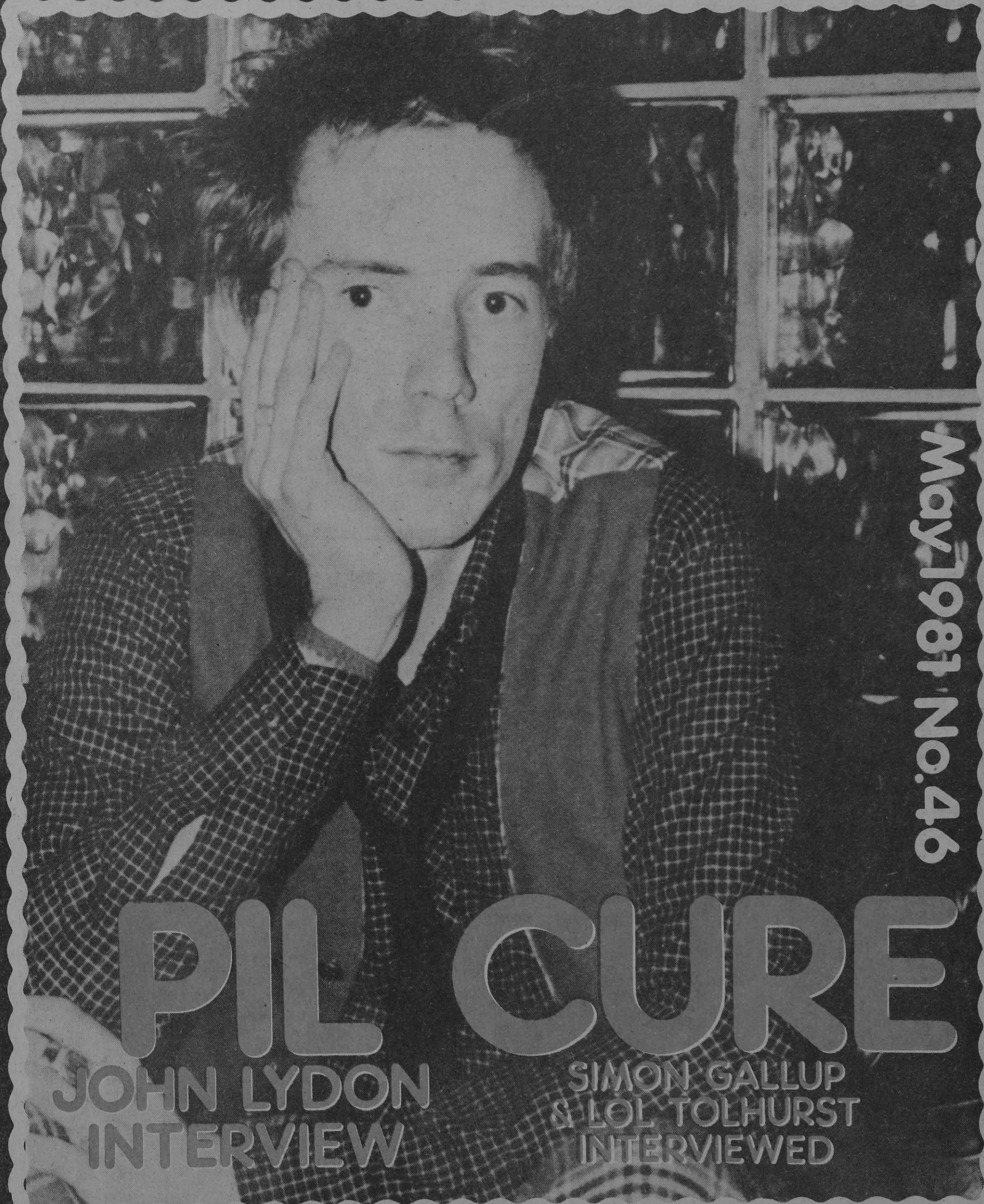


MUSIC SHACK RECORDS

# RIP IT UP

May 1981 No. 46



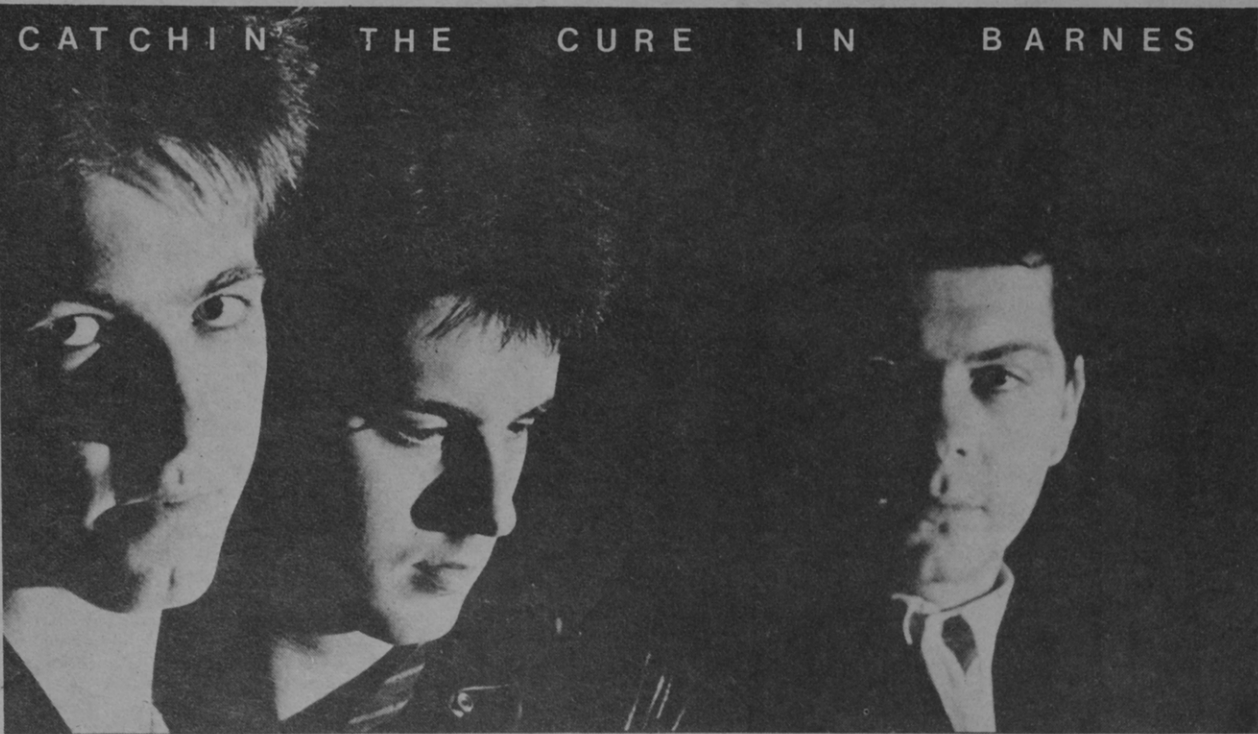
## PIL CURE

JOHN LYDON  
INTERVIEW

SIMON GALLUP  
& LOL TOLHURST  
INTERVIEWED

ELLEN FOLEY DIRE STRAITS





Robert Smith, Simon Gallup and Lol Tolhurst.

To talk to the Cure, I put myself at the mercy of British Rail. About 20 minutes by train, through the wilds of deepest Battersea, brings you to a picturesque little village called Barnes, home of Olympic Studios. The Cure are due there to record a track for *Top of the Pops*.

A *TOTP* appearance is almost compulsory for bands who want to make it, but considering the hassles, it's little wonder that some refuse. No miming to the original track allowed. The Musicians' Union decrees that a new version must be recorded especially for the programme. With studio time costing an average of 55 quid an hour, and a track taking at least three hours to lay down, it's a costly exercise, with no guarantee of recouping it in sales.

With all this, compounded by the band's late arrival for the session, it was getting late by the time I managed to draw bass player Simon Gallup and drummer Laurence Tolhurst aside for a quick chat. For lack of anywhere quieter, we talked in manager Chris Parry's car.

The Cure are now back to a three-man lineup, with the loss of keyboards player Matthieu Hartley. Their new album, *Faith*, basically continues where *17 Seconds* left off. It's a dark, broody, rather unnerving work, but not without some attack, especially on 'Primary' (the single) and 'Doubt'.

"We had about 13 tracks when we started originally," says Gallup, "but we finally cut that back to eight, because the others didn't particularly tie in. Robert plays a lot of keyboards this time, instead of guitar."

"The new material is a bit more expansive, if you like," adds Tolhurst, "*17 Seconds* was more, sort of, misty and set-back, whereas this is more up front, and there's a lot more variation with instruments."

"It's more immediate in some respects, but it's still got a theme that's running from *17 Seconds*, there's still that same kind of feeling. It's a lot more positive though, more specific."

"I think it's a natural conclusion to *17 Seconds*, really," says Gallup. "We had no real idea what the sound was going to be like when we started these sessions. It's as much as a surprise to us as to anybody else, really."

"We never contrive a certain type of sound," Tolhurst explains. "We work with a basic backbone, and everything else we do is like a discovery. We very rarely go in with a set idea. It just develops as we go along."

Hartley left at the end of the Australasian tour, necessitating some smart rearranging of material.

"When we came back, we had about eight days off before playing some British dates," says Gallup. "So we had a couple of rehearsals, and the parts that the keyboards were really essential on, Robert and I took our share of that. We tried just to put the essential parts in, but a lot of it wasn't needed. It certainly sounded a bit rougher, and meant we had to work harder on stage to get a tighter sound. But there were only about three songs where we really needed keyboards, so Robert and I took our share of that."

The Cure intend remaining a three-piece from now on. "At the moment, to fill out the sound on two of the new songs, I'm playing bass pedals as well as bass," Gallup says. "If we think about it, we can actually make a very full sound, we don't have to have an extra instrument."

"It's also good because we like to keep songs down to a bare minimum, to give the melody more chance. The melody is very important to us."

The new stage act features all of the new album, about three-quarters of *17 Seconds*, and two or three oldies. Gallup says the new sound is very solid, especially on tracks like 'Primary', where two basses are used, playing chords. The band is trying not only to use new instruments, but to use instruments in a new aspect.

The Cure are now touring Europe, after extensive shows in Britain and Ireland. Expect them back down this way in July or August. They also want to sandwich in another single somewhere along the line.

"It's been our pattern to do a single a year and an album a year, but now we feel that we want to do something a bit more immediate, and not spend a year in between," says Tolhurst. "I mean, a lot of that has been touring anyway, we've done a lot of travelling and we find it very hard to write as we're going."

Ideas do emerge, however, while on tour. 'Primary', for example, was conceived in Australia. But the band hopes the new structure of the live performance will give them a little more breathing space, and time to exchange ideas.

Part of the new stage show is a brief animated film called *Carnage Visors*. It has a vague theme of good and evil, being a series of images using wooden figures as characters. The film was devised by Gallup's brother, and the band wrote a mainly-instrumental soundtrack for it. It'll be shown as the first half of the concert, instead of having a support act.

"I'm not being derogatory to other bands, but sometimes you might get a support band that's singing 'Route 66' or something like that, and both bands don't complement each other. They'd be better off playing on their own," says

Gallup. "So to make it a whole package, we have the film, and then we come on immediately after."

The Cure are a long way from superstardom, even at home, but they're happy with their support. They put in the same amount of effort whether they're playing in London or Upper Hutt.

Says Tolhurst: "Quite a lot of people know about us know, but it's fairly even in every country. Our popularity at home is the same as in other places. It's not like the Jam, for instance, though they might dispute this. Their popularity in Europe, as a whole, is very, very low, while in England they're massive. But we've never had the attitude that people should bow down to us overseas just because

# faith

To win a copy of the Cure's new album *FAITH* and a poster just answer the following questions. The first 10 correct entries opened on May 30 win *FAITH*. Post your entry now to *Rip It Up*, PO Box 5689, Auckland.

1. Name the member of Cure not on the first album?

2. What is the first single off *FAITH*?

Name .....

Address .....

we're English. We set exactly the same standard everywhere, and maybe that accounts for people liking us in other countries."

Right now, the Cure are happy and confident in their work. They bear the slings and arrows philosophically, particularly the barbs thrown by the British media. But they were chuffed to hear that *RIU* readers voted their New Zealand performances the best of 1980. I wasn't personally bowled over, but await their next visit with interest. The title of the new album is an expression of self-confidence rather than devotion. The Cure have plenty of faith in themselves, and they may yet move a mountain or two.

Duncan Campbell







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## rumours

UK & USA

Bubbling under the NME Top 40 Chart is *Prayers On Fire*, the new album by Aussies, *Birthday Party*. NME writer, Andy Gill described the album as a great debut of '81, writing: "This sound is beautiful, it's perfect!" It's on Missing Link (through RTC here) ... Pink Floyd will perform *The Wall* for five nights at London's Earls Court. The concert will be filmed for Alan *Fame* Parker-produced movie of *The Wall* ... Canned Heat lead singer, Bob Hite died of a heart attack, April 6. Their late sixties blues hits included 'On

The Road Again' and 'Goin' Up Country' ... Clash are once again managed by Bernie Rhodes. Their new UK single is 'Magnificent Seven' remixed by Pepe Unidos, a Puerto Rican producer ... Dexys have recorded tracks with Bowie producer, Tony Visconti. The



Futurist but chic, Spandau Ballet.

band claim they have left EMI ... Chic will be involved in next Blondie album ... Mercury act Teardrop Explodes have a UK hit single with 'Reward' ... new Echo and Bunneymen 12 inch single features four live tracks from the film *Shine So Hard* ... the Who bassist John Entwistle

told NME: "I like playing heavy metal — I just can't stand listening to it ... the same way some people like the smell of their own farts but don't like smelling anyone else's." ... first Adam & the Ants' album *Dirk Wears White Sox* (on Do It) is now in the UK Top 20. *Kings Of The Wild Frontier* is still number one ... in Berlin Bruce Springsteen performed two John Fogerty songs, 'Who Will Stop The Rain' and 'Rockin' All Over The World'. Fogerty, the ex Credence Clearwater frontman is recording a solo album for Elektra/Asylum ... the Gary Glitter comeback single is 'I'm Not Just A Pretty Face' ... Stranglers are on Stiff in America ... new Robert Fripp band (Discipline) features Bill Bruford, Adrian Belew (toured downunder with Bowie) and Tony Levin.

New UK albums include Dave Edmunds *Twangin'*, Scars *Author! Author!* (on Charisma-owned new wave label, Pre), Girlschool *Hit & Run*, Kraftwerk *Computerworld* (first since 1978), Cramps *Psychodelic Jungle*, Gillian *Future Shock*, Tenpole

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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# THE CURE

faith

THE CURE  
faith



the holy hour  
primary  
other voices  
all cats are grey

the funeral party  
doubt  
the drowning man  
faith



# Rumours

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2  
Tudor Eddie, Old Bob, Dick Gary, Foreigner Silent Partners, Greg Kihn Rockinroll, Joe Ely Musta Notta Gotta Lotta and the Fall Slates (a ten inch on Rough Trade).

## Auckland

Out now is the Blams 12 inch EP ... Ainsworths and the Regulators have recorded a double A sided single for proposed Olympic Presentations.

Songs are 'Coin' and 'Neat Boy' respectively ... Rhythm Method are recording 'Creating Criminals' at Harlequin. Their new permanent members are Phil Steel on vocals and percussion and Matthew Flynn on sax.

Rick Bryant has a brand new band, the Neighbours with Andrew Clouston (Rodents), Paul Kurnac and ex Local Heroes Sam Ford, Trudi Green, Ross Cameron and Ken James. Neighbours will play tunes by Sam and Rick and soul standards. They're looking for a soundman. Write to PO Box

47-135 if able ... bassist Adam Holt has left the Ainsworths to start a band with Terry Towelling ... ex Snipes drummer Norman Knox and brother Chris (yes, another one) are looking for a guitarist. Phone 'em at 568-384.

Hammond Gamble returns from the USA May 10 and commences a Far North Tour with gigs in Kaitia, Dargaville, Kaikohe and Whangarei. See Calendar for dates.

Next 45 on Ripper is Otis Mace and Rex Reason performing the Gene Pitney hit, 'Mecca' ... on May 11 Screaming Meemees will complete their Propeller 45, 'See Me Go' and record flip, 'Till I Die'. The recording was delayed a week as Split Enz were in Harlequin mixing the sound for their Night Moves (Aussie RWP) Special of a Sydney concert ... Phil Yule will produce and engineer for Mascot Studio based Warrior Records. Yule was at Stebbings 1973-76 and more recently has worked in UK studios.

## Wellington

The Wellington Zone Concert that drew a capacity crowd to the Concert Chamber was in fact recorded. A live album of the concert is due out early June with two Digits tracks and three each from BRF, Steroids and Mockers.

The Red have done a RWP clip for upcoming posthumous single ... filling R&B gap left by demise of the Rodents are Private Eyes. Prospects of a Rodent revival vary according to who you talk to and on what day of the week. Meanwhile John Nyland is playing keyboards with Preservatives.

Condemned Sector are now Neoteric Tribesmen ... gigging again and impressing after a layoff are Naked Spots ... old Mockers single 'Good Old Days' is available again ... there is talk of further Town Hall shows and of a Wellington Zone Tour. Les Crew

## Christchurch

Newtones have recorded an EP. The four tracks 'Paint The Town Red', 'Santa Anna', 'China' and 'Christchurch' will be released on their own label in late May ... a Christchurch independent has been formed.

