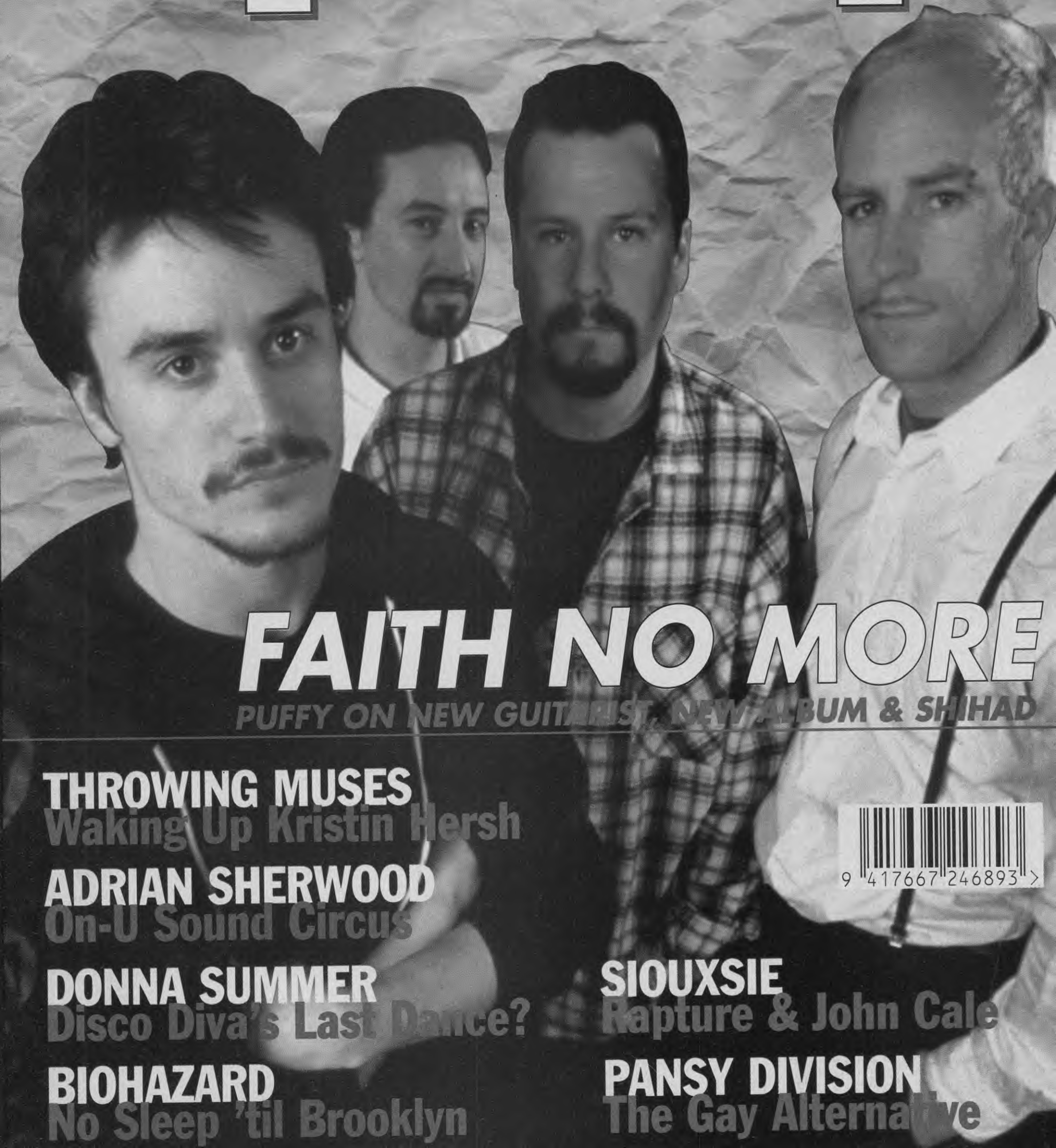


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rip it up



FAITH NO MORE

PUFFY ON NEW GUITARIST, NEW ALBUM & SHIHAD

THROWING MUSES

Waking Up Kristin Hersh

ADRIAN SHERWOOD

On-U Sound Circus

DONNA SUMMER

Disco Diva's Last Dance?

BIOHAZARD

No Sleep 'til Brooklyn

SHOXSIE

Rapture & John Cale

PANSY DIVISION

The Gay Alternative





COOL NEW RELEASES



ICE CUBE Bootlegs and B-Sides

Over the course of his solo career, CUBE has released a score of hit singles, several with B-sides never before included on any album. Couple those with six brilliant remixes of classic Cube tracks and a pair of excellent new songs and you have Ice Cube's new album! Tracks include '24 With an L', 'What Can I Do', '2 N the Morning' and 'My Skin Is My Skin'. The album ends with 'D'Voidofpopniggafiedmegamix', a collage of over 15 CUBE songs fused into one.



JULIAN COPE Autogeddon

The wonderful, eccentric ex-Teardrop Exploder has got on his bike and recorded a brand new album for a brand new record label – hooray! *Autogeddon* is Julian's first album for the Echo label and it is the final part of the environmental trilogy that also includes *Peggy Suicide* (1991) and *Jehovahkill* (1993). It deals with similar themes about the pillaging of Mother Earth, this time with an emphasis on the evils of car pollution. One track, 'Paranormal in the West Country' was recorded inside West Kennet Long Barrow, an ancient burial tomb near Avebury.



BLOWN Kind of Blew

Think sultry French hip-hop; think smokey New Orleans jazz; think mellow urban grooves and you have *Blown*. A new three-piece act from the U.K., *Blown* caught the attention of music lovers everywhere with their version of 'Je T'Aime' (the sexy Serge Gainsbourg/Jane Birkin 1969 classic). *Kind of Blew* is their debut album out through Liberation Records and if you're into some love and jazz this is the album for you! ...By the way, if you were wondering about *wind* instruments – there aren't any.

louder

a b FM compilation

- 1 african headcharge heading to glory
- 2 dinosaur jr feel the pain
- 3 new facts these foolish things
- 4 breast secreting cake all the cars
- 5 the breeders (with j mascis) do you love me now (remix)
- 6 the dean outside the cage
- 7 the puddle southern man
- 8 ween take me away
- 9 manasseh meets the equaliser souljah
- 10 three the hard way what i gotta do
- 11 the tufnells husky vooms
- 12 david kilgour filter
- 13 guided by voices marchers in orange
- 14 thorazine shuffle clutter
- 15 sugar what you want it to be
- 16 conscious daughters princess of poetry

95 b FM



OUT NOW!



The Applicators' Yvette Denton

Geoff Maddock, Breast Secreting Cake



bFM
Summer
Series
Photos by Alan Drain



Big Ross of the Tuñels



Debbie Silver, Garageland

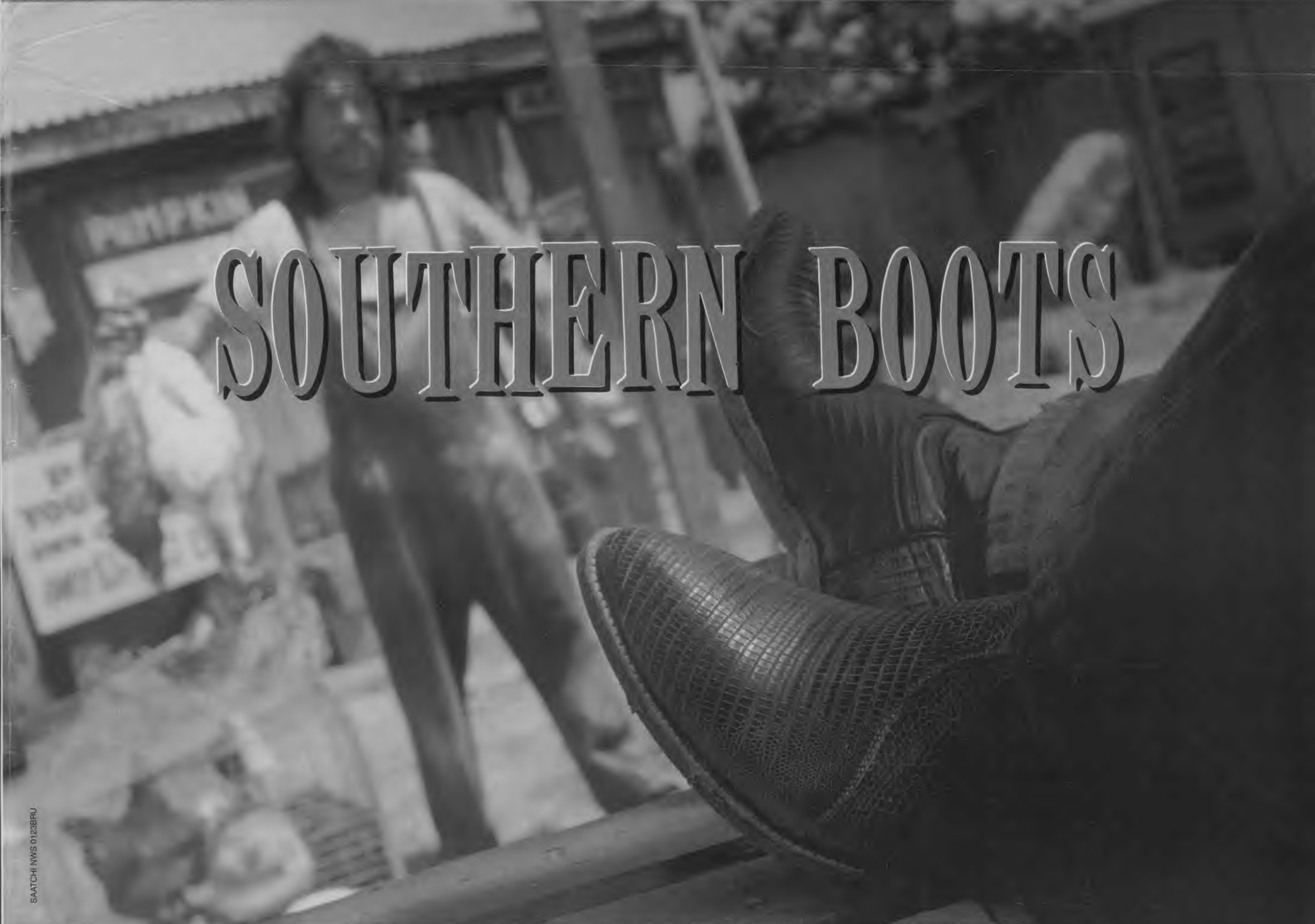


Chris Knox

BOOTS



SOUTHERN BOOTS

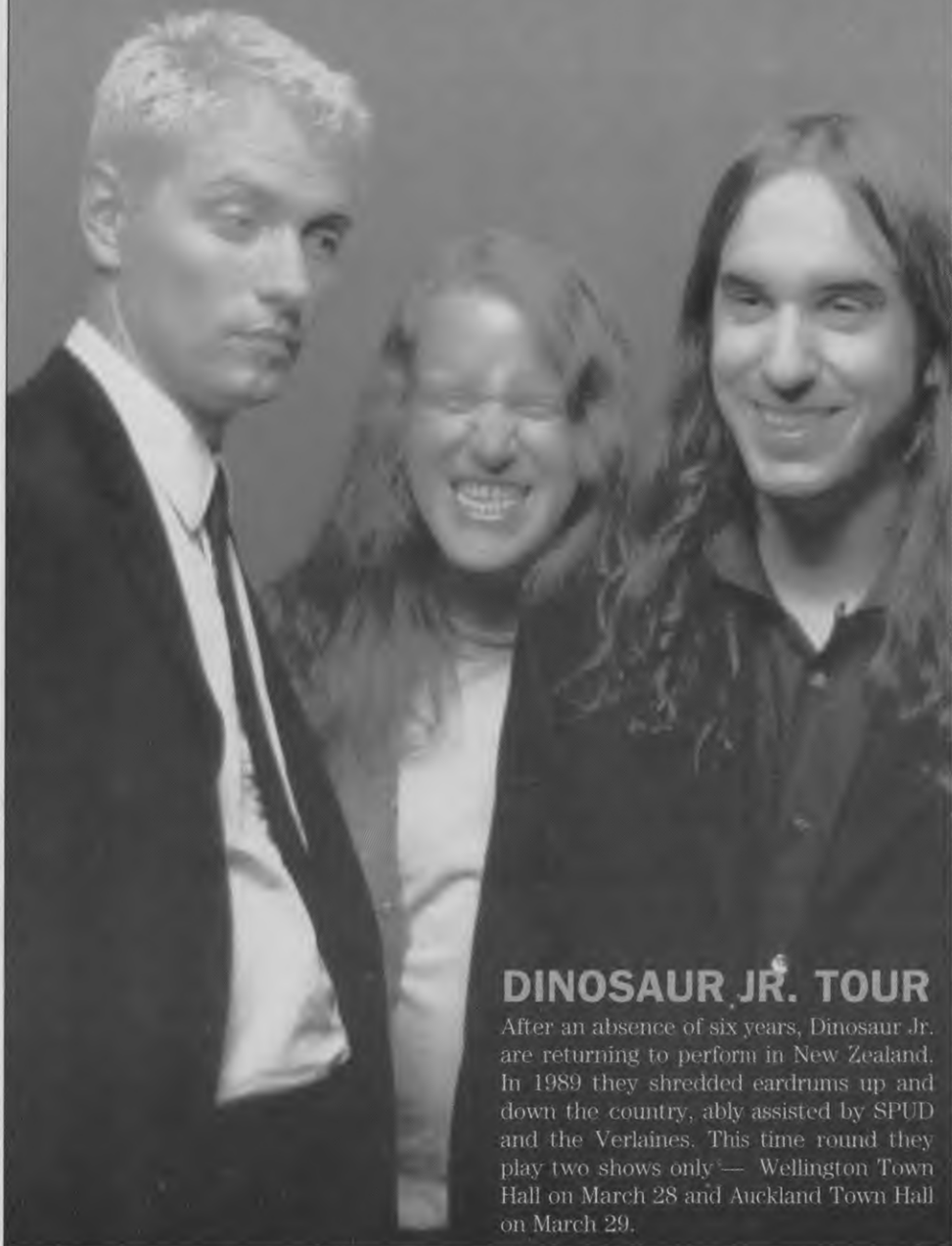


SAATCHI NWS 0123BRU

SOUTHERN COMFORT IT GIVES A WHOLE NEW MEANING TO COMFORT



News



DINOSAUR JR. TOUR

After an absence of six years, Dinosaur Jr. are returning to perform in New Zealand. In 1989 they shredded eardrums up and down the country, ably assisted by SPUD and the Verlaines. This time round they play two shows only— Wellington Town Hall on March 28 and Auckland Town Hall on March 29.

ABSOLUTE RETRO

The original wide boy is prowling again. Nick D'Angelo, the man behind the hedonistic orgy that was *Cheap Sex*, is lining up his fifth *Retro* dance party. *Absolute Retro* goes down on the night of Thursday March 9, at Auckland bars Squid, Box and Cause Celebre. Billed as "the 70s versus the 80s", D'Angelo is promising "good times and bad fashion". Dyn-oh-mite!



DREW GETS HER DRAWERS OFF

We haven't been seeing Drew on the movie screen of late, except for *Bad Girls*, which wasn't anything to write home about. Drew's latest claim to rock 'n' roll fame includes 'going around' with Hole guitarist Eric Erlandsen. She is currently re-vamping her career by being very much in the nudey in the latest edition of *Playboy* mag'. Guess it's goodbye Gerty for good this time.



PEARL JAM CHAOS

The first of 12,000 tickets for Pearl Jam's March 24 concert went on sale at Electric City Music stores in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, on February 3. The most frenzied activity went down at the chain's Newmarket store, where almost 3,000 fans queued for the 2,000 tickets available. Many had come prepared for the long haul, armed with chairs, chilli-bins and picnic baskets.

When the doors opened at midnight, the inevitable stampede saw fans crushed against doors and security stretched to the limit. The frenzy was unrelenting until just before 2 o'clock, when the last ticket was sold. Due to ticket demand, local promoters Frontier Touring have scheduled a second show the following night. Both concerts will be held at the Mount Smart Super Top in Auckland.



