



MORE DOORS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

several bass players without finding the sound they wanted, until Manzarek discovered the keyboard bass, which he could play with his left hand while playing melody with his right. The Doors were born.

After rehearsing for some time together, the band made their professional debut at the London Fog Club on Sunset Boulevard. They were paid peanuts and constantly harassed and threatened with dismissal by the management. Morrison usually took the stage whacked out of his skull on booze and several kinds of pills, but the Doors already had some 40 original songs, including the chillingly beautiful 'The End', recently used in Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*. Word of mouth brought them local fame, mostly due to the singer's brutal good looks, obsessive stage performance and wildcat reputation. Elektra finally signed them after one of their talent scouts was dragged along to a performance at the Whisky. He made three return visits before gaining any enthusiasm.

Fiery Success

Their debut album, *The Doors*, blew them to the top in a very short space of time. It was a

dense, theatrical work, showcasing Morrison's obsessions with sex and death. Krieger's song, 'Light My Fire', went to number one and Jim Morrison became everyone's favourite face. He also started a rollercoaster ride to oblivion.

The follow-up, *Strange Days*, was no less impressive, and provided another hit single in the melancholy 'People Are Strange', perhaps the definitive song on loneliness. *Waiting For The Sun* came along in 1968, producing 'Hello, I Love You', which Morrison had debuted to Manzarek on an LA beach three years before. *The Soft Parade* charted well enough, but lacked the strength of its predecessors. Also, by this time an anti-Doors backlash was in full swing, with Morrison being hassled by the authorities wherever he went. This culminated in the notorious incident at a Miami concert in 1969, when Morrison was charged with lewd behaviour, after allegedly indecently exposing himself on stage.

Morrison Hotel, in 1970, showed a return to form, back to the lean, economical style of the best early work. *Absolutely Live* was a patchy double album (it had never been possible to get a definitive Doors' performance on record; Morrison just wasn't that reliable). But at least they

managed to get 'Celebration of the Lizard' on vinyl.

The Last Time

13 was the first greatest hits collection, to be followed by the last studio album the Doors cut together, 1971's *LA Woman*. For this they used an outside bassist, Doug Lubahn, having exhausted the limitations of their three-man musical format. Despite all his excesses, Morrison seemed to have retained his old vigour. His voice was starting to fail, but his gritty conviction carried the day. This album produced another certified classic in 'Riders On The Storm'. Morrison sounded weary, and his bleak death images seemed to bring his own end closer than ever.

Soon after completing *LA Woman*, Morrison, disillusioned and fed up with being hounded, announced he was quitting and moving to Paris. He and his wife, Pamela, leased an apartment in the old quarter, where he spent his time mixing with the local writers and artists.

Jim was a dying man, and he knew it. His hopeless alcoholism had well and truly caught up with him, and the last five months of his life were one endless binge. He was found dead of a heart attack in his bath on July 3rd, 1971. He was 27 years old.

The other three Doors continued for a time as a trio, producing two unexceptional albums, *Other Voices* and *Full Circle*, before splitting. They got together again in 1978 to provide musical backing to tape recordings of Morrison reading his poetry. This was released under the title *An American Prayer*.

Elektra have just released another retrospective album entitled *The Doors Greatest Hits*, compiled by the surviving members. The tracks are: 'Hello, I Love You', 'Light My Fire', 'People Are Strange', 'Love Me Two Times', 'Riders On The Storm', 'Break On Through', 'Roadhouse Blues', 'Not To Touch The Earth', 'Touch Me' and 'LA Woman'.

Duncan Campbell



The aura that surrounded Jim Morrison while he was alive, got out of control after he died. So it has been with all of his ilk who have been idolised. You know the names.

Cutting through the myth to find the true per-

son beneath it is often a trying and not very rewarding task. Nobody managed it with Hendrix, while Peggy Caserta's *Going Down With Janis* was squalor at its most depressing. Maybe myths should be left intact.

The Jim Morrison story has been several years in the writing, the product of a collaboration between *Rolling Stone* contributor Jerry Hopkins and long-time Morrison confidante Daniel Sugerman. Hopkins interviewed countless friends and associates of all four Doors, while Sugerman edited the final transcript, adding some of the more intimate details and correcting inaccuracies.

The result, *No One Here Gets Out Alive*, is a weighty and factually meticulous paperback, stuffed full of everything you ever wanted to know about the rise and fall of Jim Morrison and the Doors, plus discography, dozens of interesting photos and credits for the films the Doors were involved in. As a reference work, it is superb. As an honest picture of the man behind the myth, it falls well short.