## Eddie Rayner, Harlequin Studios.



Madness' Woody at Record Warehouse

## Flying Nun Records.

Hip Singles are Dick Driver, guitarist Bill Direen (Vaccum) plus Melbournites. The band resides at the Hillsborough in May ... Dunedin bands in town recently, Clean and Elevators at Gladstone and Broken Models at Cave Rock ... Knobz packed the Aranui. Ralph recording artist Snakefinger will play the Gladstone May 21 & 22.

The much loved Playthings have split. They played their final night May 6 at the Gladstone ... Sandra Garagette (guitar) has joined 25c ... new band, Dave McKenzie (Returns, Nameless), Mike Williams (Vauxhalls) and Roland de Bere, play Pil, Banshees influenced material. Rose Stapleton

## Dunedin

Split Enz's capacity show went down a treat. Tickets were sold out in two days. The Elevators supported but puzzled many with their unorthodox repertoire.

The newly formed University Rock Society are encouraging new bands by providing varsity venues. A successful virtual new band night featuring Stones (boasting ex-Same Geoff Batts on vocals), the Verlaines (featuring another ex-Same Craig Easton), Requiem Paradise, the Chills and stalwarts Bored Games should be encouraging for RocSoc.

The Clean made friends in Christchurch's Gladstone and have been re-booked. 3ZM also have them down for a forthcoming station organised stint and the band should be up north sometime during May. George Kay

## Tours

May's surprise is visit by guitarist/Resident, Snakefinger

of Ralph Records fame. His band is Miguel Bertel (guitar), John Paul George (bass) and Johnny Ryan (drums). The tour commences May 21 & 22, Gladstone. NI gigs are Last Resort May 23 & 24, Hillcrest 27, Auckland Uni's Maidment Theatre 28 and Gluepot 29 & 30. Snakefinger's new album is out now on RTC. It's titled Greener Postures.

Several top bands cross the Tasman in May to play Mainstreet. Expatriots Mi-Sex play Tuesday 12 & Wednesday 13. The band have recorded a new album and they will feature new material including current single, 'Falling In And Out'. Midnight Oil conclude their NZ tour at Mainstreet May 8 & 9, legendary Aussie rock and rollers OL'55 play May 19 & 20 with the Blue Flames and Cold Chisel may do the same late May.

Other OL'55 dates are May 14 Bellblock New Plymouth, 15 & 16 Framptons Hamilton, 18 Onerahi Whangarei, 21 Rocks Rotorua, 22 & 23 Lennons Hastings and May 24 Wellington. Since 1975 when OL'55 stalled into action they've released three albums in NZ: Take It Greasy, Fives Live Jive and Cruisin' For A Brusin'. Their new album is known as The Vault.

Grammy award winner Billy Joel makes a flying visit to Auckland in May. See him at Logan Campbell Centre, Friday 22 and Saturday 23. Sam Rivers and band, Herbie Hancock with Ron Carter, Wayne Shorter and Tony Williams. There is talk of Adam Ant and Clash touring this year. Devo may tour September.

## SNAKEFINGER

The last week in May will see New Zealand besieged. No, the

reds aren't coming, and it's not the yellow peril either. Commencing on May 21 at the Gladstone, Christchurch, and finishing on May 30 at the Gluepot in Auckland, Ralph recording artist Snakefinger will stun us with his weird blend of avant-rock and mutated blues.

For the uninitiated, Snakefinger was born in London on June 17, 1949 as Philip Lithman. Lithman played with the unknown Juniors' Blues Band and Smiley in the late sixties before teaming up with German musicologist N. Senada to record bird song in the Bavarian forests. This was led to the duo being absorbed into the emerging musical deviants now known as the Residents.

When Senada made a pilgrimage to Greenland, Snakefinger drifted back to the UK to form the brilliant but under-rated Chilly Willy and the Red Hot Peppers. Despite two stunning albums, Kings of the Robot Rhythm and Bongos over Balham, Chilly Willy never received their due acclaim and splintered, with members later turning up in the Rumour and the Attractions. Snakefinger returned to the Residents after abortive ventures with such diverse acts as Long John Baldry, Ace and Hall and Oates.

Since rejoining the Residents' fold in 1976, Snakefinger has



appeared on four of their albums, Fingerprince, Duck Stab/Buster and Glen, Satisfaction and the recent Commercial Album. He has also cut two of his own, the superb Chewing Hides the Sound and the recent Greener Postures.

As well as playing violin, keyboards and steel guitar, Snakefinger is, along with James 'Blood' Ulmer, the most original guitarist to have come to prominence in the last five years. Utilising a tone that sometimes sings, only to fracture into dissonant shards of sound.

If your tastes extend beyond the Top 40, you owe it to yourself to see Snakefinger and sample such weird and wonderful delights as 'Kill the Great Raven', 'Jesus was a Leprechaun', 'Golden Goat', 'The Man in the Dark Sedan' and 'Save Me from Dali'. Graham Donlon

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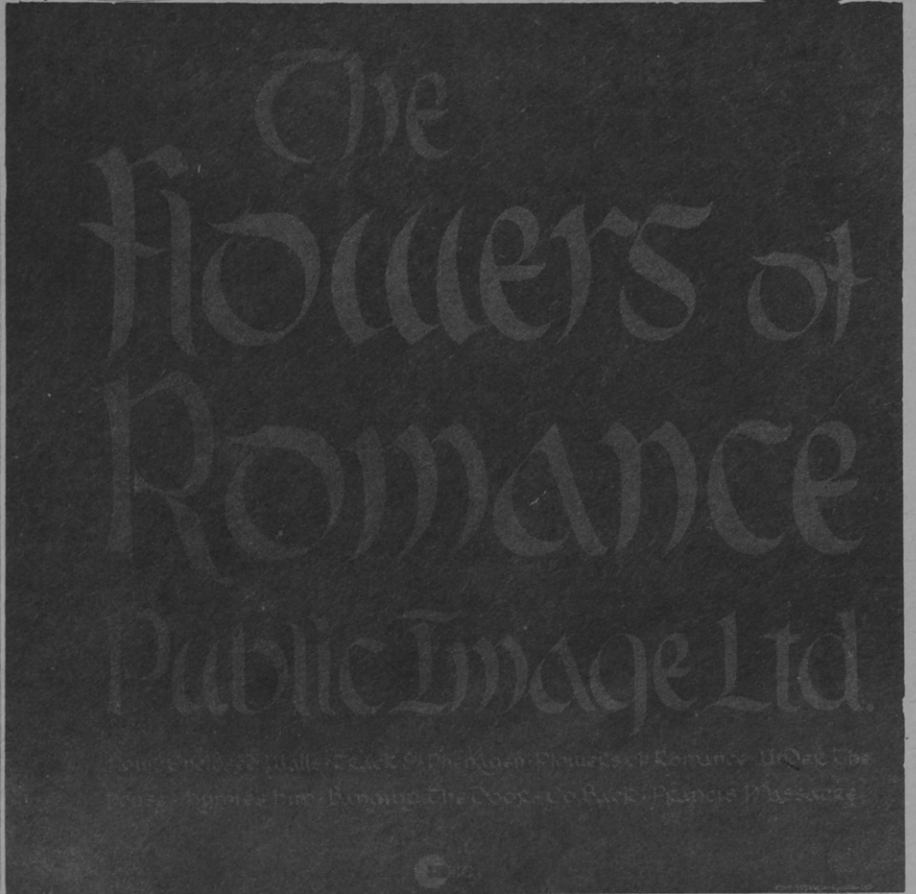


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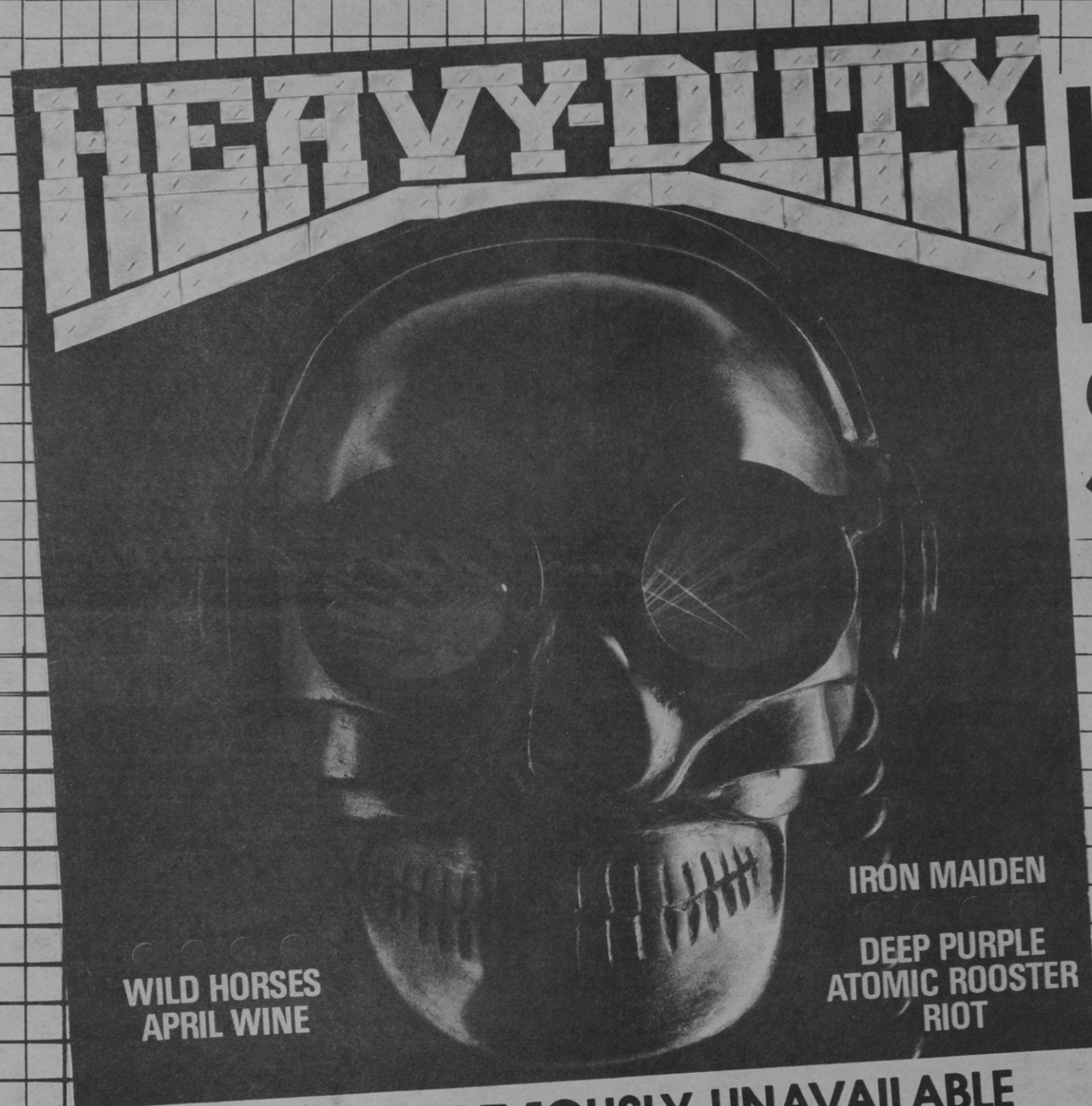


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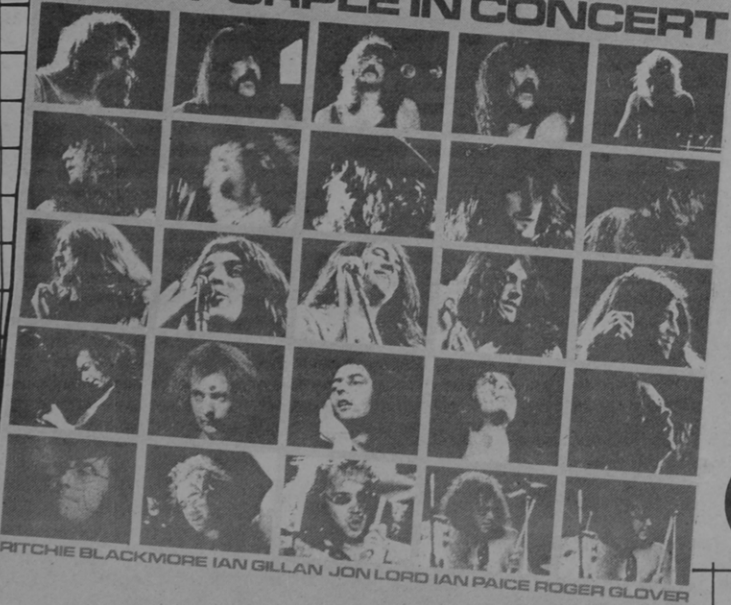
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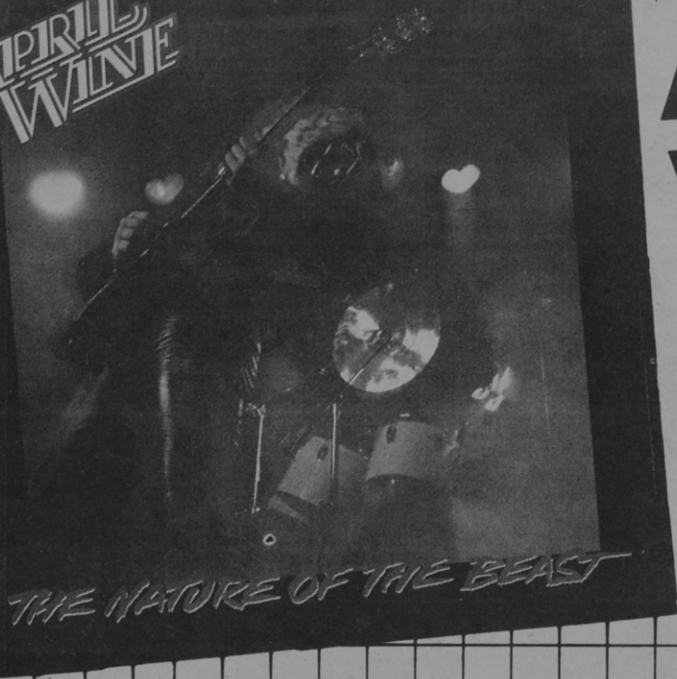
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# Off the Record

## On The Tube

This is for the network audience.

Rock and roll TV is looking up a little, despite the efforts of last month's RWP seventies 'special' to scuttle it. There is a new show on the waves, Andy (sorry, Andrew) Shaw's *Drop O' Kulture*.

Promising to feature local talent and visitors only, it goes out on Wednesday at the annoying time of 5 pm. There have been mutterings about how closely the show will stick to its New Zealand format, so get your letter-writing crayons ready.

One band who won't be appearing on the show — at least through the normal channels — are the Screaming Meemees, who came to some kind of disagreement over style of presentation, and are now planning an independent Super 8 film clip. Meemie's manager, David Merritt, claims the all-up cost of the venture is around \$500. Some say you can add a nought to that to arrive at what it costs TVNZ to do an in-studio job. If the programme's makers agree to buy the finished article for a realistic price, it could give a lot of bands a chance to get away from the dreaded Avalon look.

Mind you, Avalon did turn out a fair result with the two tracks from the Blam Blam Blam EP featured on RWP. Perhaps the end is in sight for the era of the lead vocalist slowly dissolving into the guitar scratchplate, as the camera zooms in and out sickeningly. I know that *C'mon*

was a milestone, but twelve years on it's more like a millstone.

## On The Town

This is strictly for Aucklanders.

Rock and roll eating is looking up a little. There are two late-night diners flourishing in Auckland at the moment. Cafe Cafe is uptown, and caters very much for the strong black coffee and burger set. Starship II is in Vulcan Lane and features new management, very low prices and a very big menu. Besides strong black, coffee also comes half a dozen other ways and the deserts are registered with the Department of Health as coronary risks. Both have jukeboxes, with Starship's winning by a Chiffon or two. Both are packed at midnight, although other factors might bring about an early closure. So make the most of them while you can.

Francis Stark

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## ROCK FOLEY

Last year, Ellen Foley visited Auckland to promote her album *Night Out*. The record stamped her as hot property, and while she was here she told us that she would like to "sing on the next Clash album," although she had never seen or met the band.

Several months later, *Cashbox* noted that Mick Jones and Ellen Foley were holidaying in the Bahamas. A quick

glance at the credits of her second album, *Spirit of St Louis*, shows that Jones contributed more than just good advice.

Speaking on the phone from New York, she sounds rather tired. "The Clash were in New York recording and I was able to watch. The way they worked really fascinated me. It was like a lot of people would come around and get very excited about something. It all seemed so spontaneous. Later on I found that in Mick's mind there was always a definite idea, and that Joe absolutely toils over everything. I suggested that maybe we could do something together, and they agreed. It all just developed from there."

As things progressed, it was decided that Jones would produce. Was Foley worried about giving away complete control?

"I really trust his skill and instinct, so it wasn't a matter of control, more of co-operation. I thought I learned a lot, but I gave a lot too."

Where did the songs come from?

"Mick and I chose the songs. He and Joe wrote six of them especially for me. The rest are made up of one of my own, two oldies by Edith Piaf and Aretha Franklin and several by Tymon Dogg. Tymon's a friend of Joe's. We ran into him in New York last spring, loitering on a street corner. I found him a really fascinating person and I was just amazed by his songs. He has a truly unusual voice and an absolutely manic violin style."

Whatever happened to the songs Foley wrote last year with Fred Goodman?

"On reflection, they just didn't seem to fit. Fred is doing demos with them now. I'd like other people to record them because they are good songs. To me it's like they came from another time."

The first album, *Night Out* was produced by Ian Hunter and recorded in the States. This time, it was done at London's Wessex Studios. How did the recording of *St Louis* compare to the previous album?

