

Tim Finn has never lost that boyish exuberance, despite having reached his third decade. It's that zest that has maintained him through the last 10 years as the mainstay of Split Enz, and there's more to it than just a public front. Tim Finn is a naturally happy, outgoing person.

Yet *Time and Tide*, another comfortable Enz chart topper, contains some of his most revealing work. The songs are personal, introspective, and not a little sad in places. For the first time, the listener gets a peak at the human being behind the pop star.

"A lot of it is to do with my age," admits Finn. "I'm not saying I'm out to pasture yet, I think

when you reach your late 20s you start to look back a bit, rather than looking forward. I took stock of my life so far, and in a fairly pithy sort of way, I put it down in song.

"I'll probably do more of that in the future. I think the lyrics overall on this album are far more revealing than any past albums."

Many of the songs came together in a short space of time, just prior to recording. One exception is 'Dirty Creature', which does sound out of place.

"That song was made up of three pieces, one of them was written a year and a half ago, one was written more or less in the studio, and the other bit was

written about three years ago by Nigel, so it's a three-way collaboration song, from bits that came at different times.

"Other songs, like 'Small World', 'Make Sense Of It' and 'Haul Away' came just before the album. 'Log Cabin Fever' is one that Neil has had around for quite a while. It varies, really."

Listening to the new album, I couldn't help but draw a comparison with the early *Mental Notes* sound, especially in the depth of production on songs such as 'Giant Heartbeat'.

"Well, only in the sense that it's more subtle, more complex than some of the recent stuff. I don't think it hearkens back musically, or lyrically, or stylistically, but

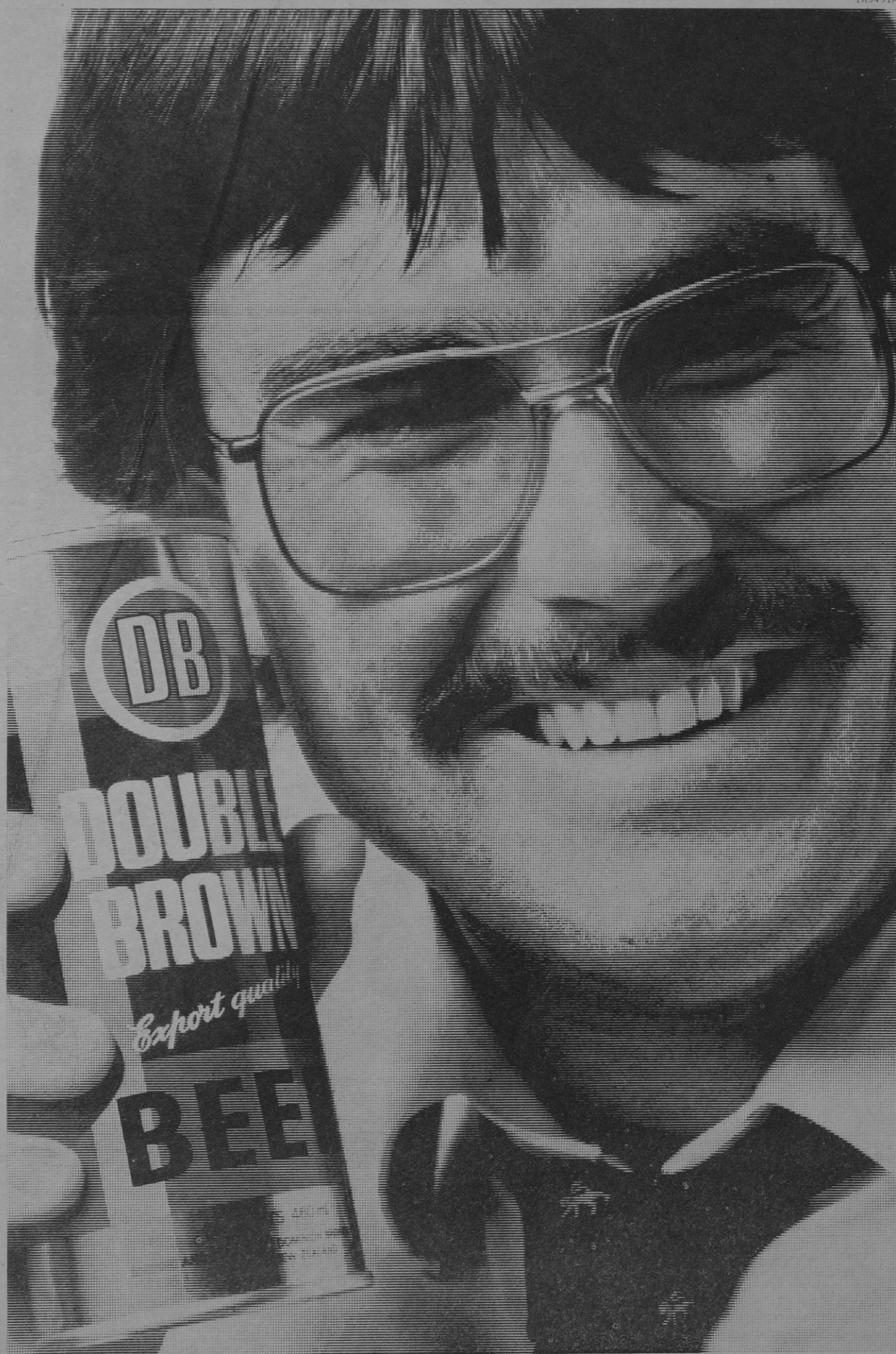


## TIDE & Tim

### DOUBLE BROWN BECAUSE...

# "It tastes great"

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perhaps just in that sense that it's more dense, it takes longer to get into it. But once you do get into it, you're hooked.

