

No. 121 August 1987

RIPIITUP

Dwight Yoakam



Country's Back

Red Danny Wilson Knightshade A Certain Ratio

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Ginger's Men

What's it like being famous? Simply Red bassist Tony Bowers laughs. "Same as it was before, except more people talk to you."

Mick Hucknall was on holiday, leaving his band to front up to the impersonal phone promotion process: promotion, because this month Simply Red are gracing these shores with three one-nighters.

One Red not coming is guitarist Sylvan Richardson, who left the band recently to "pursue separate ideals." Manchester guitarist Aziz Ibrahim quickly took his place, and the world tour continued.

Also from Manchester is drummer Chris Joyce. In a dry Mancunian accent he explained how he was in Durutti Column back in 1979, "when there was a bit more black influence." In 1983 he met Mick Hucknall and a year later, after Hucknall had fired the original rhythm section, he found himself in Simply Red:

"We see ourselves as pop, as in popular music, but we don't want to be categorised because we don't want to be limited. We're quite chameleon in that we can change what we do from jazz to reggae. We're all pretty much jazz freaks in the band but we've often been labelled as a soul band and I wouldn't agree with that, soulful

perhaps."

Does the rhythm section get to write much of the material?

"No, we don't do a lot there," says Joyce. "We worked on 'I Won't Feel Bad' from *Men and Women* but there could be a few more from us on the next album. Mick does most of the writing and through Stewart Levine, who produced *Picture Book* and was a good friend of Lamont Dozier, we got Lamont to come and see us in LA. He invited Mick to write a couple of songs with him and in an afternoon they came up with 'Suffer' and 'Infidelity' on *Men and Women*. And Mick is going to be working with him again this year."

Black and White

Bassist Tony Bowers was with Chris Joyce in the early Durutti Column, and after they left Vini Reilly to his own devices, they played with the Mothmen, unheard of here,

but respected in the UK.

Fame means cracking America? Bowers: "Yeah, but just because we've had one hit there — 'Holding Back the Years' — doesn't mean to say we've broken it yet. The biggest market there is AOR [adult orientated rock] and we still have a lot of work to do there."

The very market-conscious *Men and Women* seemed to be aimed at AOR ...

"They had to go with what the market dictated," says Bowers. "Strangely enough 'Holding Back the Years' first happened on black radio and at the time I don't think they knew we were an interracial band. Our last single, 'The Right Thing,' didn't do very well there because the black stations thought it was too white and the white stations too black."

In Britain are you being compared with white blacks like Alison Moyet, Paul Young and company?

"Originally we were but at the moment I think we're an entity on our own as people know more about us. A couple of years ago we were even being compared to the Style Council. But Weller's version of soul music is very cabaret, and I don't mean that insultingly, it's just that he's picked a very smooth blend and to me it's not very moving or hard. Whereas we're very popular live because the show is 'well hard,' as they say in Manchester."

Simply Business

A survivor from the early Simply Red lineup is trumpet and keyboard player Tim Skellett. He stayed on after three members were given £1,000 each then fired because Hucknall didn't want to carry any dead weight:

"They weren't that bad at all, it was just that they weren't going to get any better," says Skellett. "They were steady but they didn't have enough flair, and when you really mean business you can't start off with a weak link."

So even back in 1984 you were determined to make a career out of it?

"Absolutely, I left college to do it, I wasn't doing it for fun. We were serious about treating it as a business."

On hearing 'Holding Back the Years' and early Simply Red demos, Seymour Stein, head of Sire Records, reputedly offered Hucknall a million dollar deal. True?

"Yeah," says Skellett, "but whatever they offer you you've got to pay back anyway so it doesn't mean a thing. But it wasn't right at the time and so we held off until the right one came along, and that was Elektra UK."

Did the band do the usual routine of knocking out demos?

"No, we only made one demo and that was on a Walkman in a room with one little microphone and we didn't take that around to anybody. The record companies started coming to our concerts and we did a lot of small gigs in and around Manchester and at one gig we just about had every record company there. We avoided demos. The best thing is to get people to the concerts, not easy but productive if you're a good band."

With Mick Hucknall being such an obvious focal point, does the band feel part of the package?

Skellett: "We've had difficulties coming over as a package and with a front man like Mick it's difficult to present the band as a group of people as it always comes over as this red-haired singer, and we've just had to surrender to that as that's how people want to see it. Live we come over as a group and that's what is important."

Since the band places such weight on live performances, have they found the two studio albums disappointing reflections of the live sound?

"No," says Skellett. "But *Picture Book* was disappointing in the way it sounded. *Men and Women* is much closer to how we sound live — I can still listen to it and relatively enjoy it. We recorded it in a fairly live fashion. We obviously overdubbed, but a lot of the tracks were done in one take."

Master market soundsman Alex Sadkin produced *Men and Women*, giving it a glossy East Coast night-tech sound, but it was an improvement on Stewart Levine's watery *Picture Book*:

"Yeah, it was an anaemic sound, it was keyboard orientated," says Skellett. "The instruments didn't come through. On *Men and Women* you can hear everybody, everybody's got a little pocket."

So what is Simply Red? Skellett summarises:

"A group that crosses over several different musical styles and somehow wraps them into a sound."

George Kay



PHOTO BY KERRY BROWN

No.9 With a Bullet

Shona Laing's home again, relaxing and writing songs after a hectic month in Australia promoting 'Glad I'm Not a Kennedy' and recording songs for a new album.

here, the *Genre* tracks may be replaced by more new material. The recordings in Sydney included sessions with a 22-piece orchestra. "Genre was pretty sparse, but a couple of tracks on the new album are enormous, almost audacious," says Laing.

A factor in the success of 'Not a Kennedy' was the video by Aucklander Kerry Brown, with its charming colour footage of JFK with his family. "Kerry rang the Boston library, told them what he wanted, and they sent it to him. It's different sort of footage to see of an American president. I think people expected the assassination, but we'd made a determined decision to steer clear of the ugly bits and make him look like a human being."

Laing's song 'Drive Baby Drive' is about to be released in Australia, but it's been held up because the "pay to play" video war has just broken out there. "I think a video war in Australia will do everybody a lot of good," says Laing. "There was something like 40 hours of music a week on — that's ridiculous, I couldn't watch half of it. They won't play as much now, so those they do play will actually start to be influential and start selling records again, which I don't think they were any longer. They are just ads after all."

Chris Bourke

While in Sydney Laing did some recording with Peter Wilson, the English producer (the Jam, Style Council) who had re-mixed 'Not a Kennedy.' An album is about to be released in Australia, with four tracks off *Genre*, plus six new ones;

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John Hammond Jr. here this month.

It Hurts Me Too John Hammond Jr

In person John Hammond is foot-stomping, guitar-crushing excitement.

A handsome figure, usually in a suit ("Junior Walker told me to get a cheap suit with a good cut," he laughs), he straddles a high stool and opens his throat to evoke the weird mysteries of the Mississippi Delta of long ago.

All the while his left foot is pounding the stage in accompaniment to the compulsive rhythms of his guitars (regular six-string, a 12-string,

his beloved National steel for slide, and a racked harmonica).

That Hammond, 43, the son of legendary record producer, talent scout and jazz critic John Hammond Sr, who died last month, is, as one might say, "good people," is icing on a rich cake.

Although Hammond's father was responsible for issuing the seminal Robert Johnson *King of the Delta Blues* albums, he didn't want his son to become a blues musician. Nevertheless hearing Johnson sparked young Hammond's lifetime devotion to the blues. "In hearing Robert's music," he says, "I was moved so deeply that I felt changed inside. Something emerged in me

and built up 'til it just had to come out."

From the early 60s Hammond has followed his own course as an interpreter of black blues. He has produced a steady stream of albums (for the Vanguard, Columbia, Atlantic, Capricorn and Rounder labels), some of which remain in print. Recommended records include *Spoonful* (an Edsel reissue of Atlantic sessions with Robbie Robertson, Bill Wyman, Duane Allman and the Muscle Shoals rhythm section), *Fattening Frogs for Snakes* (Rounder), and *Footwork* (late 70s Vanguard acoustic sessions with veteran blues pianist Roosevelt Sykes guesting). Hammond also provided the haunting music for Arthur Penn's mythical western *Little Big Man*.

I make no apology for having been a fan since I first heard the screaming electricity of *So Many Roads*, a mid-60s Vanguard album with backing from key members of Levon and the Hawks — who, through Hammond's introduction, later became Bob Dylan's Band.

Naturally, not all my friends who like the blues care for John Hammond. The casting of a "white bluesman," especially one from such a wealthy background as Hammond, will always be a stumbling block to some.

Others, while acknowledging Hammond's guitar and harmonica skills, scorn his vocals as "black-face." Most of these criticisms were ventured years ago, but Hammond has kept honing his style, recording some songs ('I Wish You Would,' 'Who Do You Love?') several times over the years.

There was a special night at Melbourne's Troubadour nearly two years ago when a soon-going-home Hammond played away from his core repertoire, dipping into such songs as 'Chattanooga Choo Choo,' 'Junco Partner' and Chuck Willis's 'It's Too Late' with an aching slide part. The memory lingers.

For that and more I shall be seeing John Hammond again.

Ken Williams

John Hammond Sr 1910 - 1987

John Hammond Sr, who died in his New York apartment last month aged 77, had the best ears in the music business.

A talent scout and producer since the 30s, he discovered and nurtured many of the most important musicians of the 20th Century. Billie Holiday, Count Basie, Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen all owe the beginnings of their careers to Hammond.

He was also a battler against racial discrimination, in American society, and in music. It was Hammond who encouraged Benny Goodman to include black musicians in his band, a courageous step in the segregated early 30s.

In 1938 Hammond organised the landmark "From Spirituals to Swing" concerts at Carnegie Hall that brought jazz — and black talent — to a formal concert stage. The bill was like a history of black American music. Among those that appeared were Sister Rosetta Tharp, James P Johnson, Big Joe Turner, Sidney Bechet, the Count Basie band, Sonny Terry, pianists Albert Ammons and Meade Lux Lewis (rescued from a Chicago car wash; his performance reawakened interest in boogie woogie), and Big Bill Broonzy.

Hammond had wanted Robert Johnson to appear at the concerts, considering him the greatest bluesman of the time, but the invitation arrived too late: Johnson had been killed by his girlfriend several months earlier.

It's extraordinary that the ear that detected the potential in Count Basie, Billie Holiday, and Aretha Franklin could also hear the voices of the future in Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen. Without Hammond, it is likely that CBS Records



The late John Hammond Sr.

would never have become a major label of contemporary music. Aretha Franklin however, didn't peak until after she had left CBS, where her producers wanted her to be a "black Barbra Streisand."

"The musical misuse and eventual loss of Aretha as a recording artist disturbed me greatly," said Hammond, "not least because her career since leaving Columbia has fulfilled every confidence I had in her. She had every musicianly quality I thought she had. All she needed was to hold to her roots in the church."

Dylan was nicknamed by CBS staff "Hammond's folly." "I think it was his air of being willing to take on the world that grabbed me," said Hammond. "It was bold, it was witty, and it was very attractive. And I confess he twanged a responsive chord in the young part of me which shared his ambitions to change the world."

Although Hammond had been born a member of the wealthy Vanderbilt family, he was always driven by a sense of social and political justice. From improving pressing plant conditions, unionising offices, breaking down Army segregation, to helping musicians down

on their luck, there are many examples of Hammond's sense of human rights and generosity.

"Of course," wrote jazz critic Leonard Feather, "anyone as opinionated as John was bound to make enemies. Because of his racial attitudes, he was called a communist, though he believed staunchly in integration while the American Communist Party at that time wanted a separate 49th state for blacks to be gerrymandered out of deep South territory ... Some white musicians resented his championship of equality. John once told me, with a touch of pride, that the white cornetist Red Nichols had dismissed him as a 'nigger lover'." The rightwing John Birch Society once waged a smear campaign against Hammond.

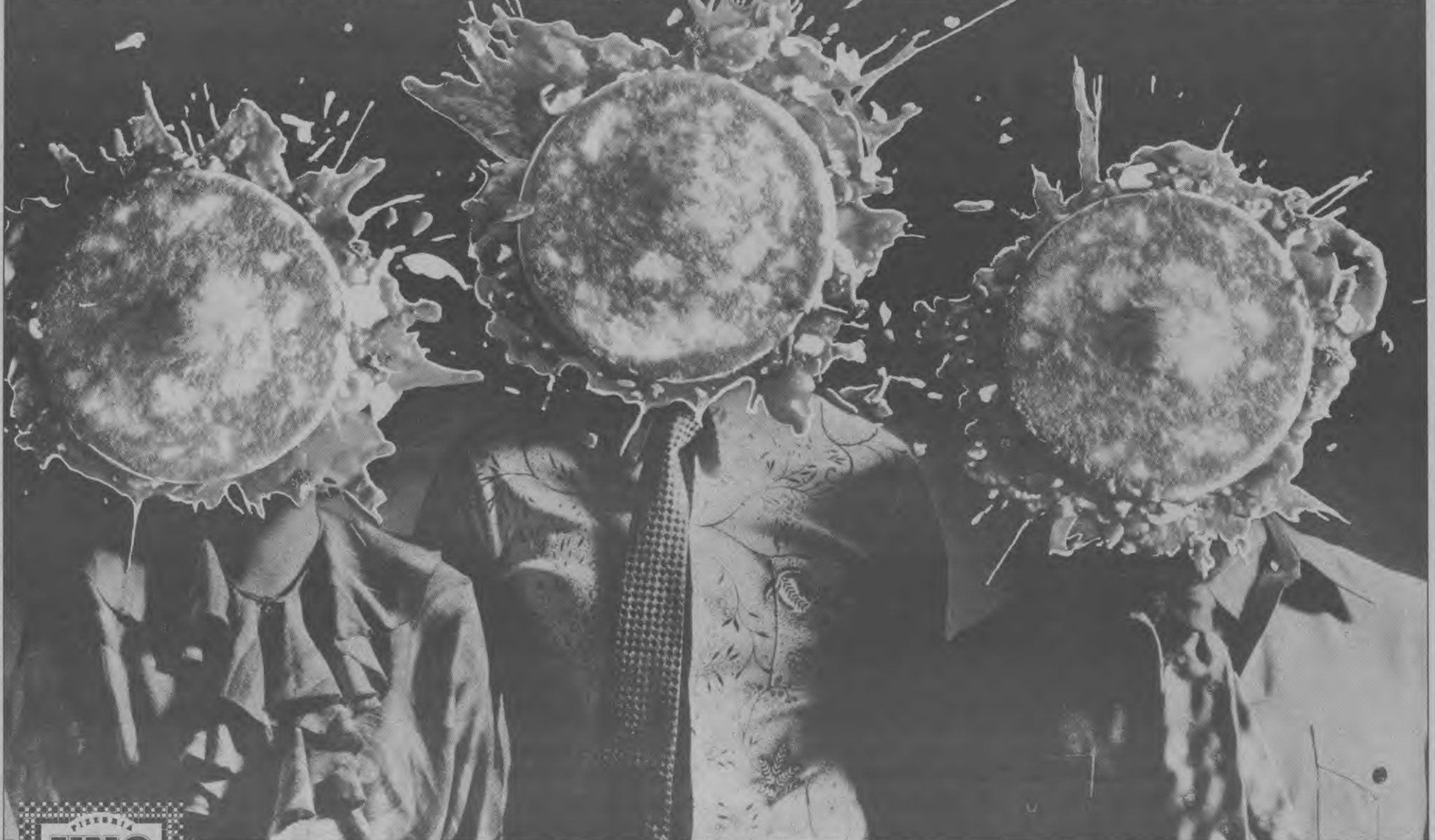
During the time when Pete Seeger was blacklisted, Hammond signed him to Columbia. Among the others to benefit from his help were the Four Tops, Leonard Cohen and George Benson, all of whom he signed, jazzers Lionel Hampton and Charlie Christian, plus blues singers Bessie Smith and Alberta Hunter. But among Hammond's proudest discoveries was Billie Holiday; he was playing 'All of Me' when he died.

Chris Bourke

RIPITUP

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Editor
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Graphics
John Pitcairn
Postal Address
P O Box 5689, Auckland 1, NZ.
Street Address
37 Crummer Rd, Grey Lynn.
Phone 763-235
Rip It Up is typeset by Artspec and Comset and printed by Rodney Times.

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Return of the Living Dwarfs

Dunedin's winters are not normally the brightest around (though 1987's is rumoured to be milder than most) but the promised return of a couple of prodigal sons was definitely what most folk were looking to as a source of midwinter cheer after a lacklustre month on the local music scene.

Having endured the cinematic "thrills" of the eminently forgettable *Mosquito Coast* and offensive *Soul Man* on consecutive weekends, some of us were ready for a bit of genuine excitement — excitement that the thought of the Tall Dwarfs engendered into our sadly depressed souls.

Y'see Chris and Alec used to be in a Dunedin anachronism called the Enemy, seen by few, but a memory cherished by many. That was 10 years ago, and they've done a lot of things since then — got famous with the Sex Toys or something-or-other, made some records and videos — but the rock dinosaur hadn't been home for a while.

Alec puts a mild damper on much of the early furore of Friday night's *Jesus on a Stick* launch by leaving

the comics in Christchurch. So for yer eight bucks at the door, all you get's a scrap of paper saying "entitled to one JOAS." If they ever bloody turn up, that is... shifty-eyed weasel face, that Knox. No one seems to mind though, and the "full house" sign is up well before nine o'clock.

Even the unseeing "hordes" locked outside would've recognised the guitar noise coming from the first band onstage — lotsa shards of the chord G spliced with indelicate pickin' signifies David Kilgour, and Steven is the three-piece (once called Chums) featuring his virtuoso talents on guitar and vocals. He drums too, in regimental 4/4, when Jeff steps out to play a bit of funky bass and sing.

Steven take things relatively easy, it appears, with all three doing a bit of

everything. Sometimes however it sounds all too familiar, almost parodic, but the good songs they have show some spark of the almost magical intuition that creates the very best music. Hear the instant-appeal pop of 'Laundry' or the ragged loud finale of 'Tape Recorder' and realise that it's something good a-brewin'.

Friday's Dwarf set was the slightly-anarchic, mechanical-breakdown, try-and-smash-a-beercrate-with-her-head show. They set the tone by opening with the aural onslaught (via backing tape) of 'Nothing's Gonna Stop It' and charged. Chris screamed and Alec thrashed. Two hours pass by in a sonic blur. There are treats a-plenty and the one-two finish of 'Crush' and 'Pull Down the Shades,' complete with two drummers, works a treat. Many promise to be back for more tomorrow...

But few make it to Saturday afternoon's performance at Chippendale House. The intriguing case of the stallion that failed to service on *The People's Court* means I miss the first half hour (it even had Judge Wapner shaking his head in disbelief). Of the local solo sets, Shayne Carter sounds best — he's got a good repertoire to draw on, and though this isn't as good as his

solo JPSE support a couple of months ago, songs old and new come across strongly.

Chris Knox hasn't played his songs solo for a while; he's got to read the words to most and forgets the odd guitar accompaniment — not too hard to rectify quickly, because he only knows one barre chord; knows it well though...

His set's a mixture — angry vitriol ('NZ Music Industry') to a short series (ironically following a comment on the large number of "hippies" in Dunedin nowadays) of dippy, quite wonderful songs, culminating in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' the story behind which silenced the small crowd. The heart behind the snarl and putdowns of Friday night was glimpsed, and it coulda almost been a special moment...

But Chris Knox is like corduroy trousers. Like enduring, favourite trou: staunchly unfashionable. Happy though, to be that way (witness 'Beauty' and other fashion-is-shit songs) and fun. Like he'll play a Beatles medley because he loves the Beatles and not cos it's "20 years ago," and what's best is that for all the numberless hordes wearing cords, you still won't catch the so-called hipsters in an old pair, and you won't catch 'em down at the

empty, echoey space that is Chippendale House on a Saturday afternoon either. I like that; pretensions just don't fit in with brown cords.