Jammed Pearl Jam fans



Liv Tyler

"I'm realising I'm 17, and there's all this rock history around me."
LIV TYLER, DAUGHTER OF AEROSMITH'S STEVEN.

"Girls are everything that's cool and, for sure, girls are way, way, way *fun*."
THURSTON MOORE, SONIC YOUTH.

"I had to be covered with 20 to 30 snakes for the 'Perfect Tan' video, and a python shot up my pant leg and licked my willie."
SCOTT BENZEL, MACHINES OF LOVING GRACE.

"My reputation as a tyrant, Svengali, asshole, there's truth in that. Where the discrepancies come in is why. I took a drummer who didn't even know what alternative music was, and took two people who could barely play their instruments, and made a band."
BILLY CORGAN, THE SMASHING PUMPKINS.

"I carry a toothbrush. I have bad teeth and food gets stuck in them, and I eat constantly. I think the only thing strange about it is that I'm not afraid to whip my toothbrush out in a restaurant. Everybody brushes their teeth; everybody doesn't brush their teeth at the table. I don't know why they shouldn't. It is quite pleasant."
MICHAEL STIPE, REM.

"I never really thought that being obnoxious would get me where I am now. When I play, I'm not a nice guy. You know when you're really drunk, and there's this person inside you that wants to come out and be really obnoxious? It's kinda the same thing, and people like you for it. I don't get that."
BILLIE JOE ARMSTRONG, GREEN DAY

"I'm a pretty good looking fellow. Verily, I end up fucking a lot."
PERRY FARRELL, PORNO FOR PYROS.

"Pooh. I'm English. It's forced upon you. You know, it's all pooh pooh, pee pee, all the way in England. You see, people are fascinated with their genitalia, but they're afraid to use it. They're fascinated with what the big hole is for — the big hole and the little willy thing. Wee wee, pooh pooh."
IAN ASTBURY, THE CULT.

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Music Awards Finalists

The last time doesn't seem that long ago, but the annual New Zealand Music Awards are upon us again. The bun fight that went on in 1994 looks unlikely to be repeated, and this year Supergroove have been vindicated, appearing as finalists in four categories.

The April 12 ceremony, to be held at Auckland's Aotea Centre, will feature several live performances by nominated bands, and is being recorded by Auckland company, Maxwell Film & Television. The show is scheduled to screen on TV2 the following Saturday.

The judges this year were: Mark Phillips (Polygram), Dave Jordan (BMG), Chris Caddick (EMI), Steve Booth (Warner Music), Mark Ashbridge (Festival), Paul Ellis (Sony), Mike Haru (Mai FM), Judi Callen (*Frenzy*), Russell Brown (*NZ Listener*), Mike Houlihan (*Evening Post*), Robbie Blair (Compact Disc Shop), and mediator, Ian Magan (Pacific Entertainment).

The 1995 New Zealand Music Awards finalists are:

SINGLE

Sisters Underground *In The Neighbourhood*
Headless Chickens *George*
3 The Hard Way *Hip Hop Holiday*
Purest Form *Message To My Girl*
Supergroove *Can't Get Enough*

ALBUM

Dave Dobbyn *Twist*
Head Like A Hole *Flik Y'Self Off Y'Self*
Shona Laing *Shona*
Supergroove *Traction*
Mutton Birds *Salty*

TOP MALE VOCALIST

David Kilgour
Greg Johnson
Jon Toogood
Dave Dobbyn

TOP FEMALE VOCALIST

Stephanie Tauevihi

Fiona McDonald
Emma Paki

TOP GROUP

Mutton Birds
Headless Chickens
Supergroove

TOP INTERNATIONAL PERFORMER

Shihad
Crowded House
Headless Chickens

MOST PROMISING MALE VOCALIST

Evan Woodruffe (*Melon Twister*)
Peter Daube (*Bilge Festival*)
Brent Mulligan (*Pumpkinhead*)

MOST PROMISING FEMALE VOCALIST

Helen Goudge (*Melon Twister*)
Chloe Reeves
Sulata Foal (*3 The Hard Way*)

MOST PROMISING GROUP

3 The Hard Way
Purest Form
Sisters Underground

FILM SOUNDTRACK/CAST RECORDING

Blood Brothers
Once Were Warriors
Jesus Christ Superstar

VIDEO

Headless Chickens *Cruise Control* Directed & Produced by Johnny Ogilvie
Supergroove *Can't Get Enough* Directed by Jo Fisher & Produced by Matt Noonan
Headless Chickens *George* Directed by Gideon Keith & Marcus Ringrose

PRODUCER

Neil Finn *Twist*
Karl Steven & Malcom Welsford *Traction*
Neil Finn *Greenstone*

ENGINEER

Nick Launay *Greenstone*
Paul Streekstra *Language*
Malcom Welsford *Traction*

COUNTRY

Merv Pinny *Destiny*
Kevin Greaves *I'm Not Scared Of Women*
Noel Parlene *Can I Count On You*

JAZZ

Urbanism *Urbanism*
John Key's Strange Fruit *John Key's Strange Fruit*
The George Chisholm Quartet *Perfect Strangers*

CLASSICAL

Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra *NZ Music Vol 5*
The NZ National Youth Choir *On Tour In North America '93*
Malvina Major *Christmastime*
The NZ Symphony Orchestra *Douglas Lilburn/The Three Symphonies*

FOLK

Paul Ubana Jones *A Change Of Season*
Chris Priestley *Argentina To Invercargill*
Windy City Stryglers *Windy City Stryglers*

GOSPEL

Jules Riding *The Fisherman*
Sir Howard Morrison *Christmas Collection*
Derek Lind *Stations*

COVER DESIGN

Wayne Conway *Twist*
Alec Bathgate/Chris Knox *3EPs*
Wayne Conway *Broadcast*

SONGWRITER

Don McGlashan *Anchor Me*
Dave Dobbyn *Language*
Neil Finn *Private Universe*

Charts

Top Ten Selling New Zealand Singles of 1994

- 1 Supergroove *Can't Get Enough*
- 2 Southside Of Bombay *What's The Time Mr Wolf*
- 3 Purest Form *Message To My Girl*
- 4 3 The Hard Way *Hip Hop Holiday*
- 5 Supergroove *Sitting Inside My Head*
- 6 Sisters Underground *In The Neighbourhood*
- 7 Headless Chickens *George/Cruise Control*
- 8 3 The Hard Way *Many Rivers*
- 9 Dave Dobbyn *Language*
- 10 Myles *Sanctuary*

Sourced from the weekly top 50 chart compiled by Record Publications Ltd.

Top Five Selling New Zealand Albums of 1994

- 1 Supergroove *Traction*
- 2 Various *Once Were Warriors*
- 3 Various *Jesus Christ Superstar*
- 4 The Mutton Birds *Salty*
- 5 Strawpeople *Broadcast*

Sourced from the weekly top 50 chart compiled by Record Publications Ltd.

KAFM 93.8 Auckland Top 10, February 16

- 1 Decline In Mind *Missed Intention*
- 2 Deluge *Wooden*
- 3 Brimstone *Near Dark*
- 4 Atomic Butterfly *Safe But Scarred*
- 5 Ed If *I Was Free*
- 6 Poweraxe *Politics*
- 7 No Utopia *From Beyond*
- 8 Blackjack *One Step Sunset*
- 9 The Nod *Loud And Proud*
- 10 Adrenalin *This Wait*

THE HEAT 91.7FM Wellington Top 10, February

- 1 Michelle Gayle *Sweetness*
- 2 Cause & Effect *Alone*
- 3 Madonna *Take A Bow*
- 4 Candle Box *Cover Me*
- 5 Silverchair *Tommorrow*
- 6 Erasure *I Love Saturday*
- 7 Soundgarden *Fell On Black Days*
- 8 Veruca Salt *Seether*
- 9 Pearl Jam *Nothingman*
- 10 TLC *Creep*

MAX THE MUSIC CHANNEL Auckland Pepsi Chart Attack, February 16

- 1 Massive Attack *Protection*
- 2 Grant Lee Buffalo *Lone Star Song*
- 3 Cracker *Eurotrash*
- 4 Emma Paki *Greenstone*
- 5 Black Men United *U Will Know*
- 6 Simple Minds *She's A River*
- 7 Sugar *Can't Believe What Your Saying*
- 8 MC Solaar *Obsolete*
- 9 Soundgarden *Fell On Black Days*
- 10 Mary J Bilge *Be Happy*

Compiled from current Max airplay.

Recording Industry Association of NZ Inc. 31st Annual New Zealand Music Awards

FINALISTS

"Single of the Year"

Voting Coupon

1. "HIP HOP HOLIDAY" – 3 The Hard Way ☐
2. "GEORGE" – Headless Chickens ☐
3. "MESSAGE TO MY GIRL" – Purest Form ☐
4. "IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD" – Sisters Underground ☐
5. "CAN'T GET ENOUGH" – Supergroove ☐

Choose the single you like best from the list of five finalists. Place a tick in the corresponding box, then return this coupon to: Recording Industry of NZ Inc, PO Box 9241, Wellington.

Votes must be received by Monday 10 April 1995. Only original coupons will be accepted. (Photocopies will not be accepted)

March 2 Christchurch, Canterbury University
3 Dunedin, Otago University
4 Palmerston North, Massey University
5 Wellington, Victoria University

March 2 Christchurch, Quadrophenia
3 Dunedin, Crown
4 Wellington, Antipodes
5 Hamilton, Exchange
6 Auckland, Squid

March 2 Dunedin, Empire
3 Christchurch, Dux De Lux
4 Oamaru, Penguin Club
9 Wellington, Cuba Cuba
10 Palmerston North, New Royal
11 Auckland, Squid
13 Hamilton, Exchange
14 New Plymouth, The Mill
17 Invercargill, Tillermans
18 Dunedin, Crown

March 3 Hamilton, Founders Theatre
4 Auckland, Town Hall
5 Wellington, Michael Fowler Centre
7 Palmerston North, Opera House

March 11 Auckland, Logan Campbell Centre
**GUINNESS CELEBRATION
OF IRISH MUSIC**

March 12 Auckland, Aotea Centre
HOT CHOCOLATE

March 14 Auckland, Aotea Centre
SLAYER & BIOHAZARD

March 19 Auckland, Town Hall
20 Wellington, Town Hall
VIOLENT FEMMES

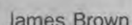
March 21 Auckland, Town Hall
22 Wellington, Town Hall
23 Christchurch, Canterbury Uni
LORENNa McKENNITT

March 23 Auckland, Town Hall
24 Wellington, Michael Fowler Centre
PEARL JAM

March 24 & 25 Auckland, Mt Smart Supertop
DINOSAUR JR

March 28 Wellington, Town Hall
29 Auckland, Town Hall
M PEOPLE

March 26 Christchurch, Town Hall
27 Wellington, Show And Sports Centre
(with **The Grid**)



28 Auckland, Mt Smart Supertop
(with **The Grid**)

AFRICAN HEADCHARGE

March 31 Auckland, Powerstation
April 1 Wellington, Victoria University
2 Christchurch, Ministry

JAMES BROWN

April 1 Auckland, Mt Smart Stadium
REEL 2 REAL

REEL 2 REAL

April 1 Auckland, Powerstation
THE ROLLING STONES

April 16 & 17 Auckland, Western Springs
TONY BENNETT

April 17 Auckland, Aotea Centre
SHERYL CROW

April 20 Auckland, Logan Campbell Centre
AL JARREAU

April 27 Christchurch, Town Hall
28 Wellington, Town Hall
29 Auckland, Logan Campbell Centre
POINTER SISTERS

June 9 Wellington, Town Hall
10 Auckland, Town Hall
DIONNE WARWICK

August 31 Wellington, Michael Fowler Centre
September 1 Auckland, Town Hall

RUMOURS '95

Red Hot Chili Peppers/Stone Temple Pilots/Tool
(April)

Massive Attack Sound System (April)
Sick Of It All (April)
Sebadoh (April/May)
Specials (May)
D.R.I (May)
Fugazi (June)
The Kinks (June)
Eagles (November)



Wellington band Shihad are currently in Europe on a 20 date tour with Faith No More. The American group first discovered Shihad on their last New Zealand trip, and invited the band to join them for the European dates.

Shihad will remain in Europe after the FNM gigs, and will commence a 30 date club tour on April 20 with fellow Wellingtonians, Head Like A Hole.

The Dunedin based HIV/AIDS prevention group, DIVO, has received a \$9,000 grant from the New York organisation Red Hot. The grant was given on behalf of the Straitjacket Fits and the Verlaines, who both featured on the *No Alternative* benefit album that was released by the Red Hot Organisation last year.

Krist Novoselic, Pearl Jam and Soundgarden are fronting a new political action group, formed to fight the planned introduction of an Erotic Music Bill that would outlaw any music considered sexually explicit or sex related. The group, called Joint Artists And Music Promotions Political Action (JAMPAC), have instigated a fundraising campaign, in an effort to raise the money necessary to become politically influential on local, regional and state levels, says Novoselic.

In an unrelated matter, Novoselic has

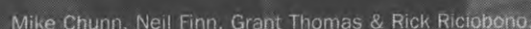
decided not to join the Foo Fighters, the band he formed with Nirvana drummer Dave Grohl and ex-Germs guitarist Pat Smear. Smear has also hinted that he may leave the group.

Several major US labels have dropped well-known reggae artists from their rosters in the last month. MCA Records said goodbye to Barrington Levy, Ed Robinson, Morgan Heritage, the Dreds and Steel Pulse, while Columbia dropped Worl-A-Girl and DJs Tiger and Tony Rebel, and Elektra Records dumped Red Foxx and Shinehead. The Columbia departures have been described by their A&R spokesperson as part of "an annual shedding".

Meanwhile, Polygram have established Island Records Jamaica. Based in Kingston, the label's first release will be an album from dancehall artist, Spanner Banner. Label president Trish Farrell has also signed a multi-album production deal with Sly & Robbie's Taxi Records.

On February 18, Neil Finn was presented with a commemorative plaque in recognition of the Crowded House song 'Something So Strong' receiving one million plays on US radio. The presentation, at Auckland's Kermadec Restaurant, was attended by Rick Riccobono, the vice president of Broadcast Music Industry, America, Mike Chunn, the New Zealand General Manager of APRA (Australasian Performing Rights Association), Crowded House's manager Grant Thomas, and other industry guests.

The band's first single, 'Don't Dream It's Over', has currently received over a million and a half plays on US radio.



Hole played an MTV Unplugged show in New York on February 21 ... **D.O.A** drummer Ken Jensen died in a house fire at his home in Vancouver, Canada on January 29 ... Rick Rubin has signed **Donovan** to his American Recordings label ... EMI Records and **Dr Martens** have joined forces to released and album called *Unlaced*, featuring tracks by **Primal Scream**, **Blur** and **New Order** amongst others ... **The Clean** have completed another album at Dunedin's Fish St ... **Surgery** singer Sean McDonnell died on January 18 after lapsing into an asthma-induced coma ... **Diana Ross** will receive a special award at the Soul Train Awards in LA on March 13 ... J-Dee of **Da Lench Mob** was sentenced to 29 years behind bars by an LA court for murdering his girlfriend's flatmate, he was convicted by an all-white jury. In New York rapper **Tupac Shakur** was sentenced to four and a half years for sexual assault. **Snoop Doggy Dogg's** murder trial is now expected to take place in July ... **Loves Ugly Children** are to record their debut Flying Nun album at Fish St. studios with Tex Houston ... **Offspring** have announced plans to record a single with **Courtney Love** ... **Rufus** are expected to release a reunion album later in the year, with **Chaka Khan** contributing to several tracks ... **Blur** have written 40 new songs for their next album ... Wellington band **Banshee Reel** are releasing an album, *Orchestrated Litany Of Lies*, on Loaded Records this month, then go on to tour Canada in May ... **Living Colour** have split up ... the **Specials** have reformed without Terry Hall and Jerry Dammers ... **Quincy Jones** will receive the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award at the 67th annual Grammy Awards on March 27 ... **Sepultura** have returned to Roadrunner Records after spending a short time with major label, Epic ... **Brett Anderson** of Suede has recorded a duet in French for an AIDS charity album ... listeners of the Australian radio station Triple J voted 'Davo' as their preferred new name for **Prince**.