"It was all much faster. It took about a month divided into two periods. It was also far less casual. Although there was a lot of tension, it was all positive. I found people in London have a far higher level of creativity than people in the States. We used Mick, Joe, Topper and Tymon, as well as Davey Payne, Norman Watt-Roy, Mickey Gallagher and Johnny Turnbull. Bill Price engineered."

Is the album aimed at the British market?

"No. I wouldn't say it was aimed at any specific market. It has a British sound because of where it was done and who did

it. It has changed my sound though. In the past, the production was very big. *Night Out* followed a successful sixties formula, because it was what we thought would work best. What I'm doing now centres much more on my voice. I see it as a modern style of cabaret. All about a singer, a performer telling stories, and particularly about a woman. It's given me more of an understanding about what I want from myself."

Where did the album title come from?

"I come from St Louis. The name of Charles Lindbergh's plane was *Spirit of St Louis*. To me, making trans-Atlantic crossings had a lot to do with making the album."

Has working with other people's bands left her high and dry when it comes to live work?

"Definitely. That's exactly where I am now. I have to wait and see what happens with the record. It's all other people's plans and I don't really agree with it. At the moment I don't even have one show lined up. In fact I really don't know what I'm going to do next."

Mark Phillips

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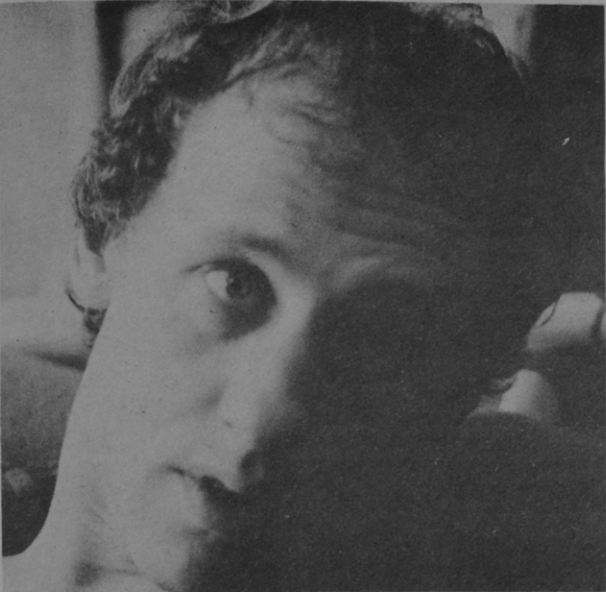
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## Straight Talk

Apart from their financial state, the four founding members of Dire Straits had little in common with the punk storm which was sweeping England in the year of their formation, 1977. Brothers Mark and David Knopfler, John Illsley and Pick Withers must have seemed unlikely bets as the next big thing.

Mainman Mark Knopfler, in Auckland for the band's Western Springs show agrees. "It was almost by chance really. All of a sudden there was a vehicle to do my own songs. At the time I was playing in a rockabilly, R'n'B group called Cafe Racers. We used to play pubs in London. I never wanted to do any of my own songs with them, because they just weren't the right sort of band.

"It was hard work getting Dire Straits off the ground, but if you have the right bits and pieces, then you just have to keep plugging to make it happen. It's a lot of hassles to get together a band and keep it, but in our cases it was worth it."

Armed with a five-track

demo that included 'Wild West End' and 'Sultans of Swing', they went in search of a record deal.

"There was a lot of record company interest. We had to go and visit heaps of A & R men in their tacky little offices. We got turned down by quite a few before Polygram signed us."

The single, 'Sultans', was not immediately successful in England, but did well elsewhere.

"It's got a lot to do with the radio. In Britain, Radio One wouldn't play it because it had too many words. They relented once it became a hit in the rest of the world. In America at the time, most stations were a mixture of MOR and disco. Somehow, 'Sultans' got picked up by quite a few stations. While we were touring there the first time, we visited lots of stations hoping to promote proper rock records, band records."

Before the recording of the current Straits' album, *Making Movies*, Mark's brother Dave left the band.

"Dave's not really a rock and

roller. I think it was the prospect of making another album and then touring the world to promote it. He hates press conferences and record company hype.

"He was also having trouble musically. The parts of *Making Movies* that he would have to play are more complex than in the past. We worked ourselves to death in the last couple of years, and I think the prospect of doing it again was just too much. At the moment he's trying to be a record producer."

Why two new members?

Because of the keyboards on the album, we needed someone to do it live. That's where Alan Clark comes in. I wanted two keyboard players, but I got overruled, as Alan is more than adequate. Hal Lindes has replaced Dave, but at the same time created a role for himself.

Production credits on all three Straits' albums differ. *Making Movies* was produced by Jimmy Iovine, most noted for Petty's *Damn the Torpedoes*.

"We use different producers because I don't believe in finding a successful formula and sticking to it. I feel it is important to move forward. I very much enjoyed co-producing with Jimmy. I might even try it by myself next time."

Mark Phillips

### 25 Nix Win Six

25 Readers win CBS singles by Pop Mx (originated in Chch), Adam Ant (UK No. 1 album) Newmatics/Meemeees (on Ripper), Swingers (Australia No. 1), Ray Columbus (No. 1 in Australia 1964) and everyone's favourite Scots, The Associates (on Stunn).

The chosen ones are: Neil Madsen Kamo, Suzanne Elliott Dargaville, J.D. McTaggart, Barbara Beyda Three Kings, M. Harrison Milford, Jenny Iversen Christchurch, Floyd McGovern Miramar, Valerie Parkes Rotorua, M. Ralm Hamilton, Joe Tooman Helensville, Warren Strickett Henderson, Philip Regan New Plymouth, Andrew Goodchild Timaru, Nicholas Lawn Dunedin, Helen Montgomery New Plymouth, Candy Gravelle New Lynn, Tereena Smith Hillsborough, Roger Hallmond Hamilton, Robert TCV15 Christchurch, P. Underwood Paeroa, Mark Sim, Stephen Brougham Hastings, Dave Paris Palmerston North, Erin O'Leary Hastings, Hamish Cowey Greenlane.

# SINSEMILLA

## HAS BEEN HARD TO GET



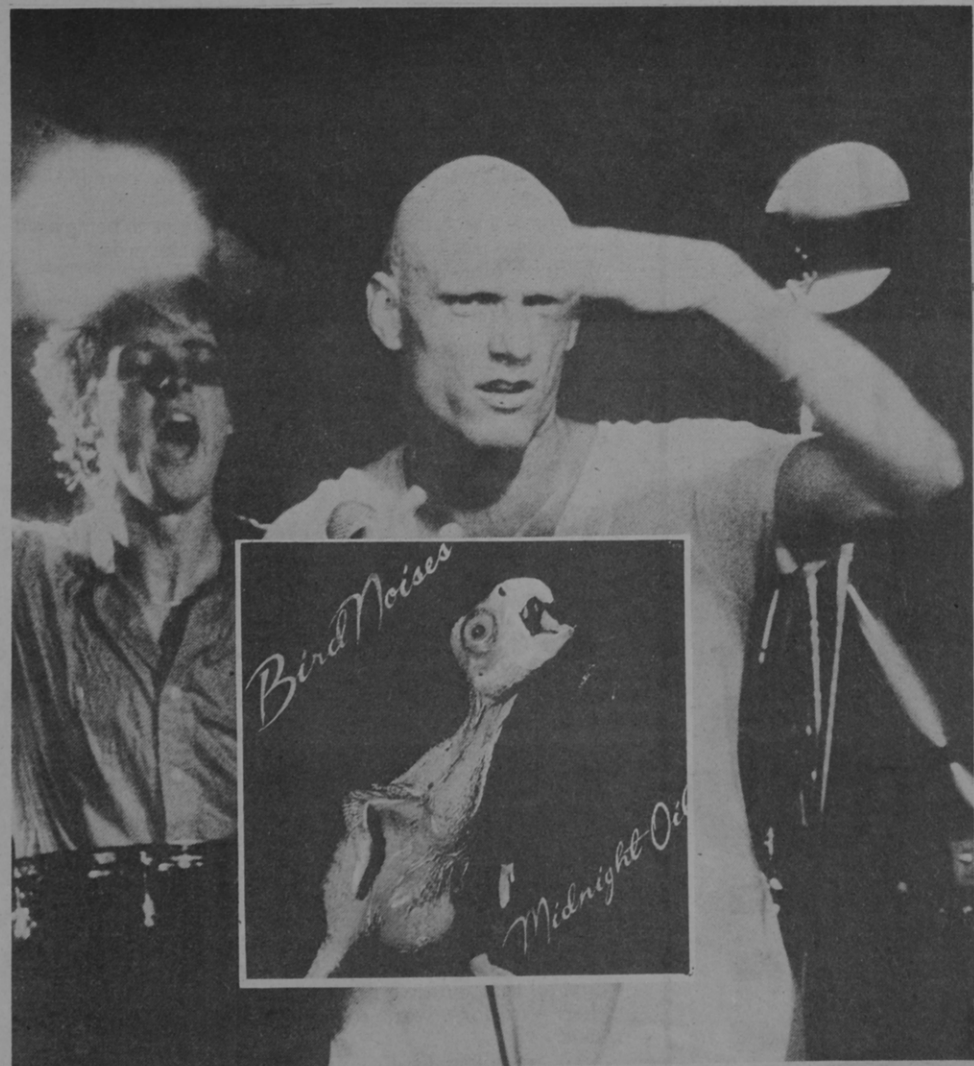
## BLACK UHURU

### THE NEW ALBUM



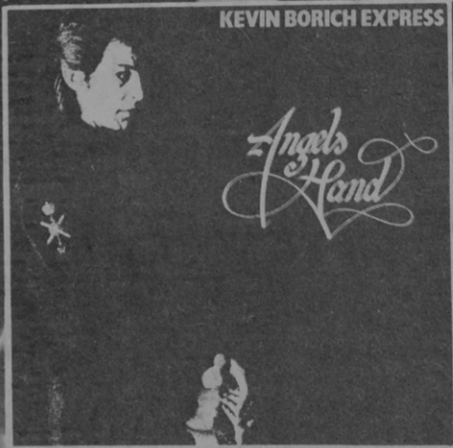
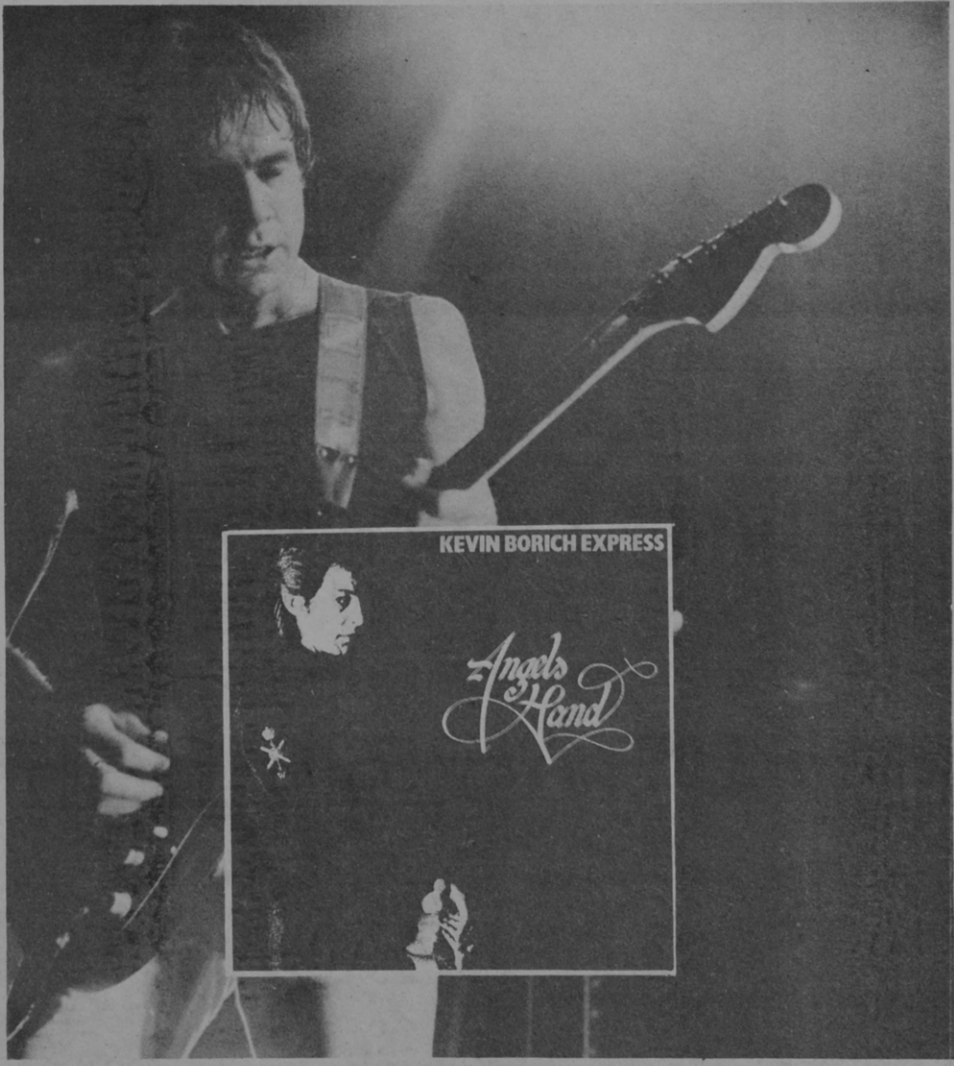
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and Tapes

# THEY DESTROYED YOU LIVE! SO KEEP THE MEMORY ALIVE ...



## MIDNIGHT OIL

### 'BIRD NOISES'



## KEVIN BORICH

### 'ANGEL'S HAND'



'Rip It Up' writer Duncan Campbell has just returned from an overseas excursion, which included a visit to London. While there he interviewed several persons

in the music industry. More interviews will appear in forthcoming issues. What follows is his first encounter, with music's *bete noir*, John Lydon.

# JOHNNY LYDON

Monday, April 13. A lovely spring day in London. Sun shining, but the wind blows straight off the Russian steppes. Sitting amid the organised chaos that is the office of Virgin Records, off Portobello Rd.

International manager Lisa Anderson and pressperson Julie Bayliss are trying to sort out for me who is available and who isn't.

"Well, they're in Los Angeles now, just starting a tour. They live in Sheffield and never come to London. They hate the place. He's just rehearsing for a play he's appearing in. They're busy recording."

Things aren't looking too promising on the interview front. Tentatively, I ask about John Lydon.

"He's been hassled for so many interviews lately, he's fed up. We'll ask him, but we can't promise anything."

But luck, as it turns out, is with us. Half an hour later, in walks John Lydon, purely by chance. He agrees to talk, and we thank our stars.

Lydon looks pale and thin, ie: normal. He's tastefully attired in a blue boiler suit and is in good humour, exchanging banter with the office staff, who affectionately refer to him as 'Lotten', after an encounter with the Japanese media.

*"I can hardly be open-minded. I think it's the best thing we've done so far, without a doubt."*

John Lydon is an easy person to like, often brutally frank and a bit of a joker. He detests sham and pretension, and while his replies to questions may sometimes leave you dangling, he's certainly not an evasive or aggressive interviewee.

PiL's latest offering, *The Flowers Of Romance*, had just been released at the time of this interview.

Tell us about the new album, I suggest for openers.

"No," he replies.

All right then, don't, I respond, playing it his way.

"Well, what the hell can I say?" comes the retort, all in good fun we hasten to add. "It's just bloody great. It should be listened to, though, first. I can only say good things about it, can't I? I can hardly be open-minded. I think it's the best thing we've done so far, without a doubt."

"We've learned our studio technique now. We approached it ... not professionally, but we know what we want and we know how to get it," he grins in conscious self-parody. "We understand the workings much easier, and it was a very enjoyable album to make."

*Flowers* was made by Lydon, Keith Levene and Jeanette Lee, with Martin Atkins drumming on three tracks. With the departure of Jah Wobble, there's very little bass on the album. Levene plays it on one track, and Lydon bows it on



another. Jeanette is a long-standing PiL Corporation member, but Lydon is reluctant to talk about her contributions.

"She does the same as any of us. I hate working out the ins and outs of what each of us do technically, I think that's a bit silly. Because in PiL we all pride ourselves on being a bit multi-adaptable. I mean, if a situation needs something to be done immediately, any one of us can do it. As far as playing goes, we all just pick things up and bash them, there's no great technical musical ability involved, just whatever moves us, whatever is right, not what's technically proficient."

Percussion plays a major part in the making of *Flowers*. With the bass so seldom used, drums and percussion are required more to provide a rhythm. It's as unorthodox as anything we've come to expect from PiL, but it's surprisingly danceable.

*"Nothing is worked out before we go into the studio,"*

The discussion turns to PiL's approach to recording. "Nothing is worked out before we go into the studio, it's made up on the spot," Lydon explains. "This makes it real good fun. If we don't particularly like something, we drop it immediately, we don't carry on with it. We have very little material that we don't use. We use just about everything."

Does that make for a slow recording process? "No, it makes it very quick. This album took about three weeks. This time around, we started off with the drums. We took about two days to get a decent drum sound, using about 16 of the 24 tracks just for the drums. And once the drum sound was sorted out we just started from there, and did it song by song. We use very few instruments, we just use what we do use to the maximum potential. We just let them flow themselves, use the power of them."

One instrument PiL has been experimenting with is a synthesiser, largely built by Levene from various bits and pieces. The sound produced is not what you'd expect from such equipment.

