

Live

Mockers Terror of Tintown Windsor, April 2.

The trash aesthetic lives! It walks! It talks! It sings! It plays guitar! And synthesiser! Some of these things it doesn't do very well, but it tries. Some things it does are wonderful. Its name is Julian Hanson and it lives in the foolishly named Terror of Tintown.

Andrew Fagan's towering fold-away persona has always been part and parcel of the Mockers. Some people say it makes the band. Some people say it spoils it. The truth (as usual) is a bit of both.

But the Mockers' strength has always been their songs. Those great songs — 'Good Old Days', 'Trendy Lefties', 'Murder in Manners St', 'Woke Up Today', the new 'Cleopatra'. Those great songs — that get steamrollered every time the Mockers play. They seem to have left subtlety behind in an effort to be a widely-loved dance band. It's small wonder that chief songwriter Gary Curtis stays in Wellington while the band plays in Auckland.

The Mockers are fun, they make very good records, but they've a way to go before they really do themselves justice live. I think they've got it in them. Russell Brown

The Spines The Body Electric DB Tavern, March 19

The pulse is this: pop's heartbeat right now is the synthesiser.

The question is this: Are the Body Electric the heart or the same music in a different vein? Sure, they have their fingers on the beat of current (chart) successes, but is the formula right? As much as BE are to be admired, there is something missing. But some songs rise above others — 'Yid-Wog War' (great chorus), 'Babies on Parade', the melodramatic 'Cleudo'.

Visually chilling, the band features actor turned singer Gary Smith and, yes, all you've heard about his voice is true. It is strong. Smith (the Body) leaves Andy Drey and Alan Jimson (the Electricians) in the shadows, providing the musical platform for his voice.

Now the punch. The Spines have it. Magnificent musicians with some great songs. Try 'Agatha', where the rhythm section of Wendy Calder and Ross Burge shines. Calder's flanged bassline still echoes round my head. Of the remaining songs, the recorded material stands out — 'Fishing', the atmospheric 'Your Body Stays' and 'Punch' (NZ songs of the year, so far).

Spines' backbone Jon McLeary seems modest, even embarrassed on stage with his smooth, jazzy guitar sound and deliberate vocal stance. McLeary doesn't attempt to elevate himself from the audience, thereby a personal atmosphere.

Unlike the Body Electric, the Spines' influences aren't obvious. They have it in them to be among the year's finest.

Alister Cain

Blue Meanies Sneaky Feelings The Chant

University Union, Dunedin.

The first of three Easter hops saw three of Dunedin's best bands struggling with a PA that was

HOW THE WEST WAS FUN

Punakaiki Valley Festival April 2-4.

Saturday: Backdoor Blues Band laid it down raw, tough and dirty and had the crowd dancing in the rain with good versions of standards like 'I'm A Man' and 'Johnny B. Goode'. Next, 25 Cents were loose and lazy as is their habit, but the crowd warmed to the sight of four females on stage.

Children's Hour, a sort of kindergarten Bauhaus. 'This one's for all the dead people.' No one else was listening mate. Sheep Effect are a three-piece with two ex Gordons on drums and guitar. The crowd reeled from their lethal kidney-punch attack. If this is the Gordons' legacy then it sure beats memories.

Nocturnal Projections are a

under-powered to deal with the cavernous Union Hall.

That said the bands did impress particularly with their wide range of original material. First up were the Blue Meanies who blend sixties sensibility with Dunedin relevancy.

Sneaky Feelings followed and they took the night with a honed set that deliberately emphasised the crowd-pleasing, up-tempo Byrds-inspired aspects of their repertoire. It may not have been representative of their typical gig but guitarists/vocalists Matthew Bannister and David Pine, drummer Martin Durrant and bassist Kathryn Tyrie have a welter of fine songs in 'Broken Man', 'She's

very professional U2/Flock of Seagulls/Sound melting pot. Their majestic layers of polished sound captured the audience but had me on the run. NZ's latest UK copycat cash-in band.

They Were Expendable were in unrelenting form. With each member making a maximum contribution they tore through a set of tight, intelligent originals into a well-deserved encore.

Sunday: most of us prefer to dance on the graves of bands like Golden Harvest but if you're still laying wreaths then Pilgrim are your boys. Primitive Art Group promoted confusion and (literally) mud-slinging. Primitive? Very. Art? Debatable. Group? Ask them. Rockers squeezed out sweet, slow reggae with unnerving ease to the most enthusiastic crowd so far.

Look Blue/Go Purple were rumoured to be the big surprise of the weekend. Five girls played silly, disjointed pop. No surprises here. Dunedin's sixties pop boys, Blue Meanies, played well and had

Not Here', 'Someone Else's Eyes' and their new Flying Nun single 'Be My Friend'.