THE SLIMMER TWINS

Diner, Service Station & Takeaway Cuisine

Rock 'n' Roll and food have always been constant companions; Luther Vandross has lost 120 pounds — nine times!, Elvis swallowed burgers and pizza whole, and Mama Cass loved those steak sandwiches to death.

In the first instalment of a regular dining out column, *RipItUp's* digestive duo, The Slimmer Twins, waddle their merry way round the finest (and well priced) eating establishments, without even stopping to mop the gravy from their chins. So sit back, undo your trouser buttons, and feel those arteries harden.

City Express. 9 Customs Street, central Auckland. Open 24 hrs.

Almost every time we've dined at this place the *Commodores Greatest Hits* has been playing. As if that wasn't enough, the staff serve portions so huge you can't even see your plate! A variety of meals incorporating eggs and chips are on offer, but the Slimmer™ choice involves bacon so fresh it literally oinks from the plate. Huge slabs of this delicacy are presented smothered in impossibly yellow fried eggs, and garnished with an avalanche of crispy fried chips (\$5.95). Sure, lentil-soakers will tell you this style of dining will shorten your lifespan, but then so will vegetables — look what they did for River Phoenix.

The Original Baron Of Beef. United Tower, 125 Queen Street, central Auckland.

"Pleased to meet you, with meat to please you", soothes the Baron, and you know you've found a second home. The Baron offers an endless choice of prime cuts from the bone, featuring beef, lamb (with mint sauce!) and pork (with crackling and apple sauce!). Full (\$9.95) or half (\$5.95) portions are served with steaming peas, crunchy roast potatoes, bright orange carrots and pumpkin. It's pork and spicy gravy on the Twins plate more often than not, but not for long, and if you need further convincing — one visit to the Baron and you'll let go a burp that could strip the bark off a tree.

Other notables:

Stables Restaurant. Cnr Fort & Gore Streets, central Auckland. Open 24 hrs.

\$5 breakfast: Bacon, sausages, hash browns, fried eggs, white bread toast, tea or coffee (brown bread is available for those with a taste for the exotic).

Tony's Original Steak Restaurant. 27 Wellesley Street, central Auckland.

\$10 lunch special: Steak, chips and a pint. Bloody marvellous!

Holly's Home Cookery. Main Rd, Paroa.

It's the Chinese Year of the Pie, and for a heavenly chicken pie don't drive by Holly's Home Cookery, main road Paeroa, 200 yards before the big bottle driving South.

TWILIGHT ROCK

AT THE



THE BEST BANDS IN TOWN FROM 6.30 EVERY EVENING. AND THE SOUNDS COME FREE WITH YOUR \$10 EASTER SHOW ADMISSION TICKET. ALL THE REST OF THE SHOW ENTERTAINMENT FROM FARMWORLD TO STREET THEATRE IS A BONUS.

FAGAN • PUREST FORM • HALLELUJAH
PICASSOS • EMMA PAKI • DEAD FLOWERS
• 3 THE HARD WAY • HELLO SAILOR •
HAMMOND GAMBLE • URBAN
DISTURBANCE • DLT & SLAVE • TUFFY
CULTURE & DUBHEAD

HERE'S WHEN THEY'RE ON:

Wed April 12 6:30pm	FAGAN • PUREST FORM • 3 THE HARD WAY
Thur April 13 6:30pm	HALLELUJAH PICASSOS • DLT & SLAVE • URBAN DISTURBANCE
Fri April 14 6:30pm	HAMMOND GAMBLE • HELLO SAILOR
Sat April 15 6:30 pm	DEAD FLOWERS • 3 THE HARD WAY • DLT & SLAVE
Sun April 16 6:30pm	ANNIE CRUMMER • PUREST FORM
Mon April 17 6:30pm	EMMA PAKI • TUFFY CULTURE & DUBHEAD • URBAN DISTURBANCE



Hello Sailor... just one of the top acts in the Twilight Rock line-up for the 1995 Easter Show.

The shows will run non-stop from 6.30 to 8.30 every evening. No seating hassles and plenty of time to catch all the rest of the Easter Show excitement before and after the rock programme. Inquiries: Phone 09 638 9969

Letters

Balls To The Wall

Dear Sir Russell,

Just a polite note to inform you that you fuckin' suck and Offspring rule. So hey matey, what the hell made you write in issue 210 that Offspring are fakers? Did you have your eyes closed at *The Big Day Out*? Offspring was the most popular band there. If you get your balls out of your ears you'd hear that Offspring are one of the best bands today. You obviously are a cheap, slack reviewer, and couldn't think of anything else to write cause you really don't know shit about music, you stupid dumbshit goddam motherfucker!

Yours sincerely,

Lana, Amy and Nat, Kohimarama.

Praise and Love

I would just like to say that *RipItUp* is the best magazine in the world. In almost every issue there is something about Courtney Love. I love it! Shirley Charles rulz! Keep up the good work.

Courtney Love Jnr., Auckland.

In Wonderland

Perhaps someone out there can shed some light on the Alice in Chains conspiracy. What happened to Mike Starr? Are they going to play New Zealand (or was their promised concert at the Town Hall just a promotional scheme to sell their latest album)? Is it just me, or have the harder riffs turned to cordial?

Jar of Flies Sap was dated September 93, and it doesn't seem to have their unique touch to it — more like the producers have scraped up two EPs and packaged it. Sixteen months later... what are they up to now?

Ah, what's the difference? I'll die in this sick world of mine.

Concernedcitizenrupert.

Editor Replies: Layne Staley of Alice in Chains has a side project, *Mad Season*, with Mike McCready (Pearl Jam), Barrett Martin (Screaming Trees), Baker, and vocals by Mark Lanegan (Screaming Trees) on two

tracks. *Mad Season* release the album *Above* late March.

Moolool Moolool

Deja-vu! I was reading a festival review by John Russell, and hello, no mention of rock or metal. Last year he wrote a one-eyed piece on *Strawberry Fields* with no mention of Blackjack or Shihad, and this year his coverage (god help us) of *Mountain Rock* was damn average. He slagged Shadowplay, who were awesome — it was their final gig, and they blew away a lot of people I know — and he left before Sticky Filth and Blackjack. I heard both were fucking brilliant.

When are you going to sack that dick? When are you going to cover these bands? You've ignored them completely for long enough. And how about a writer that wants to cover rock and metal? It's a part of the NZ music scene that you profess to uphold. How about someone who would focus on the music rather than posing or being a wank noter.

There are plenty of people that want to read about these bands and they're bashing ass sticking to their own stuff. In the Waikato alone there's some dedicated and very cool bands... 8forty8, Obsidian, Subliminal Warfare, Psychlops, Blackjack and Knightshade, and what about the Nod? Why don't you get a Waikato reviewer to cover them? You Aucklanders might get a shock — they're fucking good! Cut the elitist Auckland wank trip and get back to the music — that's why your readers pay for your magazine.

Yours truthfully,

P Crowley, Hamilton.

John Russell replies: If you 'heard' that *Blackjack* and *Sticky Filth* were brilliant, that means you left before they played also. Therefore, doesn't that make you a hypocrite? I made it clear that I left *Mountain Rock* as I had an early plane to catch, so why would you expect me to review acts that I did not see?

Sound Out

I'd be eternally grateful to hear from other women round the country who are doing sound work (particularly live stuff), with a view to trying to set up an information exchange/ networking kind of thing. If you're interested, write to me at 66 Norwood St, Christchurch 2, and hopefully we'll get something together.

Sand McDougall,
Christchurch.

A Bleeding Heart Writes

Dear John Russell,

Of all the ignorant things to write. In your review of the book *Never Fade Away*, you state that Kurt Cobain "explained and justified" his suicide. This is just not possible. No matter how bad someone perceives their life to be, taking their life is not the answer.

There are too many unanswered questions left behind for the families of suicide victims to say that a suicide is justified. Kurt Cobain's death was nothing but a waste of an incredible human being.

Matthew Laidlaw,
Ponsonby.

John Russell replies: For you to state that no suicide can be justified shows an

incredible degree of self righteousness. Obviously Cobain's state of mind was such that he could justify his suicide, and ultimately, that is all that counts — he made his mind up. When someone has descended to the point where even their baby daughter cannot summon in them any sense of wonder about being alive, then who has the right to say they can't throw their hand?

Don't Give Me Kulcha

Fair Dinkum of Christchurch says (February Letters) Kulcha has received an NZ On Air grant. He's wrong. No NZ On Air funding has gone into Kulcha records or vids. A Kulcha track was included on NZ On Air's *Kiwi Hit Disc 10*, but no money changes hands with *Kiwi Hit Disc* tracks.

Yes — Failsafe did get video funding from NZ On Air for Throw and Malchicks projects. The bands' bloodlines and domestics are not an issue from our point of view. What's important to us is: (a) is it New Zealand music?; and (b) is it going to get airplay?

We get 300 applications for video funding every year. We can do 90 projects. Pumpkinhead missed out with 'I Like', but picked up funding for 'Water' and 'Third Eye', not because the band is made up of "hard-working, full-blooded kiwis", or because of where they are living at the moment, but because of the broadcast potential of the tracks.

Brendan Smyth, NZ On Air, Wellington.

Southern Discontent

In reply to Fair Dinkum (*RIU* February), regarding NZ On Air's recent grant to Failsafe Records artists.

In view of the inadequate reporting on the status of most groups south of the Bombay Hills, I can understand how you wouldn't know one way or the other the activities of artists on the Failsafe label. I'll enlighten you.

The Malchicks have completed an album of new material for release in the first half of this year. The band members are presently and temporarily in different parts of the world, and will remain so probably until the release of their album. The group intend to continue working under the name of the Malchicks when the opportunity arises, so I guess that means they are a current band, currently not performing. Their album is cool. It's called *Mercury*. You should check it out when it's available.

Springloader received a grant for their song 'One More Thing'. It was the third track they had applied for and, although not their first choice for a video, is probably the most applicable 'commercial' intro to the band. As I am personally in this band, I guess I'd know what we were doing. Nope, we haven't split either. We did lose an unreliable drummer late last year, but I don't recall having split. Springloader have had a track on the *Good Things* compilation and have an EP and album mostly finished.

Throw received a grant for the forthcoming singles 'Falling Inside Me' and 'Nowhere Near'. The original intention in forming Throw was to write and record songs in a loose group of musicians co-ordinated by myself, similar to how outfits such as the UK's This Mortal Coil work. A spate of live activity in 92 saw this idea temporarily sidetracked toward a more traditional band format. An album, *Rememory*, is due out soon and was completed under the original objectives over the last three years. This information has been included in almost all info kits on Throw, of which *RIU* has received a few.

It's unfortunate you haven't been informed much either way on these groups, especially by this biased publication, who seem to find

a page of full colour photos of what's up Courtney Love's dress etc. (February 95 issue) more relevant to the music readers of this country.

It is, however, good to see you're supportive of locally made music in the face of relative national apathy. My personal opinion on the LUC and Pumpkinhead tracks you mentioned is that both bands have made better songs more applicable to a video funding scheme aimed at the less open minded genre of national music and TV.

Cheers etc.

Rob Mayes,

Failsafe Records, Christchurch.

Editor Replies: What extra terrestrial power could have made me think that our readers were more interested in "what's up Courtney Love's dress" than your bands?

Hey La, Hey La, My Boyfriend's Band

In reply to Kevin List and his unfortunate review of Thorazine Shuffle, Big Day Out (February issue). Well, if anyone pissed me off today it was you. It was with pleasurable anticipation that I purchased this issue. Having experienced *The Big Day Out*, I was eager to relive the days events by scouring the columns looking for the most memorable bands in bold print. You can imagine my aversion when I came across your dispassionate, disillusioned account of Thorazine Shuffle. A music review is not just some half arsed attempt to recollect your opinionated, narrow minded taste from the depths of your prejudice, but should capture, in perspective, a descriptive narration of musical ability, stage performance, sound mix, crowd emotion etc. With a flair for reliving the moment, a reviewer's responsibility is to the readers — the impressionable. Sure, we are not of the same opinion, however, an opinion that was delivered in a such a derogatory way, with no sense of humour, and that was clearly dissenting from the majority of Stage 3 audience? A tokenist effort it seems.

Their appearance on Stage 3 clashed with that of You Am I on the main stage. This might have had an initial effect on crowd movement. However, you failed to notice the almost immediate return as the crowd increased in numbers, enthusiasm and atmosphere. Had you not been feasting your eyes up Mete's miniskirt, you may have been able to grasp some inclination as to what Thorazine were doing on stage, instead of wanking in the sidelines as some wannabe with a laminate.

With their original sound, one must praise bands like Thorazine Shuffle. 'Whydidtheydoit?', you asked... (like you care). Often tagged as the darlings of the bFM Top 10, these guys have some clues (unlike you) on the arrangement and presentation of alternative music. As for the flute — it is not often you can blend alternative rock with a classical instrument. Mete is damn sexy, and yes, her stage presence is appreciated by the 'teenage boys', but because of this why should you discredit her musically?

In conclusion:

I 'Blame' you 'For This Long',

The fact that you made us 'Succumb' to reading your review;

We had to 'Sink' to your level and listen to your 'Queer' opinions;

I hope you can't 'Forget The Guilt'... the way you 'Spit It Out' on paper fills me with 'Nausea',

You 'Clutter' the pages with bullshit;

You're a 'Liar' and if this incident means 'Losing You' from the review columns, then I'll be a 'Happy Camper';

'Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!'

Baby Verve.

Write to Rip It Up Letters, PO Box 5689
Auckland 1 or fax us on (09) 376 1558

WHAT THE

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IS FUDGE?

LEFT FOOT FORWARD

Some gays have all the luck. Jon Ginoli, lead singer and guitar man with San Francisco's Pansy Division, is cradling a mobile phone on a ferry that's crossing Sydney Harbour on a beautiful day.

The Bay area punkers are overseas for the first time, touring Oz and New Zealand on the trail of their second album *Deflowered*. Ginoli formed the band in the winter of 1991, frustrated with lack of anything other than what he considered stereotypical gay music.

"I wanted to have a band that other gay people, who were dissatisfied with the usual gay fare of show tunes and Barbara Streisand, could have for themselves."

But, by his own admission, he doesn't always take a righteous stance. Like a lot of desperados who enter the rock 'n' roll game, Ginoli did it partly to get laid.

"I thought that might be a nice by-product, yeah. Rock 'n' Roll has always been about sex, so I would say that was part of my whole scheme."

