of noise and quiet. Um, *little*? Relatively long and complex actually, but very much songs nonetheless — lyrics, melodies, refrains and so on. The Headless Chickens mixed, for want of better words, things arty and things rock 'n' roll with appealing disregard for which was which. Provocative, very intense and very good, they did not impress those in the crowd who had come to hear 'Dole drums'. Having no live drummer was a major factor in being so consistently good — but just maybe the right drummer would let 'em take off into the realms of organic word/rousness every now and then.

Bird Nest Roys don't do a lot of homework and they act up like hell in class and it seems almost everyone likes them. With a big, warm, chaotic sound that was miles away from their wimpy debut EP, they had what ranked as one of their better nights. The songs are eccentric and tasty, almost inseparable from the band; a refrain like 'I've got empty animals for you / Wrap it up!' (from the great 'Love') makes perfect sense when you see them. Extra fun was gleaned from Shayne Carter's appearance on very noisy guitar for the final two songs. I believe the expression is that they Beasted the Beast ...

Whilst the two support bands were marginally less good on the Saturday night, the Chills were kaleidoscope worlds better than they'd been. I should mention here that I'm reviewing from right up against the stage here — the expensively remodelled Gluepot doesn't carry sound much further than the old model, and the out-front mix was again showbizzy and bottom-heavy. That's a worry — the last thing we want is for the Chills to start sounding like the Nares.

But off the stage all was glorious noise. As has often been the case, the first set was an enjoy-

able build-up to the second. And the second set was ... awesome. Sparks flew, *everyone* in the band played full-tilt and the songs sounded the way you knew they should. Highlights? Just about everything, but perhaps especially 'Frozen Fountain', some welcome new tricks from Alan Haig in 'Pink Frost', a fiery resurrected 'Smile From A Dead, Dead Face' and the closing 'I Saw Your Silhouette', glitch and all.

"We demand a lot and a little from our bands. Presentation, tightness, slickness and so on don't matter for shit, and even things like good songs, energy and originality take a back seat to the thing that makes good bands from this country great bands and good gigs great gigs. That's the ability to really move, the sense of emotional investment so clear in gigs by the likes of, say, Goblin Mix. D'you call it Soul? Magic? Trotting that out night after night almost seemed to have bled the Chills of it, but this Last Night was nothing if not reassuring.

The Chills will hopefully re-emerge with two new, enthusiastic members, and I imagine it'll be good watching them find their feet, work out what they are and move on. They'll again have to deal with people and systems who regard them only as entertainment and they'll have to keep growing out as they go up and there'll be people who'll still insist they've sold bloody out and they've got to get things together on record ... but with a heart as big as a house, I think the Chills can do what they want to.

Russell Brown

Look Blue Go Purple, Verlaines, Pterodactyls, Roy Montgomery Chippendale House, Dunedin, Dec 31.

Chippendale House is a big commercial building in Dunedin that has been (and is still being) set up as an arts resource centre. Most of the action thus far has involved music, with live performances and a four-track recording studio, but it is also intended to cater for the rest of the arts with a part-time gallery, etc. It is run by and for a collective of mostly young people and aims to make things easier for those with something creative to offer. Anyone can join Chippendale House for \$5 and share in it. And also take

responsibility for it. Some people did not do that on this night ...

There was excitement (not to mention a good deal of purple haze) in the air when David Merritt took the mike to declare the evening open and introduce the first act, a cowpoke from the plains of Canterbury called Roy Montgomery. "Whenever ah put on this here hat ah jest start talkin' this way," explained Roy touching the brim of his stetson. There followed a short bracket of country songs dedicated to the memory of the great Hank Williams, and maybe a coupla not-so-country songs done the way Hank woulda done it. Funny and serious, like country music so very is. Who sez good guys wear white?

Look Blue Go Purple got on the stage pretty fast, but in the humid hall tuning problems set in after just one song and they seemed to spend about half their set gazing fixedly at each other going *twang* ... *twong* ... The Androids tuneup lives on. When they played songs they were as good as usual, much more physical than the record, pushing out music in big melodic swells.

The Verlaines had one of those nights called 'The Verlaines On A Good Night'. Near-faultless without any apparent sacrifice in energy, they did justice to most everything they played. Particularly noteworthy were the rhythm section's sheer *grunt* and Graeme Downes' singing. Even with only a tiny vocal PA they managed to sound colossal when they wanted to. By popular demand, 'Lying In State' was the song that took us into 1986. Euphoric. Best live band in the country at present.

Things spiralled downhill from the end of the Verlaines' set. The audience became aware of the jerks the unfortunate organisers had been trying to deal with for the past hour or so. People trying to take *knives* inside, even producing them, people who didn't seem to be able to not try and inflict violence on somebody around them. The lights had to come up and the unfortunate Pterodactyls only got to play about 20 minutes. The magic was broken.

It has to be said that the sole body of people responsible for ruining the evening were "boots", "skins", whatever. The kind who are too fucked up to have any fun and stagger through the lives of the people who *can* and fuck them up. It seems No Idea had been play-

ing at the Oriental but the crowd did enough damage for the management to close the pub down early and call the police, so they had to go somewhere else to not have fun.

Now you can't blame a band for its audience, but similar macho moronism went on when No Idea played in Auckland recently; not even heat-of-the-moment slamming, but simple, chilling pack intimidation. Stopping playing when there's a fight is one thing, but if No Idea's much-trumpeted political principles mean *anything*, they have to bring pressure to bear on people like this to shape up or be ostracised. After all, these people look like them and identify with them. It's very easy to write 'Rugger Bugger' but how about 'Macho Punk Wanker' for a song title? It should also be noted that the Chippendale House Collective is the epitome of the whole anarcho-punk philosophy. Isn't it?

So, a great night with a fizzer of an ending for those who paid their monies, and a stupid, miserable one for the people who had to look after the door. There was the very best and the very worst of what could happen. Let's hope for the best from now on.

Russell Brown

Harem Scarem Dogman EP Au-Go-Go

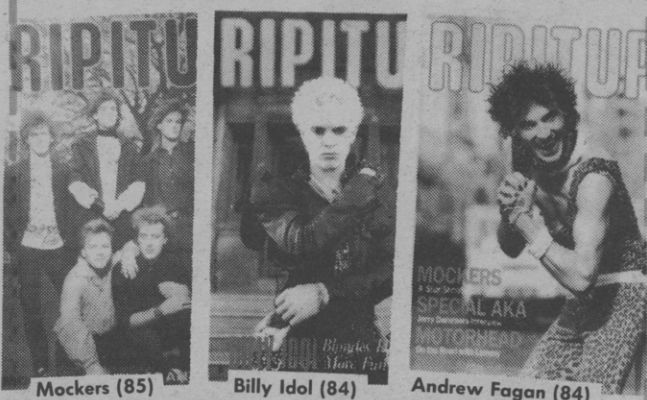
Rough and raucous, Melbourne's Harem Scarem are obviously part of what Mark Seymour referred to as the "Aussie R&B tradition", relying pretty much on a straight R&B base for *Dogman* (almost 30 minutes long — hardly yer average eeppee).

The best track, 'Figurehead', is an amazing seven and a half minute workout sounding particularly Doors-inspired and reminiscent of the Birthday Party's most blues-sodden moments. It features Mark Seymour on tambourine and backing vocals, while his fellow Hunter-Collector John Archer produced four of the five tracks. The non-Archer production number is a raw live recording, 'Sweet Thing Desire'.

All fine stuff, and almost worth having for 'Figurehead' alone. Imported and available through EMI retail stores.

Paul McKessarr

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