Finally the babes, the Chant, a five piece fronted by vocalist Damian Woodhouse who've been building up a fair reputation over the last year. In 'Stand In Flame', 'Tambourine' and 'Echoes and Gray' they have their own sound/songs with a Cure-ish drive but punctuated by haunting synth lines that give the band real individuality.

George Kay

No Tag Star and Garter, March 25.

As the song goes, "woodwork squeaks and out come the freaks."

fun. The crowd loved them. Originals and the odd cover alike were dished up with refreshing exuberance.

Sneaky Feelings are a heart-warming band on the worst of days but ringing through the frosty West Coast night they had the crowd positively glowing. Playing superbly, their youthful panache and air of cute naivety captured the crowd immediately. Best of the excellent was 'Someone Else's Eyes'. Must presently rank as one of NZ's top bands.

Naked Spots Dance tried hard to be oh-so-fearsome but their dour epics invoked a mood of despair among those who knew better. Lacked variety in their material and the tapes were a grating and superfluous touch.

The Stones played a mediocre set to a cold but keen crowd who appreciated that a bad night from these guys is still a force to be reckoned with. Finished with a stunning version of 'Fad World' crammed with guitar improvisation.

An invitation to the future? We'll see. Boak and co. begin with 'Legalised Dogs' and from then on it's blitzkrieg bop violence at towering intensity. Their tone belies a value and necessity of discipline. This is no forced ramble of rock-a-rola tirades, it's precise, channelled, controlled. Out front, Paul is all startling bellicosity, a tight knot of passion and fury. Behind, Mark, Carl and Andrew provide the fuel for this wrath.

No Tag's music is a philosophy of defence and reaction. There remains a tension between individual freedom and popular role. A sense of anxiety lies at the very base of this music. Succumb to tailoring your music/behaviour to other people's expectations because of your punk associations or enforce your individuality by scorning all these so-called labels. I suggest No Tag resist parody by moving towards the latter.

Watching No Tag can be a revelation of sorts. Their playing out is expansive and cathartic: it allows for full and often violent expression. I confess, it beats any other rock performance I've seen this year. If only they could develop into the Bad Brains/Flipper/Meat Puppets hardcore of this world, now wouldn't that be something?

S. J. Townsend

Velvet Vipers Cabaret Mercury 2, March 16.

Ssss ... you wanna see a dirty show? Just off K'Road ... the Velvet Vipers launched their late night cabaret.

As soon as I saw these three fatally fascinating females coiled on fallen totems and one of them reared back her head and declaimed "K'Road is the Armpit of Auckland," I sensed the finely distilled venom of true satire.

These daughters of Lenny Bruce and Bertolt Brecht passed a nod to Red Mole and Broadway's smash Cats and struck directly below the reptilian belts of their trendy first night audience. Sparing no shade of nuance, inflexion, facial expression or double entendre Judith Gibson, Andrea Kelland and Teresa Woodham mercilessly white-trashed contemporary values. Have you a weakness for Performance Art? Heroin? New Wave music, masturbation, or a timely abortion? These ladies strip away pretensions with gusto and don't scruple a black sequined g-string (total nudity finally appalled their M.C.P. heckler into

Monday: Bottletops were not inspiring. Wailing vocals over minimalist arrangements left most unimpressed. Not Really Anything grind out discordant topical originals with a hefty punch but not a lot of feeling or direction. Predominant Killing Joke influence.

Max Quits is Bill Direen's latest pseudonym/ensemble. Powerful, original, wacky pop that was over far too soon. Watch this man closely. The Wastrels (Christchurch's next "big thing") played their sixties pop/pap atrociously and admitted as much but the crowd just laughed and screamed for more. Gimme some smaller things.

Next, a no-name outfit with some Gordons and an Android. A fearsome combination? Damn right it was. An hour wasn't enough. Billy TK and Powerhouse were a droll soft-rock outfit who should've played earlier (before anyone got up). Some finale — not with a bang but a whimper. Michael Woodnorth

total silence).

They're fine actresses with skills ranging from mime to poetry, but not great singers. I found that their rough edges rendered their humour more abrasive. Perhaps John Gibson's arrangements were a little too Noel Coward for the three worldly-wise monkeys who swarmed on to the piano and hotted up the music with the explicit action of their erectile tails. They brought the house down. Jewel Sanyo

The Troggs Out To Lunch Richie Venus and The Blue Beatles Shoreline, Dunedin.