*Waiaata* and *True Colours* were very immediate albums, a lot of people probably said 'yay, yay' for a while, and then didn't play them much any more. I don't know, it's tempting to dump on past material, they all have something to say, I think.

"Really, we're a pretty honest band, it's just that this time round we've laid it more on the line than ever before, with the obvious example of 'Haul Away' for me. But there are other songs where we really speak from the heart, as opposed to using metaphors and analogies."

Sounds like it was something of an exorcism.

"Sure. I read a very good book after I'd written 'Dirty Creature', called *Love and Will*, by Rollo May. He's a psychiatrist and he does therapy and all that sort of thing. Part of it made big sense to me, when he talked about demons, and you have to eventually embrace them, otherwise they'll defeat you. You can't keep running away by taking tranquilisers or ignoring them. It's something that's difficult to talk about, but I found it quite easy to sing about."

So has the last year or so been tough?

"Personally it has, in a way. After the success of *True Colours* and *Waiaata*, I realised that success wasn't what I was chasing all those years. It's a piece of shit really, it doesn't make any difference to anything. What I'm chasing more is my own brand of perfection in what I do. I haven't come near to reaching it yet, so that was a bit disillusioning, I suppose. It didn't seem to make any difference to my personal happiness or confidence."

"Other things happened, too. I

had a relationship of four or five years' standing that collapsed just before this album. For me, it was a very strange year, but I grew an enormous amount as a person, and I think I'm better equipped now to deal with the next 10 years."

Did all this personal trauma make *Time And Tide* a difficult record to make?

"I thought it was going to be difficult. I remember saying to Neil before we started, that I didn't think I was going to be very strong, or contribute much. But it ended up that I contributed more than I ever have, especially in lyrics. I came through, and I feel much better for having done it. I sort of exorcised all my despair and loneliness and fear. I'm not yet healed by any means, but I'm on the way."

"It was a great victory for me personally to be able to come up with what I think are some of my best songs ever. For everyone else it was a time of learning and a time of great joy, we had a very happy time making it."

Hugh Padgham was just brilliant to work with, absolutely extraordinary. He pushed us to the limit, really, but we needed to be pushed. He claims he's not a producer at all, but in a way he's a brilliant producer, because he says that. It's a subtle thing, you don't feel any pressure from him."

Is it easy to be lazy these days?

"Yes, I could avoid work quite well, if I wanted to. I find I need the pressure of an album deadline to finish my songs, but when I get that pressure on me, I can work like a madman. I'd like to be idle for a couple of years, just to see what it's like. But having said that, I'm pretty determined that Split Enz carry on at least another 10 years."

Duncan Campbell



Photo by William West

Martha Davis looks tousled and tired. Even though that image has always gone hand-in-glove with her music, it's plain that she's been working very hard lately. She'd only just finished doing the video to go with the Motels' new album *All Four One*, when the executives at Capitol threw her a plane ticket, and told her to go drumming up some publicity. That's why she's sitting in the bar at the White Heron, getting good-humoured on the local vino with the media. She misses her kids.

Martha has come through a turbulent life, both parents dead at an early age, child bride and a broken marriage. Her love life is just as hectic these days, and that spills over into her career.

At the beginning of 1981, nine months after the band's triumphant visit to this country, there were thoughts of a new album, and replacing John Carter as producer.

"We agreed that we still like each other, but that Carter had perhaps got a little too close to this project, and we needed some new blood."

"We ran around for a while, talking to various producers, writing new material, until April Fool's Day, when we went into the studio with Val Garay. He said 'I don't know you, you don't know me, let's cut some tracks and see what happens.' They came out really good, and so we started working on the album."

Garay already had a hit-maker's reputation, having produced Kim Carnes' 'Bette Davis Eyes'. The sessions for *All Four One* were spread over a leisurely six months, and band and producer were generally satisfied. But the picture changed when the time came to play the finished product to Capitol executives. They were polite, but not impressed.

"They said 'If you want us to put it out, we'll put it out,'" recalls Martha. "But they also said 'If you don't want us to put it out, and maybe have another go..."

"They couldn't see a single, and they weren't happy with other things. At first we said 'What do they know?', but then we went back in and started recutting it."

At the same time, Martha's personal life was having its upheavals, specifically her relationship with the Motels' guitarist, Tim McGovern.

"Tim and I had always had a rocky relationship, and while we were on the road it had been getting rockier and rockier, and soon we had, you know, the Himalayas. At that point, what had been building up finally came down, and Tim left the band."

"So there we were, we had a new producer, a new studio, Tim had gone, and we had to remake the new album. Rather than taking the time out to audition a new guitar player, I talked to Val, and he just rang up some of the guys who had played on the Kim Carnes album. We basically doubled the whole band, as we decided we wanted a certain sound, we'd add another musician. It was like a whole football team in there."

"So we proceeded to launch right into album 3B, and actually finished it in about three and a half months. We turned it in to Capitol and they got so excited! They said 'I can hear one, two, three singles!'"

The only track that survived intact from the first sessions was McGovern's swansong with the band, 'Tragic Surf'. To my mind, they should have dumped that one as well. It's really the worst thing the Motels have ever recorded. Other tracks were rearranged substantially, and four completely new tracks were added. It was a metamorphosis, illustrated by the fact that 'Only The Lonely' virtually passed by unheard on the first sessions, but the new version was the first US single.

Martha is philosophical about Capitol's lukewarm attitude to the results of the first sessions.

"We resented it for about five minutes, until we realised these were the people that had to work with the album, they had to sell it. But they were so nice about it, that we really felt sorry for them."

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