"We don't want a mechanical, synthesised sound. We go more for sort of natural sound, and we use the synth very sparsely to imitate a natural sound that we couldn't get otherwise."

Guitar is also only a minor feature of *Flowers*, being used only on two tracks, one of them played backwards. Lyrics evolve in much the same way.

"There's no set format. Some of the lyrics I'd already written before and just kept them, others I made up on the spot. Sometimes the lyrics were made to fit what we'd already recorded, and in other cases the words came first."

"There couldn't possibly be a format. If we approached things with a set way of doing it, it would take all the fun out of it. It would seem tedious, and I really wouldn't want to do it."

*"They're either too over the top about us or too against."*

So what were you after, musically, after the Pistols split? "The way groups were approaching music was very limiting. There were traditions and formats that they were allowing themselves to be drawn into. We approached it totally opposite to that. There would be no limitations, there would be no set way of doing anything. No doors closed. And it's been very difficult." He draws the words out for emphasis.

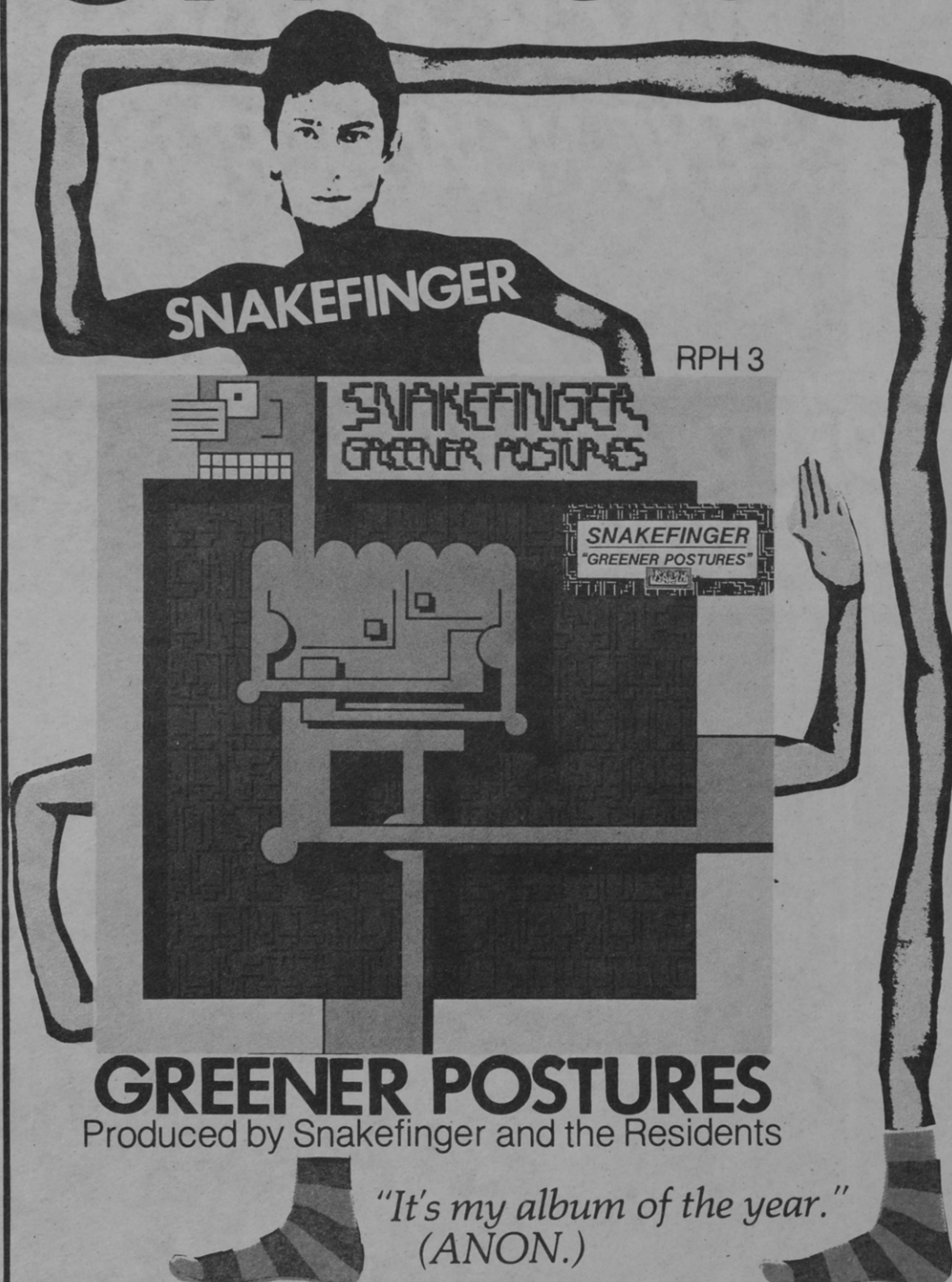
"The prejudice you stir up in people, lazy people, can be very, very bitter."

What sort of people are you talking about? "Journalists, first and foremost. They like the rock n' roll format. Bands must have managers, they have to record at certain dates, they have to do tours, have to do this, have to do that, have to have a producer ... we just don't want to know all that, and we don't want to call ourselves a band either. We don't want to limit ourselves to just making music."

"To get journalists to understand that can be f\*\*kin' difficult, because they need to categorise. Well, they do in England. That's the only way that they can approach anything. They have a standard way of dealing with music, and if you break away from that standardisation, you come up against some very, very nasty opposition."

And yet there are some sections of the British music press that have championed PiL extensively.

## ON TOUR SNAKEFINGER



### GREENER POSTURES

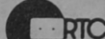
Produced by Snakefinger and the Residents

*"It's my album of the year."*  
(ANON.)

Live Through Muchmore Associates

### SNAKEFINGER GIGS

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HAMILTON	May 27	Hillcrest
AUCKLAND	May 28	Maidment
AUCKLAND	May 29 & 30	Gluepot

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SNAKEFINGER



"I know, but that's a game they play. You can't really rely on any of their opinions. They're either too over the top about us or too against. There's no real common sense, it's really down to 'Well, do you like the record or not?', and I think that's all that matters. If you like it, buy it, if you don't, don't. There's no real pressure."

*"I'd rather us do it than Barry Manilow or someone like that."*

Was it hard finding the right people for PiL?  
"Well, we've made mistakes with certain ex-members, but we're alright now. PiL now is just a trilogy; me, Keith and Jeanette, and I don't think we're ever going to have new members. There'll sometimes be auxiliary units like Martin, because he's got his own band. We'll never enlarge our company. We like it small, it works better."

So why did Jah Wobble quit? This has never really been explained.

"Just personal differences, that's all. No huge bickering. I mean, he just went about things differently from the rest of us, and his idea of where we should be going musically was very different from ours. He wanted to go into jazz-funk and stuff like that. To me, that's an old, tired cliché. I don't need the limitations of one form of music."

Wobble has not been seen in some time. He was last heard of driving a taxi.

PiL also wants to get more involved in films, but is running into union problems. You need a union ticket to get anything shown on British TV, which is important if you want to be known. And, as Lydon says, PiL doesn't want to be anonymous. The company had agreed to write the soundtrack for a horror movie being planned in Hollywood. But that's currently in abeyance because filming has stopped. Does Lydon have any misgivings about being associated with such a Megabuck industry?

"No, if we can make a good soundtrack, then we should. I dearly like being given a chance to do that, and it has the makings of a very good film, and I think we could improve it. I mean, I'd rather us do it than Barry Manilow or someone like that. All we want is to be given the chance."

We return briefly to *The Flowers Of Romance*, the title of which has associations with a band whose former members included the late Sid Vicious.

"The name is mine, and Keith was a member of it," says Lydon. "It's got nothing really to do with that band. It's just a similar situation of people turning themselves into parasites for social reasons. It's just about social climbers."

*"Live gigs are really a thing of the past."*

PiL has only gigged sporadically since it formed. The quality of the performances has varied, the best moments being captured on the *Paris In The Spring* album. But it's unlikely there'll be any more concerts.

"Live gigs are really a thing of the past. They were well

and fine in the Who's era, in the 60's, it was a good thing, but it isn't no more. They've become too institutionalised. It's a real pain now to go and see a band live. You're forced into your seat, the bouncers can be brutal, and it's all at a very high cost. It's just like bad theatre, you have to sit there. You can't really enjoy yourself. There's not enough activity. You end up a pantomime horse."

Despite all that, Lydon is happy with the live album, saying it's better than the bootlegs, which is why it was released.

Keith Levene walks in, complaining about a power failure which has stopped the underground, stranding a friend across town. A cab is despatched, and the conversation continues.

*"He made Malcy look like a big tosspot. Well done, Adam."*

I hesitantly raise the subject of the Sex Pistols. Lydon's face is resigned, his answers mechanical. It's old history, and a part of his life he obviously wants to forget. Law suits are continuing, and Lydon has seen plenty of tax bills, but no money. Malcolm McLaren is also a touchy subject. Lydon hasn't spoken to him since the split, nor does he care to.

"It's a waste of time talking to him, he's just an egotist. He's stuck on his cloud. He'll remain convinced he's an artist. I think it's really good, what happened with Adam Ant. Malcolm kicked him in the teeth and he came back shining. He made Malcy look like a big tosspot. Well done, Adam."

At the same time, Lydon is not entirely convinced about the Antboy's sound.

"I don't really know what they mean when they say 'tribal'. They don't sound very tribal to me. But good luck to 'em. We need those different attitudes in music anyway, or it becomes sterile."

He agrees that the approach recalls the days of Gary Glitter, the Sweet and Slade.

"That's the trouble with 'the music biz' at the moment. It's all going backwards, nobody really wants to go forwards. But I never think about the future. We just do as we want, and that's that."

One thing Lydon never does is to presume he's influencing others.

"I would hate bands to start imitating us. I think that would be awful. But I hope people pick up on the right side of us, that we're doing what we want. I think that's what all bands should be doing. What they want, not what they're told to do, not what some crummy record producer says to them. I mean, if you make a record, who better to know what it should sound like than the person making it? You don't need someone to tell you how your own songs should sound."

"It's not that difficult to work out how to use a studio. It just takes a bit of effort."

*"He got the name Vicious from*

*that Lou Reed song. But he was a weed."*

Is John Lydon happy with his lot these days?

"I'm always happy, just as long as I can do what I want, without infringing on others. I just do it. I'm not the misery-guts the world would want to believe. That's just convenient bracketing for the press, innit?"

Yet the punk days seemed to have a very negative outlook.

"It was looked upon as negative, but I didn't think it was negative at all. I thought it was all jolly good fun. 'Look, we're destroying your horrible industry. Titter.' It stopped being fun when Malcolm started to take himself too seriously. That was in America."

"People love a demise. I mean, the Pistols were never successful until they broke up. The same thing happened with guys like Jim Croce. It would have been very convenient to a lot of record collectors if I'd hit the bucket."

Instead, it happened to Sid.

"Sid fell into the trap. You know, 'Oh, you've got to be a martyr to be a real rock n' roll superstar.' Fool. I don't think he'd enjoy what's happened since his death. It's a farce. They've turned him into a puppet."

What was he like, as a person?

"He got the name Vicious from that Lou Reed song. But he was a weed. He was OK up until he met Nancy, then he started fooling around with drugs because he thought that was the big thing to do. And he just ended up a vegetable. He became very gullible."

Lydon dismisses Steve Jones and Paul Cook with ease. He considers they're living a hasbeen life, making hasbeen music.

*Like to be unknown again?*

End of interview. Pub time. Lydon carefully combs his shocking orange hair into a mess, and covers it with one of a number of baseball caps he carries in a Boston Red Sox bag. It also contains a pocket cassette recorder, for random thoughts and snatches of songs, none of which will ever see the light of day.

We retire to a pub down the road, where Levene gets engrossed in a Space Invaders game. We are joined by Vivien Goldman, who writes for NME and is an old friend of Lydon's. Over a few jars, John speaks of his desire to one day record a nostalgia album, a la *Schmilsson In The Night*. Goldman says he's been threatening to do this for ages. We finish up doing a little harmonising on one of his favourites, Skeeter Davis's 'The End Of The World'. This is all becoming a little bit unreal.

Lydon's parting shot comes when I ask whether he'd like to be unknown again.

"God, no! That would be awful! What's the point of being unknown, like some sort of cult hero?"

The famous face registers the well-known look of disgust, mingled with amusement. And John Lydon says goodbye.

Duncan Campbell

# JOY DIVISION

## A SHORT STORY FOR THE UNINITIATED

### CHAPTER 1

Not so long ago, Brian Pitts phoned Rob Gretton at Factory Records in Manchester and reminded him it was time Factory sorted out New Zealand distribution. Thousands of discerning people wanted Joy Division singles and albums and couldn't get them.

### CHAPTER 2

So Rob was told all about RTC (small is beautiful?), that RTC was an independent record company and all manner of amazing things (it was a good sales pitch). Rob said, (sort of): "Great, I'm getting a bit choked with getting no response from multi-nationals."

### CHAPTER 3

Then, after sorting out mundane things like royalty advances and royalty rates, we agreed it was essential that all the record covers, inner covers, labels etc., had to be exactly like the English releases: and the deal was done.

### CHAPTER 4

Then came the fun part, the long wait for production parts (you know, tapes and cover films) — something to do with Very Fast Airlines Ltd. Anyway, they're here now.

### CHAPTER 5

(If you've got this far you may as well wait round for the finale.)

The first Joy Division releases will be in your nearest record store by about 5th June. They will be:

### SINGLES

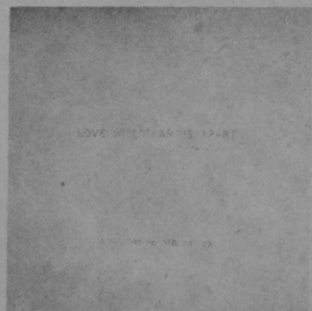
'LOVE WILL TEAR US APART' (FAC 2312). A *very* limited edition 12 inch single in a picture sleeve.

'LOVE WILL TEAR US APART' (FAC 23). A 7 inch single in picture sleeve. Special labels.

### ALBUM

'UNKNOWN PLEASURES' (FACT 10 & FACTC 10). Special sleeve and labels.

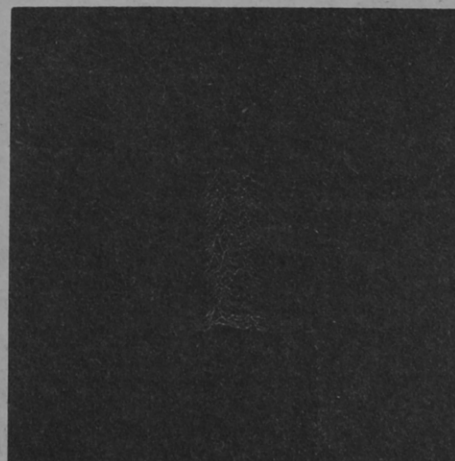
### THEY LOOK LIKE THIS:



FAC 23



FAC 2312



FACT 10

FACTC 10

## THEY WILL BE YOUR MUSICAL EXPERIENCE OF 1981



## the state of the ART

The Cure  
Faith  
Stumm  
Public Image  
Flowers of Romance  
Virgin  
Siouxsee and the Banshees  
Kaleidoscope  
Polydor  
Visage  
Polydor  
Boomtown Rats  
Mondo Bongo  
Mercury  
Pauline Murray and  
The Invisible Girls  
Illusive

Rock'n'roll in the UK is currently at its most diverse and most volatile. Overnight you can become passé, the victim of a press shift in allegiance, and as a result few new bands are 'allowed to progress beyond the ideas expressed on first albums.

So new fads throw up new heroes, but under scrutiny here is a range of virtual veterans who've managed to sustain enough direction/determination to see them over the initial two or three albums. Whether or not the effort has been worth it is another story.

### Fade To Grey

The road the Cure are travelling is leading to increasing musical-emotional inversion. *Seventeen Seconds*, as an account of a disintegrating love affair, was successful enough, but the dangers of pre-occupation with self depression were obvious in the album's morbid incompleteness.

*Faith* is a further retreat into the melancholic process of song writing and even though it has undoubted rewards, it is more obvious that Robert Smith has succumbed to the temptation of despair, romantic or otherwise.

The crystalline guitar sound of *Seventeen Seconds* has been replaced in many cases by Simon Gallup's firm bass lines and Smith's marriage of guitar and keyboards. The images ('Whisper your name in an empty room' Smith sings in 'Other Voice') and constant use of vocal echo behind synthesiser landscapes are alluring, particularly on 'All Cats Are Grey' and 'The Funeral Party', but they're also misleading. They tend to sentimentalise dejection to the point where it becomes an idealistic notion, a pained, lost artist persona.

*Faith* is a more consistent and more complete prospect than its predecessor, but it's aims are essentially the same. It is seductive and enjoyable, but its

equation of despair with profundity or importance is vacuous. So be warned.

### Blooming Flowers

PiL have made it quite clear with their last two studio albums that they have little time for rock'n'roll as they see it. Their primitive obstinacy has been obsessive in that they've refused to conform to rock norms or general expectations.

Last year Jah Wobble left, taking PiL's famous bass sound with him and so now ex-drummer Martin Atkins and impressario Keith Levene have been forced to fill the vacuum on *Flowers of Romance* with pounding up-front studio treated drum patterns which provide the only rhythmic basis for the new songs.

A definite Eastern influence pervades some of the songs, especially Lydon's vocal on 'Four Enclosed Walls' which, apparently, broke the studio oscillator during recording. 'Phenagen' and the title track (culled from Sid Vicious' first band) also use mosque vocalese as the emotional core. On 'Under the House' and 'Hymies' Hymn' repetitive-hypnotic drum sequences are used to powerful effect and on 'Go Back' Levene's scratchy guitar reinforces Lydon's anti-fascist/apathy sneer.