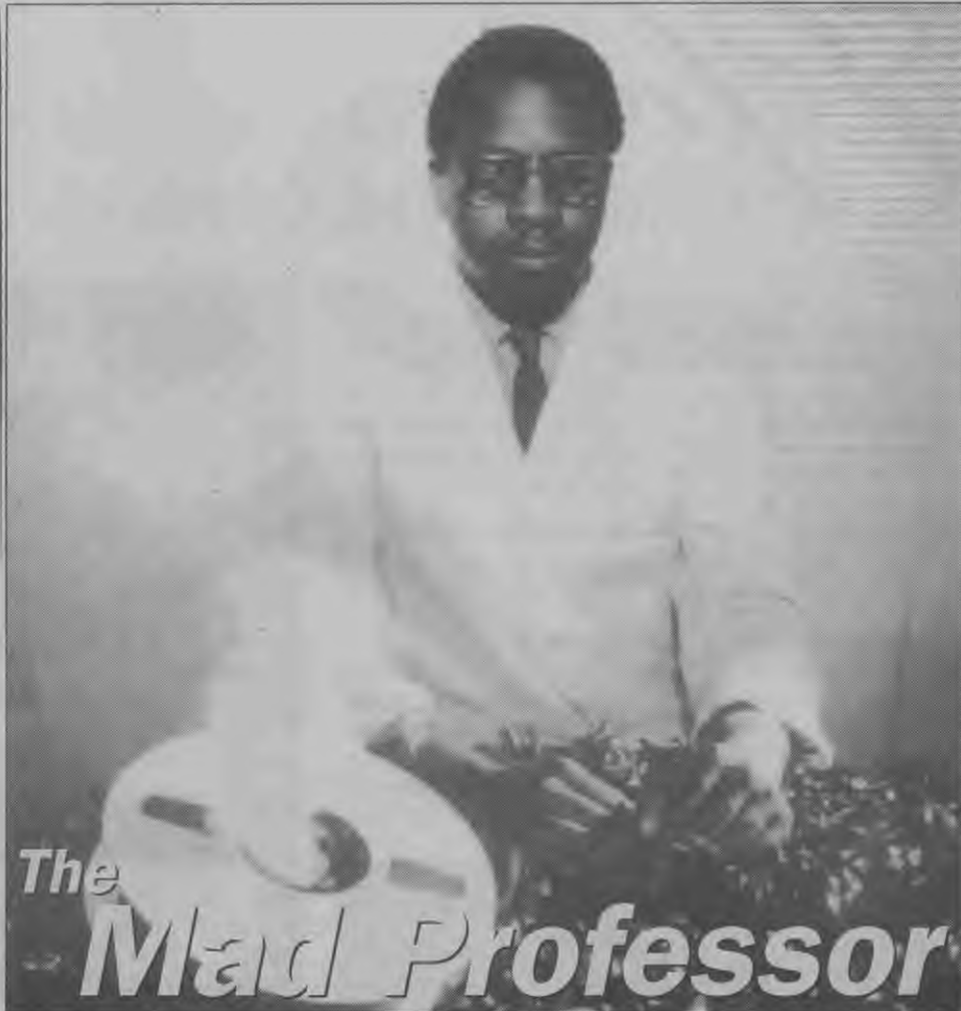
Pansy Division have thrown pop and punk into a pot and come out sound like Pete Shelley fronting Blondie with Brian Wilson producing. Lyrically, they're like nothing you've ever heard, and the titles of their singles — 'Bill and Ted's Homosexual Adventure', 'Nine Inch Males' — point to a deep respect for toilet humour. You don't have to be there to get the joke, but they still get a hard time in more ways than one.

"Occasionally we get accused of things, but I think after people get over the initial shock they see that we can write good pop songs."

JOHN RUSSELL



Pansy Divisions' Jon Ginoli



Neil Fraser, aka The Mad Professor, has just turned a new page from a very old book. This month the enigmatic dub/reggae producer tours New Zealand for the first time on the university orientation ticket.

Fraser's first musical steps were made behind amplifiers and underneath mixing desks, as a service technician. With these skills in hand, in 1979 he built a four-track studio in his house, and launched the now legendary Ariwa label.

Throughout the 80s, Fraser's stable of artists increased along with the size of his studio, and Ariwa scaled the charts with releases from Pato Banton, Sandra Cross and reggae star Macka B.

"Macka B is one of a kind," says Fraser. He's probably released more albums than any other British reggae artist. It's incredible that

he's still going with such velocity."

In 1992, Fraser slowed the flow of releases from Ariwa and left home, touring Europe and America, before returning to break into the remix market. His credits include the Orb, Sade ("I didn't meet her. Probably a good thing, I might not have left her alone"), and the newly released Mad Professor Vs. Massive Attack album, *No Protection*.

"I've liked Massive Attack for years. The songs they like are similar to the songs I like. They contacted me with the idea to do some dub remixes for them, and it developed to the point where it evolved into an album."

Keen to break out of the studio, he's out on the touring tip again, and is bringing Macka B, Sister Audrey and Nolan Irie with him to New Zealand. Surprisingly, he has no intention of taking in the greenery.

"No, I don't smoke or do drugs at all."

JOHN RUSSELL

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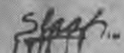
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TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM USUAL OUTLETS

Elvis

QUEEN OF THE DESSERT

ELVIS LOVELY ELVIS

And after the lovely BIG DAY OUT (yes readers an UP TO DATE column as usual) it was ALL SMILES for the happy couple of MINISTRY's AL JOURGANSEN and HANS HOEFLICH's girlfriend HELENE! Yes as they LEAVE TOGETHER after the show the lovely HANS is shuffled into a taxi by a CARING LOVELY CHATTING QUITE A BIT GIRLIE from Warner Music because the lovely Hans has been DRINKING quite a bit since he is not so happy. Meanwhile at the SQUIDDLY DIDDLY bar Al

COOL and offering Al some FRIED EGGS - so considerate and the PERFECT CURE for a hangover. What can Al do but LEAVE QUICKLY - not however before offering Mrs Hans tickets for the Aussie BDO shows...

And after that tale of one cutting edge rock band, here is one about... HELLO SAILOR. Recently reformed from DNA FRAGMENTS found in the blood of Jurassic mosquitoes, the excellent and Still Able To Pack Away Quite A Bit band of good old KIWI ROCKERS were performing at the also

I cut
them up
quite a
bit

Dr. Elvis
jack the ripper

one Harry! Except unfortunately the lovely young thing at the bar is DAVE DOBBYN'S DRUMMER - and more importantly a BLOKE.

... Summer festivals! Don't we love MIDDLE-AGED FAMILIES in BIG BOUNCY WHITE REEBOKS carrying CHILLY BINS and DECK CHAIRS through town! Don't we love BIG CROWDS of out of townies CHEERING all their favourite songs and lovingly rendered GOLDEN CLASSICS! Don't we love OLD PERFORMERS tarted up with lots of HAIR and MAKEUP and NEW CLOTHES! Don't we love people DRESSING for the occasion in FUNNY HATS and face paint and FESTIVE CLOTHING! Are we speaking of OPERA IN THE PARK? No - we are speaking of the HERO PARADE! The only difference between the two is that city councillors disapprove of the WRONG

ONE. The only good FIREWORKS show is one where they BLOW UP JUDY BAILEY at the end.

TELEVISION - DUCK of a NATION! SEE! Lovely TVNZ executives trying to work out how many programmes they can fit MARCUS LUSH into! WE LIKE MARCUS and demand to know if they are FITTING HIM UP like they did with SIMON BARNES, putting his face on EVERY DUMB PROGRAMME they can think of. Half an hour of practical jokes? But we have AN HOUR OF TVNZ NEWS ALREADY! Tired of TV? Then why not pay MONEY to watch repeats on SKY? Or better yet, ORANGE! Pay TV WITH COMMERCIALS! BRILLIANT! WHO could have thought of THAT? ORANGE? LEMON more like. And BEVERLY HILLS without BRENDA? What's the POINT? Life has no MEANING anymore.

I didn't
mean
to start
world war II

Dr. Elvis
adolf hitler

and Helene are DANCING and DRINKING and having a lovely time. Afterwards the happy couple return to la maison de Helene where the romantic and fabulous AL pisses in the FIREPLACE, writes over the wall in LIPSTICK and PASSES OUT - a proven contraceptive if there ever was one.

Next morning the suave and ever so slightly HUNGOVER Al awaketh to see before him someone with a BEARD and a FRYPAN. Yes viewers it's the wonderful HANS! And for what is the FRYPAN - surely for STOVING THE BASTARD'S HEAD IN? But no for Hans is EXTREMELY

extremely cutting edge radical far out grunge foot massage MOUNTAIN ROCK. After the "set" the band get down to the most IMPORTANT part of the tour, the Getting Very Pissed at the Quality Inn Hotel bar. After a few "handles" the suave and urbane and very sophisticated Mr HARRY LYONS spies a bright young thing at the bar and notes with a practiced eye the shoulder-length long blonde hair and cute "butt" (as they say on BEVERLY HILLS 90210). And, being something of a smoothie, Mr Harry Lyons doth cry out "Cor! Wouldn't mind fucking that!" Thumbs up to that

I drilled
their
heads and
poured
acid in

Dr. Elvis
jeffrey dahmer

WHAT THE

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IS FUDGE?

FUTURE RECORDINGS

Boo Radleys, Wake Up.
Fall, Cerebral Caustic.
Leftfield, Leftism.
Juliana Hatfield, Only Everything.
Jason & the Scorchers, Blazing Grace.
Christine Anu, Stylin' Up.
PJ Harvey, To Bring You My Love.
Red House Painters, Ocean.
Pavement, Wowee Zowee.
Belly, King.
Morphine, Yes.
Violent Femmes, Rock.
Anne Dudley, Ancient & Modern.
Marianne Faithfull, A Secret Life.
Pop Will Eat Itself, Two Fingers My Friends.
EMF, Cha Cha Cha.
808 State, S2S.
Tindersticks, The Tindersticks.
Mo Cammick & the How Do All Stars, Bootytime
Moby, Everything Is Wrong.
Carter USM, Worry Bomb.
Grant McLennan, Horsebreaker Star.
Tragically Hip, Day For Night.
Graham Parker, 12 Haunted Episodes.
Charlie Sexton, Under the Wishing Tree.
Elton John, Made in England.
Annie Lennox, Medusa.
Duran Duran, Thank You.
Weezer, Weezer.
Spiritualized, Pure Phase.
Terry Hall, Sense.
Adam Ant, Wonderful.
Slash, It's Five O'Clock Somewhere.

FUNKY

Cypress Hill, Temple of Boom.
Naughty By Nature, Poverty's Paradise.
Massive Attack, No Protection (Mad Professor dub versions).
New Power Generation, Gold.
Herbie Hancock, Dis Is A Drum.
Bomb the Bass, Clear.
Dana Dane, Rollin' Wit (Maverick).
Gene, Olympian.
William Burroughs, Dead City Radio.
Mad Season, Above.
Tom Browne, Mo' Jamaican Funk.
Christopher Williams, Not a Perfect Man.
Stevie Wonder, Conversation Peace.
Stevie V, Satisfy Me.
D-Knowledge, All That & A Bag of Words.
Hilary James & Bob James, Flesh & Blood.

AOTEAROA

Magick Heads, Before We Go Under.
Pumpkinhead, Sloth.
King Loser, Sonic Super Free Hi-Fi.
Chris Knox, Songs of You & Me.
Shihad, Killjoy.
Snapper, A.D.M.
Nathan Haines, Shift Left.
Upper Hutt Posse, Movement In Demand.
Glenn Moffatt, Somewhere In New Zealand Tonight.
La De Das, Reunion.

HEAVY

Mudhoney, My Brother the Cow.
Claw Hammer, Thank the Holder Uppers.
The Mother Hips, Back to the Grotto (American)
Monster Magnet, Dopes to Infinity.
Megadeth, Hidden Treasures.
Quicksand, Manic Depression.
Skid Row, Sub-Human Race.
Ass Ponys, Electric Rock Music.
Thunder, Behind Closed Doors.
Monster Magnet, Dope to Infinity.
Hurricane, Hurra.

ROOTS

Jayhawks, Tomorrow the Green Grass.
Mark O'Connor, The Fiddle Concerto.
Los Lobos, Papa's Dream (Music For Little People)
Tanita Tikaram, Lovers in the City.
Johnny "Guitar" Watson, Bow Wow.
Steve Forbert, Mission of the Crossroad Palms.
The Band, Live at Watkins Glen.
George Thorogood, Let's Get It Together.
Laurie Anderson, The Ugly One With the Jewels and Other Stories.
Fontella Bass, No Ways Tired.
Enya, The Celts.
Carey Bell, Deep Down (Alligator)
Carlene Carter, Little Acts of Treason.
Wynton Marsalis, Joe Cool's Blues.

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1. The competition is open to all residents of New Zealand. 2. You may enter as often as you wish, however you must complete a separate entry form and obtain another proof of purchase sticker to attach. 3. The competition closes April 21st 1995. Winners will be notified immediately. 4. Entries must be sent to Festival Records, Faith No More Competition, PO Box 1170 Auckland. 5. The judges decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. 6. Winners must make their own arrangements to claim their prize from either Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch.

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Rockin' in the City That Shines, almost.

Christchurch Scene Report

Christchurch has never quite made the rest of the country sit up and notice its music scene. It's been close — the garage punk scene in the 1970s and the fact Roger Shepherd set up Flying Nun in the City That Shines in early 1981. But, even then, Dunedin dominated as the New Zealand music mecca of the South Island, with Christchurch having the odd successful band. Now Christchurch is getting its own back, having its musicians enjoy commercial success in the 1990s.

Contributing to Christchurch's day in the sun is local record label Failsafe, owned and operated by Rob Mayes. Mayes, a self-proclaimed art-collector/music fan, founded the company in the mid 1980s and released numerous compilations, EPs and albums with mixed results. Some bands disappeared — others, like the Holy Toledos, got picked up by multi-nationals, like Sony.

It was Failsafe releases of 93/94, *Avalanche* and *Goodthings* respectively, that finally attained nationwide airplay and recognition of Christchurch's indie music scene.

However, suffering from discontent at the lack of return for effort put into the label, Mayes threatened to shut it down in 1994. It was the same year Loves Ugly Children and Pumpkinhead, both previously released on Failsafe, were signed to major labels.

While Christchurch should be basking in its glory, some say the city has 'sold out' — given into commercial pressures. Others say Christchurch has just finally caught up with the rest of the world. One of the accusers is Grant McDonagh, who, in his own publication *Sunburn*, wrote: "Where it all went wrong, it was *Music Storm*, or what came after, all that *Avalanche* shit. It was like the whole of Christchurch was immersed in the most stupid, inane, phoney show biz bullshit imaginable, and music got sort of shoved under the carpet."

So, in search of truth, justice and whatever comments managed to slip into the conversation, three players in the Christchurch music scene had their say on musical politics, commercialism and the dreaded sell out.



Simon McLaren

WHAT THE

f

IS FUDGE?

Simon McLaren

Loves Ugly Children Singer/Songwriter/Guitarist

1993 was a good year for Christchurch music, lots of bands, lots of venues. Then, in 1994, Loves Ugly Children and Pumpkinhead both got signed, and Failsafe threatened to close. What's happening now? Has Christchurch lost its edge?

"No, it definitely hasn't lost its edge. When all the bands played John Greenfield's wake at Warners, it was a really good display of Christchurch coming together, and the community feel of the music scene was just pulling together. There were a shitload of good bands, a complete variety of styles, and it was a genuine showcase of goodwill and a great memorial for John. After that, I felt really good about the Christchurch music scene again. It highlighted that Christchurch isn't bitchy, nor is there a lot of competitiveness, or one-upmanship. It may be there on the surface, but, when it comes down to it, everyone's really supportive."

"Personally, I've stopped going out so much over the years, but I still like to know what bands are coming through, and who's doing what, and I help support them wherever I can."

"For me, it's different because we've got busier as a band, and I have to spend more time song-writing and getting it together, rather than going out and celebrating the scene."

"If it wasn't for people like John Greenfield, and the basic network that already existed in Christchurch, then there is no way that I ever would have been able to start a band, and keep going, and feel like it was a valid thing to do. I think it's a valid means of expression, but you really have to question yourself sometimes: 'Is it worth it?' That's when you fall back on your environment for support."

When you say you question whether it's worth it, in what respect do you mean? Is it because you don't make money out of it?

"No, I'm talking about after you've been in your band for one and a half years, and you've released your cassette, or been played on RDU, and done your gigs, and you're not signed — in that limbo. Now that we've signed, I don't have to wrestle with those thoughts so much."

Some people, like Grant McDonagh, would say you don't need a lot of money, or need to jump on the commercial band wagon, to make music.

"Well, I think coming from Grant's perspective, anyone that releases a CD or prints on glossy paper is probably the enemy. I think he's just a reactionary figure against anything that has any mild success. I mean, if you are going to berate people about being able to release their music, or those that advertise in any way, then you're an idiot, basically."

Where does Christchurch fit into the New Zealand music scene?

"Well, if you're talking about touring nationally, then there's us, Pumpkinhead and Squirm. There are other bands as well, and those bands just existing is something to offer to New Zealand. Christchurch is [a] really conservative city, culturally, but it's anti-culture has a really strong element. It doesn't really matter if Auckland is sitting up and noticing what Christchurch is doing, just as long as Christchurch notices itself. Sure, it would be nice to see more independent publications and labels springing up in Christchurch, so that it can be its own entity, but it comes down to needing shitloads of money, and nobody has any."

Do the independent labels like Failsafe and Flatcity make a difference?

"Hell yes. Without those kind of organisations or labels existing no-one is going to get off that first step. You need to get released on a label with a good local feel before anything else happens."

Do you think Christchurch's music tastes are changing? Christchurch is traditionally a guitar-rock city, but now bands like Salmonella Dub and Darktower are evolving.