The Dwarfs' request session fizzles a bit. It's getting late and there's only a potbelly stove warming the big room, but we get a chance to see things go a little differently from the previous night. The omnichord chimes through some fun things, but some of the requests are beyond the two-man band; wait for the second set at night, when they're joined by Paul Kean on bass and Malcolm Grant on drums. Home for tea then, and it's gonna be interesting to see if we get a third, different tone in the evening back at the pub...

RTR's as useless as ever, but Snapper, first on at the Ori, are always interesting. *Garage*-man Richard Langston sums them up as "country and western meets Suicide," and that's as good a description as you'll get. On any other "good night" for the band, huge colourful bursts of distorted organ chords collide head-on with laconic C&W guitar riffs while Peter Gutteridge plays the Lee Hazelwood role to the hilt.

But tonight was a lot different.

Dominic Stones' guitar was as loud and distorted as the organ, and the set careered headlong towards termination. Snapper's song structures contribute to this — the wonderful 'What are You Thinking' is probably beyond two verses. They were loud, and Allan Haigh's taut drumming was the only hint of C&W roots. "Clippety clop." Good though.

Knox's voice is well-shot by now, and he's had a quarter of a haircut, so it's bound to be a different looking and sounding Tall Dwarfs on stage tonight. There's another full house and the effect of Knox's shagged larynx means that the first set is a lot better organised, and in general lots better than Friday's first set.

Alec Bathgate's mature guitar playing is the highlight — songs like 'Come Inside' he injects with a folk-edged, third-Velvets-LP twang. Sublime. Other songs hinge on Knox dancing and hitting the omnichord — the Young Marble Giants are a cited influence and this is where it shows through. Wire are another influence cited by the Dwarfs, and the second set, as a full band, veers towards resonant heavy rock, in a dense, Wire-like way; stuff like 'Song of the Silents' working intensely well...

Saturday's encore was a drawn out affair. There's a spirited, haphazard and unrehearsed version of 'Venus,' assorted pissing around and stuff (obligatory 'Pull Down the Shades') and ultimately a jam (the hippies) with spontaneous Dunedin nonsense from Knox. No one seemed to care, but to my mind, though Saturday's set was technically better, it lacked the sheer exhilaration of Friday.

For me, the lasting image is a mixed one. Songs are in there somewhere, but it's the three Knox-faces of the weekend that linger: him in the middle of the still-packed dancefloor at about 11.15pm, the rest of the band losing interest, but Knox carrying on with some rabid diatribe about "Dunedin people"; then there's the guy singing tenderly about a troubled uncle, and then bawling out that Beatles medley to the only barre chord he knows...

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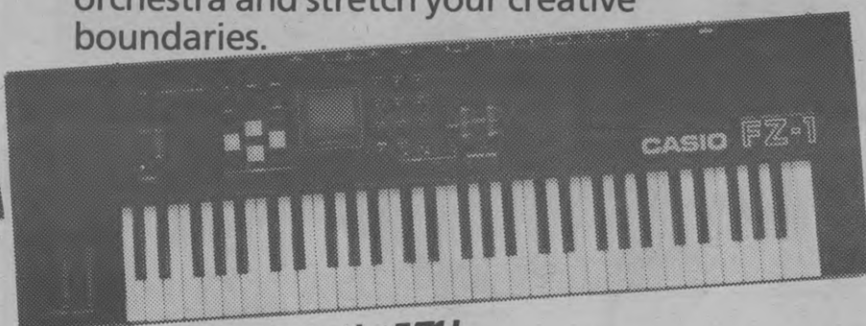
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Dark Star

Dancing With the Devil 'Shakedown' Breakdown

Compilation albums by new bands are not a new concept — from *Class of 81* and *Propellor's Furtive Three-Pack* in the early 80s to last year's *Outnumbered by Sheep* and *Weird Culture, Weird Custom* — but with the demise of the 7" single, albums like *Pagan Shakedown* could become the most feasible way for new acts to "go vinyl."

"It's no secret that the 7" single is a dying format," says Pagan Records' Trevor Reekie. "That makes it a problem for independent companies who concentrate on new artists. There's a futility about a debut band doing a 7", both for those that play live and those that don't. If they don't play live, it's suicide, if they do, a 7" is justified, but it's still a risk."

"There's a consumer change away from the 7" to 12" or tape. Tape singles are really a factor now on the charts, especially for black music. Three-quarters of the singles chart is now 12"—7" singles work only for the really established bands.

"But we've got to keep encouraging new bands, and that's what catalysed this format. I rang round the

artists to see if they would share vinyl space with others. It's better for the punters, with six bands for the price of two singles, and good for the bands — fans of one band will buy the record, or one band might be featured on TV, and the other bands will receive a spinoff benefit. Obviously the music has to be of equal quality."

Pagan Shakedown features recordings from six newish acts:

The Lonesome Cowboys emerged from Chinese Eyes, who had a song on the compilation *All Dressed Up and No Place to Play*. Their song 'Tonight' was picked from a demo they sent to Pagan and other record companies, and re-recorded at Harlequin.

The Morlocks used to be the Buckets (or Bucketsful), whose EP *Buckets Full* received good reviews. 'Psychedelic Dream' was recorded at the Lab with Terry Moore. Like the Lonesome Cowboys, they'll be playing live again soon.

Rhythm Cage have been playing around Auckland for some time now and recently won much praise for their Crowded House support gigs. Formerly Humdrum, their song 'Freeze City' is sung and composed by David Parker, and recorded at the Lab.

War Brides features ex-Soul on Ice vocalist Liz Diamond, and two synthesists, Daniel Barnes and Martin O'Neil. Their 'Total War' was done at Harlequin.

Dark Star recorded 'Fighting' in London. It was written by ex-Newmatic and Miltown Stowaway Kelly Rogers, who was in a saxophone quartet there, and also features ex-Freudian Slips Nikki Lancaster and Kathleen Anderson.

Dean Heazelwood's 'Cat and Mouse' instrumental concludes *Pagan Shakedown*. In the Mockers for two years during the 'Swear It's True' period, Heazelwood recorded the song at Mandrill with Gordon Joll providing the drum programs.

Chris Bourke

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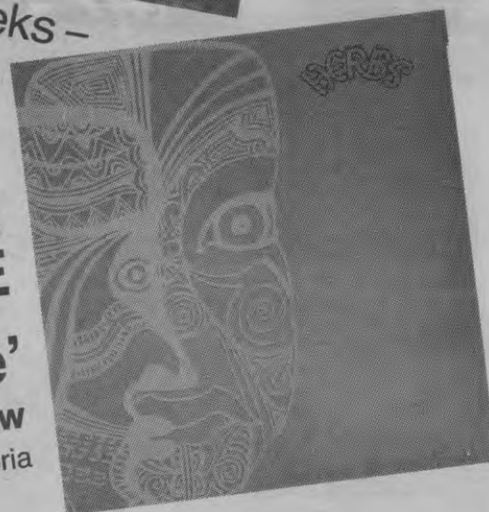
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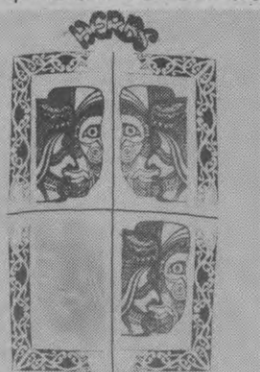
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RUMOURS

Auckland

Watch for the **Rheineck Music Festival** to be held at Abbys in Victoria St on Saturday August 29. All three bars will have live music from 11am to 12pm, with Al Hunter, Narcs, Skindivers, Maria Monet, Neon Quaver, Society Jazzmen, Tommy Adderly, Toot Suite, Red Adair, Soul on Ice and Rhythm Cage. **National Anthem** return with a single this month 'Wonderful Reason' plus live gigs with new six-piece lineup...the **Pterodactyls** have an EP and **Three Leaning Men** an album due out in the next month on Meltdown. **Lynne Campbell** from Working Holiday is joining **Sweet Harmony**, whose new album is available at their gigs. Mondays at **Charley Gray's** cinema are 'Cheap Thrills' nights: previews and rarities for \$3.50... ever keep

clippings or notes of the pop charts? Russ Leadley wants details of National Hit Parades and the Top 40 from the years 1961 to 1967 for a NZ music encyclopaedia he's compiling. Write PO Box 378, Greymouth.

In New Plymouth **Sticky Filt** have an EP out this month 'At Least Rock & Roll Doesn't Give You Aids'... new bands are the **Urchins**, with Brendan Conlon (ex-Remarkable) and Mark Airle (ex-Pilcrow), and a thrash metal band **Das Unter Mensch**... about a dozen local bands are booked so far for the Kuitze No Ordinary Band contest at the White Hart on August 28 & 29.

The first national training scheme for backstage theatre workers is underway. Trainees will spend two years training while working in a theatre, learning all parts of their craft. Organised by the National Theatre Technicians Training Committee, applications for the new entrant training scheme close at the end of August, with an introductory

course planned to start mid-October. For details contact Jeremy Collins ph. 09-792-583, or write PO Box 9443, Courtenay Place, Wgton. **Joe 90** have a single out 'Walls Surrounding Me' in early Sept, when their tour starts. **Maya** have finished recording an album-length cassette. **Chris Bourke**

UK & USA

Top UK producer (Grace Jones, Talking Heads, Simply Red, Bob Marley, Robbie Nevil) **Alex Sadkin** died after a car accident in Nassau, Bahamas, on July 16. He'd just completed Boom Crash Opera's debut LP... the **Smiths** look likely to split after a rift between Johnny Marr and Morrissey. **Strangeways Here We Come** looks like being their last album... **Springsteen** is back in the studio... after their recent suit against Nike shoes for using 'Revolution' in an ad, the surviving **Beatles** are now suing Capitol for delays releasing Beatle CDs. Their lawyer

claims it's the company's way of getting the band to drop their eight-year suit over **Abbey Road** royalties.

LL Cool J was recently fined \$250 for "lewdness on stage" — simulating sexual intercourse. "He was on a sofa hunching up and down and carrying on," said the Ohio police chief. Ohio brought in new obscenity laws after the **Beastie Boys** caused an uproar... teenagers imitating the Beasties 'Fight For Your Right to Party' video caused \$350,000 worth of damage when a luxury house was gutted by fire in Washington... meanwhile British Beastie fans are stealing 300 Volkswagen badges a day. VW are now selling the badges by mailorder to prevent the vandalism.

Terence Trent D'Arby was involved in a fight outside a London theatre. The heckling bystander didn't realise young Ter was once a Golden Gloves champ.

Former toilet seat fitter **Bill Withers** ('Lean On Me') is the latest to have a hit used for an ad: 'Lovely

Day' now extols the virtues of Ford Escorts. Meanwhile, post-**Platoon** 'Tracks of My Tears' now means Budweiser... Shock! **Bill Wyman** was seen at Island Records 25th anniversary bash with a woman old enough to be his mother!... **Wilson Pickett** is in a New Jersey court, facing charges relating back three years, when he allegedly fired a gun at one of the **Isley Brothers** while on a hunting trip. Pickett, who claims he didn't know the gun was loaded, is now on Motown with a new LP **American Soul Man**... **Ronnie Spector** is back with **Unfinished Business**, with the title track by **Gregory Abbott**... **Run DMC's** *Tougher Than Leather* movie should be out in the US by late August.

Christchurch

Canterbury Polytech's **Plain Radio** is back on air from August 3 to 18 on 92.1 FM, while **Radio U** recently held a successful Kiwi music only day... South American? are now

a four-piece and touring and recording under the name **South American Big Band**... the **Smitherens** are now **Big Game Hunters**... **Worlds Apart** are recording an album at Nightshift without the assistance of guitarist Jodie Bell who won a trip for two to England off a tube of toothpaste!... **Churchills** have a new bassist, Paul Thompson, and hope to tour mid-August.

Flying Nun news: the **Chills** proved to be a hit at the New Music Seminar in New York and they have a new album recorded... members of **Max Block** now living in Sydney will team up with the **Bats** for their last Aussie date, and with the **Verlaines** on the first date of their tour, on August 28... **Tall Dwarfs**, after packing the Old Star for the *Jesus on a Stick* party, recorded an EP at Nightshift... keep an eye out for a 45 by **Rex Bourke's Strange Love**.

Martin McPherson has left his post at the Youth Centre. **Bridgette Hanrahan** from the Court Theatre will be taking over... after a successful Dole Day gig and Saturday night with the **Bats**, the **New Zealander** looks set to become an alternative venue which should help out some of the local bands wondering where to play. Anyone interested phone **Running Promotions** on 64-324. **John Greenfield**

Wellington

The **Cricketers** have reverted to weekend gigs after dropping **Sneaky Feelings** for a covers band and disco. They will vary their licensing hours depending on gigs. A sigh of relief passed over the town after the possibility of losing weekends of local and touring bands... tenders are out for the operation of the Council's **Chews Lane** underage venue, but the restrictive contract riders make it a dodgy proposition... **No 9** have their album *Nowhere Fast* re-released on Jayrem and are touring north in August and September... also out on Jayrem is the *Hardedge* compilation compiled by Gerald Dwyer with **No Idea**, **Compos Mentis**, **Five Year Mission** and **Flesh D-Vice**... **Compos Mentis** have their final vinyl, a 7" EP 'Backlash' out backed with three tracks from South African band Powerage... **Besser and Prosser** have released (*Volume II*) *Forms and Gestures*, music for piano and violin on Kiwi Pac-
CONTINUED ON PAGE 42

EMI Factory Closes Pressing Plant for NZ Music

New Zealand's only record pressing plant, EMI in Lower Hutt, is to close at the end of September — a move that has major implications, particularly for this country's independent record labels.

The decision, which EMI attribute to the rise in CD and cassette sales, means that all vinyl records sold here will have to be imported. Several of the major labels, whose parent companies have pressing plants overseas, already import many or all of their albums. But for the indies, who will have to send their tapes overseas to be pressed, the closure means greatly increased costs in administration and freight, which could result in higher record prices

and fewer local acts being released.

"I think it's wrong in a country the size of New Zealand that we can't sustain some type of pressing plant," says Tim Murdoch, head of WEA and president of the Recording Industry Association. "If the pressings are going to be sourced out of Australia, you're at the whim of the Australian companies, and obviously there will be less records released, as New Zealand companies will have to be more selective than they were in the past."

With several companies already importing their general release records, prices shouldn't immediately be affected, but the inconvenience of ordering stock from Australia will be tested during the peak selling months leading to Christmas. "The acid test will be to see how long things are held up by Customs for clearance," says Brian Pitts of Virgin Records.

The plant closure is a nuisance, says Jim Moss of Jayrem: "It's going to make it very difficult for our sort of business, which tends to be in smaller runs. We're going to have to take more risks. How many do you get pressed? What if something takes off, how long are you out of stock? We'll just have to adapt, I guess."

Distribution through the major companies is one way for the inde-

pendent labels to keep in operation, says Tim Murdoch. "We're looking after Warrior and Maui Records and they won't notice any difference. They'll still bring their tapes to us and we'll make the records, just the same."

"What worries me," says Jim Moss, "is all these little labels — the Skank Records, Meltdown, Rational, the list goes on — what are they going to do? They're a valuable part of the industry. If Skank Records want to do their own thing, how are they going to do it? I don't think they should be told, 'Oh you've got to go along to Jim Moss, and let him organise it for you,' and I'm the big brother who distributes the records. It would worry me if those small labels all ended up being cassette labels, because a lot of people like records."

"It's as though the whole thing has been brought upon us, and internationally the decision's been made, and for lovers of black plastic, tough is the message. It's almost impossible to sell records to some retail chains now — all they're interested in is compact discs and cassettes." With capital tied up in CDs, stores are stocking less vinyl records.

But vinyl isn't dead — there will always be acts that sell better on vinyl than other forms, just as some acts

(reggae, for example) sell mostly on cassette. Also, although the death-knell for the 7" single has been sounded for some time, that is the most convenient medium for radio to use. "Are radio going to accept cartridges — what's going to happen?" says Moss. "If radio are going to support New Zealand music, and the vinyl manufacturing is being taken away from us, we're going to have to get together and work out some alternative for getting music on radio."

While the increase in CD and cassette sales is one reason for the decline in vinyl production here, some companies have been importing all their records recently. Tim Murdoch: "There are two sides to the coin. CBS and Polygram, two of the biggest companies, took their pressings away from EMI because they could get them cheaper in Australia. That's probably accelerated this situation. I can understand CBS because they own their own factory in Australia, whereas Polygram don't have a factory there, so they are now in a reliant situation."

"I was always very conscious of that — that we didn't have a factory to call on in Australia, and that EMI had looked after us for a number of years, so we should support them. I think that had the New Zealand industry been a little more long-sighted and

supportive, 'support your local sheriff,' this wouldn't have come about. But then you'll get the argument that the service from EMI was second-rate, and at times I'd have to agree with them." One music company source said it could sometimes be quicker to order pressings from Australia than locally.

Is there any chance that another pressing plant will be started? Modern pressing equipment would be available from American companies that have closed — because of the decline in vinyl production. Brian Pitts: "The fall in the manufacturing figures for LPs is so dramatic there's no reason to suppose that the same rate of fall isn't going to continue." Tim Murdoch thinks it's unlikely that a co-operative pressing plant will happen — the RIANZ's constitution prevents it from setting one up — but Jim Moss says, "There are already some noises being made. I've had a couple of calls from people who are reasonably financial who are interested in putting a group together."

"We're just going to have to adapt. If it looks as if there isn't going to be a New Zealand plant, if the efforts of the people looking at buying a plant don't come off, I'll just have to visit Australia and get organised."

