



#### Other Stuff

Don't believe what you hear about great Australian audiences going bananas at the drop of a drumstick. They do, but only for bands that *Ram* and Aussie *Rolling Stone* have told them are great. 99% of bands here are light shows and street theatre with a New Wave soundtrack. A couple, notably the Sheiks, dismiss the crap and provide good, unslick, honest music.

We've got a residency at a good pub, the Civic, on Friday nights which is sometimes shared by that most gentlemanly of bands, Proud Scum.

Posters are really bland over here — just the name of the venue, and who's playing there. We've rectified that by having our talented Alec Barthgate do a lovely one of a digger consoling himself with a sheep. Good on yer, Alec.

Australians talk funny, and some still gob. Mods hit punks, and Greeks hit mods, and Kiwis hit up and go to the Astra in Bondi (a large-scale Occidental, for all you Queen St habitués). Everybody likes Madness and the Specials and flavoured milk. Boots are cheap, but there are no boot boys — except for a handful of New Zealand imports.

TV rock shows are even worse than in NZ. They have the same film clips with real dorks introducing them and dreaming of their very own prime-time talk show.

Takeaways are generally pretty good. Everybody and his pekinese has a synthesiser or a female bass-player. Mi-Sex have an awe-inspiring influence on some local bands, all of which stick to one style and do it to death. You can safely bet that if the first song of a show is fast heavy metal, then the rest of the night is going to be pretty similar. Even if a band is good at its style, you are bound to be sick of it by the end of the evening.

worst question you can ask? Why do you want to know ... so you can go out and buy them?

A dog is sniffing around Dave's feet, as he suggests I write an article on Magazine and animals. Things are more relaxed, though Simon gets quieter. I don't think he likes me.

DF I was saying to Barry, had he read the Malcolm McLaren article in *Sounds*? He maintains that the emphasis is going to shift from the album to the cassette because of all the things you can do with it. But the medium is going to be live performances which will be great for us.

BA People say, "I never realised quite what Magazine were all about until I saw them live."

Their last London show was at the Lyceum on May 1. I remember wondering if the fact that Howard and Dave had the same haircut meant there was a new trend on the way in. I now realised that the style was dictated by the receding hairline common to them both. Simple as it was, the use of backdrop and lighting was as creative as any I'd seen.

DF We try to use lights to complement what we're doing — not to be flash or anything.

RS In the eighties it is going to be video discs — visual as well as aural. Movies are a major influence for us, I think.

DF Some of us are interested in film music. Something came up — a film of Samuel Delaney's "Dhalgren", a science fiction book about the apocalypse. The new status quo — or un-status quo.

Mention of the end of the world leads us inevitably to the Thatcher government.

DF The present government worries me a lot. I've always been very anti-discipline, very anti-authority. Punk pre-dated the extreme right-wing government we've got at present. I wish it'd happen now.

Often, it seems, those who share Dave's views on authority choose a stance which is just as authoritative. Rock music is not free of these dogmatists. It strikes me that what has been criticised as ambiguity in Magazine's lyrics may simply be an evasion of dogmatism.

DF Overt stances have never been for us. I think I can do best by displaying and improving my talents as a musician. I've got to reconcile my own survival with the idea of trying to provide something for my fellow man. It's very idealistic, but I'm a romantic. If I was stronger, or brought up on a different level, I might have been an activist of some sort in a different way. I've chosen music because that's what I'm best at.

Mairi Gunn



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