"Well, the diversification is good, the more the better. I mean, Christchurch was hung up in the indie, English sound

time warp for quite a while. That was pretty boring, so the more flavours the more fun. You know what I think about all this, it's that Christchurch has finally caught up."

Grant McDonagh

Musician/Passage Label/Commentator

How would you describe the Christchurch music scene at the moment?

"I've been in and out of Christchurch for a lot of years, seen a lot of different things come and go, and I think Christchurch is at least two distinct cities. There's the West side, Fendalton, Riccarton, places like that, and then there's the East side, with some of the poorest parts of the country. There's two quite distinctive cultures. There's a middle class, cum successful yuppie orientated society. Then there's a real down and out working class society. There's two distinct kinds of music associated with those two things. It seems to be that Christchurch goes through cycles, whereby one has the upper hand at different times. For the last two to three years it's been the up-market music, and the whole thing has been orientated toward that, like the *War of the Bands*, *Goodthings* and *Avalanche*. They're all sort of middle to upper class kids, with flash amplifiers, playing really safe kind of pop music."

Is it fair to bring those kinds of politics into music?

"I find it impossible not to. I don't think you can separate them."

Is Christchurch moving into a more commercial scene of music then?

"Moving out of it, [I] would say. I think that whole thing has its cycle. Maybe it will in another two to three years. I think it's exhausted itself. Out of all of those bands on *Avalanche* and *Goodthings*, none of those bands have achieved what they theoretically wanted to achieve, or have 'arrived'. None of them have made a big impact overseas, lets say."

Is commercialism in music a good or bad thing? Some would argue that money allows creative freedom.

"It depends. All you can do is look at examples of people who have gone through that whole process. I look at the those involved in the kind of post-punk thing — bands like REM, Sonic Youth. How much credibility do those bands have these days? Maybe Sonic Youth has got some, but they lose it by going to a big label. They're dealing with those people in suits and budgets, and music somewhere loses its edge. "Obviously, you need to have a roof over your head and food on the table, but a lot of people who all of a sudden get a lot of money, it starts to go up the nose, and that's not helping the creativity at all."

What's good about the Christchurch scene then?

"Particular bands, I've made a list, the likes of Trawler, Disgraceland, Rainy Taxi, Delirium Tremors, Cultivation and Leonard Nimoy, but again, that's entirely subjective. They're just bands I've seen and liked."

Are there any particular failings of the Christchurch scene?

"I don't think it's too bad as far as venues are concerned. It could do with more and better mixers, and PAs. In the last eight years that I've been back in the scene, things have been worse. The thing that does bother me is that hundreds of thousands of dollars goes through the 'Summertime' scheme, but never goes to bands doing original music. It goes to jazz or classical bands that aren't playing original music."

As a record label/distributor, what's your philosophy about music?

"Just get out there and do it, and make it available — put it out. It's a fan philosophy. What I'm bitching about, I guess, is the fact I've reviewed 56 tapes [in *Sunburn*], of which 30 hadn't been reviewed elsewhere. That's not op. They don't get any recognition."

What about the likes of Failsafe? Would it be a bad thing to lose?

"It's something that doesn't really impinge on my life at all."

As a fan of Christchurch music, you can surely see it serves a purpose, and some people do appreciate that music?

"I'm not a fan of pop music. That's getting back to the two sides of the city thing. That's a social scene I just don't really have anything contact with."

But shouldn't music in any form be available?

"I don't know. No, let's be frank. I actually see pop music as being something that is quite oppressive."

How?

"It's a drug. It prevents people thinking about their lives. It's not stimulating. It's like aspirin or something. It deadens people's perception."

Rob Mayes

Failsafe/Musician/Sound Engineer

Is Christchurch losing its indie edge and becoming too commercial?

"What's too commercial? You mean like in Auckland, and based on bands trying to grab a dollar? I don't know and I don't really care."

In like bands abandoning indie labels to sign to major labels.

"The two cases that I know of recently are Pumpkinhead and Loves Ugly Children. One, I think, is wishful thinking, and the other is probably a good move."

Which one's which?

"I think Pumpkinhead is wishful thinking. Well, probably both have elements of wishful thinking, but one, I think, is a joke, and Loves Ugly Children are just doing what they are doing. I don't consider that selling out. They are getting a better distribution deal with Flying Nun, to get their music out to people. That said, they're also getting promoted by the hype machine which is not so cool. But then, so is everyone else."

Is commercialism part of the parcel?

"Yeah. The other side is it's part of the parcel for creating serious music, for Loves Ugly Children, but for Pumpkinhead, it's playing part of the game. They want to play the rock 'n' roll game, and that requires budgets and labels and a cell-phone and videos and whatever, and that's what they're into, so that's cool. But I don't see that Loves Ugly Children sold out to anyone. Flying Nun is hardly selling out, anyway."

Do you think the Christchurch music scene is in a healthy stage at the moment?

"I don't know. I don't go out into it much. There are some very unhealthy, decaying bits in the music scene, but no more so than anywhere else. At least they've got something good to decay, which is not necessarily the case elsewhere."

From May 93 to Aug 94, Christchurch was on quite a high.

"There were quite a few venues, quite a few bands, but the roto had already set into a number of the bands who had missed the boat. I think most of 93 was a pretty interesting year, but, towards the end of it, the promises that were offered by a lot of those bands flew out the window."

Why do you think that happened?

"Because musicians are just that. They write songs. They aren't business managers, or necessarily know what's good or bad about themselves; ie. they're not producers, they don't know. In Loves Ugly Children's case, Simon McLaren writes a hell of a lot of good songs, then, a few weeks later, throws those good songs away because he doesn't know how good he is. That's too bad."

So, is that what Christchurch is lacking? Producers?

"Yeah, but Christchurch is also lacking any support from outside its 300,000 population. That is because our musical network has been based on a magazine that ignores what's happening within its own shores, and that's *RipItUp*."

Are you still running Failsafe?

"As far as *RipItUp* is concerned, it's business as usual. What difference does it make? As far as I'm concerned, I'm just doing what I enjoy doing, and that's aimed at a market of people who are interested enough to get off their butt and find out what I'm doing. The rest of the industry, like *RipItUp*, is attached to the commercial market. You're just out to sell papers, so, if you're talking about selling out in Christchurch, then *RipItUp* sold out a long time ago. Part of my fiasco last year, when I tried to shut down my business, was because I was thinking about how many years I have done this because I like it, and how it ends somewhere when someone fucks you over one too many times, and you continue to get no income, and be denied an income, from something that is providing New Zealand with a service by documenting their musical history."

Where do you see yourself fitting into the Christchurch music scene then?

"I know I'm perceived as being 'in the scene', but I'd prefer not to be seen as part of a scene or of an industry, because that pisses me off, because it leads to people taking what I do for granted and abusing it, which I'm not interested in. What I do is as purely a music fan. That's where I'm coming from and that's not going to change."

ROBYN PETT

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On the Road with the 3Ds

For most, the day after the day of *The Big Day Out* was one of rest. But not for the 3Ds. Being the only New Zealand band invited to play at all the shows meant they were strapped into a plane bound for Australia. Guitarist David Mitchell kept a diary, but only so he'd know what day it was.

Saturday January 21

A couple of hours sleep and David, Dom and Tex arrive, but we're all in grave danger of missing the plane. Pack up all the broken blood vessels and place the throbbing brain back in its skull and away we go. The International Airport is a disaster — every band is in a queue waiting to board the flight. Sunglasses and guitars everywhere. Flight is fast and curious. Drive around Melbourne madly trying to find a genius who can fix an old orange amp. Failed. Play a few hours later with Luscious Jackson at the Prince of Wales and witnessed one of the best bands I've ever seen! The Dirty Three crawl around Melbourne — a drummer, a guitar and a wild gypsy kind of violinist in charge of a wall of the most haunting melodies and screeching fucked up feedback. A very frightening show — song after song dissolving under a tidal wave of feedback and screaming vocals (?) — amazing! Back to the hotel for some beer and some blather.

Sunday January 22

Wake up with the Weiner Fassbinder look. The show was easy to find, but hard to enter. Get directions from Nick Cave who leads us to a tall wire fence which we have to vault over with guitars etc, then we finally find our stage. The Dirty Three are playing a couple of hours before us — again, a demolishing performance, with Nick Cave joining them for a version of *Tupelo* and an old *Boys Next Door* song. Nothing can top this — Hungarian folk music

collapsing into the Stooges ('LA Blues' style) — a beautiful interlude during the *Big Blow Off*.

Monday January 23

David's surfing and we're shopping. I meet my brother, his wife and their child Lawrence — nice to see some human life forms without sunglasses and guitars. Went to a science fiction exhibition and then sat under a tree by the Yarra River. A beautiful day ends in a glutinous feast of wine at a restaurant around the corner from the hotel. Try to continue drinking at a late night pub, but the none too friendly bouncer won't allow Tex (the jandal wielding maniac) in so we drink my brother's vino instead.

Tuesday January 24

Brain fuzzy from winey feast last night. Long day ahead on the *Deadly Hume* — a brief break made me realise that the food stops are the Humes' killers. Kangaroo, crocodile and emu pies — very easy to pass on these regional delights. Things improve when we hit Sydney — a quick trip to our favourite Thai restaurant, the Ladda, then off to the Coogee Bay Hotel.

Wednesday January 25

Vacant day — stumble around getting passes and assorted paraphernalia for tomorrow's *Big Day Out*. Go to a late night film (*Pulp Fiction*) for a violent escape from musical chores.

Thursday January 26

Massive audience in Sydney showgrounds. We play okay, through a series of power failures. Beer for breakfast — brains boiling in the hot Sydney sun. In the middle of the blur *Supergroove* play an amazing set to a very

enthusiastic crowd. See *Tumbleweed* on the same stage, who have fun. Drinking, drinking, DRUNK, stumbling in a sandy fog on an empty Coogee Beach. Ummmm?

Friday January 27

Advertise room to let in the vacant lot between my ears. Nothing moves in.

Saturday January 28

Fly to the Gold Coast. Strange erections poke up into the sky (buildings?). A blinding, tourist's black hole, hiding a nice apartment for the 3Ds to plan the destruction of their world from.

Sunday January 29

Still playing between two completely unlovable bands — the *Furballs* (some very stray cats) and *Allegiance* (a long double kick drum laxative). Both bands enjoy getting up at dawn and screaming. Denise and I feel like joining them, then escape early.

Monday January 30

Our Australian mentor, Speedy, offers to drive us to Byron Bay (a good idea), a beautiful place with wildlife in abundance. After swims we end the day at his parents caravan park for a barbecue and beer. Thanks!

Tuesday January 31

Travel to an ancient rainforest. Denise meets a lizard. Find a waterhole to cool down in and then indulge in some beautiful fish, barbecued on the roof of our hotel.

Wednesday February 1

A man resembling a beardless Spike Milligan

fixes my orange amp. We stand in the heart of *Surfers Parasite*. We leave.

Thursday February 2

Adelaide. After a nibble we (Denise, David and I) go to the Synagogue to see *Luscious Jackson* and the *Dirty Three*. Tonight the audience stand well clear of the stage — the violinist keeps gobbing and hurling monitors, mic stands and vodka all over the place. Another grandiose show!! *Luscious Jackson* are a lot more fun in a small club — a great night for the ears.

Friday February 3

More dawn performances for the 3Ds. Had some fun on the rides — hard to keep the rider down. Kim Salmon have some amazing songs. Watch as the day dissolves into night and the *Dirty Three* take the stage at 8:40 — another grand performance. Later we try and talk them into touring New Zealand with *King Loser*. Denise, Tex and I chew the fat at a late night bar until the bouncer decides that Tex needs to stop drinking, by throwing his beer away. Leave.

Saturday February 4

Flying to Perth. Soon we are standing looking at the Indian Ocean. Soon we are looking up at the ceiling of our hotel room.

Sunday February 5

Play at 11:30 today. My speakers blow up. Evan Dando drops in to give us some of his theories on life and to teach us his ABC of heavy metal singing. More rides, more riders, until the body finally curls up into the foetal position for a final sleep. Tomorrow we fly home.

DAVID L MITCHELL



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You Am I's last album, *Sound As Ever*, appeared to be every rock journal's wet dream. They raved and raved about it. But sometimes, no matter how much journals rave about you, it doesn't mean Joe Der-Brain public is gonna buy your album. This was the case with You Am I. They did not shift vast quantities of units. But a band called Soundgarden did happen to see them play at *The Big Day Out* in Australia last year, and they did very much like them. So, the Soundgarden band decided to ask the You Am I to go on a wee tour of the United States with them. This scored You Am I major exposure points in the said United States.

You Am I drummer Russell Hopkins talked to me at the stately Warner Bros. offices, (while the other members, Tim and Andy, slept off their Jagermeister hangovers in their hotel rooms) mainly about the Soundgarden tour... oh, and the bus.

1) THE BUS

"We got to ride on an Eagle coach, which is every band member's dream," Russell states matter-of-factly.

Slept on the bus too did you?

"I slept the best I'd ever slept on that bus. We felt really spoilt," he declares.

Lovely. Now that we have the travel and nocturnal factors cleared up, what about the actual tour?

"It was fantastic. When you go out on the road and are first on the bill [of three bands], you expect to be treated... not that well. But Soundgarden, from the word go, looked after us, let us use one of their tour buses [yes, yes] and made sure we were comfortable. I mean, the fact we didn't even have a record out in America when we went over there — it's just unheard of to get a deal like that."

After You Am I completed the 'Soundgarden' stage of America, they went on to 'conquer' it themselves... travelling in a smaller vehicle that you could not lie down in.

"It was sort of good in a way, to get back to all being crammed in a small, little tour bus, and driving to the hole-in-the-wall type venue," Russell reflects (after all the excitement of the 'big bus'). "It was a bit more us really, than that sort of big rock thing."

2) THE SOUNDGARDENS

"Even Soundgarden themselves — you can tell that sometimes they just really didn't like the fact they were playing the arenas. Like in Charlotte, North Carolina, all these people held up lighters to 'Black Hole Sun' and that kinda thing."

Ooh. How sick.

"Yes. I think sometimes they would really rather be back playing in the clubs."

Well, it's either one or the other I guess.

"They're such incredibly down to earth guys and they're on this rock 'n' roll tour thing. All the sorta groupies and hangers-on are still on that circuit, and when a band like Soundgarden comes along, they really wanna to party out with them and hang out with them. Soundgarden just aren't interested. They just go off to the bus and play with their video game machines. Generally, after the gig we'd go and sit in their room with them and have a few drinks. It was pretty low key."

3) YOU AM I PLAY TO A LOT OF PEOPLE

"It was quite strange because we were told by some people that it was gonna be pretty hard, and that we'd get stuff thrown at us, and people would be just yelling 'Soundgarden'

through our set, but that didn't happen at all. We got really good responses everywhere, especially places like Texas and Canada, where the album's out and they were playing the video on TV. It was just bizarre, the first gig we played in San Diego, we were just shitting ourselves. We were in the big, sold out auditorium. There was eight thousand people there just waiting for something to happen, and it was either gonna be good or bad, but it turned out good. There was people jumping up and down, and crowd surfing, and it was like... [sounding rather pleased] shit!"

4) YOU AM I VISIT NEW YORK AND CUT AN ALBUM

"Well, we stayed in New York for about a month, which is where we did the album. Lee [Rinaldo] just gave us the keys to Sonic Youth's practice room, and we went down there and worked out about twenty songs and then went int' the studio in Soho and basically recorded it in six days. It was every boys rock 'n' roll dream [laughs]. We had an apartment in New York which we were all crammed into, and it was cool to get up and go down to St. Marks and Chinatown and stuff — it was a real experience in itself."

5) UM —THE HOODOO GURUS

"We played a few gigs at CBGB, and we played another gig there with the Hoodoo Gurus."

Oh, are they still going?

"Yeah, it was really funny because there was almost all Australians in the audience, but there was also a really high percent of black American people there. We met a couple of them down on Queen Street who were recording dub music — these real stoned, dread-locked dudes — and they were like: 'The only Australian band we've ever liked is the Hoodoo Gurus.'"

