

'CHRISSIE' FROM PAGE 18
come out and seen me on my tour, but I didn't see him all of last year and that's kind of fucked up, really."

This phone interview went through at the beginning of last month just as the Pretenders were in the middle of an American tour promoting their okay *Get Close* album. Is the band big in America?

"Patchy. We sell out in LA, Chicago and New York, but in some places we were booked into the wrong venues people wanna see the Pretenders in."

"I'm gonna be grateful to get back to New Zealand because we did lousy shows when we were there last and that was down to me, it was a bad week for me. I'm not that consistent, I'm very affected by my mood, I'm not like a cabaret artist where I go out and do the same thing every night."

What's the matter with the music scene at the moment?

"Everything, it's a big fucking career for people now. There's a lot of money in it and then there's the whole compact disc, paraphernalia and technology side, and people who aren't very good can go out and spend two years on an album and make something that sounds amazing."

"It's just not rock and roll, and it's getting very mundane and ordinary. It's too accessible and over-exposed. I mean people know when I get my period, f'Chrissake! You're analysed and constantly scrutinised, it wasn't like that when the Beatles were around, maybe you knew their middle names but that was all you got. It's all phoney-baloney."

"I really dig a lot of what's going on but it's a great big money spinning industry and it used to be an outlaw renegade thing and that's what appeals to me. Let's get these yuppies out of here."
George Kay

Singles Bar

Dwight Yoakam
'Little Sister' (Reprise 7")
Dwight takes on Elvis and wins! Wonderful version of this barroom fave with Dwight sounding so bright and confident just nothing is going to stop him. Some real intense guitar picking that is hotter than Ginger Lyn's new film. Taken from *Hillbilly Deluxe*, a real scorcher. Great cover with some ultra neat Levis.
Hot Chocolate
'You Sexy Thing' (EMI 7" & 12")
Another remix of a great dance track, but this one really works, with the addition of horns and a sparse go-go back beat. Erroll Brown still sounds like a sepia Sinatra; a monster club hit.
Jackie Wilson
'Reet Petite' (RCA 7" & 12")
"Looka there, looka there, oooowee oooowee." Such begins one of the world's classics. Jackie once aspired to be an opera star, but he still beats the shit out of Pavarotti and those other fat guys.

'CHILLS' FROM PAGE 16
cratic way by NME staffer and ex-Mainly Spaniard David Swift, and The Yard Goes On For Ever, new band for Ed (ex-Saints, Laughing Clowns) Kuepper. The Razorcuts have to play to a crowd that's still arriving, but things have warmed up for Ed's long-awaited return.

He still can't sing (and just smiles cryptically instead of talking) but Ed Kuepper sure knows guitars. He pulls songs from throughout his career, but this young band is more like the Saints than the Clowns. This is sheer, sweet guitar classicism and it hums. Just ask Lindy Morrison. All I want to know is why Ed Kuepper has more hair now than he did in 1977.

The Chills take the stage to cheers and Martin says "Good evening, we're the Chills" in German and it's off to a flying start. But some of the Kiwis in the crowd want to hear their memories rather than a band and it loses a little momentum, to be picked up at the end by a monumental 'Leather Jacket' and 'Balancing.' With time only for one encore, it's another good gig but not quite the great one they wanted. They've no doubt suffered from following the directness of Ed Kuepper too. As a friend put it, the Chills were like central heating but Ed was like toasting yourself in front of a two-bar heater, with both bars on. That probably sums up as well as anything the job of focusing that lies ahead of the Chills. But hell, they're still learning the songs.

Backstage, tales of Scandinavia are unlovely, but Germany, where they are on the diligent Normal Records, seems to have been quite crazy. Everyone still sounds excited about Germany. But

Just love the song, but the 12" has this terrible remix — truly a sacrilege. But the 7" has the original for your listening and dancing pleasure.

Vesta Williams
'Once Bitten Twice Shy' (Festival 7" & 12")
Best modern soul track this month, but with a great swaying beat to it. Vesta socks out the "men beware" message in a very strong voice. Smooth and smouldering soul for the discerning.

Jody Watley
'Looking for a New Love' (WEA 12")
Jody says, "Hasta la vista" and checks out the action on this "nasty" beat. A stab at the Ms Jackson market that should hit bullseye, produced by sound moguls Cymone and David Z with a crisp, sexy sound.
Billy Idol
'Don't Need a Gun' (Festival 7" & 12")
One of the best from *Whiplash Smile* in a nifty Freddy Bastone mix that incorporates gun shots and love song a great bongo break. Good lyrics if you can decipher the Idol drawl.

for now, there's a gig tomorrow night in swinging Scunthorpe. F Nun man Gary Cope, who joined them in Germany, parts company here, but the new passenger, much to Caroline's delight, will be her boyfriend, who arrives tomorrow morning. The journalist bums a lift home.

Oh, and the Chills are still having a bit of trouble with their rider.

"Now close your eyes," said the Gryphon. "Let your mind drift, let the intuitive nature come to the fore ... see from inside ... see anything?"
"Sort of ..." said Alice, not really sure.
"Just think about everything ... the works. The whole of spacetime, all your friends and every ice cream you ever ate. All at once."
"That's a tall order, Gryphon."
"Shhh! Once you get that feeling of standing back and having a look at it all right, you'll begin to feel drawn into it, right to the heart."
Alice tried.
"Ye-esss ..." she murmured, breaking a full minute's silence. "It's bright ... hold on, it's coming into focus now, and ... oh ..."
"That, child, is an intuitive impression of the order of everything, space-time and beyond, in er ... two dimensions. I believe that it is the dimensional form which has been most popular with your race for communicating abstracts."
"It's a quartered square encompassing a circle," Alice said slowly. "Encompassed in turn by another circle. It's a nice enough arrangement."
"Nice enough for two dimensions, I suppose," sighed the Gryphon. "But you should see it in four billion ... it's a real hummer."