Chris Bourke

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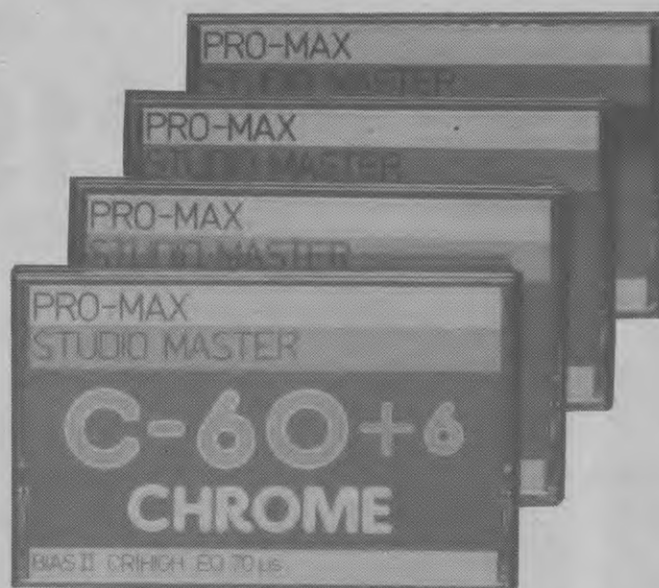
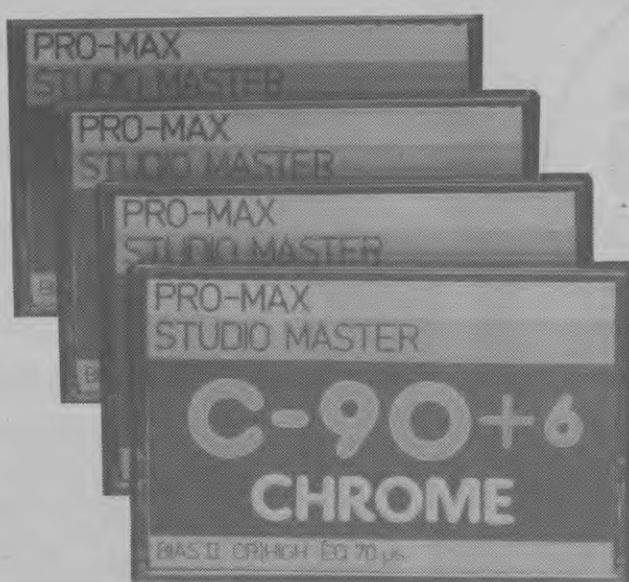


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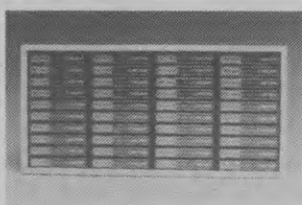
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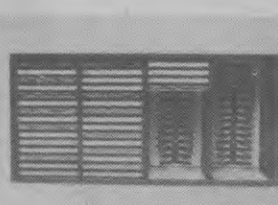
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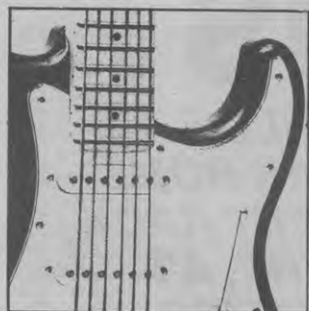
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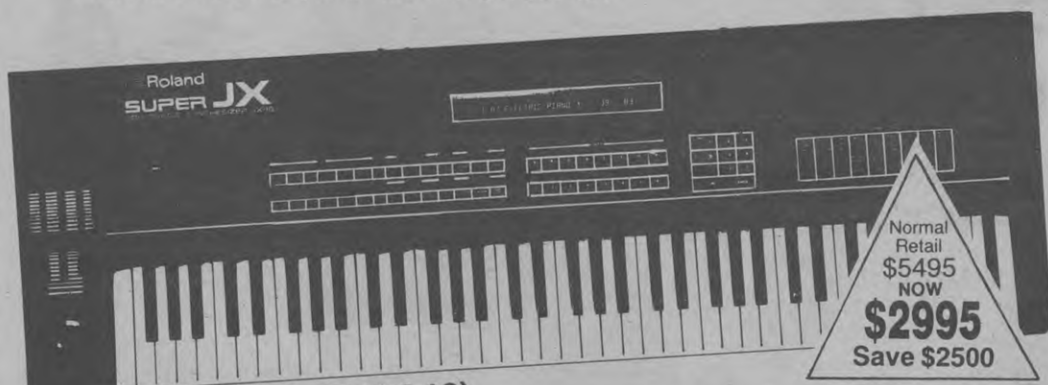
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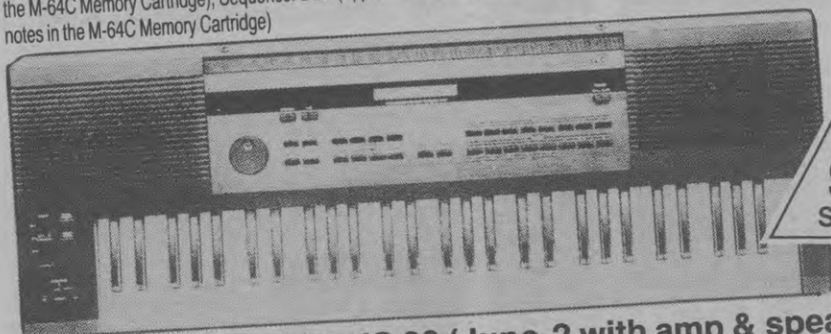
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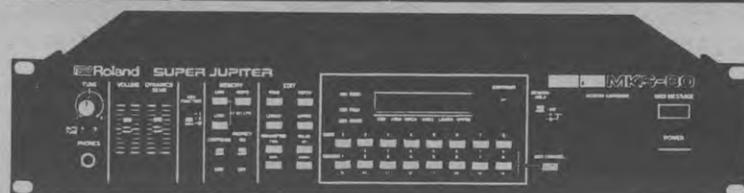
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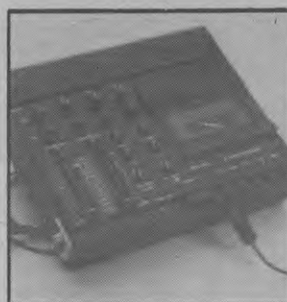
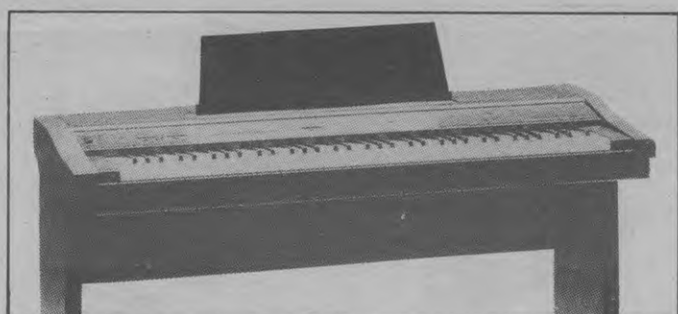
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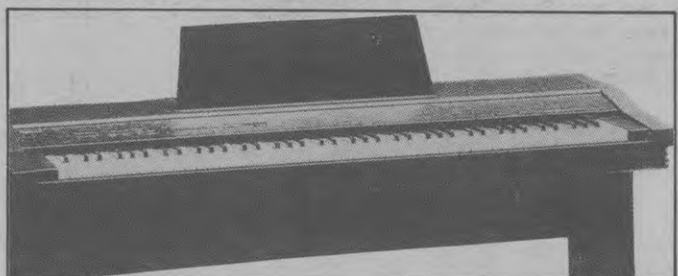
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Force Fed



A Certain Ratio

The sound of A Certain Ratio has always found its way into this country's ears. Albums like *Sextet* and *I'd Like to See You Again* are regulars on student radio — but then again, so is 'Bella Lugosi's Dead.'

What I could never figure out is why 'Wild Party' was never flogged as the frenetic dance single that it is, or why the cosy melodies of 'Life's a Scream' never got on *RWP*. That's not being naive, for by accident or design, ACR are now making a music that beats Top 10 dance songs at their own game.

Martin Moscrop blames two things for ACR's 10-year lack of mainstream success, their early arrogance and their record company. Both have been left behind: their new album *Force* was the last recording the group made for Factory Records and Moscrop now recalls their old "fuck dance let's art" days with a chuckle.

"For the first six years of our existence," he notes, "I don't think we ever had a melody in a song — we were only interested in rhythm. When we got tired of punk in 78-79, we started listening to things like

Kraftwerk and Brian Eno — but at the same time we were listening to James Brown, the Ohio Players and Parliament, and we got into funk rhythms. From that we went to South American, African and reggae music. Rhythm's more immediate, more aggressive if you're young. Although a lot of young people nowadays are interested in a tune, we never were.

"As we grew up we found that melodies can be nice as well and that's what makes our newer music more accessible. But if you listen to *Force*, you can't pick any particular influence — there are so many styles in there."

Perhaps the most unified ACR album was *I'd Like to See You Again*, recorded in Italy.

"Yeah, a lot of people like that one. We hate it. That was a real bad album, the down-point of our 10 years of existence. The band wasn't

getting on together very well so we just went into the studio and made up a few songs. That's why it took so long for *Force* to come out; after that we decided that never again were we going to record an LP until we had so many songs together that we had to throw 10 away."

Matters of Factory

Moscrop picks *Sextet* and *Force* as his favourite albums, saying that the band was "getting back on its feet" during the period when they released the singles 'Wild Party' and 'Life's a Scream.' Nowadays he accepts the peaks and troughs of the creative process but, I ask, wasn't it Factory Records that tolerated — and financed — the band's peaks and troughs for 10 years?

"There's nothing for them to tolerate — they don't do anything. When we say we want to do an album, we go into the studio and do it. They have no say in the matter, which I think is ridiculous."

This state of *laissez faire* peaked when *Force* was released in the UK. It sold out in two weeks but replacement copies of the album didn't find

their way into shops for another six.

"We've got a professional attitude," insists Moscrop. "We go in, book the studio time ourselves, record the LP, produce it ourselves, do all the artwork and get everything together and the record company don't even get the record into the shops. We just got sick of it. We do all this work and nothing happens. In the past, it's partly been us to blame because of our not being interested in selling records, but lately we've been writing more accessible material. And the tunes that we've written since *Force* [nb: now nine months old] are probably even more commercial. But, ah, when I say *commercial*, they're not bland..."

Indeed, ACR are many things, but "bland" isn't one of them. *Force* swings like a well-oiled hinge, gathering up a lot of what ACR have done before, smoothing it out and cleaning it up. Its ancestry (quirky jazz, howling tape loops, easy funk) is as diverse and as colourful as ever but the songs are played and sung with the dizzy optimism that first broke surface on 'Life's a

Scream.' Maybe it was this album that gave ACR the confidence to leave their Factory dwelling; the Benny Bad-man jive of 'Mickey Way' and cute punch of 'Only Together' are the sound of a band more confident and positive than ever before.

Breakout

After recording the album the band lost keyboardist Andy Connell — a departure, however amicable, that must have further emphasised the band's new attitude. Connell had taken accessibility a step further and formed a slick trio named Swing Out Sister in his spare time. Their recording contract was a year overdue when Connell, along with drummer Martin Jackson and vocalist Corinne Drewery, cut their debut album, *It's Better to Travel*. That, along with some killer singles ('Breakout' and 'Surrender') have made SOS hot chart property.

The similarity between the two bands (the 12" 'Breakout' beat is 'Knife Slits Water' but faster) is not contrived, but it's there — hence my desire to see both alongside each other on *RWP*, *Shazam*, the lot.

Moscrop speaks of SOS's record company pressure almost with admiration and seems to enjoy their pursuit of definite goals. Connell keeps in touch with his colleagues and Corinne even pops up on *Force*'s 'Bootsy' for guest vocals. Moscrop seems to feel obliged to talk about "commercial" bands; in truth I suspect that the ancient problem of what is and isn't commercial is no longer something he worries about.

Moscrop finished by asking about touring New Zealand — "Do y'think many people'd come?" As far as summer tours go, I can't be bothered with Bowie and I can't afford the Pepsi guy, so maybe A Certain Ratio will drop in after they've finished their next album for Christmas '87, and give me a "Best Live" name for my "Ten Best of '87" list. In the meantime, everyone — the band included — has a "best" in *Force*. It's aptly named; if you haven't been swindled into buying a whole heap of dullard HM-rock albums, *Force* really is a piece of vinyl you should reckon with.

Chad Taylor



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Let's get Physical Knightshade Box On

Out for the Count, The Physical You . . . current contenders in the heavyweight league are Knightshade. With two hard-hitting EPs under their belt, a nationwide tour with the Angels completed, and a new live album, things have never looked or sounded better for this Hamilton rock group.

Before their second Angels' show at the Galaxy, Knightshade's singer Wayne Elliot shares his whiskey and his thoughts. "We're almost a professional support band now," he says. "It's more the record company's idea, to get more people to see us."

Knightshade have supported many overseas acts, from Deep Purple to Stryper, and have had varying experiences doing so. "I swear I'll never treat a support band like we've been treated sometimes," says Elliot. "The Angels have been the best treatment we've had so far. We respect other musicians no matter how good or bad they are — we're all in the same boat. If we all pull

together the industry's got to get better instead of, y'know 'We're better than them, they're better than us.' That's why quite often [if double-billed] we'll go on first. We don't really care where we go in a performance. If we're good we'll stand out and people will remember us no matter what playing order we are."

Knightshade have been going six years now, though Elliot has been the only constant member in that time. "Each new person we add to the group adds more professionalism and everyone's got their act together. Our guitarists Rik and Gavin are very compatible, they work in excellently. The other guy we had, Paul, was excellent too, his

personality and to get on with on the road. He's just a real cruiser, but he cruised a bit too much, he never practised and his musical tastes were heavier than what ours were too.

"Our music is becoming softer but it's not intentional. It's just when we're writing we concentrate on getting the songs more melodic and something more danceable to a wider range of people, cos if we don't we gonna starve. We have to work jobs as well, we don't take any wages or anything out of the band. All the money goes straight back into the records and things like that. We've paid for everything so far. This is the first year we've actually got some record company help — it makes a difference."

Blood & Money

Reaction is the label that got this quintet on vinyl. "Glyn Tucker has actually paid for studio time, helped on production, things like that, out of his own pocket. It was unheard of before from our point of view. Playing our sort of music you've got to work twice as hard and be twice as good as anyone else, cos it's not mainstream — you haven't got that selling potential."

Do you think metal is becoming more popular in New Zealand, though?

"I hate the term metal, it's so derogatory. There are so many con-



Knightshade (L-R): Rik Bernards, Jon Bell, Gavin Lind, Wayne Elliot, Alan Grady.

notations to it, you know, you get this thump, thump headbanger bloody image and it's not that. You get some of the best musicians in the world playing heavy metal and you can't get this through to people. To be tight playing heavy metal is 10 times harder than being tight playing a real trendy easy beat.

"The hard rock core isn't getting any better, we're not getting any more followers, they've just got more stauncher. Quite often I've seen people that have travelled from one end of the island to the other to come and see us for a weekend. There's no other type of music that would have fans like that."

What did you think of National MP Graham Lee's comments on metal?

"A person that is that closed-minded I can only say I'd hate to have him in a position of power over any people because that was the most bigoted one-sided opinion I've ever heard. I'd like to sit down and have a chat to the guy, but I don't think he'd be able to handle it. He'd want to get rid of me like a pimple out of his face, cos he just doesn't

stand for anybody else's opinion. They shouldn't have even put that interview on TV. I don't see what use it did anybody except making him look a complete idiot."

Knightshade are now at the stage where they only perform original songs. "I'd sooner have 10 people applauding for the band's song than a cover of somebody else's and having a thousand people out there screaming more, more."

Warp Factor

Songwriting duties are shared equally among the band. Are the songs written from personal experiences?

"Yes, a lot of them, with a bit of humour. I'm a great believer in humour. I don't get depressed and think about some relationship I had in the past that didn't work out. With 'Out for the Count' boxing was something I could bring in to it. It's just my warped humour. I just hope other people pick up on it! 'Blood and Money' is like a slightly political musician's anthem looking at the world and saying you're getting on with making your dollar and not

giving a stuff who you hurt along the way, whereas we're down the bottom of the ladder."

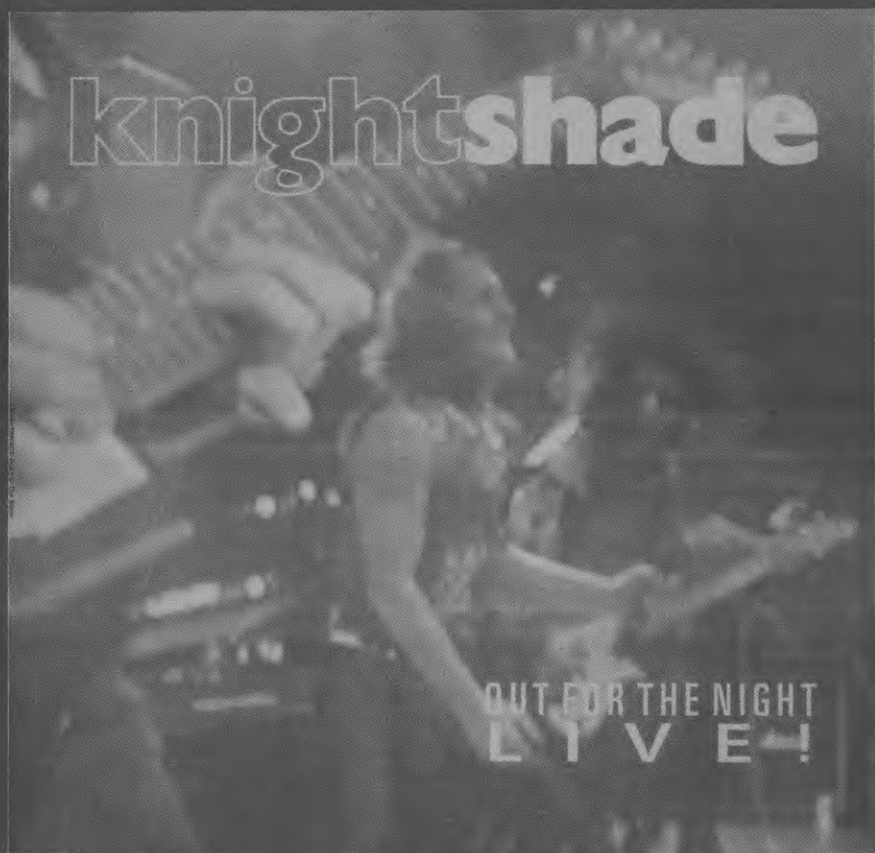
It was great to see *Our World* presenter Gael Ludlow helping Knightshade out on backing vocals for the *RWP* special, but it appears that was a one-off performance.

"She's pretty busy with her own TV things and that, so we were just lucky she was available to do it that night. I'd quite enjoy her on the road with us. It would be good — keep the boys a bit quiet."

Ludlow does all the main harmonies on both EPs; live, bassist Jon Bell does them. Over the next three months Knightshade plan to write some new material and do a video for 'The Physical You,' but their big goal is to get to the States. "We all want to go," says Elliot, "we just need a sponsor for the initial promotion. I'm sure we could make them money."

But it seems most important to the band is their fans. "We appreciate all the people that have followed and supported us over the years. Without them we'd be nothing."

Geoff Dunn



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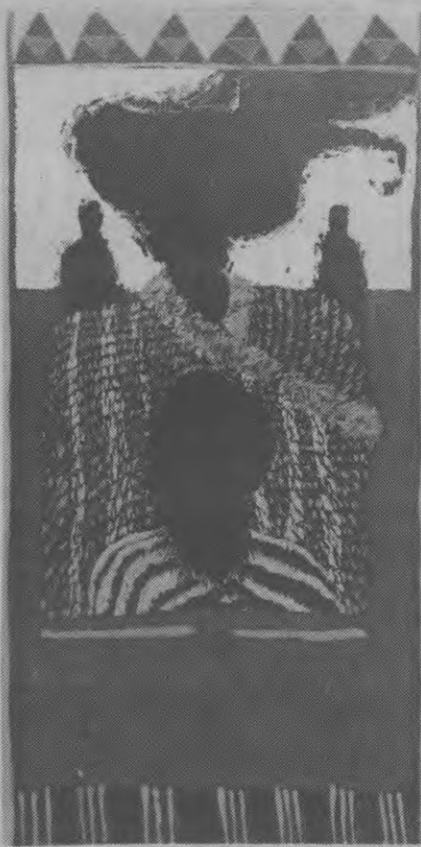
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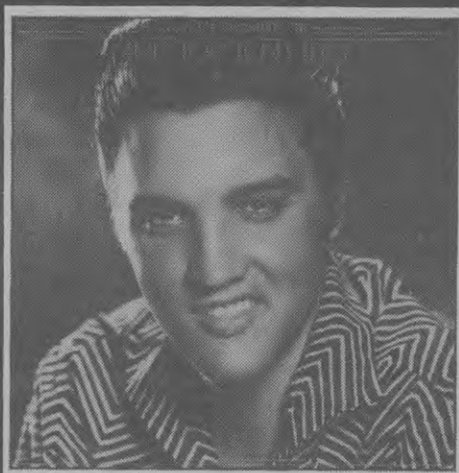
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The Men They Couldn't Hang Country's New Breed ● By Kerry Doole

Did you see the shoot-out at this year's Grammys? The three hottest young stars in country music had just performed the songs for which they'd been nominated for country record of the year.

The TV camera caught their tense, unsmiling faces as they awaited the verdict. And the winner? Ronnie Milsap, for *Lost in the 50s Tonight*. Talk about an anti-climax! What is the point of a three-way gunfight in which no one wins?

"Yep, it was pretty strange," says Steve Earle. "If they'd kept the camera on Dwight and I, it would have been classic. We sort of looked at each other and [rolls his eyes]. You have to remember that 70 percent of the Grammys' voters know nothing about country music, so they just ticked the most familiar name."