6) YOU AM I VISIT LA

"So much of it so much like the movie *The Player*. They are just living cliches. Going out to lunch with, say, our booking agency or something, in the business area of Hollywood. Every second there's a mobile phone ringing and men answering them with sunglasses on kinda thing. The funniest thing was, I was in this post office and the guy in front of me was talking to the counter assistant, and the assistant was going on about how his first script had been accepted. The guy in front of me goes: 'Who's looking at it?' The counter guy goes: 'Weelll, lets just say Scorsese and DeNiro are very interested.' [We laugh.]

"Americans can become such a cliché of themselves. There's so much satirical things about Americans, but a lot of it's so true!"

7) YOU AM I'S NEW ALBUM THAT IS TITLED HI-FI WAY

And what have you to say about the album, if I may ask?

"Lighter in feeling, but more rockin', more up-tempo."

The guitar sounds are different aren't they?

"Tim's experimented with a few different guitars and amps. We managed to get a nice Telecaster and a Rickenbacker, to add different textures and stuff. I used an antique snare drum that was made in 1927, which sounded fantastic, and a mellotron and Hammond."

Hi Fi Way will be out in early March and You Am I are supposed to be returning here in June or July. Now that's something to get excited about... really.

SHIRLEY CHARLES

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On-U Sound Head

Adrian Sherwood

Four Japanese space cowboys and a white English boy are back in the studio creating killer dub. It seems an unlikely combination but, over the past 10 years, Adrian Sherwood and his On U Sound label have been responsible for some of the best brain altering dub registering on the Richter scale.

Sherwood began deejaying around the age of 12, and built up a system from hustling at schools and discos. "We used to make 50

pounds a week," he says. "We were the richest kids on the block."

The disco got mobile and became a reggae club. He went on to work for the 75 and Carib Gem labels, before founding Hit Run Records, in 1978, and working with Prince Far I and the awesome dub sound of Creation Rebel. He founded On U Sound in 1981, after touring with the Clash, and melded punk and reggae. At the time, Sherwood was renowned for the way he would dub live from the mixing desk, something no one else was attempting.

On U may not have the MTV generation in mind, but they churn out consistently good, interesting music. With a new studio complex in an East London industrial estate, Sherwood says he's trying to build the new Black Ark, a reference to Lee Perry's legendary Jamaican recording studio that spawned many of reggae's best tracks. He aims to have the studio available 24 hours a day so the "sufferer" artists who don't sell records can come in and record for virtually nothing during the quiet times.

Ask Sherwood what he's currently working on and the answer's a bit like the River Nile. Out pours an inexorable flood of words from the man who, just over a year ago, was ready to close down the label he created. He was frustrated — felt he wasn't doing justice to the artists.

"But then I look at the alternatives and think: 'Fuck it.' We're not doing such a bad job."

Plenty would say they're doing a great job, pumping out killer rhythms.

The four aforementioned

space cowboys are Audio Active and Sherwood says their album is going to be "brilliant". If Sherwood is excited about the new tracks, I'm ready to queue for the result.

Prince Far I, Lee Scratch Perry, African Head Charge and Dub Syndicate — he's crossed tracks with them all. And still, he doesn't slow down. There's a new album, recorded in Bombay, with Bim Sherman singing over the top of an Indian orchestra. He's been in the studio with an all-women band from London. *Pay It All Back 5* — with most of the On U artists represented — is due out any time. On U Sound has started a roots reggae label to release original classics. He's about to go back in the studio with African Head Charge, who are due out for three concerts in New Zealand at the end of March. As he says, life's good.

"I've been in this business all my adult life — since I was 15 or 16. I've got a bit of respect now. I've got... kudos. Is that the word? I'm not rich or nothing, but I've got confidence and I don't really give a fuck."

"In the old days I made noise for the sake of it. I concentrated on making music that would leap out at you. I still want that, but I'm also trying to make music that will stand up in 10 years time."

"A lot of the things I did in the early days I think sound old now. We're still very fast at laying down rhythms — I can lay down an album of rhythm tracks in a day. But the actual scanning process takes a lot longer. I like to take the music home, listen to it round the house, play it to friends, get tuned in. I like to get a kind of a vibe about it." Sherwood laughs: "That's a horrible Americanism. I seem to be picking up a few of them."

"I work quickly — I usually have about five things going at once — but it might take two years to give a project time to develop. I have a clear idea of what I want and I'm prepared to re-record things to make sure I realise that original idea."

One of On U Sound's latest releases, the brilliant *The House That Wolf Built*, by Little Axe, the band led by Tackhead guitarist and On U producer Skip McDonald, took two

years. "We weren't working on it all the time, but it took time getting all the ideas together and collecting all the samples."

Sherwood says he's really proud of the result — a sort of Tackhead meets the blues, heavy on atmosphere and a main contender for album of the year. He's just as excited about the Bim Sherman album. While he expects *Little Axe* to be a slow burner and sell mainly by word of mouth, the Bim Sherman album has been licensed to Island Records, who can give it the sort of promotional push he thinks it warrants.

"It needs lots of press because it's such an unusual record. It's the first acoustic album I've produced, and we also spent a lot of time on it."

The all-women project is also about one third acoustic. Sherwood says they've done a lot of backing singing over the years and he wanted to concentrate on getting the feel just right.

"They're a really militant bunch — I wouldn't want to upset them — but they've also got a very feminine side. We could have done just a reggae album, but we got into the acoustic thing because they've got such fantastic harmonies. I really wanted to get across the spirit or feel of what they're all about."

Talking to Sherwood, you get the impression he's like an author searching for that illusive kernel of truth in every record. It's no longer just a matter of making noise — but also "communicating with the listener," he says.

"I'm not much of a musician. I usually get introduced to people and get involved that way. Someone says: 'Oh, this person's absolutely fantastic,' and we either involved in repeated projects or it's just a passing relationship. I have to trust the people I work with."

As long as On U can keep on moving, keep making records and keep doing concerts, Sherwood says he will be happy. You get the feeling his focus is as sharp as ever. He's happy with the challenges ahead, and he's still making wicked music.

MARK REVINGTON

WHAT THE

f

IS FUDGE?

Record company conference rooms are dull places — they're all swimming in shiny surfaces, pastel walls, expensive stereo systems, and usually the fruit bowl will have cost more than your rent for the year.

Festival Records boardroom is no exception, but Auckland band Grace have draped themselves about, so that makes it alright. I haven't come up trumps in the *Win A Dream Date With Grace* competition that a local teen mag is running — the reason for this meeting is the release of their debut record, *Black Sand Shore*.

They, brothers Jason, Paul and Anthony loasa, are looking

sharp, surprisingly so after the night they've just had. Auckland's Galaxy Theatre was the venue, and surrounded by friends, fans and freeloaders, Grace launched the album with their first live show.

"We didn't make the obvious mistake of trying to copy the record," says Paul, "so we ended up having a good time."

The threesome, all with a history of banging away at various instruments, hooked up as Grace in late 1993. Paul began at age eight, taking lessons in music theory before picking up a guitar at 11. Anthony was a self-taught drummer at 4 years old and played in his Dad's covers band, while

nine year old Jason practiced constantly on the bass. What's weird, is the individual influences they brought to the band — Style Council, Prince, Stevie Ray Vaughan and Yazoo — are hardly detectable on *Black Sand Shore*.

Made at the Lab Studio in Symonds Street, *Black Sand Shore* floats from the smooth pop of the title track, to piano driven ballads like 'Distant Blue', on to the rock feel of 'Winter Madness', and reinforces the band's reluctance to be categorised.

Paul: "Everyone thinks we're a soul band, but we've never said that."

Anthony: "Part of us is soul, but part of us is rock

as well."

With bulk commercial radio play, widespread media coverage and a forthcoming nationwide support slot for Ruby Turner, Grace appear to be, in rugby terms, 'on the burst'. But, in reality, they have come at us slow and steady, void of hype or theatrics, and without bruising each others egos. A calculated approach that the trio are convinced will keep them away from *Where Are They Now?* territory.

Anthony: "We don't want to be a trend band, that's why we started out the way we did."

JOHN RUSSELL



How Grace Thou Art

DIVINE INTERVENTION

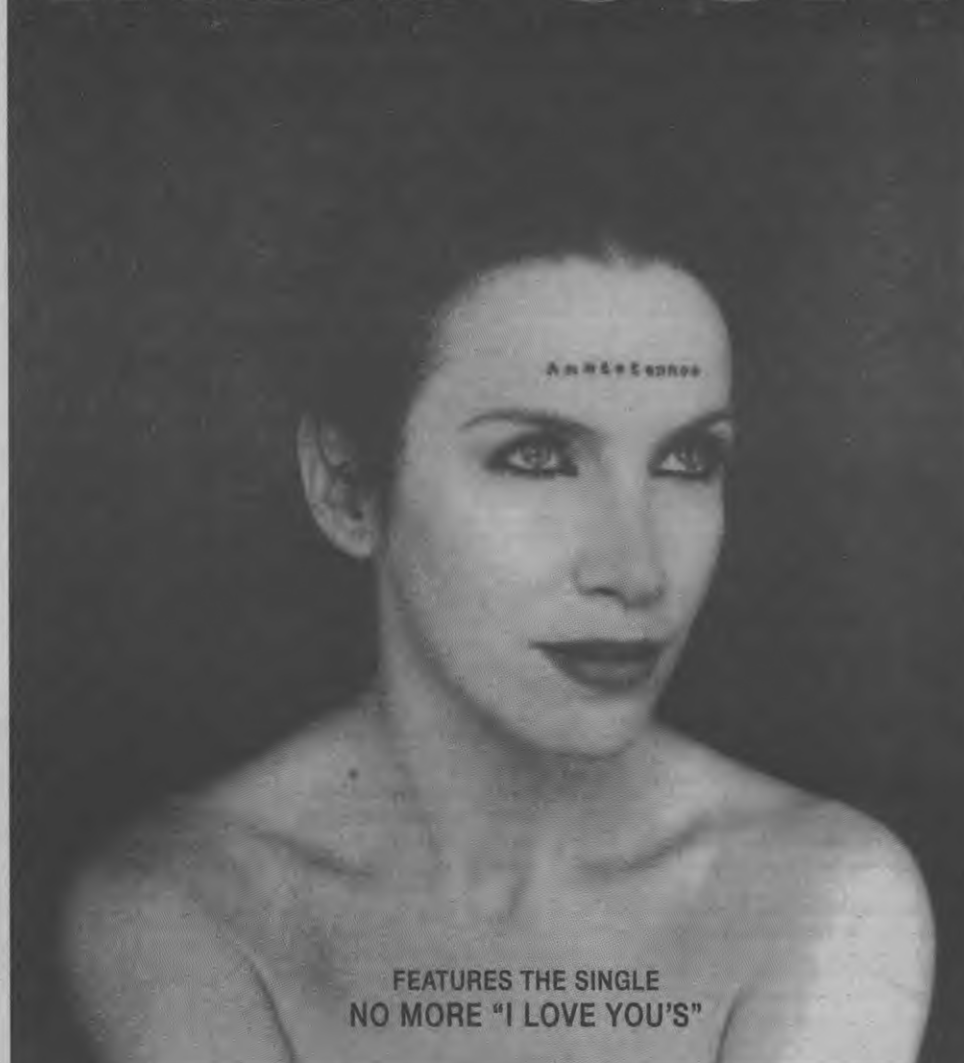


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Donna Summer *Back For The Future*

Like no one else, she made you feel like dancing. Armed with a string of hits, Donna Summer epitomised the simultaneous kitsch and glamour of the disco era. Time and again, Summer outshone the stunning Marilyn McCoo on *Solid Gold Hits*, and was always first choice for inclusion on the best disco compilations.

During the mid to late 70s, Summer hogged the charts worldwide. She climaxed all over 'Love To Love You Baby', raced her way through the hedonistic 'Bad Girls', and neglected a cake left in the rain, to score a number one single with 'MacArthur Park'.

But when the Pistols arrived in America, in 1978, disco music took a blow to the groin and only the strong survived. Summer triumphed again with 'On The Radio', the Grammy Award winning 'Last Dance', and 1983's 'She Works Hard For The Money'.

Despite working continuously in America and Europe, the years since then have been largely barren for Summer. Only a couple of ill-conceived projects, including a track on the autobiographical video of Pope John Paul II, have brought her back to the strobe light. But with the recent (and still current) worldwide fascination with the 70s and 80s, it was inevitable that Summer would come around again. She

doesn't quite say it, but you figure she's glad of this taste for nostalgia.

"These kids who are into disco now were babies when the disco era was happening, and their parents were playing the music or it was on the radio. In their psyche they remember it, and I think the kids that were too young to go out dancing had a sense that things were going on around them, and they were missing out on it. So now they're saying: 'I wanna go do this.'"

"In the 70s, when the music was new to everyone, it was a very exciting time. In one sense it was a very amazing time to be a part of, but life goes on and you learn. I think in a strange way, through all of the things that have gone on in my life in the last few years, I think I have far more to give as a performer."

Summer's US record company has just released *Endless Summer*, a greatest hits compilation featuring two new tracks, 'Melody Of Love' (written with C&C Music Factory), and 'Any Way At All', a tune recorded in Nashville, Tennessee. Like a rock musician recording an album of jazz standards, a disco artist recording in the home of country music appears the last bastion of a scoundrel, but Summer insists it's the place she prefers to hang her hat.

"I love Nashville. It's a very refreshing place to be. In fact, I'm going to live and record there.

In terms of my music, songwriting is one very important aspect of my creative life, and there is no place like Nashville in the United States. It's proved a writer's heaven with this new record."

Summer plays the sly dog when it comes to details of her forthcoming solo project. As yet it's untitled, and she'll say little else on the matter.

"At the moment I'm trying to catch the feeling and presence that music had in the 70s. When you went to see Gloria Gaynor or Thelma Houston, there was a real command that they had. People have changed that approach now, and I'm trying to get that feel back into music with my new record."

One thing's for sure, she won't be recording with C&C Music Factory again. One half of the duo, David Coles, died of an AIDS related illness last month. Almost 10 years ago, the born-again Summer was rumoured to have said AIDS was God's punishment on homosexuals. These allegations were never proven, and Summer fervently denied the charge. Nonetheless, she lost the gay following that came with being a disco queen. Ain't it funny how things work out?

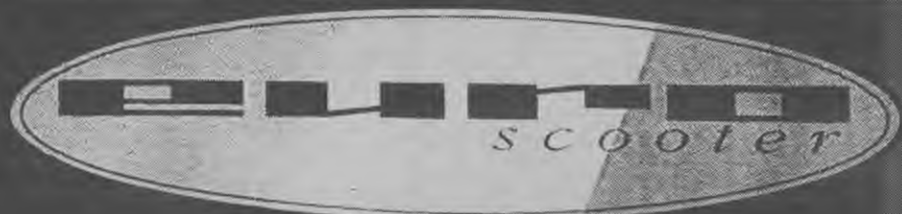
"There's a lot of gay kids in the audience now. I have a pretty good relationship with

everybody. I'm not feeling anything strange. I think people finally got on top of all those awful rumours that somebody started, and I think they finally realised that they just weren't real. But that was 10 years ago, so I think we can stop talking about it at this point. It's just very sad that David Coles is not here. I really wanted to work with him again on this new record."

So, on the comeback trail she is. Now into her fourth decade of performing, Summer says she won't do anything different this time round, and that includes never providing the freak-show on her own dancefloor.

"Well I'm dyslexic, so I have a very hard time with co-ordination, and that's one of the reasons why I decided it was not in my best interests to dance on stage. It's a shame because I think there's a certain element of joyfulness dancing brings to you. In a tribal sense, if you look at some of the ethnic groups of the past, music and dance was generally a form of enjoyment and was something that was done with great relish. Dance music should be fun. It should be something that makes you want to shake loose from whatever's keeping you down, and get up and boogie."

JOHN RUSSELL



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"I've been talking to a lot of people who have maybe only played it one or two times, and I said: 'Well, it'll get better the more you play it.'"

What was John Cale's involvement?