Sugerman goes right over the top in the foreword. 'My personal belief is that Jim Morrison was a god,' he gushes. How disillusioned he must have been when he read Hopkins' text. Hopkins faithfully details just about every glass of booze Jim drank, every joint he smoked and pill he popped, every nasty, crazy trick he ever played on anyone, every sofa he passed out under, every time he threw up on something or talked dirty. Some deity.

In between his battles with the bottle and various substances, Morrison managed to lay down some of rock's finest moments on record, and put some dark imagery into verse. Reading this book, one wonders how he managed to find the time. His life appears to have been consecrated on artificial stimulants. His lucid moments were apparently few and far between.

In a nutshell, the premise behind this book is hypocritical. Hopkins and Sugerman try to set up Morrison as a musical Messiah, then coldly and calculatingly run him down as a shambling, boorish drunk, a cruel mistreater of women, a visitor from Hell rather than Heaven. This two-faced approach is accentuated by the Christ-like cover photo, and the writers' pathetic attempt at the end to re-build the legend they have so carefully shattered.

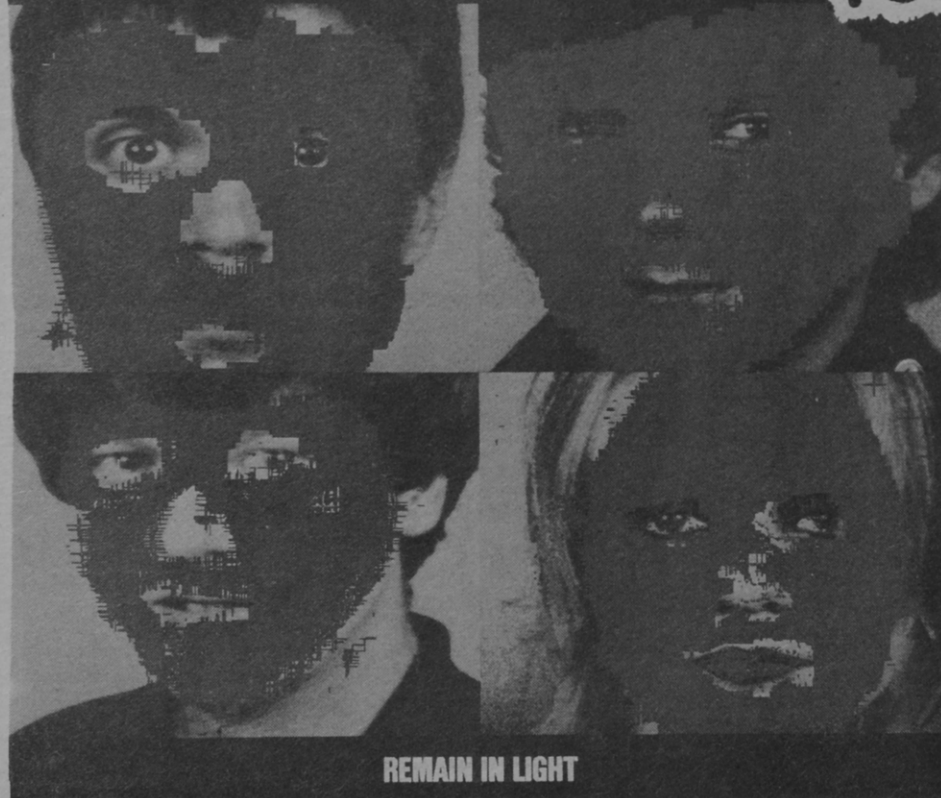
Did Jim Morrison really die in that bathtub in Paris? Nobody actually saw his dead body, save for his wife, who died three years later, and the coroner who signed the death certificate. Morrison's friends saw only a sealed coffin. The authors try to sow the seeds of doubt, recalling that Morrison once talked of disappearing, burying The Lizard King. They're still waiting for a sign. Jim, come out, come out, wherever you are. Similar things have been said about countless other famous persons, from Buddy Holly to Adolf Hitler.

Does anybody really care? For my money, Jim Morrison is dead. He died from too much high living, proving he was just as mortal as the next man. *No One Here Gets Out Alive* is a cheap shot. Morrison, the man and his motives, remain a mystery.

Duncan Campbell



TALKING HEAD ARE YOU READY FOR?



ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN

CROCODILES