Such ignorance isn't going to last much longer. Steve Earle, Dwight Yoakam and Randy Travis are spearheading the single most exciting movement in American music right now, the revitalisation of country music. "New country," "new traditionalism," "hard country" — whatever peg you hang their hats on, there's no

denying this crucial trio and their peers are pumping young, virile blood into a form that had long lapsed into lethargy.

With some honourable exceptions, country music over the past 15 to 20 years had prostituted itself in its desire to cross over to a wider, pop-oriented audience. Desperately keen to shed its "hicks from the sticks" image, it dressed itself up in sequins and a slick, glossy sound.

Suburban Cowboys

Around the time of the *Urban Cowboy* fad, this formula did strike gold, but those raised on the real honky tonk music — you know, the stuff that'll have you crying in your beer or tearing a juke joint apart — were left wandering through a wasteland populated by just a few faithful flag-bearers.

Dwight Yoakam is an angry spokesman for the new breed: "That glossed-over pop that became part of the reality of Nashville in the 70s never had anything to do with country," he says. "They've aligned themselves with pop. When these kids come to our shows and say, 'We've never liked country music before,' we say, 'That's because you've never heard it!'"

In terms of record sales, the country music market in the 80s had been stagnating, even shrinking, but all observers agree that 1986 was

a watershed year. Country is becoming cool again, and this time it is because it is stressing true grit, not glitz.

Emmylou Harris, along with her now-legendary former partner Gram Parsons, deserves credit as an inspiration for the new artists. Ricky Scaggs, Rodney Crowell and Albert Lee all cut their chops in Harris's Hot Band of the 70s. In the early 80s, Scaggs and singers like John Anderson, George Strait and Reba McEntire have helped keep at least some country honest, and now they're being joined by a posse of young pretenders. Young?

"Country music is adult-oriented, so kids in country can be 30," says Nashville producer Tony Brown. "Because the cycle of change in country is so long, young artists stay stars, get older, gain weight and become uncool. So who wants to identify with those older country artists? Now young people can identify with country acts again."

"If Georgia Satellites and Bruce Springsteen think country is cool, the kids will too. Country artists are influencing rockers, who in turn are influencing the consumers." So while Kenny Rogers isn't hip, even LA punks love Dwight Yoakam.

Travesties

But based on records sold, Randy Travis has the draw on Steve Earle and Dwight Yoakam. Get this for a statistic: Travis is the first country act ever to go platinum with a debut album within a year of its release.

While fly-by-nighters like the Beastie Boys get all the hype, this reserved 27-year-old from North Carolina has quietly sold more than a million copies of *Storms of Life*, plus truckloads of chart-topping country singles like 'Digging Up Bones,' 'One the Other Hand' and 'There's No Place Like Home.' His followup album *Always and Forever* has just been released.

Not too shabby for someone who little more than a year ago was still scrubbing catfish in between gigs at the Nashville Palace. But Travis is no novice. "I've been singing since I was eight," he says, "and been serious about it in a business sense since I was 17, when I entered a talent contest and won."

After a six year stint at a North Carolina country club, he moved to industry centre Nashville, Tennessee. Under the guise of Randy Ray, Traywick (his real name) put out a low budget LP for an indie label in 1983, but on signing to Warner Brothers he was advised to adopt the Travis name. He's taken the country world by storm, but Travis still seems bemused by his success. "It is hard to believe, especially on my first album," he says. "I'm very lucky, I guess."

Count Emmylou Harris as a fan: "For a while," she says, "you were wondering who was going to carry on these traditions, because most of the voices were pop-sounding. They lacked the edge that can take those country ballads and wrench every single bit of feeling and emotion from

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20



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Jim Marshall, has been involved in the music industry for an extraordinary 50 years. He started in 1937, at age 14, as a singer in a band. By the middle late forties he was a professional drummer in England. He went on to teach many fine drummers in the fifties and sixties, including Brian Saunders of Johnny Kidd and the Pirates, Micky Waller of the original Jeff Beck Group, Nicky Underwood (Blackmore, Ian Gillan) and Mitchell. Marshall opened a music shop in London specialising in drums. Many of his former students brought in their groups and young players like Pete Townshend of the Who were soon asking Marshall to stock guitars and amplifiers. Realising that many bassists were unhappy with the sound they were getting, he began designing compact 18" bass speaker cabinets. In association with the engineer Ken Bran he started designing a prototype 50 watt lead amplifier in consultation with guitarists like Townshend, Brian Poole and "Big" Jim Sullivan. The first Marshall amplifier was issued in 1962 and met with instant acceptance from British musicians looking for a bigger sound with a full, rich tonality and smooth distortion characteristics. The company grew rapidly. The 50 watt lead amps or "heads" in tandem with the distinctive Marshall 4 x 12" Celestion- equipment speaker cabinets became a dominant force. Townshend provided the impetus for a more powerful 100 watt version working together with eight 12" speakers in two separate cabinets mounted "piggy-back". The forerunner of the pioneering Marshall "stack" concept, this set-up reflected the rock guitarist's need for a massive power output with the added visual impact provided by these high powered monoliths. Enter Jimi Hendrix. The fiery young guitarist was introduced to Jim Marshall and a long and fruitful collaboration began. With Marshall, Hendrix found a new type of amplifier that could help him get his unique, super charged style of playing across. Along with the Who and Cream, Hendrix helped gain worldwide acceptance for Marshall. Many other rock musicians followed, helping Marshall refine and develop his growing product line of lead and bass amps. Marshall was also busy developing a series of potent and versatile combo amplifiers as a cost and space-effective option to the larger stacks. Recently, a major re-design of the whole line by Marshall's Research & Development team (still lead by Marshall and Bran) has resulted in the breakthrough JCM 800 series. After 25 years the "secret" of the Marshall sound remains the same: **producing the most massive and powerful output around without ever sacrificing any of the tonal quality which has made the amplifier an authentic "industry legend."**

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them. Then along comes Randy and everyone goes, 'Where did he come from?' He has a wonderful voice in the Merle Haggard and Waylon Jennings school."

Travis would sooner crawl across Death Valley in summer than cross over musically. "We don't give trying to cross over any thought at all. I don't care to sing anything but country music. That's all I'll ever sing or listen to!"

Top country songwriter Paul Overstreet wrote three songs on *Storms of Life*, and he sees Travis-style hard country versus "watered-down pop-country" as being akin to "100 percent cotton versus part polyester. Purer is better."

Guitar Man

Whereas Travis only occasionally records his own songs, Steve Earle and Dwight Yoakam have earned their spurs as singer/songwriters.

It is Earle's songwriting that has attracted tags like "the Springsteen of new country," and many are predicting his rock and roll edge will make him the man the Springsteen and Mellancamp audience will take to heart.

Last year's debut album *Guitar Town* won him rock and country fans, even if it has yet to achieve the success of Travis and Yoakam. But his new album *Exit Zero* is just out, and it's expected to make more of an impact on AOR ra-

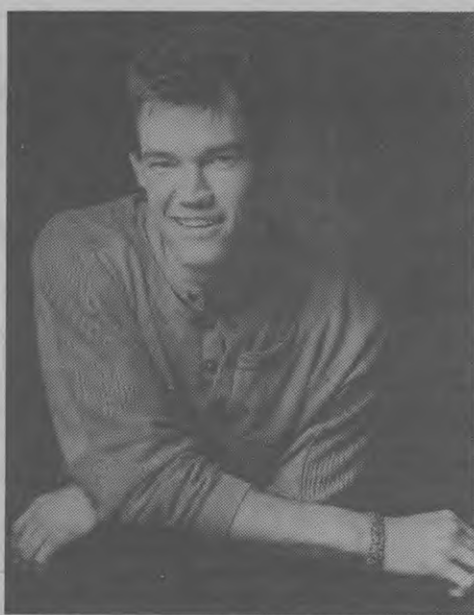
dio. "They'll have less problems with it," says Earle. "It is bigger-sounding, but I don't think the spirit is any different."

Of the trio, this 33-year-old Texan troubadour has the longest track record. As a young bohemian in the early 70s, he played with respected singer/songwriters Guy Clark and Townes Van Zandt, and Earle still sees himself "more as the last of that wave than a newcomer. I was the kid of that group, but I must have been passed out or drunk when they handed out the record deals!"

He survived, just, as a songwriter, hung out in Mexico, and put together a rockabilly trio in Nashville in 1982. "Rockabilly was something that had always appealed to me. My eccentric electric guitar style lent itself to that. I developed a lot of confidence as a performer then, and it did influence my guitar and vocal sounds."

Earle acknowledges the rise of new country, but insists that "it's an accident. Obviously Dwight, Randy and I weren't getting together and conspiring. We weren't even speaking! All three of us have brought a younger audience to country music with three completely different records. The fact the three of us exist disproves Dwight's theory that there's only one true form of country music."

The reference to "Dwight's theory" leads us into one of the most fascinating elements of new



Randy Travis: cotton vrs polyester.

traditionalism — an ideological debate about truth and purity that gets every bit as heated as political debate. Earle and Yoakam have a highly-developed awareness of their art and its historical roots, and they explain themselves eloquently.

Feudin' Cousins

Their differing approaches to country music flared into a personal feud that was only recently resolved: "It began at a show in San Francisco about a year ago," says Earle. "We played a good show, got an encore, then Dwight walked on. Three songs in, he says, 'These fuckers from Nashville don't know what they're doing, now we're going to show you the real thing.'"

"My crew had to lock me in the dressing room. I was going to kill the s.o.b! Then we started taking shots at each other in the press, and yes, I did write 'Dwight Yoakam eats sushi' in an elevator. But at the Grammys we decided it had gone too far. All three of us have realized we've changed more in country music in one year than it has changed in the last five or six."

Dwight now laughs off their rivalry. "Steve and I were unfairly and unjustly paired," he says. "There are certain comparisons. We're both new and doing things based in country, but Steve would be the first to say he's not doing traditional things with country. What he's doing is good music, and he has obviously shown it is important."

Earle: "What Dwight is all about is preserving a form of music, and that's great. What I'm all about is seeing how I can push the outside of the envelope to bring in new listeners. If you don't bring them in, the music dies, as the audience gets old and dies!"

Kentucky Reign

He wears his traditionalist tag as proudly as his ever-present cowboy hat, but Dwight Yoakam has a far wider, less traditional country audience than either Travis or Earle. You'll find Yoakam albums indexed between Wall of Voodoo, Hank Williams and X in his fans' collections. Attribute this to a background decidedly unconventional for a singer/songwriter who proclaims himself a "new generation West Coast honky tonker."

You see, this 30-year-old Kentuckian was rejected by the Nashville country music establishment as sounding "too country" a decade ago — a rebuff which still rankles. "They didn't want to hear about a Dwight Yoakam record even three years ago," he says.

Los Angeles beckoned. "One reason I moved west was the encouraging sign I saw from people like John Fogerty, Emmylou, and the Gram Parsons influence there. Fogerty's *Blue Ridge Rangers* LP in 1973 was closer to Hank Williams than anything coming out of Nashville."

After struggling around the honky tonk circuit, Dwight hooked into the bizarre LA cowpunk scene. "By 1983, the cowpunk movement had taken hold via bands like Rank and File, Lone Justice and Blood on the Saddle. When that crowd became a reality, we were able to play the rock clubs." In turn, the Husker Du and Violent Femmes fans dug his hard country sound, and they've stuck with him even though he's now reached the regular country crowd.

Yoakam's debut LP *Guitars, Cadillacs, Etc, Etc*, with its two hit singles 'Honky Tonk Man' and the title song, have gone gold, and he is confident his new album *Hillbilly Deluxe* will silence his detractors. "It should eliminate any questions in mind about us changing our style or deviating from what I said I'd do, which is to continue playing country music in as pure a fashion while still putting my personal fingerprint on it."

"All these people saying, 'It's a fad, he's riding on the coat-tails of a novelty, he wears suits with rhinestones and a hat, there's no substance' — we'll see in five years if I've run out of stuff then! People write off things that come from Hollywood as trendy, but that scene didn't create Los Lobos or myself. It embraced us."

Return to Sender

Sceptics find many reasons to distrust Yoakam — his LA years, good looks, that oft-displayed derriere, his eloquence, sharp dressing and sharp videos. If some image and marketing consultants concocted a blueprint of a new star to revitalise country music, they couldn't have done much better than design a Dwight Yoakam.

But have faith. Dwight is the real McCoy, a classic country artist of both sincerity and substance. He possesses a melodic, oft melancholy voice with an attractive quiver, and he writes hurtin' and honky tonk songs with the best of them: witness the new 'Johnson's Love,' about his parents' divorce, and 'Miner's Prayer,' a tribute to his coal-mining grandfather.

Yoakam's favourite phrase is "parameters of the art form." To him, "hillbilly/honky tonk music is an ethnic art form," and he dedicates himself to its preservation. But he denies he's a revivalist act. "I'm not trying to make albums that sound like they're recorded in 1954 in terms of sonics and fidelity. You don't have to throw the artistic baby out with the bath-water. To make country palatable to young people, don't short-sell it. We use modern recording and video techniques, but we maintain integrity of form."

"Both the country music industry and the artists over the last 20 years have shown a lack of respect for their own artform. People like Randy, Steve, and I hope myself, will be able by our track records to command a certain respect for the music."

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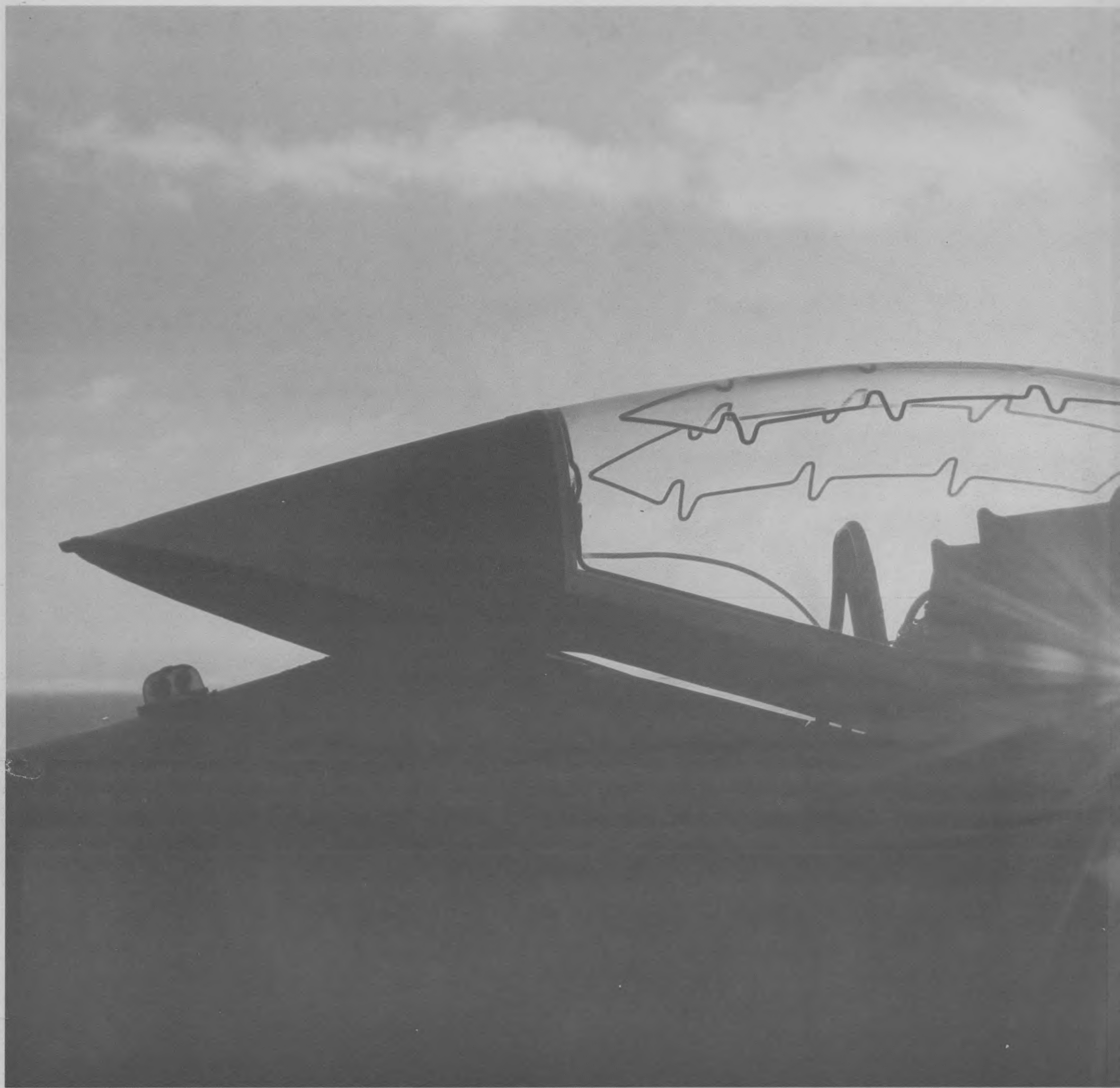
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Danny Boy Dundee Calling

The band with the debut album of the year originally started as Spencer Tracy, but faced with a lawsuit they decided discretion was the better part of bankruptcy and settled on Danny Wilson, a name taken from an old Sinatra movie.

On the line from his Dundee home, singer/songwriter/guitarist Gary Clark explains: "I haven't seen the movie for 10 years but it's my father's favourite film and he keeps moanin' that they never show it on TV. We were pissed off when we had to change our name, as we really liked Spencer Tracy, but we were in a cheeky mood and so we picked on Danny Wilson."

London 0, Dundee 10
Danny Wilson revolves around

brothers Gary and Kit Clark and long-standing friend Ged Grimes, and except for a two-year lapse in London, their music was shaped in Dundee to a sophistication that's characterised other bands from there, like the Average White Band and the Associates.

"There's a heavy soul tradition here — in a lot of pubs there are bands playing Sam and Dave stuff and things like that so there's quite an emphasis on singers and musicianship. I did a stint with a soul band called Mafia who are quite well

known here. They don't rehearse but they know all these songs inside out and you'd be standing on stage and they'd shout at you, 'This one's in D' or whatever and you had to be pretty quick to pick it up.

"Band's in Dundee seem to be more free and less part of a scene than say Glasgow, say. That's why I live in Dundee, you can detach yourself a wee bit."

What was the reason for going to London?

"Ged and I went to try and get a record deal. We lived in a wee hov-



Kit Clark (top), Gary Clark, Ged Grimes.

el for a while. There were so many bands there and their main objective was to latch onto what the week's big thing was, and a lot of them got signed on the strength of that.

"We got disillusioned and decided to move back to Dundee and do our own thing, which is the best decision we've ever made."

Is London still a big magnet for Scottish bands?

"Everything seems to have to go through there, but now recorded companies are shifting their arses up to Scotland and checking bands out, whereas before you had to go to them.

"When Ged and I moved to London, the press and record companies had shifted their attention from there to the provinces. And here's Ged and I sitting in our wee London hovel reading reviews of some of our mates' bands in *Melody Maker* playing some tiny pub in Dundee. And we thought, there's something wrong here!" (Laughs)

This fashionable shift of attention to the provinces must have made it easier to get a record contract?

"Well, we made loads of demos and sent them to most of the record companies, including Virgin. These were demos of half the album and they were all rejected. It wasn't until we got a live review in the *NME* written by a fan of ours, Bob Flynn, that the record companies were interested. They got in touch with us through him.

"Virgin were the first to turn up and we gave them the demos they'd heard before, but this time they thought they were marvellous. WEA offered us more money but Virgin seemed to have more integrity — they would actually tell you the truth if they didn't like a song, whereas WEA were going 'No problem, you can work with any producer you want, just sign here...' We got a suspicion, so we signed with Virgin."