He produced half the tracks. When we finished touring after *Lollapalooza* and then a tour on our own, up to March 92, I uprooted myself and moved to France. I got the band down to the house and we wrote and demoed there. It was great to be in an environment that wasn't hired or part of the business. [There were] not even any roadies there, so we were just self-sufficient. It was a real reaction to the way we had approached the album before that, *Superstition*. It was recorded in a place called Leon, a town north of Biarritz in the south-west of France. That's the region where I live. We had nine songs at that point. We finished that, then had a great time playing some festivals and going to Australia in October.

"Before that, I went to see the Velvet Underground at the Paris Olympia show — the one used for the live recording of the video. It was just great to see one of your all-time favourite bands, as we were all too young to catch them when they were actually playing first time around. I think they only came to England once, and that was without John Cale, so that was a great event. When we got back from touring, we listened to what we had recorded. It sounded great, and we'd already recorded *The Rapture* at that point, but I felt it wasn't finished and I wanted to write some more material. A couple of songs I wasn't sure about and was thinking of dropping, so that December we wrote two or three more songs.

"Because of living in France, we have a few connections in Paris, and found out a friend of ours managed John Cale. We'd felt, on the songs we'd produced ourselves, that

we'd reached a logical conclusion. We knew we wanted a producer, and that had been the real despairing moment of mine with this album. We didn't want that Stephen Hague [an earlier producer] situation again. We had approached it very much as a live unit, very organically, and didn't want any technology to intrude. So there wasn't anyone we wanted to work with, and the record company was batting over ridiculous ideas and we were batting them back.

"When this friend mentioned John was coming over to work on an album he was finishing, me and Budgie looked at each other and said: 'Why didn't we think of that before?' He has certainly produced some landmark albums, like *The Stooges*, Patti Smith's *Horses* and the *Modern Lovers*. To me, those are real landmark albums, so we thought: 'Why not ask? He can only say no.' We kind of struck up a correspondence. He sounded interested, but obviously wanted to hear what we were doing. I think he's a very fussy man. He doesn't work with stuff he can't believe in. He was very complimentary, and said: 'Right, when can we do it?'

"We found a period in March that year where we all met in London, had a rehearsal room, worked on the new songs, and got into a recording studio in May. Within about a week, we had recorded five new songs, then mixed in New York in June, so it's been ready for a while. But the record company — Christmas arrives earlier and earlier! It takes longer and longer to put a record out once you've finished it."

Had you met Cale back in the late 70s punk days?

"No, we hadn't, and it's crazy we hadn't. Maybe because the connection was too obvious and we shied away from it. Myself, I'd bought a John Cale album before I'd heard of the Velvet Underground — *Fear* then *Slow Dazzle*.

Do you think it's important to have an outside voice involved in your music?

"We achieved so much on our own, but knew we took it to the conclusion. We did need someone else, but that someone else was a big question mark as far as what kind of producers are out there. They're very expensive and have such inflated opinions of themselves — and the reality is that they rarely mic up real guitars and real drum kits. We're sick of going into a studio and having some apprentice come in and fumble away in the dark.

"The fact we had someone the stature of John Cale meant we didn't really have to worry about watching him to make sure he didn't fuck up. Also, there was little we needed to explain to him. He's very intuitive and quick-witted. [He] has a great sense of humour as well, which is always important."

Never a dull moment with him, I'm sure.

"I think he has mellowed out, but he still has that glint in his eye, which you cannot mistake. [He] still has a good wicked glint. He's no Florence Nightingale, believe me. And, yes, we're twinkling away wickedly, still."

Tell us about the title track. It's arguably the longest, most daring song you've done.

"It's probably the most ambitious idea we've had, not just because of the length of it [11.32], but

because of how I wanted it to flow and be a journey. I didn't want to, and we wouldn't and couldn't, have it be some kind of musical virtuoso show-off — a big wank. We're self taught musicians, so we don't know how to wank off like that. But it was ambitious — an idea we'd had for so long, and we had

the title. We'd actually written the middle section as a band in France, in rehearsals. The front and ending came when we were in a recording state. That's when we tend to open up a lot more. It's a lot more relaxed, less frenetic, so things happen. It's always great to go into the studio and have those things happen — when it works. When it doesn't, it's frustrating."

You have such a distinctive sound. Does that make it a real challenge to keep from repeating yourselves?

"I don't know. I think because our tastes and interests — not just musical, but with theatre, film and books — they're so diverse that it's kind of a challenge to reinterpret other areas. We'll never say: 'We need to do a jazz song now.' We might like something that sounds a little jazzy, but whenever we play it, it always has our edge to it. There are no rules as far as we're concerned. We have used technology, but we hate it when things use us."

Is the song 'The Rapture' at all inspired by the film of that name?

It's funny — in North America and Europe, people have been asking that, and I've tried to explain that it was a film title friends of

ours in America kept telling us to go and see —

'you'll love it' —

and I never actually did get to see it. But

the actual title and the word

acted as a spring-board for

so many ideas for me

that maybe it's good I didn't get to

see the film. I asked

someone here today what

"The fact we had someone [a producer] the stature of John Cale meant we didn't really have to worry about watching him to make sure he didn't fuck up."

the film was actually about, and it sounded really interesting. It sounded like this album would be a perfect soundtrack for the film. That title conjured up so many images for me. Now I'm in New York, so I'll try and get it on video — invest in it and watch it with our album playing!"

Do you ever get approached to do soundtracks? Your music has a very cinematic quality.

"Not as

Again, I don't take it too seriously. [I] don't have any sleepless nights about it. It's just — that's life, I suppose. There are a lot of assholes in the world!"

There used to be Siouxsie clones amongst your fans. Do you still get that?

"I think people are cooler about that kind of thing now. I like to think that people we've influenced, you wouldn't be able to tell by looking at them or listening to

I think it's very healthy to have a lot of women involved in rock, but to make a big deal out of gender, rather than what that person can bring to the music, was just a male idea — a very hetero idea of rock chicks, and very patronising as well.

much as we'd have like to be. The only thing that has happened was when Tim Burton asked us to write a song for the *Batman Returns* film, but that was for a very specific scene in the film. We were the only band approached to write for the film, so it wasn't like one of those horrible films with 100 bands on it. That's pretty sickening, isn't it? And there was another film, *Out Of Bounds*. They use 'Cities In Dust', but we didn't actually write for that one. That's all we've been asked to do. [It would] be nice to do more."

Do you ever look back at your career and how it unfolded? If somebody had said in 1976, you'd still be making records in 1995, how would you have reacted?

"Yes, likely would have laughed them out of the room — ha ha ha! We only formed to fill in a spot that was free on the bill of the 100 Club festival. We were in a gay club in London, and I happened to overhear Malcolm [McLaren] saying: 'If only we could find one more band.' I piped up, without thinking: 'I'll do it.' I was with [bassist] Severin at the time, and we recruited [guitarist] Marco [Pirroni — Adam and the Ants] and [future Sex Pistol/punk icon] Sid [Vicious] in a club that night. Then we thought: 'Well, what are we going to do [big laugh]?' Apart from Marco, no-one else had ever held an instrument or talked into a microphone. We met at the Clash's studio to find out where you plug in: 'Ooh, what does this do?' Kerrang! 'What's a pick?' So, we entered into the spirit of the thing, and the impossible became possible. The naivete was that I said to the guy doing the sound for all the bands: 'OK, I want to be really loud, so I'm going to have three microphones so I can be three times as loud as anyone else [laughs]. So we gaffered three microphones together, and no-one told me it wouldn't be any louder! They appeased me, and I finally found that out — just the other day, actually. Just kidding!"

Are you mused or bemused at the current, so-called punk revival?

"Both. It's kind of like a preconceived notion of what they're doing. It's so self-conscious. As far as I'm concerned, it was quite a naive and innocent way of becoming a band for us, personally. It wasn't like studying books with musicians. No-one can read music in this band, except for Martin, the cellist/accordionist, and we give him a hard time for it. We slap his head: 'Where did you pick that rubbish up from, Martin?' No, I just find it all very cynical actually."

How are you viewed in the English music press these days?

"We've always distance ourselves from being part of a fashion, or clique, or movement, which the media are always trying to create out of something, especially the press in Britain. It's so desperate there. We've saved those buggers till last 'cause we know we're going to have to get our fists primed! We're not looking forward to doing press there, but we'll be ready. We've been in and out of fashion there three or four times at least, so it's like a pinch of salt.

them. I'm also so sick of the bands around that are just so derivative of an era, like the 60s or early 70s. Maybe for 14 year olds it's exciting but, if I know where the source is, I'm really not interested in what they have to offer, unless they add something of their own to it."

Do you think your own achievements have been undervalued given all this current stress on 'women in rock'?

"I know there have been people wanting to do 'women in rock' books every other week, and I resisted a lot of that. I think it's very healthy to have a lot of women involved in rock, but to make a big deal out of gender, rather than what that person can bring to the music, was just a male idea — a very hetero idea of rock chicks, and very patronising as well. Yes, it is depressing that is still happening. Let them play their games. I'm not really interested and I think people out there know that. They're misinformed so often, but I'm sure they're not as stupid as these papers try to treat them."

What are your recollections of the *Lollapalooza* tour?

"For us, it was very exciting and really good because it wasn't the big successful monster it later became. There was a lot of doubt about it. Promoters weren't booking it because they were nervous about it. It was only halfway through, when they saw it was outselling the Van Halens of the world, that they started knocking on the door. With the bands, it was a very diverse bunch of people thrown together. We were the only English band and there was a lot of trepidation from the other bands, us included, that it could be hell backstage. Imagine all those people hating each other! Some people may be disappointed about this, but we had great fun with all the other bands."

"The road crews all helped each other, so it wasn't this juicy soap opera that everyone was hoping to get their teeth into — 'and that bitch Siouxsie' etc. — but that did seem to happen with the ones afterwards. Plus, it did get to be this big, successful, almost corporate thing, that I suppose was inevitable after its initial success. The first one was a 'what's going to happen?' thing, and that was a perfect vehicle for us. But we won't do it again."

Do you still enjoy performing?

"Oh yes. We wouldn't do it otherwise. The physical side of that is very much a part of this band, as well the spiritual side — that's a very important element — and it's fun! People don't associate us as a band having fun, but that is the ultimate criterion for what we do."

One last question. What was the first vinyl you ever bought?

"Oh, this is very embarrassing. I have to explain. I grew up with an older brother and sister — 10 and eight years respectively — so there were a lot of records I never had to buy. But the first 45 I bought was 'ABC', by the Jackson Five. At least he hadn't grown into the monster he became then. He was Michael, as he was born."

KERRY DOOLE



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Faith No More

“To be quite honest with you, I’m not in a very happy mood right now. It’s six o’clock in the evening here. Yesterday we shot the first video and we were on the set for 17 hours, from four o’clock in the afternoon, and I got home at eight this morning. So I’m pretty outta my mind and pretty tired,” Mike Bordin states gaily over the phone from his home in San Francisco. Bordin, the drummer for Faith No More otherwise known as ‘Puffy’, even though he isn’t, certainly doesn’t sound “in a bad mood” to me (well, he isn’t exactly the guy from Tool!). We have a very nice chat indeed for about 45 minutes about all manner of things, including and especially Faith No More’s new album *King For A Day, Fool For A Lifetime*, which was recorded in upstate New York in October and November last year.

I’d not heard hide nor hair of Faith No More for the last year (except for rumours that Mike Patton was arrested for having kiddie porn mags, and that keyboardist Roddy Bottum is gay). Gosh, and what a shock for everyone this year certainly shall be (hearing from Faith No More, that is). Their new album is very, very interesting, and I mean that. Stick your hand in and either get it bitten or licked; the bites being the Faith No More style ‘rawk’ songs, and the licks from the plentiful assortment of weird and wonderful ‘rawk’ ballads and otherwise — from the Tom Jones-ish number called ‘Evidence’, to a beauty of a freaky rock opera called ‘I Am Just A Man.’

What with the band’s original guitarist Jim Martin leaving (or being pushed) early in 1994, then finding a replacement guitarist in the form of Trey Spruance (who also plays guitar for Mr Bungle), who left shortly after the new album was recorded, and the band replacing Trey with keyboardist Roddy Bottum’s keyboard technician Dean Menta — one could say it’s been a somewhat shambolic year for the band.

“We’re a band that believes in making our

time and effort and we believe in getting the most out of doing the best we can,” says Puffy. “We do a lot of work. We spend a lot of time writing songs. We do the homework. Yeah, this album was definitely a challenge. Around the time when we did *the Real Thing*, we were *thrilled* to have a singer who could sing [they extracted the then 21 year old Mike Patton from his porno mags in January 1989 and put him to good use], because it wasn’t easy with the previous singer [Chuck Mosely]. Mike was able to sing to all the sorta things we wanted to play. After *Angel Dust* we knew two things. We knew it was a record that did well and that we were proud of, but, on the other hand, we also knew we were fortunate that it turned out as well as it did. We had a lot of difficulties with the guitar player [Jim Martin]. He felt he could have

keys back.”

Indeed they did. *King For A Day, Fool For A Lifetime* is the third delinquent offspring of Faith No More. Being a little more mature and consistent content wise than the others, it rocks along charmingly, but still takes the opportunity to smear shit over its face when you’re not paying attention.

“If you look at our other two records, I think you can find elements of both those records in this record. You could say *Angel Dust* was a challenging record, it wasn’t as obvious as *Real Thing*. It had layers of stuff heaped on it and you had to go looking for it, but it was there and it did quite well everywhere. People had to listen to it though, and it wasn’t an obvious hit single album. It’s also great to have a giant hit single — ‘Epic’ was beautiful for us.

Americans loved

Once you start thinking everything is beautiful, and you’re guaranteed a happy life ever after, it’s a buncha bullshit. You’ll start suffering and your art will suffer for it.

done more and we felt he could have

done more, so we knew we needed something more, and we felt we could improve.

“This new album was a very big challenge for us when we eventually fired him and sent him away. The challenge was to be as good as we could be. It was like, you think you can do something so now you make the steps to go out and do it. It was an exciting time actually. We were pretty confident ‘cause we knew that we could be a hell of a lot better, in our minds. It was sorta like we got the car keys back, y’know [chuckles]. We didn’t like how he was drivin’ the car, so we got the

it, and Americans have gotta short attention span. This album is a nice combination of both. We went into it basically only knowing one thing, we knew we could be better.

“The only thing me, Mike and Billy said was: ‘Let’s try something a bit less dense and layered. Let’s try and be a bit more direct and to the point, rather than putting poison gas in the air and smothering people.’ That was what we wanted to do. You can put this record into context with our other records, and to me that means this is honestly us without a doubt. Having said

that, I don’t want to seem like an asshole, a big positive guy, but I really don’t have any regrets about this record. I’ve never said that about a record before.”

When and why did Trey Spruance decide to leave the band, just when he was on the verge of rock-stardom? What sorta person would not want to travel around the world and play music every night for a living? Has he got something better to do?