Wobble isn't missed, in fact the absence of a bassist is an innovation as the music is more open, more accessible. Quite plainly this is their best album and, acquired taste or not, it must be confronted.

### Make-Up

Visage are a manufactured concept, made up of two Magazines (Dave Formula and John McGeoch — now with the Banshees), a couple of Ultravoxes (Billy Currie and Midge Ure) and a Rich Kid (Rusty Egan). With fashion barometer Steve Strange they recorded this album last year, and, not surprisingly, the music is tailored towards Ultravox modernity. The songs are tightly arranged, catchy and well-synthesised, the sort of thing that radio stations often label as 'tomorrow's music'. In fact, it's nowhere music, it's quite soulless in its attempts at highly contemporary craftsmanship and the cosmetics of Visage cannot hide that fact.

### The Art of Sinking (Without Trace)

The Boomtown Rats are another band who are full of sound and fury and who have



Pauline Murray and the Invisible Girls.

failed to live up to Geldof's mouthings. Their first two albums proved that they were adept at using old Stones' and rock-flash clichés in a contemporary framework. Geldof, master of the blether, set himself up as frontman, the character as 'charismatic' leader, the only thing was he got on everyone's nerves with his opinionated chatter.

*Surfacing* showed the band for what they were — a bunch of slick superficialists and *Mondo Bongo* continues this artistic collapse to the point of disintegration. The rare redeeming features, a Costello-influenced 'Elephants' Graveyard' and the relatively unaffected bongo of 'Please Don't Go', are the last weak gasps of a band who seem to have made this album out of some business commitment or for something to do.

Geldof and his boys are out of style and out of touch.

### Feminine Ways

Talking of style, Siouxsee, and to a much lesser extent, Pauline Murray, should spring to mind.

Siouxsee, once the female vanguard of intelligent punk (*The Scream*) and neo-Nazi chic, is now as risqué as Blondie without a rinse, but *Kaleidoscope*, with John McGeoch welcome on guitar, is a vast improvement on the over-traumatic *Join Hands*.

*Kaleidoscope* is an album of easy-to-assimilate pieces with old Roxy Music tones used to fine effect especially on 'Happy House' and the commercial 'Christine'. Siouxsee still sounds distant but in command — notably on 'Desert Kisses' and 'Red Light', the latter taking a vocal cue from Jim Morrison.

This album proves that Siouxsee and the Banshees can use their ideas to produce music that is balanced, composed and still retains a sense of drama.

These qualities also apply to Pauline Murray and the Invisible Girls' first album. The two Penetration efforts indicated, if nothing else, that she had

sufficient talent to survive outside of the straight democratic band format.

Produced by Martin Hannett and using John Cooper Clarke's occasional band, the Invisible Girls, the album is an excellent first step in her solo career. Murray sounds more at home with this more thoughtful repertoire than she did with the often blunt dynamics that Penetration favoured.

Highlights such as 'Screaming In The Darkness', the single 'Dream Sequence', 'Shoot You Down' and Mr. X' are sophisticated in their use of power and melody and are sure signs that Pauline Murray's days, rather than declining with the demise of Penetration, are only just beginning.

So the kids are alright? Well some of them, particularly PiL, who brook no interference with their projects, and Siouxsee and Pauline Murray who are changing and even developing, two qualities rock'n'roll always needs to stay healthy.

Overall diagnosis? Fair.

George Kay

## what ART?

### Stray Cats Arista

This New York three-piece, now based in London, were the highlight of my television viewing so far this year, when 'Runaway Boys' first appeared. My set has been on the blink ever since, and bass has never sounded the same. Immediately, any sour taste attached to the word rockabilly as it appears in the '80's, was washed away, and now the album comes just in time to revitalize the taste buds.

The sleeve is superb, but the sound is better. From the great, loping bass lines of the first single (opening the album), to the closing jungle beat of 'Wild Saxophone', this record proves that rockabilly doesn't have to stand still and be watered down for radio play.



StrayCats, Slim Jim Phantom, Lee Rocker and Brian Setzer.

Baby-faced blonde Brian Setzer, credited with writing six of the twelve tracks, plays excellent Gretsch guitar and vocals throughout, Lee Rocker handles slap bass, and Slim Jim Phantom retains complete control of his sparse, stand-up drumkit. Limited? Well, you wouldn't guess it from the sound.

Production credits run five to Setzer/Stray Cats, and seven to the venerable Dave Edmunds, including 'Runaway Boys', 'Jeanie, Jeanie, Jeanie' and the new single 'Rock This Town', but Stray Cats produced tracks like 'Ubangi Stomp' and 'Storm The Embassy' leap out of the speakers with every bit as much power.

The Setzer/Phantom written 'Storm The Embassy' veers away from the generally social commentary to a political subject. The sentiments may be naive, but the song, whilst a little Jam-sounding, is bloody great!

On the other side is another Setzer/Phantom song, 'Rumble In Brighton', an observation on the English Mods/Rockers scene. The last line says no-one is a winner, and it's ridiculous to beat someone up just because of the way they dress.

Me, I'll just dress as usual and get drunk to both the Jam and Stray Cats.  
David McLean

### J.J. Cale Shades Shelter

Modesty is an unusual attribute in performers. The handful that are humble about their own abilities — as an example Kris Kristofferson is dismissive of his singing voice — usually have every reason to be so. What's much rarer is a person like J.J. Cale, whose work is infused with a natural humility that a lack of talent does not force on him.

There have been times when Cale's self-effacement is so great his music almost vanishes in the mists, but on *Shades* the mix of taste, minimalism and flair are in such perfect proportions I would rate it, as a long standing fan, as his best album since his remarkable debut, 1972's *Naturally*.

On *Shades*, much of the music has that beautifully evocative feel of songs heard for a moment on the radio of a passing car, through the open door of a hotel room, a mood touched for a moment and never quite forgotten.

Cale manages to weave his spells whether working in Nashville, on an instrumental 'Cloudy Day', featuring the sax playing of Dennis Solee that can only be called lovely, or in Hollywood, jamming with Emmylou Harris's old band on an improvised blues, 'Pack My Jack'.

There's even what sounds like a perfect top 40 song, 'Wish I Had Not Said That', that would add class to any radio station worth the name.

At a time when much of the music you hear may leave you untouched, an album like *Shades* is, as Smokey Robinson once wrote, "like sunshine on a cloudy day."  
Phil Gifford

### Skafish Illegal Records

Jim Skafish. Read about him three or four years ago. Very ugly; huge nose, tits, scars of adolescence and music to match. It sounded promising and now there's an album. Slick cover, all very nice. Is this a put on?

I don't think so. Jim's ugly all right, but like Paul's old granddad, very clean. And boy, does he like musicals. *Skafish* is a sound-track for some brave, new wave musical about being irrevocably on the outside of 'normal social life'. Very credible and praiseworthy. How many of you know what it's like to be teenaged and ugly, fat, scaly, dwarfed and so on?

Unfortunately, it's not a good record. It's not abnormal enough to reflect its lyrical content. Although Jim does try to make his music sound weird, savage and deformed, it just comes out strained and cluttered.

The verses of 'Disgracing the Family Name' aren't bad, Joe likes 'Joan Fan Club' and Australia could conceivably take the whole thing to its heart, but for a bloke who sings, "I am the rotten apple with the worms chewing at my core," it's all so very nice.  
Chris Knox

## FIRST SINGLE

# penknife glides

TAKING THE WEIGHT OFF/ 'LAUGH OR CRY'



## U2 Boy Island

U2 are from Dublin, breeding ground of the Boomtown Rats. Although they have existed since the primeval days of punk, it took them until last year to secure release of their debut, *Boy*.

Produced by Steve Lillywhite (of XTC fame), *Boy* is above all intense. It combines melody and harmony with the semi-metal fervour favoured by the Skids. On the opener, 'I Will Follow', the voice of Bono. Vox twists up to a full-paced chant over reverberating guitars and crashing drums. Through the whole of Side One, they don't let up. 'An Cat Dubh', 'Twilight' and especially 'Out of Control' all ooze the excitement lacking in many of Britain's elite.

As the cover and title suggest, *Boy* is concerned with the problems of growing up. 'Stories for Boys' deals with the same area touched on by 'Twilight' and 'I Will Follow'.

A boy tries hard to be a man,  
His mother takes him by his hand,  
If he stops to think he starts to cry,  
Oh, Why?

Only on 'The Ocean' does the music reflect the lyrical depression. Short and sombre, it's mood parallels Joy Division.

U2, with their mixture of old wave skills and new wave ideals, have made a record for the masses. A stunning debut. Mark Phillips

## Garland Jeffreys Escape Artist Epic

Those who retrieved Jeffreys' 1972 Atlantic debut from the sale bins, where it immediately landed on its release in this country, were agreeably surprised as to just how good the record was. However we had to wait until 1977 before Jeffreys delivered the real goods, via the justifiably much-praised *Ghost Writer*. Two more albums on A&M followed, bought in vast quantities by Europeans only, and then it was on to label three. And here with *Escape Artist*, we find Jef-



Garland Jeffreys, the Rumour etc.



Skafish



## U-2

freys right back at the very top of his craft.

Songs are always important, and Jeffreys' writing on *Escape Artist* would rank with his finest to date. But what really makes this one work is the backdrop — a sprinkling of top reggae names plus two each from the Rumour (who have ditched Parker in favour of the dread-locked New York mulatto) and the E Street Band. It's a mighty unit, and flavoured by guest appearances from the wunnerful Adrian Belew and longtime buddy Lou Reed, to name but two, you have the

perfect vehicle for Jeffreys' superior vocal skills to cruise on. So good in fact, that the overkill on vocals that occasionally marred previous works, is never allowed room to destroy the balance of the record.

*Escape Artist* comes with a bonus 4-track EP, and it is there that Jeffreys plays his main reggae cards. The album itself is a lot more rocky, no ballads, nothing slow. The killer cuts are arguably the last two on the second side (a great place for killer cuts), the cover of Question Mark & The

Mysterians' '96 Tears' is superb, and 'Christine' is a natural single. The man never misses once over the entire 14 tracks.

Play this between *The River* and *Trust*. You might just find it's better than both of them. Roy Colbert

## Dennis O'Brien Still In The Same Dream EMI

This is Wellingtonian Dennis O'Brien's second album. His first was recorded in London in '75 with Gerry Rafferty's producer. This one is self-produced (with James Hall) in Wellington. It's very good indeed.

O'Brien sings, plays piano and co-wrote nine of the eleven numbers. His voice is strong with just that commercially-right touch of throttled melodrama. But it's his songwriting that's his real ace in the hole. An astute craftsman, O'Brien proves thoroughly capable of adopting various popular styles at will. Four of the first tracks range through Steely Dan, flat-out rock'n'roll, a jazzy shuffle (à la Amazing Rhythm Aces) and a Jay and the American's type ballad.

Side Two is the stylistically more uniform — solid, mainstream pop-rock of consistently high standard. The impeccable musicianship, from some of NZ's finest session workers, is enhanced by a powerful, punchy production. In fact everything about this album is classy.

Given the right promotion, *Still In The Same Dream* has the necessary attributes to hit big in that market currently dominated by the fading talent of Billy Joel. If EMI don't push this album for all they're worth they're crazy. Peter Thomson

## Mink DeVille Le Chat Bleu Capitol

The delays and problems surrounding the third Mink DeVille album have given it a sort of mythical status — Willie versus the Capitol bankers, Art v Finance with Art finally winning. On listening, one's first — and lasting — reaction is:

what's all the fuss about?

The album was recorded in Paris and New York with Steve Douglas producing. It was reputed to be laden with strings. The record company said uncommercial. Willie was sacked. Why?

Essentially, *Le Chat Bleu* follows closely the lines of the two previous albums — occasionally, a mite too closely. The rocker 'Savoir Faire' car-bons 'Gunslinger' from the first album and 'Soul Twist' from the second, the lilting ballad 'That World Outside' (co-written with veteran songsmith Doc Pomus) has the melodramatic rises and falls of 'Just Your Friends' from *Return To Magenta*.

But perhaps that is carping. There are some sublime moments. Willie DeVille has a marvellously evocative voice. He can sound hurt, crushed by emotion, but still avoid self-pity. His leer on uptempo number is so broad as to be ludicrous but funny.

If you want some funny, silly, moving singing, check out 'Bad Boy', with its cocktail-lounge piano and shoo-by-doo vocal chorus. For stick-it-up-there raunch, try 'Lipstick Traces' and the dirty, propulsive guitar of Louis X. Erlanger.

An excellent album — regardless of the wait. Ken Williams

## The Residents Commercial Album RTC

If you have any preconceptions about the Residents, this album will destroy them.

While the band's previous material (available here on the *Nibbles* compilation) has been obscure and inaccessible to most, this album seems to live up to its title. It contains forty one-minute tracks, each with its own melody — self-contained but fitting into an overall mosaic. They cover everything from rock and roll to ethnic ditties, each song sounding satisfying when heard in context, despite its lack of length.

The Residents could never be classed as easy listening, but this album is almost ambient music — a record you can put

on and just float away, as with much mid-period Eno.

But, things aren't quite right. It's still a Residents' album and it sounds like it. No hard core devotees will be disappointed, but it should have a wider appeal than things like 'Satisfaction', and 'Smelly Tongues'. Then again, perhaps I'm just taking them too seriously.

The Residents sell out? No, the Residents sell in. Simon Grigg

## The Joe Jackson Band Beat Crazy A&M

Joe Jackson's debut certainly looked one of the sharpest of '79: catchy tunes, danceable rhythms and smart lyrics. Possible reservations over any Costello influence were cleared away by the follow-up album; Jackson was definitely his own man. Now, over two years later, comes his third, though this time it's the J.J. Band.

And there's a lot more than just a few moniker involved here. Remember those witty, ironic lyrics of sexual bewilderment? No more. The new Jackson is a solemn auteur pronouncing on racism, political ideology, voodoo, fashion, social alienation even. Serious stuff. Unfortunately however, his once trenchant observations are becoming laboured.

Moreover, in writing what seem primarily statements rather than songs, he has dissipated his old musical strengths of melody and structure. 'Someone Up There' is virtually the only example of those tight, poppy numbers that made his fame. Most of this music is darker, moodier, considerably less accessible than before, often involving long, even overlong, instrumental passages.

I've really been trying to like this album. After all, Jackson has made a bold departure from the safety of his successful formula. I respect his concerns and admire his passion. And certainly there are some successes here: 'One to One', 'Battleground', 'Someone Up There'. Ultimately, however, too much of *Beat Crazy* simply fails to satisfy. Peter Thomson

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# records

## The 101ers Elgin Avenue Breakdown Andalucia

Back in 1977, the 101ers occupied a similar place in the punk scheme of things as other legendary groups like the London SS (members to GenX, Clash and Damned) and the Flowers of Romance (Sid Vicious' first). The big difference was that the 101ers gigged regularly, and released a single, 'Keys To Your Heart' on Chiswick.

The band's claim to fame was lead vocalist and guitarist Joe Strummer, and later Richard Dudanski, who was in first edition PiL. Now, through the efforts of Strummer, amongst others, we have an album documenting their short career.

The two question marks over the album are whether it sounds like the Clash, and whether it has any merit besides historical documentation. The answers are qualified yesses. The record is a mixture of studio and live-from-a-cassette material. Most of the live stuff is covers like 'Gloria' and 'No More Monkey Business' and they are rough, but not unacceptably.

But the real value of *Elgin Avenue Breakdown* is in the studio material. This sounds like much of the R'n'B flavoured stuff on *London Calling* and *Sandinista!* Especially worthy of note are the two singles, 'Keys to your Heart', a bona fide classic and 'Sweet Revenge'.

Obviously, this is one for the Clash devotees, but it could conceivably find favour with any one with a rock and roll heart.

Simon Grigg

## Cold Chisel Swingshift WEA

Some live albums work, and some don't. Some are real, and others fake it. *Swingshift* has guts.

Cold Chisel's been going over seven years now, and has literally torn Australian hearts apart by translating the national psyche into rock and roll. Kids in Sydney's western suburbs are reported to have queued for copies of this double album.

Full of rock and roll in the

finest tradition, *Swingshift* was recorded over 1980's 'Youth in Asia' tour, and much of their last album, *East*, is included.

Feature is 'Star Hotel', a riveting track penned by keyboardist Don Walker, which has turned an incident outside the same Newcastle hotel into virtual legend. Walker's songwriting excels in 'Choirgirl', and 'Four Walls', about jail — 'her majesty's hotel' he calls it. 'Breakfast at Sweethearts' from the second album starts out as chirpy reggae, but mellows out as Jim Barnes's vocals spin a simple story. It's six in the morning, toast and coffee at the cafe, and the lady who never smiles, but "just wears that mini skirt".

Powerful rockers 'My Turn to Cry', 'Cheap Wine', and 'Rising Sun', are whipped up by harmonica, and saxophone, and the masterful guitar just can't be denied.

Once again Barnes does justice to that classic Creedence 'Long as I Can See the Light', Dylan's 'Knockin' on Heaven's Door', and listen to Jesse Stone's 'Don't Let Go', which has been butchered by everybody from Manhattan Transfer to Isaac Hayes. Stand to be reconverted.

Could be what it's all about.

AnnLouise Martin

## Snakefinger Greener Postures RTC

*Greener Postures* is the first Snakefinger album to be released in New Zealand, although it is in fact his second, the other being *Chewing Hides the Sound*. While it lacks a track with the sheer stopping power of *Chewing's* 'Kill the Great Raven', it is a better-focused, more consistent set over all.