Countdown to Ecstasy

The album *Meet Danny Wilson* is a timeless, placeless, priceless gem of craftsmanship that exists on its own terms. Like the Associates and Steely Dan, Clark's two biggest influences, the music on the album has been created independent of fashion or environment.

"That's what we want to do and by doing that the freedom you have to use different influences is so open. We wanted to bare our influences rather than hide them. Where I draw the line is where I get accused of plagiarism, but I'm not ashamed to

talk of influences. Steely Dan's *Countdown to Ecstasy* is one of my all-time favourites and they were so adventurous up to *Pretzel Logic*."

Songs like 'Nothing Ever Goes to Plan' and 'Five Friendly Aliens' also show that Steely Dan's vocalist Donald Fagen had an impact on Clark:

"I love him as a vocalist. My favourite singers would be him, Stevie Wonder, and earlier than that, Nat King Cole and Sinatra. They've got the same ability to sit back on a song.

"I used to listen to my dad's old Sinatra records and that gives singing a sense of importance if you listen to people like that rather than those that just droll."

'Davy', a song often accused of being naive because of its innocence and honest soul, opens the album.

"It was written when we talking about coming home from London, but it's written from the point of view of the person back home rather than the person who sees London. It applies to so many people and situations although it is written from my experience, and like all my songs they're quite honest and personal. It's supposed to be innocent."

Sandwiched in between 'Davy' and one of the album's other brilliantly uplifting songs, the single 'Mary's Prayer', lies 'Aberdeen':

"That song could be about anywhere. It's quite tongue-in-cheek. Songs about towns are always about New York or Chicago and I just wanted to write about somewhere ordinary. I'd finished the song completely but I didn't have the title, just the syllables 'la de da', so I asked Kit to name somewhere really ordinary with three syllables and he said 'Aberdeen'."

And so to 'Mary's Prayer', a single so fine it hurts, but it's disappeared in the race to find the latest Terence Trent D'Arby or anything that can be easily recognised as credible. 'Mary's Prayer' is too good to be No 1:

"There's still time yet, it's starting to pick up in other countries and I've heard it a couple of times on the radio in the last few weeks. I think Virgin are going to re-release it here."

And it's important to sell records?

"Yes, it's important that we pay the record company back so they'll give us money to make another album. Their budgets are so low that if you're not making them some money your career is in jeopardy, and we haven't got over that hump yet because it cost a lot of money to make the album. But I'm quite

sure they'll give us money for another."

Clark was brought up a Catholic, and that upbringing comes out in the imagery of 'Mary's Prayer', 'You Remain an Angel' and 'Steam Train to the Milky Way':

"I'm not a practising Catholic now, I'm spiritual but not religious. The imagery from the old hymns is glorious and there's touches of that in the lyrics.

"But 'You Remain an Angel' is a song about a friend of mine who got into trouble doing smack. 'Steam Train' is spiritual, it almost wrote itself like a wee journey in my head. It's about returning home, but where is your home — is it a physical place or is it inside you?"

The song celebrating Clark's granny's golden wedding, 'Ruby's Golden Wedding' has received a lot of attention because of the character of the song and Lester Bowie's Brass Fantasy Horns. Did you need the expertise of the famous jazz men?

"Yes, I don't think we could've got that sound in Scotland. The Brass Fantasy is so flexible. If you listen to 'I Won't Be Here When You Get Home' his eight-piece band sounds like a big Tijuana band, and on 'Ruby's Golden Wedding' it sounds like a half pit-head brass band with a bit of New Orleans. Their attitude is unique but we've got a lot in common as they take music from all over the place, and that's one of the reasons Lester worked with us because the demos we gave him used so many influences. We didn't want the ordinary funk Earth Wind and Fire-type horns, we wanted richness and character."

Did your gran appreciate 'Ruby's Golden Wedding'?

"When I brought the tapes back I gave them to Mum and Dad but I left off 'Ruby's Golden Wedding' because I knew they would play it to her. Kit eventually played it to my Dad and he snuck a cassette out to her and she was very flattered and emotional about it.

"We played a gig in Edinburgh and she came and saw us but I didn't know she was in the audience. I'm dreading the New Year because I'm sure she's going to ask me to sing it.

"Lester Bowie asked me if he could cover that song and I was incredibly flattered."

And then you asked him for a million dollars?

"[Laughs] No, I said he could have it for nuthin'."

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Starting the month off is **Simply Red**, with concerts in Auckland on August 11, Wellington the 12th, Christchurch the 14th... blues guitarist and singer **John Hammond** plays Auckland on August 16... then it's **Billy Idol**'s turn, with two shows at the Mt Smart big top on August 20 & 22, with **National Anthem** supporting... the **Johnnys** embark on a nationwide tour, supported at some gigs

by Aussies **Olympic Sideburns**... **Steve Gilpin** comes home for a tour, supported by Australian 60s revivalists **Ready Steady Go**... locally, the Winter gigs get underway at the Chateau and Ohakune.

Coming Up... Plenty to look forward to before Christmas... the **Huxton Creepers** play the Gluepot Sept 18 & 19...

the Front Lawn

AUGUST 13

Johnny Specific, Slippery Sam Gluepot
Undertakers, Dr's Orders, Dead Ringers Galaxy
Johnnys Napier
Skindivers Wildlife
Blue Rhythm Hounds Gluepot Cnr
Working Holiday Esplanade
Ebony Sye Hastings
Truda & Lonely Ones Kiwi
Blue Milk Civic
Thin Red Line Palm Nth
Sweet Harmony Cheers

14

Simply Red Christchurch
Satellite Spies Gluepot
Johnnys Ohakune
Keep Civic
Ebony Sye Napier
Not Really Anything City
Skindivers Wildlife
Thin Red Line Palm Nth
Neon Quaver Gluepot Cnr
Working Holiday Esplanade

13, 14, 15

Front Lawn Auck Town Hall

15

Satellite Spies Gluepot
Johnnys New Plymouth
Ardijah Chateau
Kuhtze Band Wildlife
Slippery Sam Esplanade
Keep Civic
Red House Rockers Gluepot Cnr
Hattie & Hounds Gluepot Cnr
Ebony Sye Napier
Not Really Anything City
Woodstock opens, 1969.

16

John Hammond, Hammond Gamble Auckland
Kuhtze Band Wildlife
Ardijah Chateau
Red House Rockers Ohakune
Thin Red Line Manawatu Art Gallery
The King is dead, 1977.

John Hammond

17

Johnnys Wanganui
Farrelli Bros Gluepot Cnr
AI Hunter Shakespeare
Red House Rockers Ohakune
Temptation Paul Williams found dead, gun in hand, 1973.

Olympic Sideburns

18

Johnnys, Olympic Sideburns Wgton Uni
Steve Gilpin, Ready Steady Go Invercargill
Skites Gluepot Cnr
Mick Jagger accidentally shot on 'Ned Kelly' set, 1969.

19

Aotearoa Gluepot
Johnnys Rotorua
Blueprint Civic
Steve Gilpin, Ready Steady Go Timaru
Loose Link Gloss Band City
Ebony Sye Palm Nth
Meg & Fones Gluepot Cnr
Sweet Harmony Fat Mommas
Elvis releases a hunka hunka 'Burning Love', 1973.

20

Billy Idol Mt Smart
Aotearoa Kiwi
Johnnys Hamilton
Johnny Specific, Slippery Sam Gluepot
Bluesbusters Civic
Steve Gilpin, Ready Steady Go Dunedin
Redhouse Rockers Esplanade
Ebony Sye Masterton
Blue Rhythm Hounds Gluepot
Truda & Lonely Ones Kiwi
Heptocrats City

21

Johnnys Galaxy
Aotearoa Gluepot
Working Holiday Civic
Aotearoa Pakuranga
Steve Gilpin, Ready Steady Go Chch
Distractions Esplanade
Burning Skys City
Narcs Ohakune
Seldom Potatoes Pakuranga
Ebony Sye Levin
Neon Quaver Gluepot Cnr
Ohio police tear gas Grace Slick, 1972.

22

Billy Idol Auck
Johnnys Galaxy
Cassandras Ear, Dead Famous People Gluepot
Working Holiday Civic
Steve Gilpin, Ready Steady Go Chch
Burning Skys City
Aotearoa Wgton
Narcs Chateau
Seldom Potatoes Pakuranga
Claytons Gluepot Cnr
Lonely Ones Gluepot Cnr
Distractions Esplanade
Ebony Sye Levin

23

Narcs Chateau
Keith Moon born, 1947.

24

Steve Gilpin, Ready Steady Go Nelson
AI Hunter Shakespeare
Peter Morgan Chateau
Farrelli Bros Gluepot Cnr
Narcs Ohakune
Iron Butterfly's 'In a Gadda Da Vida' out, 1968.

25

Aotearoa Wiri
Skites Gluepot Cnr
Peter Morgan Chateau
Steve Gilpin, Ready Steady Go Wgton
Sweet Harmony Mt Wellington
Elvis Costello is 33 today.

26

Aotearoa Gluepot
Steve Gilpin, Ready Steady Go Windsor Pk
Skoda Green Civic
Meg & Fones Gluepot Cnr
Cradles City
Peter Morgan Chateau
Sweet Harmony Fat Mommas
Hendrix's last gig, Isle of Wight, 1969.

Skoda Green

27

Nick Smith, Chris Knox, Otis Mace Gluepot
Aotearoa Westward Ho
Steve Gilpin, Ready Steady Go Hamilton
Ardijah Mt Wellington
Chameleon Gluepot Cnr
Peter Morgan Chateau
Toot Suite Esplanade
Urge Civic
Heptocrats City
Brian Epstein ODs, 1967.

28

Ardijah Galaxy
Steve Gilpin, Ready Steady Go Wildlife
Olympic Sideburns Gluepot
Headless Chickens City
Aotearoa Westward Ho
No Frills Civic
Cairo Ohakune
Peter Morgan Chateau
Band Contest New Plymouth
Neon Quaver Gluepot Cnr
Ebony Sye Chch

29

Music Festival Abbys, Ak
Ardijah Mon Desir
Olympic Sideburns Gluepot
Steve Gilpin, Ready Steady Go Wildlife
Headless Chickens City
Band Contest New Plymouth
Tunnellers Civic
Cairo Chateau
Warners, Manson Family Wgton
Claytons Gluepot Cnr
Working Holiday Esplanade
Ebony Sye Chch
Blue Rhythm Hounds Gluepot

30

Ready Steady Go Wildlife
Aotearoa Hamilton
Cairo Chateau
UK DJ John Peel, 48 today.

31

AI Hunter Shakespeare
Rock Me Bananas Gluepot Cnr
Cairo Ohakune
'Be My Baby' Phil Spector's first No 1, 1963.

SEPT 1

Farrelli Bros Gluepot Cnr
Mick Jones sacked from Clash, 1983.

2

Enids Sore Throat City
Heptocrats Gluepot Cnr
Bitumen Waltz Civic
Nick Smith Palm Nth
Teddy Pendergrass gives a concert for women only, NY, 1978, and gives everyone a chocolate teddy bear.

3

Joe 90, National Anthem Gluepot
Steve Gilpin, Ready Steady Go Wildlife
Chameleon Gluepot Cnr
Nick Smith Chch
Tunnellers Abbys
Boogie Bros Esplanade
Jamming With Edward Civic
Heptocrats City

4

Sneaky Feelings Gluepot
Narcs Wildlife
Paradox XK4 City
Rock Hard Ohakune
Breathing Cage, Nick Smith Chch
Meg & Fones Gluepot Cnr
Sticky Filth, No 9N Plymouth
Private Practice Civic
Rock Me Bananas Esplanade

5

Narcs Wildlife
Sneaky Feelings Gluepot
Private Practice Civic
Gentle Annie Gluepot Cnr
Breathing Cage, Nick Smith Chch
Rock Hard Chateau
Paradox XK4 City
Sticky Filth, No 9N Plymouth
Freddie Mercury, 41 today.

6

Sonny Day Gluepot Cnr
Rock Hard Chateau
Ginger Baker briefly joins Hawkwind, 1980.

To list your gig send details to: RIU Calendar, Box 5689, Auckland 1.

bluesman **Brownie McGhee** plays five centres in mid September... No 1 album folkie **Suzanne Vega** plays Auckland Town Hall Sept 30... **Stevie Wonder** at Mt Smart on November 21... **Billy Joel** plays Christchurch Nov 21, Wellington Nov 25, Auckland Nov 28, all outdoors... and the big clash: after a Wellington gig December 2, **Michael Jackson** plays Mt Smart Dec 6... over at Western Springs **David Bowie** will play Dec 5 & 6... and rumours for early next year include **U2** and **RIU** cover star **Dwight Yoakam**



Moana of 'Kua Makona' fame will be singing with Aotearoa for their Auckland gigs this month.

Second Idol Show...

A second show for the Billy Idol "Rebel Yell" tour has been announced. As well as the Thursday, August 20 date, Billy will appear under the big top at Mt Smart Stadium on Saturday the 22nd. A feature of the stage set will be a large blow-up of Billy's fist; the show is said to be the biggest indoor rock production yet seen here. In Billy's band are Steve Stevens, guitar; Tommy Price, drums; Kenny Aronson, bass; Suzie Davis, keyboards. The support act for the first show is National Anthem, who have a new single 'Wonderful Reason' out this month.



Joe 90 Are Go! Playing the Gluepot on Sept 3 are Hamilton's eccentric Joe 90, who have refined their nerd image to add a little sex appeal. Their debut 45 'Walls Surrounding Me' is out this month on EMI.



Johnnys: fashion award-winners on tour



One Day Festival

AI Hunter is one of many local acts performing at the Rheineck Music Festival at Abby's in Albert St, Auckland on Saturday August 29. The music will go from 11am to 12pm. Also playing are the Narcs, Skindivers, Red Adair, Soul on Ice, Rhythm Cage, Tommy Adderley, Toot Suite, Society Jazzmen, Neon Quaver and Maria Monet.

Al Hunter

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RECORDS

Los Lobos By the Light of the Moon Slash

Early each morning in East LA, Mexican immigrants wait on street corners hoping to be picked up for a day's work at exploitative rates. Such was the lifestyle that beckoned the wetback about to head north in Los Lobos' last album, *How Will the Wolf Survive?* The heartbreaking lines "Speak softly, don't wake the baby..." And I'll send for you baby, it's just a matter of time" expressed the forlorn faith of centuries of immigrants looking for a better world. *By the Light of the Moon* is part three of Los Lobos' epic novel on the plight of the Mexican in the 20th Century; it's the best album I've heard this year.

The first thing that strikes you is that Los Lobos have played down the rootsy aspects of their sound, wanting to hone their own voice and avoid being a "cartoon of Mexican-Americans" destined to flavour-of-the-month longevity. The accordion player takes a back seat — the emphasis is on songs rather than a style.

So T-Bone Burnett's presence is more overt than before and there is only one traditional Mexican song, 'Prenda del Alma.' But David Hidalgo's aching high tenor and Louis Perez's lyrics remain the key elements in Los Lobos' identity, and they have gone from strength to strength.

Hidalgo's wonderful weary but unbeaten voice relates tough tales home in the superb opener 'One Time, One Night' and 'Is This All There Is?' The news is bad. "All searching for the promised land / Where twisted hands don't mean a thing / Asking to themselves, is this all there is?" In 'The Hardest Time,' surely the finest song ever written about motherhood by a male, a young mother writes, "Life is better, not like long ago," but she pines for her girlhood and tears up her letter. 'River of Fools' is another Hidalgo weepie, with torn photos and tear-streaked faces at the border.

It's not all despair however, Los Lobos have hope and faith that life will improve; meanwhile they party to forget. Though the stompers are driven by bar-band guitars rather than an accordion, and the Tex-Mex feel is subdued for R&B, Los Lobos remain the most authentic and eclectic group since the Band (and



Los Lobos

sometimes they make the Band seem like sincere dabblers *a la* Ry Cooder). On the Cesar Rosas rockers however, Burnett's production dominates so that it could be his Marshall Crenshaw record we're listening to. It's a shame he brought in two drummers (including the over-rated Golden Palomino Anton Fier) to assist Louis Perez — he was the driving force of *Wolf*.

This is a great album, one you can dance and shout to, laugh and cry to.

Like *The Band*, I'll be listening to it in 10 years.

Chris Bourke

Sly & Robbie Rhythm Kings Island

In the beginning was the "big bang," life and rhythm formed as one. Man emerged with the proverbial ants in his pants, ready to scratch that itch and get on the good

foot. Get the picture: man was born to rock the house, shake that money maker, slap them cakes, to move to the groove. Baby, born to raise hell and get funky.

Sly and Robbie know this essential truth and reveal all on *Rhythm Killers*, an album of such murderous funk it's downright frightening.

It's interesting that this is funk of the old school, 70s flavoured grooves that James Brown cut and a virtual homage to George Clinton. The whole first side is a version, in three parts, of the Ohio Players' 'Fire.' The first, a straight edge attack, with great vocals from Bootsy Collins and Gary "Mudbone" Cooper, ex-Parliament singer. This sets the tone, with the steady rhythmic flow of Sly and Robbie, and producer Bill Laswell building up the banks of Philly strings — adding counterpoint to the pulse of the song. This merges with the great 'Boops (Here to Go),' raps by Shinehead and Ramme-lzee, a very severe kick drum from Sly and the strings linking everything up. Then a real surprise with 'Let's Rock,' a nice Nile Rodgers stroke on guitar. P-funk vocals and Sly playing drum patterns like Led Zeppelin's John Bonham — this one's real wild.

The second side opens with Allen Toussaint's 'Yes, We Can,' with Grandmixer D S T on turntables and a sense of musical space that's a delight. Boom boom drums send the message, just like in the *Phantom* comics, that funk is its own reward. The title track is perhaps the only reggae track, with toasting from Shinehead in the speed MC style, but once again Laswell unleashes those melodic strings and the "prepared" piano of Bernie Worrell, a clashing of opposites in fine dialectical style. Closing with the almost romantic 'Bank Job' with a bassline that's a bone shaker.

Like last year's *Language Barrier*, a move away from reggae — except for the toasting, the input is all funk, not the B-Boy cutups I expected, but a revolutionary return to the roots of modern rhythm.

Sly and Robbie — in the place to be, and here to go — and that's a fact, Jack.

Kerry Buchanan

LL Cool J Bad Def Jam Various Artists The New Style Def Jam

"Even when I'm braggin' I'm being sincere." LL Cool J is a B-Boy prodigy, rap's gifted child. He's fast, cocky, and probably Def Jam's wittiest and most articulate artist.

On *Bad*, the follow-up to *Radio*, though, LL seems to be doing it all himself. Rick Rubin has nothing to do with this effort, and his freshness and humour are sadly lacking here. Where Run DMC's *Raising Hell* drew on heavy metal, LL Cool J uses old rock 'n' roll quotes like 'Johnny B Goode' (in the opening track 'Go, Cut Creator, Go'). And although six months ago I'd have been thrilled by

another clever twist in hip hop sources, today I see the rock 'n' roll extracts as a schoolbook exercise.

Nevertheless, this album is definitely as listenable and danceable as *Radio*, and a must buy for those reasons alone. I particularly like 'The Do-Wop's doo-wop, and 'I Need Love,' the first rap ballad of any note. 'I'm Bad' uses a gratuitous *Shaft* backing, but it's strong and sensational. There's also the self-effacing parody which I enjoy in most Def Jam records, and the almost traditional brouhaha on the end of side one, where LL Cool J tells us the "Joke's on you, Jack!" for buying yet another one of his records.

It's the New Style is a compilation CBS New Zealand have put together to meet the interest in Def Jam here. It's a very good compilation of both the hip hop and pop ballad sides of their output. Although the work only dates from the CBS deal with Def Jam, the Beastie Boys' 'She's On It,' LL Cool J's 'I Can't Live Without My Radio' and Juice's 'The Rain' are all included. Plus there's LL's original version of 'Rock the Bells,' which is magnificent, and the less commercially successful Junkyard Band, Chuck Stanley, Tashan, Original Concept and Public Enemy.