Billy Joel
'Baby Grand' (CBS 7")
A love song to all the pianos of the world, made great by most of the vocals going to Ray Charles. I like this a lot, but I'd rather Mr Joel stayed away from the microphone.
Cyndi Lauper
'What's Going On' (CBS 7")
Marvin Gaye's finest song slapped around by the ex-manager of the women's wrestling champion (Wendi Richter). Ms Lauper can't quite handle the vocal complexities but a solid dance beat almost hides that. Fun if you're not easily offended.
Kerry Buchanan

Shake Summation

Dance Exponents
'Brand New Doll' (Zulu 7")
Based on a seminal grungy riff ('Wild Thing,' 'Addicted to Love' ...) the aggression and hardnosed vocal make this the best thing the

Exponents have done in ages. The attitude gives it an edge without getting your back up. Excellent hard rock production with plenty of effects done well. B-side 'One Sad River' is a slow ballad recorded live in the studio, sad and affecting, but it slows down as if they lose interest.
Al Hunter
'Highway Song' (CBS 7")
From *Neon Cowboy* comes virtually a double-A sided single that gives Al two well-deserved shots at airplay, on rock and country radio. 'Highway Song' cruises along with steady beat and lived-in voice, plus lovely instrumental touches from producer Stuart Pearce, particularly his acoustic piano — and a cameo backing vocal from Dave Dobbyn. Swings out, "listening to the wheels," full of warmth and taste. 'Country Music' is an upbeat, pure celebration of the form, driven by brilliant fiddle and pedal steel. Great piano break, a strong melody and spirited vocal. Superb.

Low Profile
'Simon Says' (Flamewave/Jayrem 12")
The Cutting Edge made more accessible, with haunting, delicate vocal, and a great brass section and backing vocals. Still Zappaesque, with an odd halting rhythm. The "slightly bent but equally enjoyable" extended mix of 'Simon' highlights the intricacies of the "sensible radio playlist" version, with guitar licks, cymbals and French horns brought forward. 'Elephunkin' is a new version of the everlasting quirky favourite of student radio. The endearing misanthrope has achieved classic status. Low Profile are craftsmen who have a refreshing, challenging approach to writing pop that ignores and bends established strictures; the whole package is another classy effort.
Dread Beat & Blood
'No More War' (Jayrem 12")
There's a striking spare opening to 'No More War,' it's got excellent voices and a lovely feel, but the melody doesn't really flow. The repeated chord at the end was a bad idea. On the B-side are the gems — 'One People' has strong harmonies, a lyrical bass and scratch rhythm guitar, a strong reggae single that would work well live. 'Tragedy' is another haunting scratch number by David Grace, who has a captivating voice. Great smooth sound.
When the Cat's Away
'Leader of the Pack' (CBS 7")
Although Kim Willoughby's perfect girl group voice and the strong BVs make this worthwhile, it's disappointing that the Cats chose this song over their other

material, much of it NZ written. Labelle's 'Lady Marmalade' shows how the Cats can cope with demanding material; shame the band (horns excluded) isn't really up to it when captured live at the Gluepot with a particularly thin mix. But it's made for Annie Crummer, and there's *lotsa* the Cats' inimitable energy.
Tim Finn
'You Saved the World' (WEA 7")
From the film *Les Patterson Saves the World*, but it's more of a whimper than a bang. A limp start, with that familiar detached voice, but it comes alive at the chorus; shame the rest sounds like a Johnny Farnham vehicle. Pleasant light production, but let's hope he's saved his best material for the next album. B-side 'Les Fanfare/Coup d'Etat' is a John Williams/*Raiders* pastiche instrumental.
Otis Mace and the Psychic Pet Healers
(Ode 12")
Two sides of the Pet Healers are revealed on this raw recording, both showing the pop potential of Mace's simple songs. First is a hokey country persona, with 'Don't Shoot Down' being a country cautionary tale, rather cautiously played. 'Long Time to Come' has great lyrics ('You can water your hydrangeas / On the grave of our arrangements / But it's only disappointments gonna grow') but is let down by Otis's voice and the sparse backing. The darker 'Horror Show Blues' heralds the Grim Reaper to a shoobedoowop fanfare. 'Effort, Money & Time' is a good pop song, much assisted by Gavin Buxton's sax. 'The Land of the Living Liver' introduces primordial slime rock, and confirms the breadth of Mace's quirky talent.
Rutherford-Brookes (Ode 12")
Singer-songwriter fare, with Stephen Brookes taking lead vocals throughout this four-track EP which has an all-star cast of backing musicians. 'Only One Life' is polished folk, with fiddle by Wayne Goodwin; 'Holy Moses' a delicate ballad with full string section and a Walter Bianco sax solo. With a looser, raw, sound 'Steinlager Blues' would kick ass like Delaney and Bonnie, but it falls down on tried and true "hot licks" and Brookes' merely competent voice. 'Letter to Francois' is a gentle ballad, rather like early Elton John, with a nuclear free message to France and Annie Crummer peeking through on BVs. Rutherford-Brookes' PR said they were country; they're no Gram and Emmylou. **Chris Bourke**

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