Snakefinger's assimilation of diverse sources, his exotic chop and change arrangements, and his bizarre tonal manipulations sometimes recall the more quirky sixties work of Frank Zappa and Captain Beefheart. But where Zappa seemed to mock everybody and everything, Snakefinger combines his tongue-in-cheek style with material as serious and rewarding as that of any contemporary



Holly and the Italians



Jim Barnes, Cold Chisel.

rock musician.

The highlights of *Greener Postures* include the weird atonal guitar solos on 'Golden Goat' and 'The Man in the Dark Sedan', Blaine Reininger's eloquent violin on 'Don't Lie', and the contrast of the soft harmonium passages with a raunchy R'n'B riff on 'The Picture Makers vs. the Children of the Sea'.

*Postures* is co-produced and executed by Snakefinger and the Residents, and is the most accessible record yet from wacky Ralph Records.

An intriguing album.

Graham Donlon

## Various Artists Concerts For Kampuchea WEA

Nine bands, recorded live at the Hammersmith Odeon in London, 16 months ago, all proceeds to Kampuchea, come one, come all, roll up, roll up, for the new wave's Concert For Bangladesh ... The cause is admirable, the shows were probably great (the TV special was, uh, interesting), but the album?

There are some incredibly good performances here, from the Who (magnificent on all of Side One), the Clash doing a great loping 'Armageddon Time', Costello sounding superbly intense on 'The Imposter', to Davey Payne blowing up a storm in his solo with the Blockheads on 'Rhythm Stick'.

Then there are some messy-but-great works in the rock'n'roll stakes — the Pretenders just on the right side of heavy metal, while Chrissie Hynde breathes through 'The Wait', 'Precious', and an urgent 'Tattoo'd Love Boys', and Rockpile as Edmunds sings 'Crawling From The Wreckage' and Robert Plant croons Presley's 'Little Sister'.

Then comes the poop. Queen strutting through a tedious, drawn-out version of the tedious 'Now I'm Here', and Side Four: Ladies & Gentleman, Paul McCartney and Wings, with the Rockestra. The best part of this farce on TV was Pete Townshend refusing to don a silver suit. The songs include 'Got To Get You Into My Life', 'Lucille', 'Let It Be', and the 'Rockestra

Theme'. It all reminds me of ELO live. Of the rest, well, there's only the Specials' versions of Toots' 'Monkey Man', which sounds like they had fun doing it.

David McLean

## Sir Douglas Quintet Border Wave Chrysalis

*Border Wave* is Doug Sahm's first album for years under the Sir Douglas Quintet moniker. I don't have the liner notes with me, but the current line-up includes at least drummer John Perez and the essential Farfisa organ of Augie Meyer, so the band retains much of the Quintet's signature Tex-Mex sound, which when it's right is as right as rain and just as natural. Sir Doug's 1969 album *Mendocino* is one of my all-time desert island discs, but it was difficult to imagine this new venture measuring up to that album's seemingly off-handed magic.

Sure enough, I was disappointed first time through. The material isn't so hot overall despite an interesting choice of covers from the Kinks and 13th Floor Elevators. On some tracks, the clean production is at the expense of the live jangling sound characteristic of the style.

But I'm warming to the record — being a fan I try harder — and Side One in particular is sounding better each time. As always, Doug Sahm's vocals can lift otherwise uninspired songs well clear of mediocrity, and beneath the surface sheen of *Border Wave* can still be felt the honesty and easy action that is the soul of the Sir Douglas Quintet.

Terence Hogan

## Tactics My Houdini Green The Models Alphabravocharliefdelta Mushroom

These two debut albums represent the two poles in Australian music.

On one hand, Tactics have produced a magnificently stark and adventurous album that bodes well for the band. The material is strong (especially 'Frozen Park', 'New York Reel' and 'Second Language') and well produced. It provides a perfect vehicle for the extraordinary voice of songwriter David Studdert. It is a little like that of Family's Roger Chapman, but projected from deeper in the throat. Along with Mental As Anything's, and the excellent Birthday Party albums this is one recent Australian LP which isn't just the sum of its influences.

On the other hand, it is to be hoped that the recent addition of ex-Swinger Buster Stiggs and his songwriting will add something to the very dull Models. The band has something of a live reputation, but their debut is uniformly drab and derivative, culminating in 'Controllable Urge', with its sub-Devo title and riff. There is a uniform lack of good ideas, and a shoddy production that obliterates anything that may have been there at the start.

It's albums like this that give Aussie rock a bad name, but fortunately, they have bands like Tactics to forcibly drag that reputation up to enviable heights.

Simon Grigg

## Holly & The Italians The Right To Be Italian Virgin

Mock Italians, most of them, produced by Richard Gottehrer and helped most mentionably by Talking Head Jerry Harrison, Holly Vincent and her band seem reluctant to commit themselves totally to cleaned up Ramones' music, pinhead guitar moves and all. When they do, it's as good as anything currently being thrown at us by the American new wave; (try 'I Wanna Go Home', 'Baby Gets It All', 'Youth Coup' and 'Just Young', all on Side One). The second side evaporates like the bubblegum this album essentially is, the nadir coming on 'Means To A Den' when Gottehrer tries to rescue a weak song with phasing (nouveau, nouveau) in the bridge.

Holly writes the songs, and plays her guitar, if we believe the gross cover, in white gloves. She sings somewhere between Chrissie Hynde and pre-silicone chip Debbie Harry (you didn't know Debbie Harry had been replaced by a silicone chip?).

And if that's her slashing those chords back on Side One, then she deserves at least some of our attention.

Play it real loud. The peaks are as futureless as they're fun.

Roy Colbert

## Rascals In Retrospect Atlantic

More Glenn Baker-compiled and annotated excellence, this 20 track collection omitting absolutely nothing from the 1966-69 career of the (Young) Rascals. The group's considerable initial impact as a singles band is underlined by the inclusion here of the B sides of their first four singles. All four thoroughly deserve inclusion, 'Love Is A Beautiful Thing' actually bettering its A side 'You Better Run', and 'Slow Down' ranking as the band's finest rock'n'roll hour. A word too on the pair of Sawyer-Burton songs 'I Ain't Gonna Eat My Heart Out Anymore' and 'Baby Let's Wait'. Retrospectively these two were atypical, but 'Heart' especially is magnificent (get the La De Das' version also if you can find it).

Good as the early stuff was, the Rascals will be remembered most for their subsequent perfecting of white soul on such 60s landmarks as 'Groovin'' and 'People Gotta Be Free'. Felix Cavaliere was the ideal singer, and Cavaliere-Brigati the ideal writing team (the pair reconvened briefly on Cavaliere's third solo album to produce one of the very finest songs of 1980 in 'Love Is The First Day Of Spring').

Baker closes the compilation off at 1969's 'Carry Me Back', which like the under-rated hit before it 'See' was written by Cavaliere without Brigati's help. The Rascals made records through until 1972, but Cavaliere's increasing fascination with things more serious and less Rascals-like made those closing years commercially unproductive. Cavaliere's taste and talent however was obvious, and it wasn't a surprise when his second solo album *Destiny* bowled critics over everywhere. One of the 1970's true forgotten classics.

Roy Colbert

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# BRIEFS

**Smokey Robinson**  
**Being With You (Motown)**

The good news is that *Being With You* largely maintains the standard set by last year's highly-acclaimed *Warm Thoughts*. Smokey's triumph on that album was to achieve a warm intimate recording of adult romance. On *Being With You* Smokey brings in an outside producer, George Tobin, who introduces a spacious and slightly processed sound that, on the title track, beautifully sets off Smokey's breathy voice. However, Tobin's attempt to make Smokey sound more up-to-date is upset by the fact that a clear half of the material here is either trivial or emulates current heroes like Michael Jackson. Happily, the other half of the songs maintain the high standards of Smokey's best and Tobin's clean arrangements expose the beauty of Robinson's singing. And, if in the end this album is not as delightful and idiosyncratic a work as *Warm Thoughts*, it may well find Smokey more in touch with contemporary tastes. AD

**Dolly Parton**  
**9 To 5 And Odd Jobs (RCA)**

In which Dolly Parton, an intelligent, gifted woman retains the ground she was losing by playing her public image — the blonde with big boobs and no brain. The title track, from the underrated movie, kicks the album off to a good start and there are other excellent tracks, such as her sincere reading of one of Woody Guthrie's most heartfelt songs, 'Deportee'. PG

**James Taylor**  
**Dad Loves His Work (CBS)**

Dad Loves His Work is a nice title but it marks a retreat from the harder music and the narrative style Taylor had adopted on 1979's *Flag*. Instead, there's a greater use of traditional melodies and a softer tone. It's well-crafted, of course, but will only confirm the prejudices of his detractors. A disappointment. AD

**Stranglers**  
**The Men In Black (Liberty)**

The Stranglers' constant jousting with the law, or

something, has resulted in this rather over-emphasised concept album of keyboard-led pieces. A bizarre waltz begins the project on Side One, and things don't really get a lot more clearer after that. The single 'Thrown Away' over on the second side is a more comfortable place to begin. RC

**Chris Spedding, I'm Not Like Everybody Else (RAK)**

A great record from a man I've admired for years. Spedding's track record as a guitar-player goes back through Bryan Ferry, The Wombles, Sharks, in fact, almost everybody. This album won't bring him the recognition he deserves, but tracks like the Ray Davies penned title song, and his own 'Depravity', along with a great reading of 'The Crying Game' and two great moody cover shots, make a worthwhile record indeed. D.McL

**Michael Franks with Crossfire Live (WEA)**

Recorded in Sydney and Auckland during Michael Franks' Australasian tour, this album provides a fine introduction to his witty, finely-honed songs. The Australian band Crossfire ensure that Franks' subtle, samba-inflected rhythms flow smoothly, and Franks' pitch, although lacking the pinpoint accuracy of his studio performances, does not disappoint. The funky 'Monkey See, Monkey Do', 'The Lady Wants To Know' and 'Bwana He No Home' are the strongest cuts. GD

**Bad Manners**  
**Loonee Tunes (Magnet)**

English "Ska'n'B" band who owe more than a passing nod to Madness, with a new album that is definitely fun, definitely loony. The single, 'Lorraine', deserves to be a huge hit, but with a 30s take off in 'Just Pretendin'' and a song title like 'The Undersea Adventures Of Ivor The Engine', this is one album that certainly lives up to it's name. D.McL

**Jermaine Jackson**  
**Jermaine (Motown)**

On this album Jermaine Jackson follows his label-mate and occasional co-producer Stevie Wonder by making a solo album where the artist provides

the material, plays most of the instruments and produces. The influence of Wonder goes beyond just the concept, as Jackson attempts the same mixture of high-stepping dance tunes and reflective ballads. But unlike Stevie Wonder, a great deal of the result is ordinary (the bulk of Side Two) but most of the first side works just fine, even if it is kinda derivative of you know who. It at least suggests that Jermaine may have at last found, or at least borrowed, a style of his own. AD

**Elvis Presley**  
**Guitar Man (RCA)**


Playing around with the songs of the departed usually means screwing them up. Buddy Holly is a prime case of such musical necrophilia. But the saints smiled on Presley when they let long-term producer Felton Jarvis slice off the goddamn Jordannaires, get some hot Nashville pickers to goose up the backing, and remix Presley's voice, mostly from a time when he still had all his vocal chops. If Elvis had recorded this album this year you could say it was his best studio recording since his great comeback LP, *From Elvis In Memphis*. PG

**Manfred Mann's Earth Band**  
**Chance (Bronze)**

Mann is such a thoughtful and melodic user of synthesisers, and he gets them so well recorded, that a purely instrumental album is surely in order. As it is, this one is the result of numerous sessions over 15 months, employing six different lead vocalists — and that's how it sounds. Springsteen's 'For You' is a bit one-more-time shameless, but a good radio shot nevertheless, and both 'Lies' and 'Stranded' deserve to be heard. RC

**The Puppies, Fun Is Right (Hi-Rise)**

A six-track 12-inch sent to *RIU* by the lugubrious Kim Fowley as an example of 'what is happening in small-town California'. A five-piece, The Puppies fall somewhere between the Cars and what you might expect America to come up with if they (ever) tried to clone the Colin Moulding side of XTC. Whimsical words, busy bass, promising band. RC



**STAFF LITTLE FINGERS - Hamx!**

**SIDE 1.**  
NOBODY'S HERO  
GOTTA GETTAWAY  
WAIT AND SEE  
BARBED WIRE LOVE  
FLY THE FLAG  
ALTERNATIVE ULSTER

**SIDE 2.**  
JOHNNY WAS  
AT THE EDGE  
WASTED LIFE  
TIN SOLDIERS  
SUSPECT DEVICE

Chrysalis

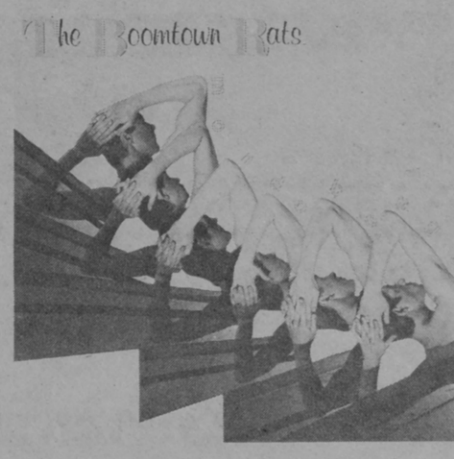
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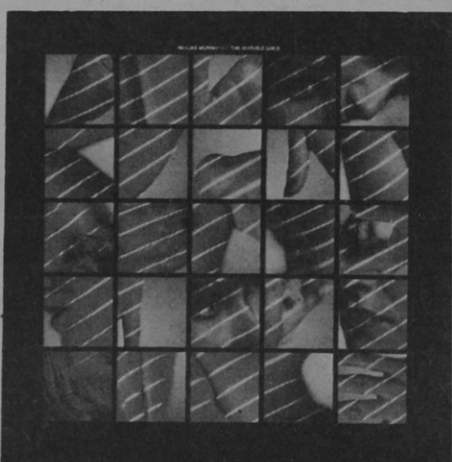
No.2, first week in NZ charts. **SOUND AFFECTS** features 'That's Entertainment'.



**VISAGE** are Ultravox's Currie & Ure, Magazine's Dave Formula, Rusty Egan, Steve Strange and John McGeoch. Features 'Fade To Grey'.



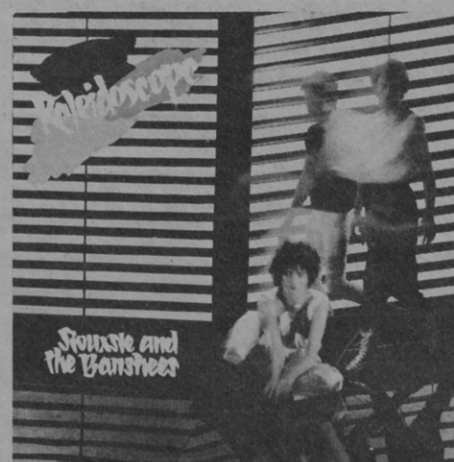
The 'Banana Republic'/Top 10 UK album from the Boomtown Rats. Known as **MONDO BONGO**.



**Pauline Murray (Ms Penetration)** returns with **INVISIBLE GIRLS**. The Girls include Martin Hannett and one Buzzcocks drummer.



**KILIMANJARO**, a remarkable debut from Julian Cope's The Teardrop Explodes. Top 20 album in UK.



**KALEIDOSCOPE** is Siouxsie's new album. Banshees include John McGeoch (ex-Magazine guitarist).

Watch For: **"TOM ROBINSON 2"**

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# briefs

**The Soft Boys**  
**Underwater Moonlight (RTC)**  
 This lot have failed to move from their confused 'Anglepoise Lamp' indifference of '78. Led by Robyn Hitchcock they try on all the styles musically and as such the songs end up as aimless, random pastiches of 'dirty' rock, whatever that is. Avoid. **GK**

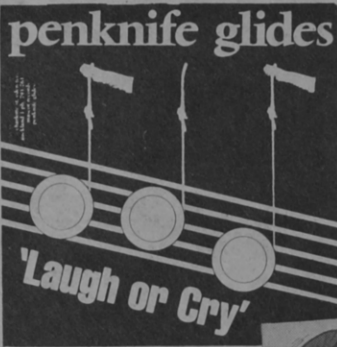
**Loverboy (CBS)**  
 Tim Finn told me in America Enz were promised 'I Got You' could be moved from place 50 up to (the all-important) place 30 if \$100,000 was handed over to the right people. Enz, vigorously, declined the offer, and 'I Got You' stayed where it was. Loverboy, who play utterly routine it's-worked-before-so-let's-do-it-again American heavy metal, sound as though they had their \$100,000 ready even before they bought the guitars. **RC**

**Roger Taylor**  
**Fun In Space (Elektra)**  
 The Queen drummer can write a nifty tune, and he's certainly versatile stylistically, but what you get on this largely self-played solo is basically what you would expect — ten songs, maybe two of which would squeeze their way onto a Queen record. Production-wise, like Queen, this sounds as though it was poured from a tube. **RC**

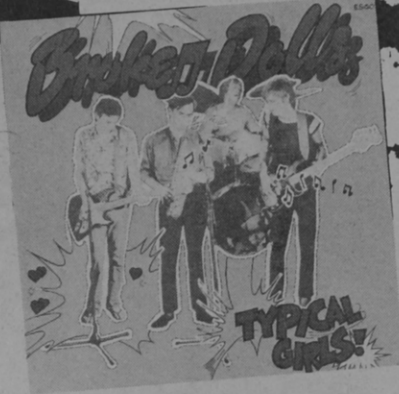
**The Cretones**  
**Snap! Snap! (Planet)**  
 The Cretones were unfortunately associated with Ronstadt's forgettable *Mad Love* album, a fact which drove people away from their actually quite reasonable *Thin Red Line* debut. Album two mines similar hook-pop sources, drying up a little on Side Two, but hitting you effectively at the start of Side One. **RC**

**Diana Ross**  
**To Love Again (Motown)**  
 A compilation album of MOR pop written and produced by Michael Masser. If you've heard "Theme from Mahogany" (which is included here), you'll get the picture: lush but uninspired arrangements and confessional "My Way"-type lyrics. Black music for Barry Manilow fans. **AD**

**Various Artists**  
**Cash Cows (Virgin)**  
 Thirteen tracks from the Virgin vaults, unrelated, and generally superior examples of the artists' work. Magazine ('Permafrost') and PIL ('Attack') have offerings from their live albums, The Ruts contribute their last single before Malcolm Owen joined The Long Methadone Queue In The Sky ('West One' — one of their finest recorded moments), Fingerpritz are Motors-like on their best song, so far, 'Yes Eyes', XTC are represented by 'Respectable Street', Gillian are bloody awful, and 'Dirty Blue Gene' will hopefully turn more punters on to Captain Beefheart's excellent *Radar Station* album. **RC**



Blamatics, Mainstreet



Blam Blam Blam  
 12 inch EP (Propeller)

Following in the footsteps of the Features, comes this four-track EP from the three-piece Blams.  
 'Maids to Order' deals with centrefolds and hinges on ska rhythms and Blamatic sax from drummer Don McGlashan. 'Battleship Grey' is far more uptempo and exceedingly tight. 'Blue Belmonts' is about the obvious, but well put. 'Respect' is the most ambitious cut — pulsating bass, haunting horn, simplistic yet captivating.