Of these Public Enemy and Original Concept are the best, and it's vibrant hip hop, rich in the history of the music, and the intelligence of these Long Island university graduates marks, for me, the future of hip hop and Def Jam, hits or no hits.

Peter Grace

General Kane In Full Chill Motown

What happened to big mean mindless boring *funk*? One place you sure as hell wouldn't look for it would be on the Motown label, where music don't get that heavy. Yet here's a record to break the black yuppie mould from funk veteran Mitch "General Kane" McDowell, who has previously recorded as General Kane on the Tabu label, and as Booty People on 70s label Far Out (wow!).

Rap has got its due recognition this decade but it's time for funk to get its reward. Sure, founder James Brown and chief freak George Clinton get a bit of attention, but black music's most progressive genre is being ignored. Here this fine man is facing the crucial questions, like "How can I roller skate, through a herd of buffalo?" Meaty stuff and the funky riddums are even tuffer!

Some may label these fine things as "sub-Clinton" — so what? What's wrong with being sub-Clinton if he's the foremost funk adventurer? George would sure be proud of having written 'Buffalos,' 'All the Way Up' or 'Wrassle.' Plus you get last year's rapper 'Crack Killed Applejack,' the weeny-bit trite 'Hairdooz' and the beautiful slow number 'Can't Let Go.'

So much fun and it's not an import. Mitch McDowell only has to follow this one up and he's gonna be one of the main men of funk.

Murray Cammick

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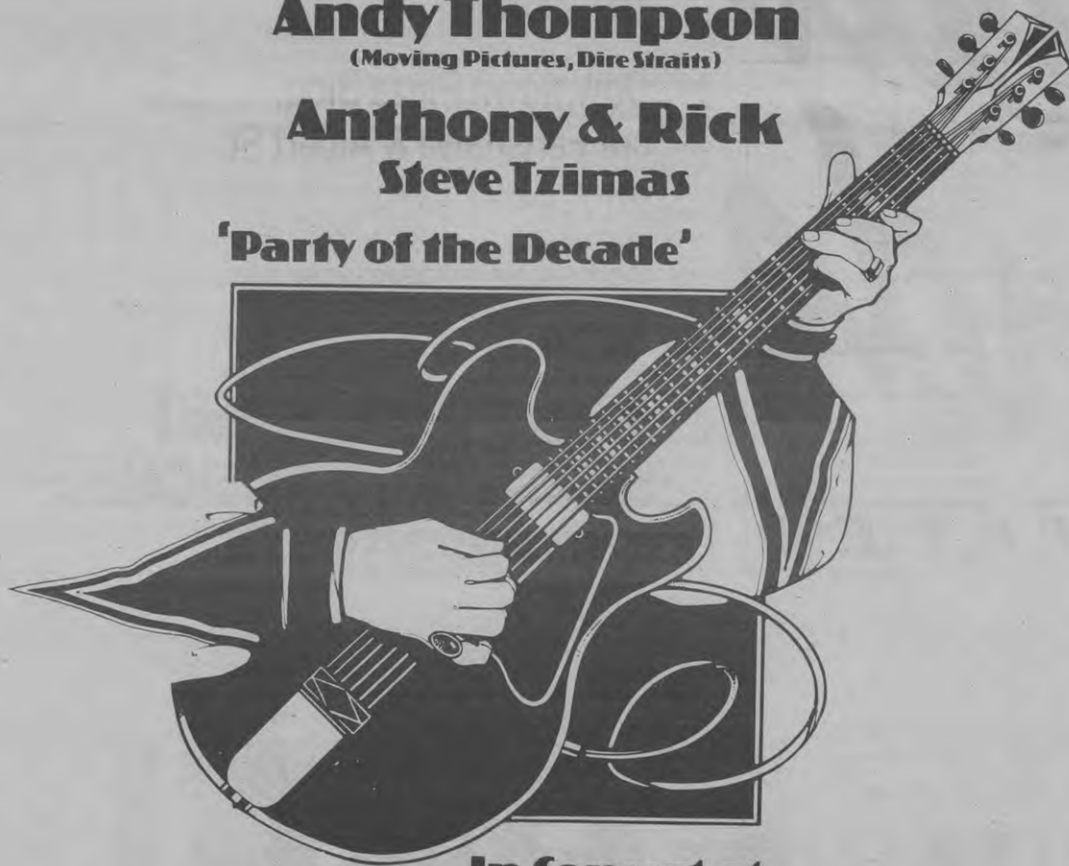
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35. BLACK SABBATH Paranoid Pic disc
36. UB40 Cherry Oh Baby Pic disc

37. THE BEATLES Strawberry Fields Forever Pic disc
38. SISTERS OF MERCY Walk Away with 7" flexi of Long Train. PS
39. THREE JOHNS Pink Headed Bug/Lucy In The Rain. French PS
40. MEKONS Where Were You'll Have To Dance Then. UK PS
41. KATE BUSH Them Heavy People/Man With The Child. Jap PS

* Plus other Kate Bush rarities — write for list

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- * Plus other Kiss rarities — write for list

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RECORDS

Tom Verlaine Flashlight Mercury

After two years in some sort of artistic obscurity — spent no doubt contemplating modernistic abstractions in some New York attic in Greenwich Village and receiving periodic visits from frail, white, intense heroines bearing rich red wines and the latest French novellas — Tom Verlaine is back.

If Byrne is the consummate eccentric then Verlaine is the wraith, phantom perfectionist, a writer and guitarist whose pain and beauty have stretched over six albums and four record companies. With his last two albums, *Words from the Front* and *Cover* veering towards a sparser guitar landscape in favour of percussion and keyboards, *Flashlight* makes a flawless return to the rich, melodic guitar tension that made the two Television albums so enthralling and his first two solo albums so engaging.

Few guitarists or songwriters have been able to blend fragile insights

with tough sentiments or storylines as naturally as Verlaine. His blend of narrative and descriptive writing in songs like 'At 4am' and 'Annie's Tellin' Me' capture a storyline as rich as any Tom Waits song. And when words can be transcended then his guitar speaks heaps as in 'The Funniest Thing' and the *Close Encounters* set-up of 'The Scientist Writes a Letter.' And just when you thought he couldn't equal 'Venus' or 'Days' for beauty or clarity, 'Song' blends the best guitar line and sentiment that he's wielded since those heady days.

Tom Verlaine is back.

George Kay

Courtenay Pine Journey to the Urge Within Island

Over the past year the British media have been according Courtenay Pine the status of a major pop star. Not only is this London saxophonist young, gifted and black, he's a very snappy dresser and an articulate spokesman for his music. Sort of an English equivalent to Wynton Marsalis.

And like Marsalis before him, Pine has packed his debut album replete with ideas and technique, almost as if to justify all the attention. Side two, for

example, opens with the sleek cool of a pop song (and features a lovely vocal from a one-time Supreme). On the next track Pine's tenor leads an octet in a fiery workout that shows his debt to John Coltrane. From there it's a change to bass clarinet, duelling with a scat vocalist to the solitary support of double bass. Elsewhere on the album Pine makes extensive use of soprano sax as well.

At times the album seems more bustling along than deliberately paced. In its 10 tracks — a lot on a jazz album — Pine not only seems wanting to show the extent of his abilities but also the full range of his technique. Wayne Shorter's 'Delores' is given a straightforward reading but then finished with in three-and-a-half minutes.

But there is much to rejoice about on *Journey to the Urge Within*. After all, too much going on is far preferable to not enough. At 22, Pine is already a prodigious talent with a variety of cleanly executed tones. He is also — that Marsalis factor again — another believer in maintaining jazz as an acoustic music. No synths; no sampling. And if, in regarding himself as a consolidator rather than a re-

volutionary, that means his influences are often evident, it also means he's developing from an invaluable base. As Courtenay Pine matures, astute jazz listeners will want to stay listening.

Peter Thomson

World Party Private Revolution Chrysalis

Karl Wallinger, the mind in this particular machine, emerged from Wales and spent his apprenticeship with Mike Scott's Waterboys, a band that mixed bombast with Dylan.

Wallinger, like his ex-boss, has obviously rifled through Dylan's arrangements and book of metaphors to come up with the dry nasal deliveries and images of 'The Ballad of the Little Man,' and the 'Trouble Down on the Farm' and 'White Horse's' clichés of 'Hawaiian Island World.'

Wallinger, complete with beatnik shades and the spoils of materialism on the cover, may be besotted with the spirit of Zimmerman but on 'Private Revolution' he creates a nice piece of feet-on-the-ground cynicism, and 'Ship of Fools' (despite the blatant plagiarism of two of

Dylan's favourite characters — the joker and the fool) has a chorus that could move statues; but the winner has to be 'All Come True,' a song of easy charm, great tune, and a pointer for Wallinger if he wants to leave Bob, the guru, behind.

So, World Party have a hint of potential: Wallinger has over-reacted to the exaggerations of his involvement with the Waterboys to steal from the past of the world's most credible writer. In the future he shouldn't feel that need.

George Kay

Jackie Wilson The Classic Jackie Wilson RCA

One of the first records I ever owned was Jackie Wilson's 'Lonely Teardrops,' this scratched 7" Brunswick that I played non-stop. Something in the way his voice soared with an operatic yelp that got me for life.

Jackie Wilson's style owes to the diverse influences of the Mills Brothers, Al Jolson, Mario Lanza and the black R&B of Billy Ward's Dominos, who Jackie sang with, replacing Clyde McPhatter. All these influences flow in soulful torrents: this is

what Jackie Wilson said.

He talks the blues with 'Doggin' Around' and 'A Woman, a Lover, a Friend,' deep Southern soul warmer than fried chicken. As an ex-boxer he could belt the hell out of any song that came his way, the rock and roll of 'Baby Workout' (which always reminds me of Elvis Presley), the ornate ballads of 'Am I the Man' and 'You Know What it Means,' and above all the haunting 'No Pity (in the Naked City).'

After the original slew of hits things slowed down until the 1966 Chicago soul comeback with 'Whispers (Getting Louder)' and 'I Get the Sweetest Feeling' that still pack dancefloors and break hearts.

Jackie Wilson was one of the world's most dynamic stage performers, a bewildering array of jumps, splits and twists that influenced both James Brown and Elvis Presley. It was during one of his shows in 1975 that he collapsed and lapsed into a coma, which he never came out of, dying on January 21, 1984. I've still got that scratched 'Lonely Teardrops' 7" and will never part with it.

Kerry Buchanan



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THE JAYREM RECORDS COUNTDOWN

THIS
MONTH

LAST
MONTH

1	6	Black Woman	GETI-13
		Judy Mowatt	TC-GETI-13
2	4	Transmission	FDV-731
		Flesh D-Vice	
3	1	Night of a Thousand Candles	JAY-328
		The Men They Couldn't Hang	TC-JAY-328
4	8	Revolution	JAY-730
		Aotearoa	TC-JAY-730
5	2	Bucket	DDCR-002
		Painters & Dockers	
6	20	Bedtime For Democracy	AIM-1012
		Dead Kennedys	TC-AIM-1012
7	7	Trick of the Light	JAY-140
		Putty in Her Hands	
8	3	Jah Magic	JAY-326
		Sticks & Shanty	TC-JAY-326
9	5	He Waiata Mo Te Iwi	JAY-327
		Aotearoa	TC-JAY-327
10	11	Ballade	CIRCULAR-8
		David Freehan	
11	12	Make Room	JAY-324
		Luke Hurley	TC-JAY-324
12	16	Rally Round Ras Michael & the Sons of Negus	TC-RRS-011
13	10	No More War	JAY-141
		Dread Beat & Blood	TC-JAY141
14	9	Simon Says	FR-5
		Low Profile	
15	NEW	Holding Out My Love To You	TC-RRS-012
		Max Romeo & Keith Richards	
16	15	The Mystery Unfolds	TC-RRS-008
		Mutabaruka	
17	NEW	Reggae Street	TC-RRS-010
		Mighty Diamonds	
18	13	Jerusalem	TC-RRS-009
		Alpha Blondie & the Wallers	
19	NEW	Eleventy Billion	CHLP-8605
		Scott Goddard IMPORT	
20	14	Yeh My People	MCCR-0122
		The Wreckery	

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RECORDS

Siouxsie and the Banshees Through the Looking Glass Polydor

Though it's been a long time since there's been a Siouxsie and the Banshees album worth admiring, their cover versions to date (basically limited to the Beatles' "White Album") have always been tasteful enough. Perhaps then a whole album full of covers ain't such a bad idea; after all, Nick Cave got away with it last year, and the Residents' series of *American Composers* cover albums is planned to run to the year 2000.

Through the Looking Glass has the Banshees taking on the likes of Television, Roxy Music and Kraftwerk — basically the period just prior to the Banshees' formation in 1977, along with older songs from the Doors, etc., and a still older one from Billie Holiday.

Some of it works well: Iggy Pop's "The Passenger" suits Siouxsie's monotone, and John Cale's "Gun" is dramatic enough (in his version anyway) for the Banshees' purposes. Other songs, particularly a gross-out "This Wheel's on Fire," don't

come across as such inspired choices though, and the self-production veers towards a slick, yet sterile touch.

Like the *NME* says, this is the best Siouxsie and the Banshees album for years. But when you consider the quality of the original artists' versions (exceeded nowhere here by the Banshees) and the quality of those last three Banshees albums, is that really much of an achievement?

Paul McKessar

The Cure Kiss Me Kiss Me Kiss Me Fiction

Catch Robert Smith with his pretensions down, and you'll find a rock and roll heart ringing with pure melodies. Too often however, it's hard to get at, hidden by the murky production of works like *Pornography* or the affected fey nature of *Japanese Whispers*. Coming to this double album, I was eager to determine whether that elusive spirit, found elsewhere in the odd inspired tune and Smith's fully-charged guitar licks, was still there, lurking behind the ponderous lyric sheet.

The Head on the Door had plenty of musical variety and panache (along with the lyrical equivalent of diarrhoea) but on the whole this is a stylised exercise; even where the

Cure try their hardest (side two's "Why Can't I Be You?"), the effect, though not displeasing to the ear, still fails to take a hold of the listener.

The major fault appears to be the dominant role played by Laurence Tolhurst's keyboards. Smith's guitar has always been the most interesting thing about the Cure, but it doesn't really get a decent outing on *Kiss Me*... He lets sax out for side four's "Icing Sugar" but there is little other derivation from the keyboard-heavy mix.

Side three is overall the most interesting music-wise, an effect spoiled by the dreadful routine funk of "Hot Hot Hot" and the most profound inanities lyric-wise; "and all I want is to hold you like a dog." Yuk.

1987's Cure: getting long in the tooth and short on new ideas; that, friends, is the long and the short of it.

Paul McKessar

Neil Young and Crazy Horse Life Geffen

Okay Neil, so it has finally come real, the time has come to tell us the story of "life." It's claimed to be a return to form; he's done it before, so why not again? The man has, in the past, been one of the few to sense the mood of the times. Neil the love-

smith, the politico, the down and outer — he has pulled on so many disguises that you thought he had it sussed: big bucks, love, religion, politics, the American way.

"Mid-east Vacation" is one of those typically weird songs that he manages to write, you're not sure which side of the border he's on. "Watching Highway Patrol whittling with my knife" to the "Rambo in the disco / I was shooting with my feet." The American obsession with law and order — remember to read, their law, their order. "Long Walk Home" opens with the classic line, "If Liberty was a little girl... how would she like us now? We balance the power from hour to hour, giant guns raised." It is an anthem to America, poor little America fighting for truth and justice. I suppose we should imagine the mocking crowds as America winds her way to Calvary.

The album doesn't show him discovering new ground, though musically it is more acceptable recent work. "Inca Queen" and "We Never Danced" will have those old eyes watering. HM buffs will dwell on his pyrotechnical displays, and his devotees will appreciate his dig at Geffen Records in "Prisoners of Rock 'n' Roll." But no, I don't think this album is a return to form. We know Neil's admiration for Ron and nuclear

power. "Good morning America, how are you?" Canadian was once his response.

Tim Byrne

Suzanne Vega Solitude Standing A&M

With "Luka" all over the radio, everybody now knows about Suzanne Vega. Last year there was only a small sprinkling of would-be cultists excitedly clutching her first album, hoping Ms Vega would prove the greatest thing in urban folkiedom since Joni Mitchell. This reviewer even nominated *Suzanne Vega* as debut of the year. Now, with *Solitude Standing*, I'm reassessing my expectations.

For starters Vega has changed bands. Out go the first album's subtle and spacious instrumentations that so superbly complemented her acoustic guitar. In comes a fairly standard lineup, synth centred and with a rockist boost to the drums. On a strong, conventional song structure like "Luka" it all works very well — the pop chart crossover has been attained. But on more introspective pieces the backing not only flattens out subtleties, it leaves Vega's voice sounding distanced, even passionless on occasion.

Then there's the songwriting.

Although *Suzanne Vega* covered an extraordinary range of styles, the overall standard was so consistently high that the album felt tightly coherent. This time out the writing ranges over 10 years and varies accordingly, leaving the album with an unsettling lack of focus.

Nonetheless there are some recent songs which show Vega's craft to full advantage. There's the paradox of "Luka": a catchy pop song about domestic violence (though I still believe its narrator speaks more like a wife than a child). The album's title track has similar success. Over a driving beat, Vega's cool delivery suits her image of loneliness as a ghostly maiden.

If one track encapsulates the conflicting values of this album it is "Wooden Horse." Drawing her inspiration from the true story of a young European man locked alone in a cellar for his first 17 years, Vega creates a delicate narration of seemingly mute eloquence. However the musical accompaniment of syncopated percussion accents and brooding bass almost tips it into dullness. An uneasy balancing act is finally achieved. On the evidence of this whole album, Suzanne Vega's future musical direction seems just as precariously poised.

Peter Thomson

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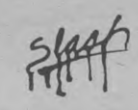
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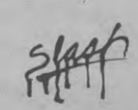
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FESTIVAL

BY THE LIGHT OF THE MOON

RECORDS

Jessie Johnson
Shockedelica
A&M

Ah, yes, there was a time when any black male singer worth his stretch limo looked like a pimp. Lots of wild suits and the all important hat. Check out Sly Stone, Isaac Hayes and even James Brown. Now it's good to see Jessie Johnson continue in the grand tradition, by wearing a leopard skin pillbox hat on the cover and having Sly Stone cut loose on 'Crazy.' The video was out of this world, Jessie and Sly in royal attire and the 10-piece band looking sharp as a flick-knife.

Just like this album, seven real pumpers and three ballads, locked up tight in this percolating rhythm, like Prince circa *Controversy* period. But this ain't no old styled jam. Stuff like 'She (I Can't Resist)' mixes that "ring my bell" guitar with a bulldozer rhythm, and 'Crazy' has to be one of the best hard funk outings ever.

Nice sparse beats with hot horn lines underline Jessie's vocals, emphatic fun funk, which is just class all the way.

Kerry Buchanan

Swing Out Sister
It's Better to Travel
Mercury

This album is being pushed hard, as are most jazzy-sounding pop groups these days, but for once the powers that be are pushing a band that could go further than No 1. Comprising of A Certain Ration keyboardist Andy Connell, drummer Martin Jackson and St Martin's School of Art graduate Corinne Drewery, SOS play as smart as they dress. *It's Better to Travel* is their debut and far from perfect; likewise, it's far ahead of their competition.

Production is level-headed but rushed; like Heaven 17's *Penthouse & Pavement*, the band see to be getting the tunes down quick and saving the lush production and arrangements for the 12" single versions. Thus 'Breakout' appears as the least fussy of pop songs and 'Surrender' as a rough-cut gem — you'll have to listen more than once to realise how good these songs are.