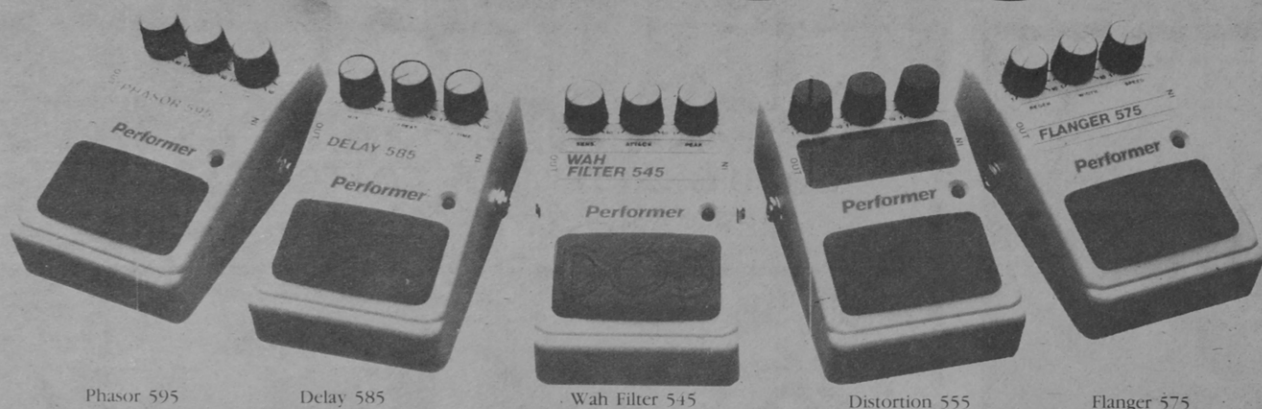
Two support bands, first was Out To Lunch, a trio headed by ex Tibet and Broken Models' guitarist Ross Nichols. It's Nichols' most pertinent venture so far. With Andy Anderson on drums and Sid Somerville on bass the band is tight, metallic and confident for a three piece. Their original stuff has its moments. The Outsider springs to mind, but they often tend to bludgeon when they should caress. Encouraging though.

Christchurch's Richie Venus provided the sort of fun that was to evade the Troggs. With a short mixed set of classics — 'Six Days On The Road', 'Green River', 'Money' and self-penned Flying Nun recorded songs, they had a ramshackled sense of enjoyment and authenticity that blended well with Venus' goofiness.

The Troggs have long been punk fantasies of distilled sixties rawness, the back-to-basics of honest trash and adrenalin. Their legend was built on three songs, Chip Taylor's 'Wild Thing' and their own sex anthems 'I Can't Control Myself' and 'With A Girl Like You'. These are their aces and they delivered them and the timeless 'Love Is All Around' with a panache and spirit that brought tears to the eyes. So much for the good news. The rest of their set was like a nostalgia-ridden thick-waisted Troggs meets Iron Maiden as they overdosed on heavy metal versions of peripheral hits like 'I Need You' and old reliables like the (Rolling) Stones' 'Satisfaction' and Holly's 'Peggy Sue'.

Reg Presley's open-legged middle-aged sexuality, all paunch and penis, pretty well summed up the excesses and incongruity of the Troggs in 1983. George Kay

FOR BEST EFFECTS



Phasor 595

Delay 585

Wah Filter 545

Distortion 555

Flanger 575



Distributed in New Zealand
by BB&G, PO Box 37-056, Auckland 1.

Also Available:
Compression Limiter 525
Stereo Chorus 565



GUITARS AND SOUND REINFORCEMENT PRODUCTS

Now Available in New Zealand
At Your Local Music Dealer

Distributed in New Zealand by
B.B.&G., PO Box 37-056, Auckland.

BIG CITY MUSIC

36 FORT ST, AUCKLAND PH 32-202, 32-203

GUITARS

Fender Strat	\$1495
Sigma Martin	\$1099
Fender Bullet	\$425
Fender Prec.	\$1125
Gibson twin neck	\$2895
Ibanez Twin Neck	\$895
Ibanez Musician	
bass	\$895
Rickenbacker	
electric 12 string	\$595
Ibanez Blazer	
basses	from \$410
Ibanez AW100	\$780
Guild D-35	\$866

AMPS

Rockit Super Lead	\$1795
Fender 100 watt	\$1195
Jansen Monitor amp	\$495
Eminar 150w Bass	
Combo	\$1295
Holden Graphic	
200w	\$899
P.A.'s	
Peavey cabinets	\$2922
Jansen 140w Cabs	\$1277
Jansen 5-100 Top	\$951
RCF Horns w/cases	\$375

DRUMS

Gretsch 6 Piece	\$1495
Tama 7 Piece	
Superstar	\$2250
Pearl 5 Piece	
w/cymbals	\$1995
Pearl Power Toms	\$370
Tama Royal Star	
7 piece	\$1215
Tama Royal Star	
power tom 7 piece	\$1585



ALSO: PAISTE CYMBALS; SHURE, EV, AUDIO TECHNICA MICS;
TAMA MIC STANDS; IBANEZ, BOSS, MXR EFFECTS;
DIMARZZIO PICK UPS; KORG, IBANEZ TUNERS.