Musical dexterity and spot-on production make this a release worthy of international recognition.  
**Broken Dolls**  
**Typical Girls (Epic)**  
 Strong debut from this classysounding four-piece. 'Typical Girls' receives a semi-dub production, and benefits from some nice sax and a tight rhythm section. On the flip is 'Living', more of a ballad. Both songs are by Spillane and Lynch.  
**Penknife Glides**  
**Laugh or Cry (WEA)**

Well-packaged, first time single from the up-and-coming Glides. 'Laugh or Cry' is strong lyrically, though it perhaps suffers a little from technological failings. On the reverse is 'Taking the Weight Off', an infectious piece of white reggae.  
**Smelly Feet**  
**EP (Real Records)**  
 Smelly Feet is actually Brent from Shoes This High. Self-indulgent warbling that features three songs, 'OHMS', 'Festered Toe' and 'Comparisons'. Some may call it experimental, others will call it \*\*\*\*. Write to Box 6972 Auckland if you want to find out for yourself.

**Cult Hero**  
**I Dig You (Stunn)**  
 Rumour has it that this is early Cure material. It does have the same feel, but that could be Chris Parry's production. 'I Dig You' is a meaningless ditty with a cockney accent. The flip is 'I'm a Cult Hero'.



Crocodiles  
 Hello Girl (XSF)

Best single for a while from this lot. Rick Morris sings, on a melodic piece with a strong hook. The B-side is 'Romantic as Hell' and has Jenny up front.  
**The Cure**  
**Primary (Stunn)**  
 First single from *Faith*. A song the band dedicates on stage to Ian Curtis. It chugs along in the usual manner — it could be a hit. 'Descent' on the flip is depressing. Nice cover though.  
**Madness**  
**Nutty Boys EP (Stiff)**

A marketing exercise brings together: 'One Step Beyond', 'My Girl' and 'Night Boat to Cairo' from the first album with 'Baggy Trousers' and 'Los Palmas 7' from *Absolutely*. There's nothing new, though it is exclusive to this part of the world.  
**Mi-Sex**  
**Falling In and Out (CBS)**

No more spacemen for these guys. This is a straight love song, very reliant on Murray Burns' layered keyboards. The radio stations should love it. The other side is Gilpin and Hodgekinson's 'Round and Round'.  
**Sham 69**  
**Lost on Highway 46 (XSF)**  
 Now this is all rather silly. Two tracks from Sham, 'Lost on Highway 46' and 'Hersham' Boys' sit uncomfortably beside two from the Only Ones — 'Another Girl' and 'No Solution'. Why? Only XSF know, and they may not have told Jimmy Pursey and Peter Perrett yet.

**Maggie Parker**  
**My Baby (Interfusion)**  
 Parker toured New Zealand as the vocalist for John Mayall. 'My Baby' is a strong, radio song that resembles LA Pretenders. Both sides of the record are self-penned.  
**Mark Phillips**

**Spaces**  
**Just Like Clockwork (Bunk)**  
 More Wellingtonians and despite an overall Mi-Sex arrangement 'Just Like Clockwork' makes it as a single through a naggingly snappy chorus that leaves it stamped in the memory. 'It's All A Farce' is a trim enough B side containing less melody but more punch. Bunk's finest hour to date.  
**George Kay**

# letter's

Post to RIU LETTERS, PO Box 5689, Auckland 1. Best wins an LP voucher.

PLEASE HELP ME!  
 I'm having trouble reading your mag. I told Karen Kay that somet\*mes I see stars in the m'ddle of words. She was no help. She said I would go bl\*nd.  
 Am I normal? Does anyone else see sh\*tty l\*ttle stars in their RIU?  
 Perhaps your typewriter is eff ewe cee kayed.  
**B.B\*ket Hamilton**

Could you please use bigger print as I'm partially deaf.  
**Womble Clevedon**

Anyone who saw Penknife Glides at the Town Hall and both nights at the Last Resort, will agree that the Glides are just supergroovalistic and that lead singer Stefan Gravelle is as fresh an unfronter as has been seen for many years. The Glides' concert was good value for money as the support group (Police?) also gave the groovers something to remember.

How about a trip to the Student Union Hall, or better, Miramar Central School Hall to get Wellington dancing again — THE GLIDES EXIST!  
**John Miramar**

If Duncan Campbell had seen the Gordons on the Aerial Railway Stage instead of watching Roxy Music drivle, perhaps he would've noticed there were quite a few of the more intelligent Sweetwaters goers there. They were neither sad (through listening to depressing music) nor were they being driven away.

If you are going to judge an inaccessible band by crowd reaction from the general public (Coup D'Etat and Mi-Sex fans) you are, to use a borrowed expression, a BOF.  
**Ex Auckland**

The Clash better hurry on back to their garage. Their bullshit detector badly needs an overhaul.  
**Another Fashion Writer**  
**Tauranga**

Is there a prize for realising that you have put out two No. 38s and no No. 39? Or to put it another way, I am a collector of indigenous New Zealand rock magazines, and if anyone out there has a RIU No. 39, I will pay big gold for it.  
**Mother Of Ten Tawa**

This letter is to inform all you jerks out there that not all roller skaters are boogie freaks. I am a roller skater and I hate disco.  
**KTBTk Glen Eden**  
 P.S. Could you please give me some tips on dancing to new wave music wearing skates.

If you do not persuade EMI to release the Cockney Rejects' LPs soon, dire consequences will result.  
 You have been warned.  
**Young Punk Papakura**

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Maids To Order

12 inch EP on Propeller Records

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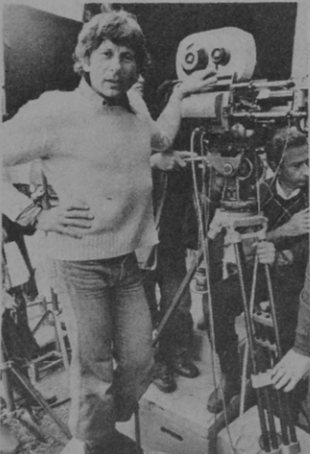


# film

9 to 5  
 Director: Colin Higgins  
 An interesting film this, showing as it does the great Hollywood machine taking up the issue of feminism as the three ladies (Lily Tomlin, Jane Fonda and Dolly Parton) combine their talents to overthrow their male chauvie boss and revolutionise the office. The result is a pleasant comedy which pulls its punches a little too often and, despite good performances, is really hampered by the deliberately eccentric casting of the three ladies. Unstinted praise to Elizabeth Wilson as the resident office bitch Roz, and a raised eyebrow to changing standards that allow a lengthy marijuana smoking sequence and s & m leather games in a basic middle-of-the-road Hollywood commercial production.

Raging Bull  
 Director: Martin Scorsese  
 The story of middleweight boxer Jake La Motta comes across as a chamber work in Scorsese's output, beautifully shot by Michael Chapman in black and white throughout (apart from some brief sequences from La Motta's home movies). The director's almost expressionist view of Jake's surging and barely controllable emotionalism spills out in both the fight sequences and his relationship with his brother and his wife Vickie (a stunning debut by Cathy Moriarty, looking like a young Lana Turner). All this encased within the strangely dislocated scenes at the beginning and end of the movie in which La Motta is

about to make his club debut reciting the works of such writers as Tennessee Williams, Shakespeare and Paddy Chayevsky (to name but three).  
 Dressed to Kill  
 Director: Brian De Palma  
 The English feminists have been hacking into this and similar films overseas for their attitudes to women, and I must agree that *Dressed to Kill* is a nasty little film. If it were a more efficient thriller, one could have something to say for it, but it is curiously lacking in pace and manages to insult everyone from women through transexuals to psychiatrists. Not to mention film buffs, who must find De Palma's arty little games such as the drawn out Art Gallery sequence and the tired old replay of the Carrie ending extremely tiresome. A film to avoid.  
 Divine Madness  
 Director: Michael Ritchie  
 There is a lovely scene at the beginning of *Divine Madness* where the theatre usherettes are prompted on what to do in case of emergencies during the forthcoming Miss M concert. This is the only instance where Ritchie's personality exerts itself in a straightforward record of a Midler concert. From there on it depends on what you think of the lady herself. The jokes are snappy and effective, her sense of self-depreciation is exhilarating and the macho clones in the auditorium provide a sympathetic audience. But all this barely atones for what the lady does to 'Leader Of The Pack' (a grossly miscalculated punk version) and 'Stay With Me' (a unnecessarily) drawn out and theatrical version of the Lorraine Ellison soul classic).  
 William Dart



Natassia Kinski plays the title role in 'Tess', a film directed by Roman Polanski (pictured right). Film screens from May 15.

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				FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
★1 Sat May 9, <b>Meemees</b> , <b>Blams</b> etc play at St Thomas' Hall, Kohi. ★2 Final NZ gigs for <b>Midnight Oil</b> are May 8 & 9, Mainstreet. ★4 Reggae band <b>Herbs</b> are back in town, at Gluepot May 12 & 13. ★5 <b>Mi-Sex</b> play Mainstreet May 12 & 13. ★6 <b>Hip Singles</b> , fronted by Dick Driver play the Hillsborough all May. ★7 <b>Spaces</b> (the 'Just Like Clockwork' people) play Auckland's Station Hotel on May 13. ★8 New <b>Coup D'Etat</b> line-up hits Christchurch, new songs and all, May 14-16. ★9 <b>Furys</b> are back on the road, 'I Can't Turn You Loose' and all, May 14-16. ★10 <b>Newmatics</b> return to Auckland and play Mainstreet May 15 & 16 with the <b>Blams</b> and the <b>Ainsworths</b> . ★11 <b>Pink Flamingos</b> re-open North Shore's Milford Marina Bar, May 14-16. ★12 Following a triumphant April weekend, <b>New Entrants</b> return to the Rumba May 18-20. ★13 <b>OL'55</b> Australia's finest rock'n'roll revivalists join with the <b>Blue Flames</b> for a greasy night at Mainstreet, May 19. ★14 Ralph recording star <b>Snakefinger</b> and band commence a NZ tour at Christchurch's Gladstone. ★15 <b>Screaming Meemees</b> return to the stage, Reverb Room, May 21-23. ★16 The battle is on again at Mainstreet May 21-24. Not wrestlers mate, it's the <b>Battle Of The Bands</b> . If ya wanna enter, phone Adrienne Rickey Auckland 797-784. ★17 <b>Billy Joel</b> himself hits town for two LCC shows, May 22 & 23. ★18 First time for <b>Meemees</b> at the Rumba May 25-27. ★19 <b>Broken Dolls</b> play the Gluepot May 26 & 27. 'Typical Girls' 45 is out. Neat band. ★20 <b>Blams</b> return to the Rumba May 28-30. (Their EP is selling well!) ★21 June 1-3 see the <b>Instigators</b> at the Rumba. A new ska band. Never seen 'em before. ★22 <b>Techtones</b> return to the Gladstone, new songs and all. Doug Hood will be there too, June 3-6. ★23 <b>Blue Flames</b> (and Billy) hit the Waikato. Rockabilly at Wedgewood June 4 and Framptons on Friday and Saturday.				<b>8 &amp; 9 MAY</b> <b>Blind Date</b> Windsor Castle <b>Hip Singles</b> Hillsborough <b>Newtones</b> Gladstone <b>Midge Marsden</b> Esplanade <b>Newmatics</b> Bellblock <b>Meemees</b> , <b>Ainsworths</b> , <b>Blams</b> , <b>Arms For Children</b> , <b>St Thomas' Hall</b> , Kohi (Sat only) ★1	<b>MIDNIGHT OIL</b> , <b>Danse Macarba</b> , <b>Meemees</b> , <b>Visitors</b> , Mainstreet ★2 <b>New Entrants</b> Castlecliff <b>Valentinos</b> Palace <i>Gary Glitter b 1944, Marc Bolan b 1947, Coca Cola b 1886 (8). Beatles sign to Parlophone 1963 (9).</i>	<b>10</b> <i>Infamous Bob Dylan Royal Albert Hall concert 1965. Fred Astaire b 1899.</i>
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	<div>rock'n'roll calendar</div> <div>OL'55</div> 		
<b>11 MAY</b> <b>Newmatics</b> Hillcrest <b>V'Dubs</b> Gladstone <b>Lip Service</b> Rumba <b>Screaming Meemees</b> Windsor <i>Salvador Dali b 1904.</i>	<b>12</b> <b>V'Dubs</b> Gladstone <b>Herbs</b> Gluepot ★4 <b>Lip Service</b> Rumba <b>MI-SEX</b> , <b>Mad Ranks</b> , <b>Visitors</b> Mainstreet ★5 <b>Meemees</b> Windsor <i>Stevie Winwood b 1948. Mick married Bianca 1971.</i>	<b>13</b> <b>V'Dubs</b> Gladstone <b>Hip Singles</b> Hillsborough ★6 <b>Valentinos</b> Windsor Castle <b>New Entrants</b> Cabana <b>Lip Service</b> Rumba <b>MI-SEX</b> , <b>Mad Ranks</b> , <b>Visitors</b> Mainstreet <b>Spaces</b> Station ★7 <b>Broken Dolls</b> Wedgewood <b>Neighbours</b> Maceys	<b>14, 15 &amp; 16</b> <b>Coup D'Etat</b> Gladstone ★8 <b>Hip Singles</b> Hillsborough <b>Blind Date</b> Gluepot <b>Midge Marsden</b> Hillcrest <b>Herbs</b> Samoa House (Sat only) <b>Furys</b> Windsor ★9 <b>Techtones</b> Reverb Room <b>Valentinos</b> De Bretts <b>New Entrants</b> Cabana <b>Neighbours</b> Maceys			
<b>18 MAY</b> <b>Herbs</b> Windsor Castle <b>Elevators</b> Gladstone <b>New Entrants</b> Rumba ★12 <b>OL'55</b> Onerahi	<b>19</b> <b>Herbs</b> Windsor <b>Midge Marsden</b> Albion (Gisb) <b>New Entrants</b> Rumba <b>OL'55</b> , <b>Blue Flames</b> Mainstreet ★13 <i>Pete Townshend b 1945. Neighbours</i> Gluepot	<b>20</b> <b>Elevators</b> Gladstone <b>Midge Marsden</b> Gisborne <b>Herbs</b> Windsor <b>Hip Singles</b> Hillsborough <b>New Entrants</b> Rumba <b>Valentinos</b> Hillcrest & Maceys <b>Techtones</b> Bellblock <b>OL'55</b> , <b>Blue Flames</b> Mainstreet <b>Broken Dolls</b> Station <b>Pink Flamingos</b> Wedgewood <b>Neighbours</b> Gluepot	<b>21, 22 &amp; 23</b> <b>Snakefinger</b> Gladstone (Thurs, Fri), Last Resort (Sat) ★14 <b>Screaming Meemees</b> Reverb ★15 <b>Midge Marsden</b> Cabana <b>Hip Singles</b> Hillsborough <b>Furys</b> Rumba <b>Valentinos</b> Hillcrest & Maceys	<b>Mad Ranks</b> , <b>Visitors</b> Mainstreet (Thurs) <b>Broken Dolls</b> Wedgewood (Thurs) Rocks (Fri, Sat) <b>Tom Sharplin</b> Lennons <b>Blue Flames</b> Station <b>Hit &amp; Run</b> Whangaparaoa (Fri & Sat) <b>Hammond Gamble</b> Kaitiaki (Thurs), Dargaville (Fri) and Kaikohe (Sat).	<b>Steamshack</b> Westown <b>Newmatics</b> , <b>Blams</b> , <b>Ainsworths</b> Mainstreet (Fri & Sat) ★10 <b>OL'55</b> Bellblock (Thurs), Framptons (Fri & Sat) <b>Pink Flamingos</b> Milford Marina ★11 <i>Brian Eno b 1948 (15). Liberace b 1919 (16).</i>	<b>17</b>  <b>Hammond Gamble</b> Whangarei Town Hall
<b>25 MAY</b> <b>Thumbs Of Brass</b> Gladstone <b>Screaming Meemees</b> Rumba ★18 <b>New Entrants</b> Windsor <b>Steamshack</b> Rutherford <i>Miles Davis b 1926. Duke Ellington dies 1974.</i>	<b>26</b> <b>Thumbs Of Brass</b> Gladstone <b>Meemees</b> Rumba <b>New Entrants</b> Windsor <b>Broken Dolls</b> Gluepot ★19 <i>John Wayne b 1908.</i>	<b>27</b> <b>Thumbs Of Brass</b> Gladstone <b>Snakefinger</b> Hillcrest <b>Hip Singles</b> Hillsborough <b>Midge Marsden</b> Awapuni <b>Meemees</b> Rumba <b>New Entrants</b> Windsor <b>Broken Dolls</b> Gluepot <b>Valentinos</b> Ngamotu <b>Newmatics</b> Wedgewood	<b>28, 29 &amp; 30</b> <b>Herbs</b> Reverb Room Glenfield College (28) <b>Coup D'Etat</b> Last Resort <b>Steamshack</b> Gladstone <b>Hip Singles</b> Hillsborough <b>Midge Marsden</b> 2XS opening Palmerston North <b>Snakefinger</b> Maidment (Thurs), Gluepot (Fri & Sat).	<b>Blind Date</b> Windsor <b>Valentinos</b> Ngamotu <b>Furys</b> DB Whangaparaoa (Fri, Sat) <b>Newmatics</b> Wedgewood (Thurs), Framptons (Fri & Sat) <b>Mad Ranks</b> Station (Fri & Sat)	<b>Visitors</b> Rocks <b>Spaces</b> Lennons <b>Young Lust</b> De Bretts <b>Techtones</b> Bellblock <b>Blue Flames</b> Esplanade <b>Blams</b> Rumba ★20 <i>John Fogarty b 1945. Neighbours</i> Greerton	<b>31</b> <i>'Purple People Eater' No.1 in USA 1958.</i>
<b>1 JUNE</b> <b>Herbs</b> Oruamo Nightclub <b>New Entrants</b> Hillcrest <b>Instigators</b> Rumba ★21 <i>Marilyn Monroe b 1926. Sgt Peppers released 1967. Superman launched 1938.</i>	<b>2</b> <b>New Entrants</b> Hillcrest <b>Instigators</b> Rumba <b>Mad Ranks</b> Gluepot <i>Charlie Watts b 1941.</i>	<b>3</b> <b>New Entrants</b> Hillcrest <b>Techtones</b> Gladstone ★22 <b>Instigators</b> Rumba <b>Blue Flames</b> Wedgewood <b>Mad Ranks</b> Gluepot <i>Ian Hunter b 1946.</i>	<b>4, 5 &amp; 6</b> <b>Screaming Meemees</b> Last Resort <b>Blind Date</b> Auck Uni (Fri), Station (Sat) <b>Herbs</b> Butts Kawerau <b>Techtones</b> Gladstone <b>Valentinos</b> Lennons	<b>Furys</b> Greerton <b>Lip Service</b> Rumba <b>Blue Flames</b> Wedgewood (Thurs), Framptons (Fri, Sat) ★23 <b>Flyte X7</b> Rocks <b>Broken Dolls</b> Gluepot	<b>Mad Ranks</b> Bellblock <b>Rhythm Method</b> De Bretts <b>Visitors</b> Esplanade <b>Steamshack</b> Oamaru <i>Beatles' first Abbey Rd session 1962 (6).</i> <b>Neighbours</b> Trees	