That's a rare quality: a whole pop album that doesn't wet itself trying to get your attention. Top 10 riffs poke out from beneath busy, almost drab songs ('It's Not Enough', 'Fooled By a Smile') to catch you just before boredom sets in.

Also enjoyable is Andy Connell's habit of not quite hitting the sweet note. His tunes are always one not to

the side of perfect, which means they're going to avoid being labelled old hat in a month. Corinne's vocals are straightforward, she can't sing as well as Sade but she can sing much faster, rapping quickly between verses. The songs often mean she has to sing slow, which puts her at a disadvantage. Hopefully by album number two the lads will realise that Corinne's an up girl and not interested in all that moody late-night stuff.

There's even a generous Bond quote in the album's closing instrumental "theme," a direct lift from the countdown sequence in *You Only Live Twice*. And Corinne's got a bob and Andy's got a polo neck and there are lyrics like "Don't say you're sorry / Don't even try / Too late to worry / Too late to cry!" Weeee! Pop music!

Chad Taylor

Let's Get Naked
Funky Duneidin
Rational

In the heatwave of fresh Duneidin music, Rational Records have squeezed tequila from a four-track. Local programmers will need to isopropyl their heads when they spout quality and production arguments for not playing this local music. What's the bet they *don't* play this album from Let's Get Naked. More pity them.

Jonathan Richman rolls into yer

average Kiwi joker and back: "No tiff over what riff / No hysterics over anybody's lyrics." Maybe from the industry's point of view the wording is "unfortunately honest," but these tracks jam through some wonderful variations on funk, and with the exception of a couple of tracks there's a strong sense of purpose. 'Chimps' (riveting beat), 'Babies,' 'Joe's a Fiend,' and the pre-released 'Funky Duneidin,' show that for each face there is a reflection — and resultant humour. Not unlike Auckland theatre duo The Front Lawn, where everyday roles and situations are satirised to the bone.

There are shades of the Clash's *Sandinista*, but without the climaxing grit. It is especially in the bass, sax and vocals that the songs are all held in suspension ... a sort of one-ness. Good groove poems to be read in their own right. Elephunkadelic stuff.

Barry Caitcheon

Ozzy Osbourne/Randy Rhoads
Tribute
CBS

"Goodbye to friends, goodbye to all the past, I guess that we'll meet in the end."

Randy Rhoads' life tragically ended in a plane crash on March 19, 1982 at the age of 25, and the world lost one of the finest and-most talented musicians ever. Now Ozzy has

finally released the only quality live recording of Randy playing guitar with him in concert, and it really is an amazing tribute of total respect for his best friend. When Ozzy left Black Sabbath to form his own Blizzard of Ozz, he discovered the incredible ability of Randy and quickly recruited him for two albums and tours of the most exciting rock music imaginable. His speedy fills and diminished scales in the songs 'I Don't Know' and 'Crazy Train' were like nothing ever heard before, and his solos on 'Mr Crowley' and 'Suicide Solution' peak into dizzying heights of fiery fretwork. Randy's years of classical training are obvious on 'Revelation (Mother Earth),' and 'Dee' is an acoustic masterpiece he wrote for his mother DeLores, who owns the music school where Randy was both student and teacher. *Tribute* is not only an excellent documentation of Randy with Ozzy at his best, but the greatest live album for 1981, 1987, or any year!

Geoff Dunn

Whispers
Just Gets Better With Time
WEA
Lakeside
Power
WEA

So it's time to chill out, get mellow, time to count how many cashmere sweaters you own and sip Pepper

Absolut over ice. What better ambience than these two fine acts from Solar Records in laidback Los Angeles.

Lakeside hit the groove with that "bass in your face" 'Fantastic Voyage' years ago, and continue to show class on *Power*. Tracks like 'Just a Touch Away' and 'Bullseye' are real nice smoochers, delicate like beaujolais. But if romance is not your thing, there are two great dances in 'Still Feeling Good' and 'Relationship.' Production by Babyface and Stephen Shockley follow the traditional Solar pattern — hot tunes at a cool tempo.

Solar have this rich upwardly mobile sound, apartment soul for consenting adults. The Whispers are the champs of this genre. Lots of "let's go to bed and crinkle the satin sheets" grooves and drum machines that pop like champagne corks. One side crucial mid-tempo dance like 'Rock Steady' and 'I Want You,' side two the big ballads like the title track and soulful 'Give it to Me,' each handled by lead vocalist Scotty Scott.

Two examples of smooth city soul that help heat up the night.

Kerry Buchanan

JOE JACKSON

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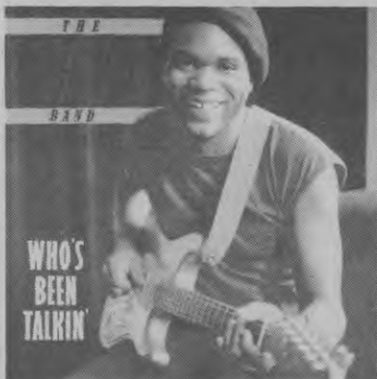
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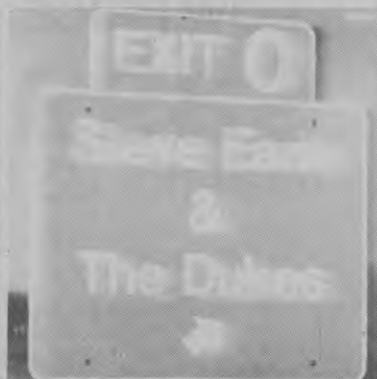
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STEVE EARLE & THE DUKES

Exit 0
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Jill Jones
A unique debut LP from a young lady with her own style mixed with a little Paisley Park magic. Prince co-produces and co-writes 3 excellent tracks while Jill Jones writes and produces the bulk of the LP. A tasty selection from funk to ballads.



ANDY SUMMERS

XYZ
The Police lead guitarist offers a new solo LP, different from his solo instrumental work, here Andy is vocalist as well as composer for all the tracks. Co-producer is Genesis veteran David Hentschel. Another chapter in his exceptional career in music.



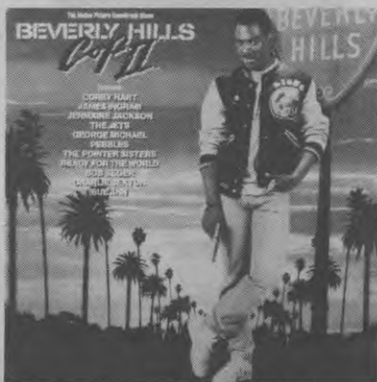
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Body & Soul
The very talented Ms Morris delivers a fabulous debut LP with her 'Body & Soul', 'You're Gonna Get Hurt' and new single 'You I Know'. After starring with NZ's Crocodiles, touring with INXS, Jenny shows here why she's voted Australia's top female vocalist.



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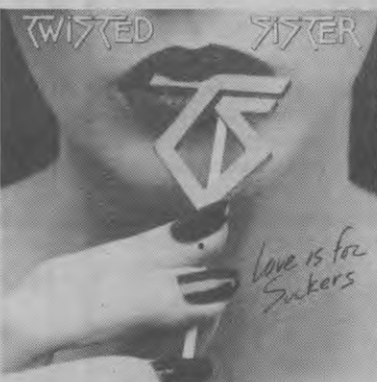
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RECORDS

The Fold
Flying Nun

What made the Fold's 'Women in Red' a better than average single was the fact that it seemed so well thought out — the Fold not merely overcoming the limitation of a drums-bass-vocals lineup, but turning it severely to their own advantage. But on this, their third record, the effect is more strained than on that 12" single. They have attempted to overcome it by using a "live" recording technique in the basement of Auckland's Lab Studios. This works best on the likes of 'Crowd,' where the drums fill out the sound, coming from what sounds like a very echoey space. It's a similar effect, I guess, to what the Triffids were aiming for on their *In the Pines* woolshed recording, but the comparisons end where production and digital mastering step into the Triffids' recording.

A more brooding version of 'Need of Want' (off *Outnumbered by Sheep*) is one of the highlights of the album, but unless you can actually derive some perverse enjoyment from the Fold's harrowing visions on this record, it is best avoided. Some of you more adventurous souls will no doubt ignore me. All I can say to you is good luck in the labyrinth. Enjoy the unenjoyable.

Paul McKessar

Johnny Winter
Third Degree

Alligator

Albert Collins
Cold Snap

Alligator

Lil' Ed and the Blues Imperials
Rough-housin'

Alligator

This batch of three new releases from the Chicago-based Alligator label continues the company's good work in the recording of modern electric blues.

Johnny Winter's album is his third, and best, for Alligator, and possibly his best since he first burst out of the Texas bar scene in the late 60s. He works again with the crack rhythm section of Albert Collins's Ice-breakers, bassist Johnny B. Gayden and drummer Casey Jones, who has

since left Collins. Winter also reunites with his original bassman Tommy Shannon, and drummer Uncle John "Red" Turner.

Together they stormed out of Texas and Johnny became the newest guitar star, but the band broke up in 1970. If anything, they play better together now than ever, working out fiercely on Elmore James's 'Shake Your Money Maker,' Freddie King's 'See You Baby,' and Johnny Guitar Watson's 'Broke and Lonely.'

Dr John helps out on piano, and as an extra bonus Winter plays National steel guitar on record for the first time in years.

The Master of the Telecaster, Albert Collins, turns in another fine, funky performance on *Cold Snap*. The band includes his long-time cohort Gayden, as well as veteran jazzers Mel Brown (guitar) and Jimmy McGriff (organ).

It is more of the Collins mixture — lightning flashes of shrieking upper-register guitar and dryly laconic vocals ('I Ain't Drunk'), funky grooves or high energy shuffle instrumentals ('Fake ID'). A minor criticism, but Collins does not seem quite as involved as he does on *Showdown*, the Grammy-winning collaboration with Robert Cray and Johnny Copeland.

Lil' Ed and the Blues Imperials are from the junior end of the Chicago blues scale. The album title tells the story. This young quartet plays upbeat music in the intense partying mood of the late, great slide guitarist J.B. Hutto, uncle and mentor to Lil' Ed Williams. Williams writes most of the material, but also covers Rufus Thomas's 'Walkin' the Dog,' Arthur Crudup's 'Mean Old Frisco,' and Percy Mayfield's 'You Don't Exist Anymore.'

Ken Williams

Randy Travis
Always and Forever
Warner Bros

Steve Earle and the Dukes
Exit O
MCA

Now Randy Travis is a man with a golden voice. Hot on the heels of his million selling debut *Storms of Life* comes this follow-up. If, like me, you fell for his easy, relaxed, and oh-so-mature singing the first time around, this album will not disappoint. Unlike

his close rivals Dwight Yoakam and Steve Earle, Travis steers away from making waves and putting political bite into his songs. So he's been rewarded with membership to the Grand Ole Opry, the youngest ever member at 28.

No, Randy's meal ticket is his weary baritone, which carries all the resignation of his esteemed forebears. 'Too Gone Too Long,' 'My House,' and 'Good Intentions' are all fine showcases of his ability. 'What'll You Do About Me?' — my personal favourite — has the humour I found missing on his first effort.

Recommended for fans of great country singing and tacky jewellery.

Steve Earle also weighs in with his second outing, but the story he's telling ain't no picnic. Comparisons with one B. Springsteen are so obvious I'll ignore them except to say he has a similar sympathy for the small man and the victim of circumstance. Images of Steinbeck's dirt road characters abound, especially on 'The Rain Came Down,' a particularly effective story of dustbowl struggling, and the best song about farming since the Band's 'King Harvest (Has Surely Come)'. In fact the superb 'It's All Up to You' reminds me of Robbie Robertson's legendary group.

Anyone remotely interested in country-flavoured rock will be delighted with this record, as it's quite the most consistent collection of new songs so far this year.

Mark Kennedy

Judas Priest
Priest... Live (CBS)

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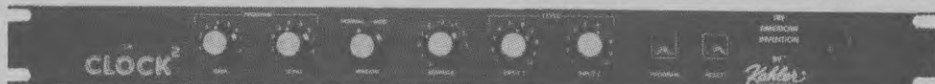
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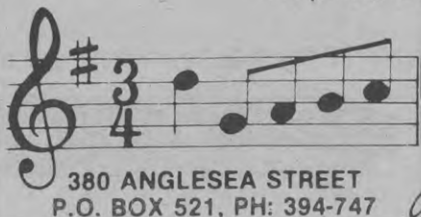
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BLUE VELVET

Director: David Lynch

"At the sound of the falling tree, it's 9.30," purrs the DJ on the local radio, as David Lynch's film proceeds to take us through a glass darkly into the heart of Middle America. The idyllic images of Lumberton in the opening

scenes of *Blue Velvet* are descriptive: soon we're plunged into the fetishistic and S&M rituals of Isabella Rossellini and Dennis Hopper. The connecting link between these two extremes of smalltown life is provided by Jeffrey Beaumont (Kyle MacLachlan) when he discovers a severed ear at the local rubbish tip and decides to investigate further.

After the constraints of *Elephant Man* and *Dune*, Lynch is free to create a more elusive film with *Blue Velvet*, a film in which so much lies beneath the surface. It's no accident

that the director seems to be at pains to make the thriller trappings of the plot structure like something out of a trashy television movie: deliberately corny dialogue (the exchanges between MacLachlan and George Buckner's detective, for example); melodramatic musical punctuations, and even the brief appearances of Hope Lange, one of television's archetypal mothers.

Lynch deals instead with the crossover between dreams and reality. There's a dreamlike quality to the Bobby Vinton song which gives

the movie its title, a song which serves as both the centrepiece of Rossellini's nightclub act and the object of Hopper's fetishism. Sandy (Laura Dern) the co-ed virgin and a Shelley Fabares for the 80s, worries about Jeffrey's curiosity ("it sounds like a good daydream, but actually doing it's too weird") and yet confesses her idea of happiness in the form of a dream of fulsome sentimentality.

Other songs extend Lynch's central theme. The young lovers eventually dance to Julee Cruise's 'Mys-

teries of Love' with its references to "mysteries... in the dark." Later in the film, Dean Stockwell's garishly made-up pimp mimes to a recording of Roy Orbison's 'In Dreams', a song which, in this new context, is particularly eerie. The director even offers the faint-hearted a release at the end of the film: when MacLachlan wakes up after dozing in the yard, perhaps the whole thing was a dream... an extended nightmare.

Despite the determination of Frederick Elmes's camera to probe ruthlessly into everything from an underground ants nest to an ear, *Blue Velvet* doesn't give up all its secrets on one viewing. Like Dern who blurs out to MacLachlan at one point, "I don't know whether you're a detective or a pervert," the audience's grasp on any reality is never more than equivocal. Yet, not so equivocal that the film runs into any danger of becoming a thinking man's 9 1/2 Weeks: Hopper attacks MacLachlan with the accusation "You're like me, you fucker," and the wider implications of *Blue Velvet* are suddenly apparent. Like the image of the wind-blown candle which occurs during the film's more heated moments, it is a vision of the permeation of evil into the fabric of American society.

Beautifully played by its cast, from Dern's touching gauche teen queen to Hopper's blistering inferno of hate and violence, *Blue Velvet* is one of the most provocative and disturbing films to come out of America in this decade — an American Dream for the 80s?

William Dart

pain and joy. Most of the film concentrates on the relationship between Patsy and her husband Charlie Dick, whose first words to her are "that bitch sure can sing."

Reisz shows the two lovers backlit by neon dancing to 'Be Bop a Lula' — Charlie is a wild man, but Patsy is attracted to him. The film is about this attraction. In a way this tends to leave out a lot of her life, things just seem to



Patsy Cline

happen. All of a sudden she becomes a star, the classic songs like 'Crazy,' 'Walking After Midnight' just appear with no real buildup. Her many television and Vegas appearances are not shown, the film doesn't really show just how big a star she was, and just how important she was to country music.

Her new agent says to her "You want to be Kitty Wells," Patsy replies, "Hell no, I want to be Hank Williams," and in a way she was. The first to really cross over into the pop charts and the first woman to really succeed as a "woman" in the male dominated world of country music.

Jessica Lange plays Patsy wonderfully, from the very early days honky tonkin' to the Grand Ole Opry and the studio hits with Owen Bradley. Miming perfectly to the original vocals, Lange brings Patsy to life. Also good is Ed Harris as Charlie, a bit wild but also a bit lost in his wife's world.

It's their superb handling of their roles that make this a must-see film, as well as the amazing music, all the hits and her great version of Monroe's 'Blue Moon of Kentucky' and Wills' 'San Antonio Rose.' If you haven't yet warmed to country music this could change your mind.

Kerry Buchanan

Motley Crue
Uncensored (WEA)

"Motley who?" someone asks as the camera peers into the studio where the Crue are meant to have met for interviewing. Forty-five minutes later you know who and what Motley are all about. Singer Vince Neil takes us on a street tour of the Hollywood clubs where they started out, as he shares a spa pool with groupies in the back of his limo (remember he can't drive since the accident in '84 which was fatal for Hanoi Rocks' drummer Razzle). Hilarious T-Bone Tommy Lee rides about on his Harley, making wisecracks and friends along the way, while Mick Mars is content to cruise and chat in Corvette comfort, and Nikki Sixx is kinda all over the place. The music clips are the real hot stuff though, and they really cook on 'Live Wire' and 'Too Young To Fall in Love.' 'Smokin' in the Boys Room' is more a fun thing, while 'Home Sweet Home' visually captures the excitement of a Motley performance. Prudish people and parents should receive guidance before attempting to watch this.