live

Madness, Newmatics  
Logan Campbell Centre,  
May 5

First up were the Newmatics. The band have found themselves tagged as a ska group, but, like Madness, they go beyond that with a rare sensitivity. The Newmatics' forty-five minute set suffered initially from muddy sound, but improved vastly after a couple of songs. They roared through their set of what are now pretty well-known songs, ranging from the strong to the astounding. They performed their warm-up mission with ease and had more than their share of calls for an encore.

Madness are hard to describe — they really do have to be seen. The band is just so damn charismatic — irresistible, in fact. Right from the outset, the difference between most touring acts and Madness is obvious. They may be showbiz, but it's no star trip and they obviously enjoy each other as much as the audience does. They run up and down the stage, they wriggle, they wobble, they push each other around and gyrate — but backing it all up are the songs.

To this audience, every song was a hit, even the new ones and the unknown B-sides. It wasn't just the usual evening of greatest hits served up for the New Zealand audience.

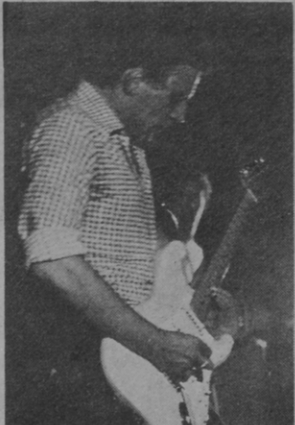
The guy behind me screamed for 'Swan Lake' about twenty times (he finally got it as an encore) and you got the feeling that if they could have heard him, they would have played it straight away. They were there primarily to be enjoyed, and had no pretensions, no desire to even think about it — just dance.

The set consisted of about eighty percent of the recorded Madness output, with five or six encores (I lost count) including two versions of 'One Step Beyond' and 'Baggy Trousers',

but the individual highlights were too numerous to mention.

Madness are exhilarating, pure unadulterated fun. If you missed it, I hope you kick yourself, because at the current rate of return of the really good bands, you may have to wait a long time.

Simon Grigg



Allen, Steroids

Wellington Zone Concert  
Concert Chamber, April 3.

If there were any doubts as to the increasing buoyancy of the Wellington scene the *Wellington Zone Concert* dispelled them. Just as the capacity crowd (500 plus and others turned away) showed the increasing numerical support for local bands, the composition of it showed its broadening base. The battered veterans of old punk scenes are finding themselves increasingly outnumbered by new faces fresh from the suburbs.

First on were Digits in their first gig for several months. Their material seems to relate more closely to early seventies' British 'progressive' influences (i.e. early Genesis) than to the post-punk world and did not find many fans.

Next up was the long awaited unveiling of Beat Rhythm Fashion. BRF go all out to paint aural pictures, musical evocations of mood and atmosphere, with no concessions to traditional notions

of rock as good-time dance music. At last an avant garde act with the musical chops to deliver the goods.

For show organisers the Steroids, it was also an unveiling of sorts, a new line-up, new material, and a whole new musical direction. Forget the old Steroids equals head-bangers equation, they have moved into new, more subtle and varied territory which could see them achieve the breakthrough which has so long eluded them.

So far the mood of the evening had been fairly heady and contemplative and it was left to Mockers to provide an energetic close to the proceedings. If a few found their more conventional pop rock passe, and showed it, others obviously thought it the highlight of the evening and likewise showed it. A suitably chaotic end to the evening. Buy the record.

Les Crew

Rhythm Method  
Windsor Castle, April 28

After the departure of vocalist Bill McGeachie, Rhythm Method have added two new members. Ex-Red Mole drummer Phil Steel came in on vocals and percussion, and part-time member, Mathew Flynn became permanent on sax and xylophone. The inclusion of new people will not always alter a band's sound, but in this case, it's unavoidable.

The first set begins with 'Walking Down High Street', the only new song in the bracket. Largely instrumental, it is an exotic blend of American jazz-funk and English new wave. The older material, with its ska overtones, pales by comparison, though 'Mad', 'Time' and 'Situations' all benefit from the added fullness of the six-piece sound.

After the break, it's straight into the acoustic guitar of 'Dancing Mood', the second new number. It's interesting, though a little repetitive. The band's projected single,

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#### Organisation Winners

The large number of entries for the RTC Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark competition proved a headache. The number of words in Organisation is over 300. Winners of the album Organisation are John

Davis & David Beattie, Hamilton, John Connor, Rothesay Hay and Kay Barclay, Aria. Winning posters only are Anna Gram Stratford, Mark Gasparich Drury, W. Simpson Hamilton, E.D. Newbigin Christ-

church, Warren Cate Kohi, Dean Bond Murrays Bay, David Baker, W. Lightowler Linwood, Howard Warner Epsom, Garth Thornton Lyall Bay, Wayne Jarvis New Plymouth.

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'Creating Criminals', is a fine dance tune, with a strong chorus.

In the past, Rhythm Method have shown their influences all too clearly. Although they still have a problem in the vocals, their recent songs display a new freshness. Some hard work in the next few months can only result in a sound of their own.

Mark Phillips

#### The Pointer Sisters

Auckland Town Hall, April 21

There we were in the centre circle, second row (reviewer's perks yunno) and we couldn't hear the Pointers sing! There was plenty of noise alright, just that the amplification was so unbalanced I suspect the sound man was taking some personal revenge on the girls by burying them in the mix. I think they sang pretty well though because the people at the front downstairs always applauded enthusiastically. Occasionally the band did quieten down to allow those lovely voices through. But to catch only desultory snatches of the singing was infuriating, especially considering the sophistication of the sisters' act.

As for the band (which is what I mostly got) — they were your standard El Lay Benson-funk, lumbered with one of the stodgiest rhythm sections I've sat through in years, even rendering ordinary the normally slinky 'He's So Shy'. The sisters' legs and hips moved to a far livelier rhythm than anything coming over the P.A. The only real instrumental salvation came from the keyboards of the girls' own musical director.

With a good sound system and a band of the calibre the Pointer Sisters deserve, I think I'd have thoroughly enjoyed the show.

Peter Thomson

#### Hip Singles

Hillsborough Tavern,

April 25.

Hip Singles are Dick Driver (who should need little or no



Danse Macabre, Rumba Bar.

introduction), Steven Ward (ex-Hoovers) and three Australians plucked from the comparative wilderness of Monash University and playing in a band for the first time. Hip Singles are an exercise in up-market modern pop, dominated onstage by the formidable presence of Dick Driver, the Frank Spencer persona yet more pronounced.

Their repertoire spans twenty originals and four covers, keyboard-oriented, bright and clear. There is a sense of humour throughout, reflected in titles like 'Bionic Man', 'I'm Not Human', 'Circus Freaks' and 'Elevators'. Humour that is (thankfully) wry and never overstated.

A band working in areas such as these will never over impress the hipper-than-thou but Hip Singles know what they're doing and do it well. Their stage presence is entertaining, the songs are intelligent and the whole operation thankfully bereft of pretension/condescension.

Direct Descendants are a different proposition altogether. Seemingly a pick up band, they contributed forty minutes worth of terribly moderne, very remote covers: Martha & the Muffins, XTC, Associates, the mandatory Bowie and some Flowers. The 'hip singles' in the audience (who put on the real entertainment and wretched it was too) loved them. I thought their decision to play 'Damaged Goods' bordered on out and out heresy...

Michael Higgins

#### Danse Macabre

##### Herco Pilots

Rumba Bar, April 27

With two successful world tours under their belts, and a hot single, the Herco Pilots are widely touted as a band to watch. Their set started with a series of carefully-rehearsed instrumental malfunctions which were diverting to say the least.

In spite of the fact that they have obviously read their NME's thoroughly (and who hasn't?), the Pilots' music is highly original and engrossing. While much of it sounds similar, their songs are full of intriguing ideas which more than justify catching the band and forking out for their single.

The Herco Pilots and Danse Macabre often perform together — not surprising when the Pilots' Gary Russell is the brother of Danse Macabre's vocalist and synthe operator, Nigel. Danse Macabre get full points as one of the few bands making any real use of the synthesiser, and this is reflected in their material.

The opinion often ventured in the band's formative stages that they were Joy Division clones has proved unjustified, and Danse Macabre are now one of the most exciting bands in Auckland. Their material, especially 'Torch', is powerful and well thought out. They have the ability to build a strong presence through the evening.

Both bands are acts to be proud of, a rare combination of

intelligence and a real feel for their music.

Simon Grigg

#### Split Enz, Penknife Glides

Logan Campbell Centre,

April 29.

Not so much a band these days, more of an institution. I've lost count of the number of times Split Enz have played farewell New Zealand concerts as they leave to seek their fortunes overseas. And each time the band has been subtly or radically different.

By my calculations this is Enz Mark Nine, and possibly the best yet. Streamlined, polished and immensely powerful. In his review of *Waiata*, Roy Colbert commented on the group's new-found guitar muscle. This carries through on stage as well. Neil has never sounded so confident. His ringing power chords on 'History Never Repeats' showed another side to Split Enz. They are one helluva rock band.

It's strange seeing Noel behind the drum kit, but then that's a logical extension of his former role. While he lacks Mal Green's inventiveness, he has considerable rhythmic drive. He and Nigel Griggs give the band a propulsive energy, to fit the aggressive thrust of the new songs.

Tim and Neil indulge in a little, friendly, sibling rivalry, pulling bigger and better rabbits out of their respective hats. Back and forth they go, from 'Hard Act To Follow' to 'One Step Ahead' to 'Shark Attack' to 'I Got You'...

The list goes on and on, every one a gem, folks.

Needless to say, the audience

went cross-eyed with delight. And once again, we wish Split Enz every success. Exports like this we need more of.

Penknife Glides came on to scattered booing, deservedly chided later by the elder Finn. But there was none of that by the time they finished their set. If you think you know a better band in Auckland at present, please show it to me. But I'll be very hard to convince. The group is, as Shakespeare once said, hot.

Duncan Campbell

#### Stevie Wonder

Western Springs, April 13

For two days the rain kept falling and Auckland fans wondered whether Stevie would play. If it had been dry 40,000 people would have packed the Springs all wondering, what will he play? With eighteen albums, where do you start? Usually Motown acts dismiss their early recordings in token medleys, viewing them as primarily the record company's achievement, not their own. (On a live album, Marvin Gaye described his early hits as a "Fossil Medley".)

But Wonder has far greater respect for his fossils and his older fans. At 7.40 Monday night, he ripped gleefully into early hits 'For Once In My Life' (not his own composition), 'My Cherie Amour' and 'Signed, Sealed, Delivered' from 1968, 1969 and 1970 respectively. Others followed.

Right from the disco guitar break in 'For Once In My Life', it was obvious that Stevie and Wonderlove were not merely copying sacred charts. Appropriately only Stevie and his all

important 'bass player' were front stage. Behind him on a higher stage were four dancin' horn players, four dancin' woman vocalists and the basic band. On occasions arrangements dispensed with the horns and the singers. Wonder performed two ballads alone and Wonderlove did one song without Stevie.

But the highpoints were when the whole unit was at full tilt on a Stevie Wonder penned chorus. First peak came with 'Boogie Down Reggae Woman' (with harmonica solo), 'Let's Get Serious' (manic little number written for Jermaine Jackson), 'Living For The City' (Wonder fell backwards off his stool), and 'Sir Duke' (the Wonder chorus?). On songs such as these the band achieved an amazing richness of sound.

From there he performed 'Sunshine Of My Life', 'Superstition' (oldie the crowd responded most warmly to), 'I'll Be Loving You Always' and then 'Masterblaster', his remarkable tribute to Bob Marley. At the song's close Wonder and band left the stage leaving only the bassist playing for a minute or so.

Wonder returned for a four song encore, *Hotter Than July's* 'Do Like You' first and 'Birthday' last. A great finale. Stevie has achieved so much, yet he directed his audience towards the achievements of another, Martin Luther King.

Though the weather dampened the event and the crowd response, Stevie Wonder was still both musically and visually captivating. A great night.

Murray Cammick

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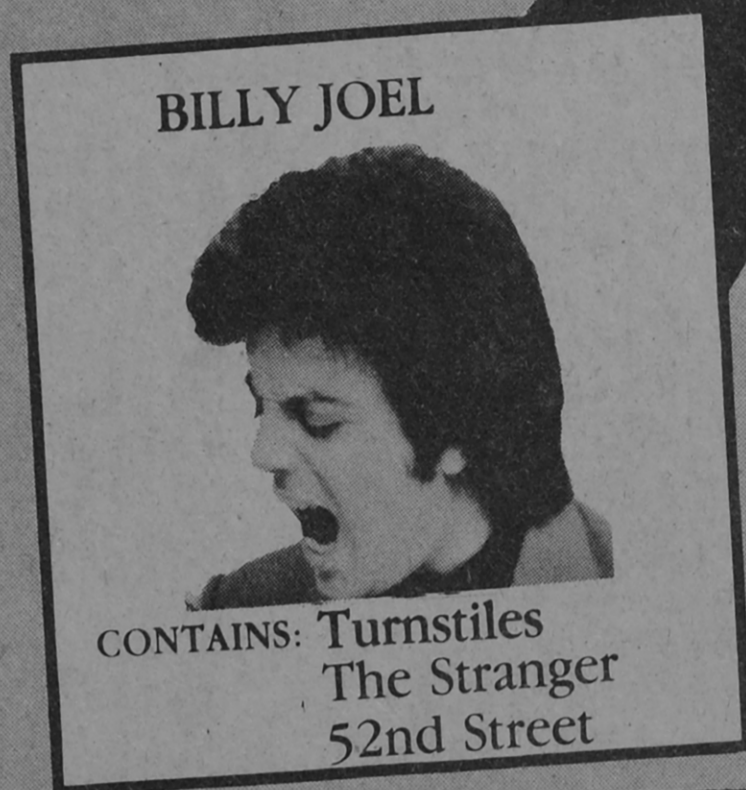
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