Geoff Dunn

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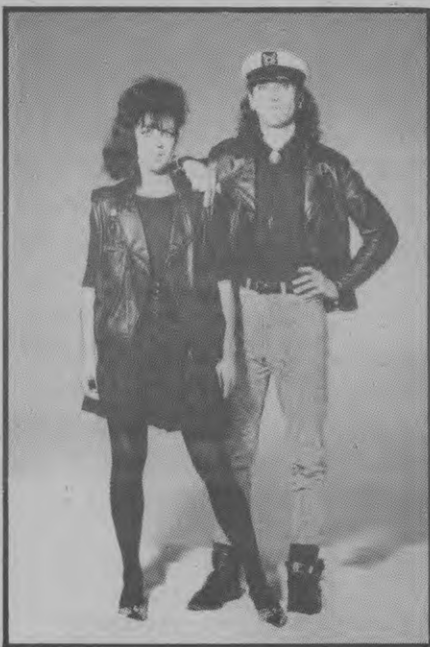
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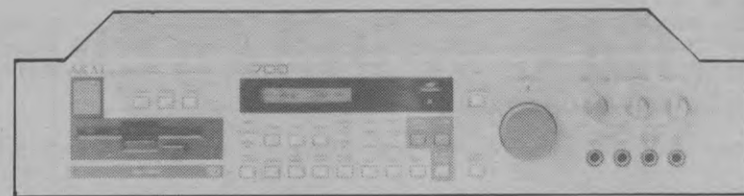


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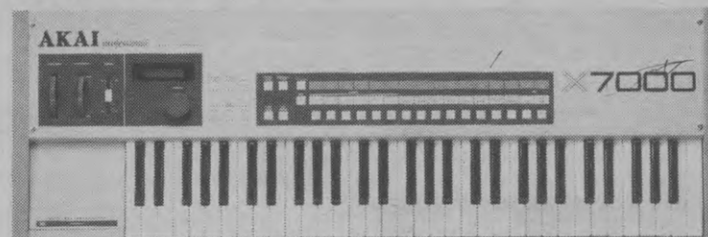
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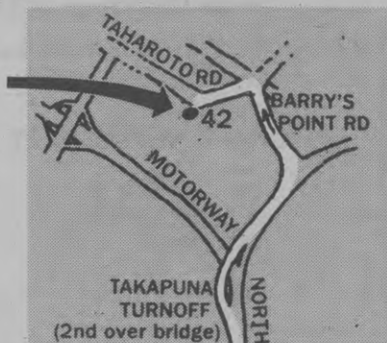
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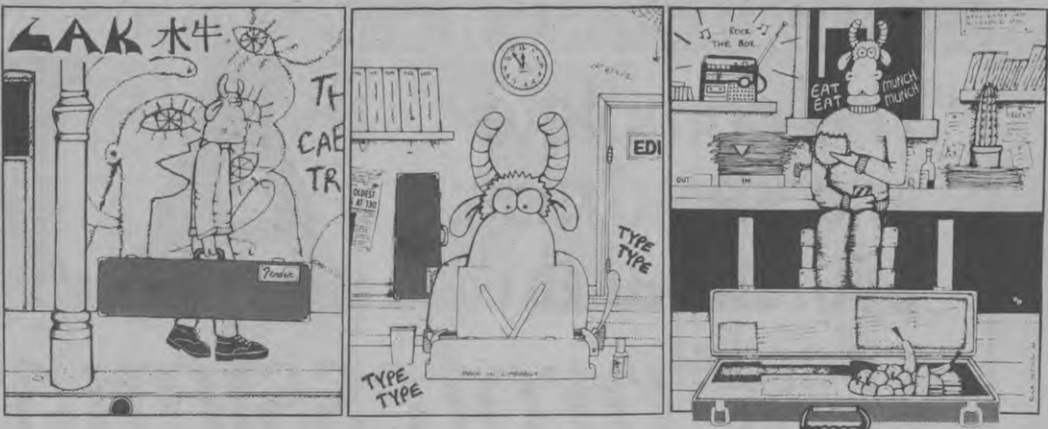
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SHAKE SUMMATION

Jenny Morris
'You I Know' (WEA 7")
Ah, this is more like it. After the INXS domination of her last two singles, Jenny Morris finds her own voice with a great Neil Finn song. And what a voice — upfront, as it should be, with only subtle acoustic guitars and a touch of horns supporting. A verse to cry to, a chorus to sing along to. The album *Body and Soul* now bodes well, as long as it's not mixed

by the guy who did this 45's B-side: 'Broke the Leather' is by Morris, but you can't hear her above the drum sound. Ah, but what an A-side.
Shona Laing
'(Glad I'm) Not a Kennedy' (Pagan 7" & 12")
A hook-filled song, sad violin, quirky bass and innocent, sympathetic vocal. Three mixes: Martin Rushent 12" (good drum sound), Peter Wilson (no mucking about), Rushent again (vocal seems to take off). Plus on the 12", the morose 'Resurrection' and reflective 'Sally Gap' (tasteful Bruce Lynch production), and on the 7" 'Neutral and Nuclear Free,' a jaunty humorous number like a throwaway Beatie

song, great harmonica and French horn, at moments like a rugby sing-along or an ad for cheese.
Debbie Harwood & Johnny Bongo
'Blue Water' (Pagan 12")
An odd dreamlike song that eventually captivates you with its drifting vocal. There's an underwater feel to it well captured by the Felus video. Upbeat backing with excellent Tim Wedde keyboards, it's at its best when the melodies work against each other. 'You Drive Me Out of My Mind' has a strident repeating vocal to a scratch/funk Bongo backing, a curious pop hybrid but you eventually need some rhythmic relief. 'Blue Water (Hang 10 mix)' is good fun: synth harmonica, 60s organ, heavy

guitar, plenty of offbeat touches.
Guava Groove
'Who's That Girl?' (Onslaught 7")
This four-track EP shows so much promise it's a shame the Guavas are no more. 'Who's That Girl?' is their standout live, with a Spencer Davis bassline and confident hiccupping vocal by Craig Bracken, who is also an excellent harp-player. Very much the sound of North Shore Two Tone, on 'Boot Girl' especially. 'Liquor Lover' and 'Fight' are also good dancers. The simple production (hand-claps, a touch of horns) and Montage's clear sound is spot on.
Tim Finn
'With You I'm Alive' (WEA 7")
Once more from *Les Patterson*

Saves the World, the limp verse tempted me to write this off as 'Who Saved the World' part two, until the fun chorus took hold with its witty mid-70s Lennon/Ringo/Nilsson sax riff, plus the Enz-ish timpani break. B-side 'Hacia El Sol' is an easy listening acoustic guitar instrumental. 'Stairway to Heaven' goes didgidiridoo.
Chris Bourke

The Builders
'Cup' (South Indies 12")
This six-track EP was recorded in four different locations on the Builders' national tour late last year. It marks another different direction taken by Bill Direen with another team of Builders — Greg Bainbridge being the only long-serving sidekick, on bass guitar. Interestingly, the main focus of the songs appears to have moved away from previous preoccupations with rhythmic structure towards sharpening Stuart Porter's saxophone.

The prevalent mood is an arty one, though the goodtimes funk-up of 'Sunday News' (a better version than that on *CoNCH* adds levity. Direen's lyricising is, as always, obscure and occasionally nonsensical, but fits into the textures of the songs well. 'Chah Hun Run' sounds like another history

lesson a la 'Opium and Gold,' but the instrumental 'Shortwave' is the high-point; at 8' 20" most indicative of the experimental, freeform jazz/Art of Walking mood of the record. To say the least, the most interesting release yet on Direen's South Indies label; a fine one.
Jean-Paul Sartre Experience
'I Like Rain' (Flying Nun 7")
A little taster from the forthcoming JPSE album, complete with orange or green dayglo cover. 'I Like Rain' is a further example of the Sartre's ability to come up with pleasant surprises on record. In their live set, it stands out as pop single material, but here it has a subtlety that reaches beyond initial listenings to the record. Although it could have done with the exceedingly delicate production touch of the first side of their EP of last year, it still works in a fun, simple, Casiotone way.
The other side is the perennial R&B stomp 'Bo Diddle' put through the JPSE masher. Straightforward, but energetic and humorous. Add these two to the RWP-aided 'Crap Rap,' and can you hold onto your seat long enough to stop the boogie when their album arrives?
Paul McKessar

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LIVE

The Bats
Cricketers, July 31

This band is great, beautifully crafted pop songs which bounce off the walls of this pub and put fizz into your drink. The crowd responded to them and so they should, there was never a dull moment nor a bum note.

The evening hadn't started so well though, with the first band threatening to blow the PA with a "worst of the 70s" session. However the Bats blew away the cobwebs again with

their happy charm. 'Once Again' kicked off the night of uplifting, good feeling music. 'Danny's Highway' sounds good, as does 'Neighbours'. Malcolm Grant on drums is tight and he and Paul Kean on bass share excellent communication, keeping every song together as they drive us forward.

Everybody's up and dancing with 'Claudine' and voices join with the chorus. Well worth the mention is the excellent light and slide show on the Bats' current tour: wonderful colour mixes and rapid changes that help the impetus of live performance. Songs from the new album abound: 'Mastery' should be played by the commercial stations. Scott writes superb songs and this band knows

how to play them. Kaye Woodward on guitar picks out simple yet effective lines which support the rolling nature of the music and provides perfect vocal harmony to Scott's vocals.

Sadly, the night is over too soon, but the band certainly fulfilled my expectations and dispelled my fears generated by their showing on *RWP* recently. Yes! They did play that great song 'Made Up in Blue' and another equally brilliant new one, 'I Know I Am' (?) which will knock your socks off when the Bats hit your town. Be there!

Tim Byrne

Headless Chickens,
Jean Paul Sartre Experience
Gluepot, July 24 & 25

Jean-Paul Sartre Experience and the Headless Chickens — two bands from two islands, one looking back nostalgically over the past 20 years, the other shredding up and spitting out their influences from a combined harvester-synthesiser — came together for a memorable weekend in Auckland recently.

For two nights they packed the Gluepot, no small achievement for two uncommercial Kiwi bands with

lower star ratings than say the Verlaines, but certainly more originality.

JPSE however score sub zero in originality when it comes to lyrics. Wistful songs about a sweet woman of love, torn hearts, shadows, trees and other mundane items that have been sung about 10 million times before. They played simple catchy tunes with a low beat and laid back feeling. In fact you could (almost) call them boring. Certainly the handful of determined fans swaying self-consciously up the front to the plaintive crooning of singer/guitarist Jim looked as uninspired as the band-

members.

But the Experience warmed up towards the end of their set with some faster tempo numbers, leaning into early rock 'n' roll. These hard-edged songs held the punters' attention and had JPSE ending on a level nearly as high as when I saw them last year in Wellington. Pity most of their set was so insipid, something the Headless Chickens could never be accused of. Serious, ponderous and depressing maybe, but never insipid.

'Winter Came Early this Year' op-
CONTINUED ON PAGE 42

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'LIVE' FROM PAGE 41

ened the set with its anguished vocals and thunderous Gordonian bassline, and what followed built up into a powerful wall of noise to deafen and awe all who heard. Chris Matthews managed to simultaneously play some frenetic guitar and intone some barbed lyrics as well as snarl into the viewfinders of several video cameras focused closely on his slick-backed head.

Ex-Birds Nest Roy's Rupert was backup singer and together the pair's strong voices incanted and capoled, threatened and shrieked to the driving thrashing controlled confusion that was Chris, bassist Grant, and Michael on synthesiser.

From the frivolous 'Scotch on the Rocks' to the Resident-warped humour of 'Do the Headless Chicken,' the obstreperous HCs

showed their fans they could be earnest and still smile.
Susan Camden

The Angels, Knightshade Galaxy, July 10

Beastly howling and growling filled the Galaxy building, and it wasn't only on the intro tape before the Angels began. Singer Doc Neeson announced from his chair centre-stage, "The doctor has broken his knee. It was either play like this or cancel. What do you think?" The crowd of about 1600 erupted into a huge roar. That was after 'Front Page News' and 'No Secrets,' which were actually a warm-up for things to come.

It was somewhere around the latest single that guitarists Rick Brewster and Bob Spencer got crazier and the show went quite wild. 'Take a Long Line' was a highlight with its quick tight blasts of power, and as they played 'We've Gotta Get Out of This Place' there was definitely no one leaving. It was so jam-packed, hot and smoky in there that it was inevitable to be drenched in sweat and beer by the time the en-

cores were demanded (though without the floorshaking of the Hamilton gig).

Brent Eccles' pounding beat began the rager 'Can't Shake It' and 'Nature of the Beast,' with the Doc's devilish salutes and waving of crutches in the air. Then into 'Will I See Your Face Again' for a fitting finale that left the crowd to climb over the mountains of empty cans.

Knightshade opened the evening with their impressive set of originals which ran together well and got things rocking nice and early.

Geoff Dunn

Breathing Cage Gluepot, July

A set of ribs springs to mind: the Breathing Cage, what a good name. I almost didn't know what to expect, but what did happen was fairly ordinary, just a band playing a few songs.

But wait! This band includes Michael Kime, ace bassist, Graeme Jefferies of This Kind of Punishment, and of course, Jay Clarkson. This band makes good noise, it plays its instruments extremely well, and Jay

sings superbly.

That's how the Breathing Cage was, good songs and a good band to play them, the musicians in the audience were impressed. Most of the songs were from Jay's EP — 'Penelope,' 'Some Kind of Haunting,' 'The Boy With the Sad Hands' — and favourites like 'The Flower' and 'Man With No Desire' saw the light of day too. However, the Breathing Cage is writing its own songs as well; I particularly liked 'Treasure' (I think it's called). The new songs have been arranged well.

For a one-off tour, the Breathing Cage got its shit together amazingly well, they were appreciated by the Gluepot audience. It would be good to see them travelling north again.

Fiona Rae

world of confusion. Randy's got a voice you can believe in and a true blue country backbeat that is emotional but far from sickly.

Smokey Robinson 'Just to See Her' (RCA 7")

A return to form after the Stevie Wonder disaster. Once again it's that voice that melts like ice on the Devil's back. This should be No 1 for weeks, but the world is a dark place.

The System 'Don't Forget this Groove' (WEA 7" & 12")

I think you'd describe this as cute, it doesn't have the emotional clout of most soul, and the guys voice doesn't convince me. But hell, there's nothing wrong with a touch of cuteness now and again.

Herb Alpert 'Diamonds' (A&M 7" & 12")

Well Herb doesn't do a lot here, a few trumpet blasts and it's all over. But as big boss of the record company Herb got in Jam and Lewis to produce and Janet Jackson to sing. Result: the best Janet Jackson song next to 'Nasty' — simply fab.

Natalie Cole 'Jump Start' (EMI 7" & 12")

Ms Cole has had a hard time recently and needs a jump start career-wise. This one should do it, from the coughing ignition to the dancefloor power glide this packs a punch.

First Circle 'Working Up a Sweat' (EMI 12")

Randy Muller used to be Brass Construction and knows his funk. This was born to raise hell in any disco, that guitar cuts like Nile Rodgers and the bass flows like champagne. There's magic in this groove.

Millie Scott 'Every Little Bit' (4th & Broadway 7" & 12")

Female soul artists nearly always have long red fingernails, and Ms Scott sure has long nails. Sociological insights aside, a smooth soul strut from the 'Prisoner of Love' woman.

Jesus and Mary Chain 'April Skies' (WEA 7" & 12")

Another nice ballad, with lilting melodies and sublimated guitars that turn this into a love song of sorts. A bit MOR for some, but side two continues the homage to Bo Diddley started on the first album. 'Kill Surf City' sounds downright evil, and 'Who Do You Love' is a slow grind that's a delight.

Kerry Buchanan

'RUMOURS' FROM PAGE 10

ific ... a compilation LP of musicians on a Labour Department work scheme features **Subdominants**, **Flying Poakas**, **I-Shence** and **Tim Golder** out this month.

The RWP reggae special will be screened late August ... new band the **Choice** play the Southern Cross ... **Phase Two** are making a video of 'The Spoiler' and are touring south ... **Chicago Smoke Shop**, "rapt" at scoring the Robert Cray support, will record an album. **Hammond Gamble** has offered to produce ... replacing Jeff Thorp in **Neil Jones' Heaters** is bassist **Chris Patton**, back from UK where he played with Peter Green ... **Tim Robinson** has left the Juke Jivers ... guitarist **Dave Murphy** and blues singer **Marg Layton** will tour the South Island.

Dave Feehan has reissued his album *Ballade* to counter claims from commercial radio that there is not enough locally made easy listening music available for them to meet the quota ... the **Central Regional Arts Council** is establishing a touring artists programme and newsletter and a performing artists directory for the central NZ region. Enquiries to P O Box 5048, Wellington. **John Pilley**

Dunedin

Chris Knox shaved half his hair while in Dunedin and **Straightjacket Fits** gave locks of it away at their gig the following weekend ... every second Monday night **Radio One** have local bands playing live in the studio, and a live album of Dunedin bands is planned, having recorded the **Benders** and **Cassandra's Ears**. And through Radio One **David Kilgour** and **Chris Raoul** are producing a history of Dunedin music.

Alistair Galbraith has a new band with **Peter Jeffries** ... **Anthony Baldwin**, ex-guitarist of Let's Get Naked, has been recording with an Arts Council grant ... new band **After Dark** debuts at a Rational Records pre-election bash ... a new punk label is being formed ... the **Baxters** are reformed as the **Playground** and are soon to record ... the **Griffins** have split ... a bizarre crowd filled the theatre for **Sid and Nancy**, including a couple of "the authorities," who made a few arrests — surely unrelated to the recent raid!

Sharon Guytonbeck

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Sly and Robbie 'Boops (Here to Go)' (4th & Broadway 7" & 12")

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Motley Crue 'Girls Girls Girls' (WEA 7")

Descartes once said, "I think, therefore I am," a statement about consciousness and existence pretty similar to this philosophical statement from Motley Crue. The leather boys roam Sunset Strip for some "hot mamas" and become one with the universe. In other words, this "kicks like a bitch."

Randy Travis 'Forever and Ever, Amen' (WEA 7")

This reminds me of Atlantic Starr's 'Always,' because it's talking about the same thing, undying love in a



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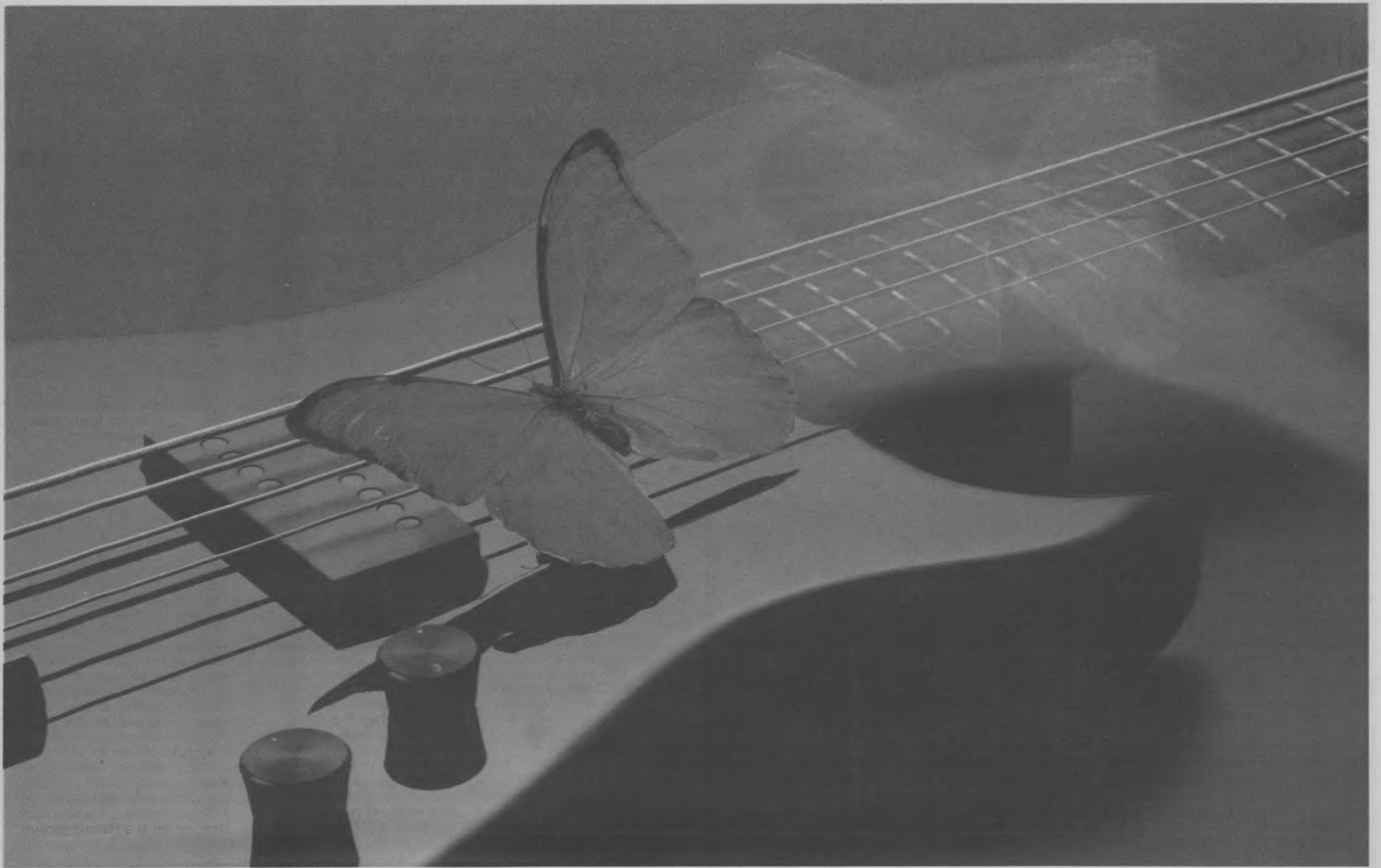
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Girl



Original Motion Picture Soundtrack

Soundtrack Features
New Songs by:

Madonna

Who's That Girl
Causing A Commotion
The Look of Love
Can't Stop

Plus New tracks by Scritti Politti, Club Nouveau,
Coati Mundi, Michael Davidson, Duncan Faure

CASSETTE & LP THRU wea