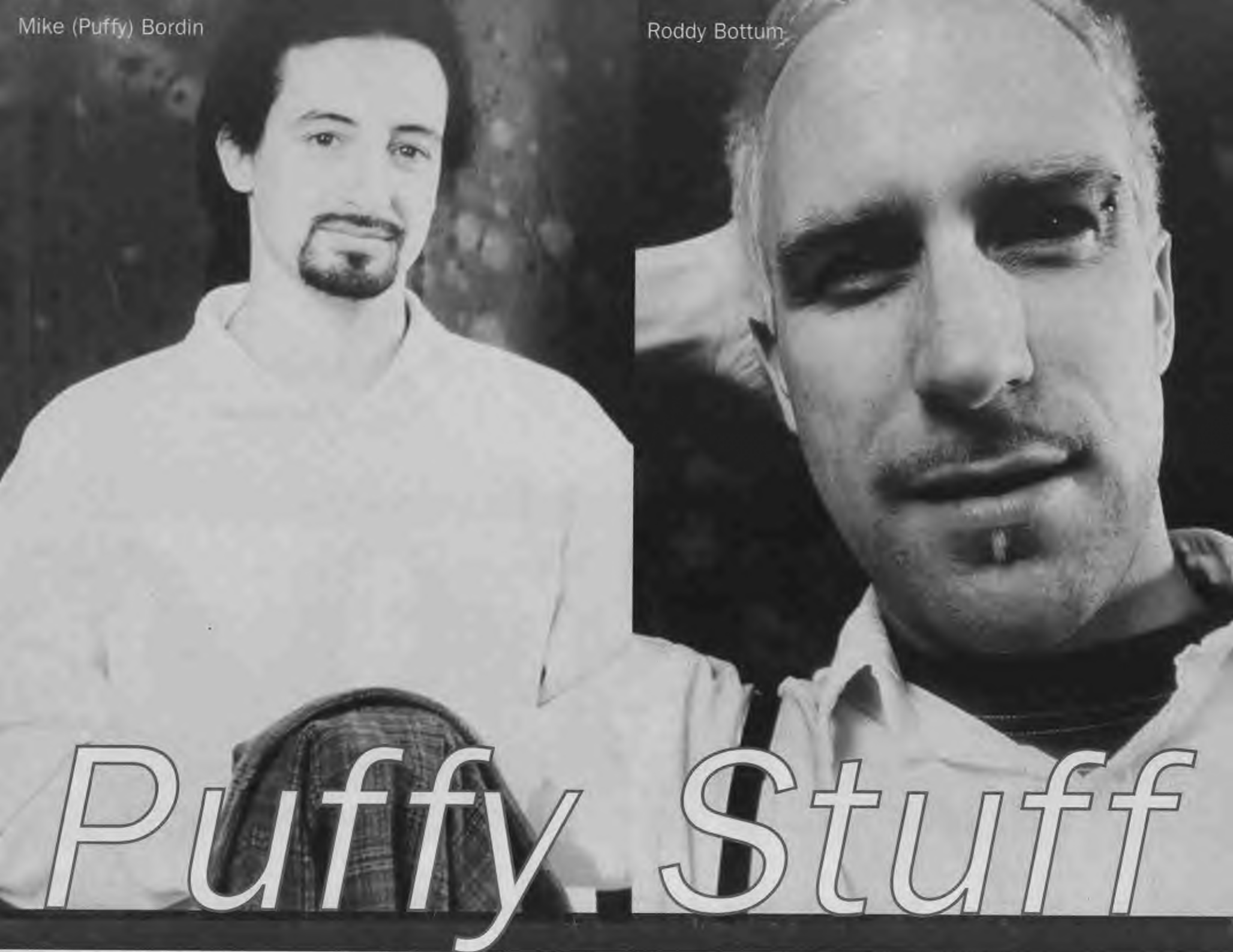
“Y’know, lo and behold, one day when we were talking about going overseas to Europe, he said: ‘I’m not gonna get a passport. I’m not comfortable with the commitment of touring for 16-18 months. I don’t wanna leave home. I like my home. I have plenty of money for my family. I’ve never worked a day in my life and I don’t want to.’

“Whaddya gonna say to that? It was like, see ya later! Have a nice life! It’s a funny thing. Trey was and is in Mike Patton’s other band Mr Bungle. Mike Patton, the only person that knew him, didn’t want him in the band — he voted against him. Most people would be saying: ‘Oh, he’s just the guy from Mike’s other band in the band and he’s trying to get the guy in the band.’ It was absolutely, completely the opposite. Faith No More is a band. We tour a lot and we have a commitment that we make. We started playing with him in April last year. Mike was saying: ‘The guy is going to be undependable in some way and he’s going to screw us up. I’m against putting our trust in him.’

“Trey helped us get what we wanted on the record, and I’m glad I got the chance to play with someone like that, because he has a very good, broad range of different musical styles. It was different to what we used to do with [Jim] on guitar and that was very exciting. It was always a battle with our old guitarist [Jim again]. It was always like: ‘I don’t know what you’re talking about. I don’t like it. I’m not gonna do it, blah, blah, blah.’ This time [with Trey] it was like: ‘Well, I can do this,’ or ‘how ‘bout this?’ It was real refreshing. It’s too bad the guy wanted to be a com-

Mike (Puffy) Bordin

Roddy Bottum



portable safe guy and take the easy way out, but, y'know, it's cool.

"The person who is now the guitarist [Dean Menta] is a full band member and is someone who we actually were playing with when we were in Australia last. He did soundchecks with us then and [Dean] said: 'Look, I've been waiting for to play in this band for three years and I'm not gonna let that chance get away. I'm into it.' We'd been rehearsing with him every day and man, he plays fuckin' great. Y'know, the guy that really wanted to do it now has a chance to do it. There's nothing wrong with that. It seems like poetic justice in a way."

Having put out two albums that were hugely successful, don't you ever feel like you've already obtained all the success that you'd ever wanted — or is there still more out there?

"That's like the end of the road. It's true there are people in business, or music, or whatever that may think like that. But that's not how we work. If we feel that creeping in, we will be the first ones to shine a bright light on it, see what it is, and deal with it. That's not the way our band works. Our band is definitely a work in progress. Once you start thinking everything is beautiful, and you're guaranteed a happy life ever after, it's a buncha bullshit. You'll start suffering and your art will suffer for it."

"The reason we fired our guitar player and made some changes and spent a long time writing this record was that we felt we had a hell of a lot more to say. It was a touchy thing [firing Jim]. This was a guy that I'd known for years and years, and all I can say, with genuine honesty, is the other members knew they could be a better band. A better way to describe our band would be that we're happy we get a chance to prove it. It's not like we've got it made — we wanna prove it. Sometimes it ain't easy to make a change and to surprise people or shake 'em up, but we know better. This is the band we lived with for 12 years. We know what we're

capable of."

Does it ever piss you off that you can't just go out there, play your music, make records every now and then and let the music run its own course? What about the fact you also have to go along with the music industry churning and do what they require as well — y'know, like signing people's records and stuff like that.

"I'm not real interested in selling myself and the band, 'cause my real pride is I would hope the music speaks for itself. But, having said that, you gotta take a picture, make a video, there's all kinds of crazy stuff. I'm not saying it's a bad thing or that I'm disillusioned, not at all, but I really honestly started to play music 'cause I felt like I had to. I'm real thankful actually. It's the greatest thing I could ever hope to do. People start saying: 'Oh, but it's like a job,' and they

that have really made an impact on me. One was Primus, one was Soundgarden and the other was Shihad. I think they're amazing.

"This tour of Europe is gonna be in smaller places than we would normally play. It was done on purpose to sort of like get back up to speed with a new guitar player. So, y'know, I think maybe we could do it again with [Shihad] when we're playing the bigger places. But I love 'em and I'll be happy to hear them every night."

How do you cope when you get home after being on tour for months on end? Doesn't life feel a little bit mundane after the non-stop daily routine of gigs, interviews, bus travel and the like?

"It is absolutely a complete shock. How I'm fond of describing it is that musicians that tour are like cockroaches. The cockroach is the most successful animal in the history of the universe. It's been around for billions of years and they adapt. When you go on tour, you get a flow of playing five shows a weeks for 14-16 months. You get into that flow and you totally adapt to be able to do exactly what you need to get along. That's why sometimes it's hard to talk or do photos. If you're playing and you're concentrating on getting your best every night, that's really taking all your energy. So, once you get in that groove, it's definitely hard to break. It's definitely hard to adjust to another schedule, which is being a human being,

having to go home and have different responsibilities. It's totally different. Once you get in that groove you do change, and I don't want to say that it's a drag coming home because it's never a drag coming home."

Even though you have to think about things like cooking dinner and doing your washing?

"Well, those things I enjoy. I love to cook and I've actually been gardening, and it's real peaceful. You know who's a big gardener? It's Iggy Pop."

Ahh, Iggy. Speaking of excessive, you've been on the road with notoriously excessive (in the wrong way) bands like Guns N' Roses. Why is it that some bands revel in the excessiveness — when it's really not necessary to have someone opening a door for you all the time or having someone wiping between your toes after the gig?

"There's gonna be people in bands who are gonna be going into meetings and want a private secretary and stuff. Then there's people that are like: 'You know what? I'll do it myself. I can handle this. I can get my own cuppa coffee.' It just really comes down to who you are and your values. We toured on the Guns N' Roses tour, and they were so good to us. They took us around the world and supported us. We were floored to see the level of personnel and equipment. It seemed like a lot, y'know. [That's a nice way of putting it. I think he really means they are wankers, but he's not gonna dish the dirt]. Everybody does their own level. It's just a function of what you're comfortable with. It's a crazy thing, but I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world"

Well — yay! Faith No More will maybe come back here mid-year. Maybe they'll pick up another New Zealand band... maybe they'll do some bungy jumping... maybe sign some records... buy some porno mags. Who knows? It's a crazy thing.

SHIRLEY CHARLES

How I'm fond of describing it is that musicians that tour are like cockroaches. The cockroach is the most successful animal in the history of the universe.

feel

that's negative. Well it's not.

Everybody does something — whether you're a mother, a plumber or whatever. To have your passion as a job — that's great."

Faith No More, especially Puffy, like New Zealand a lot. They like our bands even more, especially Shihad. In fact, they like Shihad so much they're taking them to Europe to be their support band.

"The first time we came to New Zealand they opened for us. They're a great band. There's a few bands like that I've noticed, in my brief time of touring around, a few bands



Biohazard



Shattering Skulls

A heat haze shimmers over the porch. It's the start of yet another bootiful day, yet something is wrong. There's no concrete, no lovely multi storeyed buildings, just grass sheep and the odd goat. It'll be another week before the sweet aroma of petrol fumes and urban decay is smelt by my hayfeverish nose. Thankfully, for the next half hour, I have a link with the civilised world in the form of the very civil, softly spoken, Billy Graziadei (the short haired one), vocalist and guitarist with New York's finest, Biohazard.

Reading the promo sheets, I come across repeated references to the Brooklyn Dodgers. 'The roar of 50 angry motherfuckers chanting violence in unison is the sound of Biohazard. Brooklyn hasn't heard such an angry mob since the Dodgers left almost 40 years ago.' Who were the Dodgers, and why did they leave? Well, I, for one, am not going to die wondering. I break the ice by demanding to know the connection between the Dodgers and Biohazard. Mr Graziadei appears a little taken aback by the question. Apparently the Dodgers were a baseball team that emigrated from Brooklyn to LA, much to the chagrin of Brooklynites. According to Mr G: "Brooklyn has never been the same since."

It's little wonder the music of Biohazard is so uncompromisingly angry with the lads growing up in Brooklyn bereft of the moral guidance and calming influence of sporting idols. A lack of quality baseball is not the only down side to life on the wrong side of the tracks.

Graziadei says: "Sometimes we go back through [Brooklyn] and see the same people, doing the same drugs, on the same street corners. The band pulled us out of some paths that would have ended us up in jail, on drugs, or definitely on the downward spiral."

For Graziadei, punk rock was the music

that shaped his formative years and helped him avoid the downward spiral. Whilst in high school, Graziadei was unknowingly introduced to heavy metal. It's this punk/metal fusion that drives the Biohazard sound. Mr Graziadei tells a cautionary tale for all young punkers of how he was unwittingly infected by the insidious metal vibe.

"There was this punk band in school. They played this talentless music — you know, two chords played really fast — the coolest music, and me and my friends were really into it. Anyway, the guitarist left town, so I said: 'I'll buy a guitar if I can play in your band.' They said okay, and the bass player taught me this three song medley. I liked the riffs and I thought they were really heavy. About three years later, I was turned on to the band that wrote those riffs, and that band was Black Sabbath. Recently, we ended up covering a Black Sabbath song." The song Biohazard cover, 'After Forever', is on the recent Black Sabbath tribute album. It contains the lyric: 'Would you like to see the pope on the end of a rope?' When I question the Catholic raised Mr Graziadei on the lyrics, he defensively points out they're Ozzy's, not his, before expounding his interpretation of the song.

"It's about being sceptical. It's a battle between do you believe in God because someone says this book [that bible] is true. I find it hard to believe something like that. None of the band believe in organised religion."

This scepticism extends to other well respected societal institutions. "I don't trust politicians. In there is the word liar. I think politicians tell people what they want to hear just so they can get their vote. Politics is a very touchy subject. We're not politicians. We sing about stuff we see. We don't preach."

In 1992, Biohazard looked at the problems in their neighbourhood on their break-

through album *Urban Discipline*. On 94's *State of the World Address*, Biohazard's concerns have become global.

"On our first tour, in 90, we'd never been out of New York, let alone America. Anyway, we were in Copenhagen, and we sat down with this 12 year old kid who knew more about America than I did. That was like a turning point, when you're on the outside looking in, you can see the big picture."

Viewers in New Zealand are unlikely to see Biohazard's "big picture" appearing on any of our mainstream video shows. The video for *Tales From the Hard Side* is divided into three parts, depicting in turn a car-jacking, a life of crime, and the ignorance of racism. "The video shows how society can push people to crime, or drugs, or even to hate someone who looks different," says Graziadei.

During the course of this chinwag, Princess Di's face has been gazing blankly at me from a magazine. Suddenly my heart knots with fear. Does Di know what she's doing by moving to this nightmare world. Still, maybe she could hang with the Biohazard boys. I inquire if the Princess could perhaps be 'down for life' with the lads. Graziadei is hesitant before deciding: "I don't think she would ever mix with the riff-raff of Biohazard." Later, Mr Graziadei decides maybe Di's a fan after all. If Di is a fan, then she can rest assured that, should she attend a Biohazard concert and suffer any harassment, Biohazard are prepared to go down swinging on her behalf. On a recent tour of Europe, a show was cancelled due to the band and security becoming involved in a scuffle over treatment of the crowd.

Upon mention of troubles with bouncers, Mr Graziadei's voice takes on the weary tone of a septuagenarian after a hard day's bowls. "No kid pays money to come see Biohazard and get punched in the face or strangled 'cause he's trying to have a good time. When we see security guards doing

that, we freak out. There's nothing worse than a security guard trying to break someone's jaw 'cause they want to get on stage and shake your hand or sing with you."

Well, possibly there is — say, crippling yourself slamming. "We grew up slamming. Our shows have been totally chaotic. Kids have gotten paralysed at our shows and we don't want that to happen. I don't want that on my conscience."

Occasionally it's the band who is in danger. "We're used to kids stage diving, but at one show we played in Sweden, there was this kid from Bosnia who'd left his family in the war. He was going crazy, slamming into us and, one particular time, he ran up to the drum kit and jumped over the cymbals and toms, landing right in Danny's lap. That's never happened before and it wrecked the entire drum kit... pretty sick."

Thankfully life is not all rock 'n' roll mayhem. Graziadei relaxes by practising ju jitsu and keeps body, if not soul, together by enjoying the wholesome goodness of health food. Whilst Down Under, Biohazard hope to have time for surfing or snowboarding, if the tour schedule allows. The touring lifestyle can occasionally resemble a scene from the movie *This is Spinal Tap*, Graziadei's all time favourite rock movie. "Every thing in that movie I've seen come true in touring with the bands I've toured with."

When Biohazard play support for Slayer, you can be certain their amps will only go to 10. This should be ample. In a recent British metal mag, their live performance received the highest possible accolade of a shattered skull, while Pantera could only manage a severe migraine. The only way to find out whether Biohazard are worthy of the shattered skull is to check them out yourself. After seeing Biohazard and Slayer, a severe headache should at least be guaranteed the next day.

KEVIN LIST



The Nine O'Clock Muse

An Interview with Throwing Muse Kristin Hersh

Kristin Hersh was using this as her wake-up call. It was 9am Glasgow time, 12 hours after my initial call had been mistakenly connected to the empty room of her nanny, Christie, who's looking after the three year old Ryder James O'Connell (Kristin's son). It didn't help that mum was registered under her real name, Martha O'Connell. But hold it right there, party animals. This is rock 'n' roll, a man's world, so how come we're talkin' kids, nannies, mothers, and they're on the road?

"It's tough," Hersh explains, not bothering to suppress a yawn. "Look at any working parent, and being on the road is the toughest part, as I have to leave eight year old Dylan behind, and the baby comes along, but he doesn't eat or sleep very well. When I'm home, I'm home, so I don't get to practice much, but when I'm on the road I don't get to mother a whole lot."

The last time I spoke to Hersh was on the eve of *The Real Ramona*'s release, when she was undergoing law suits, custody battles and managerial problems.

"I don't remember that album very fondly. I like the songs on it, but I think the production was a little trendy for us — and the band broke up making the record. We didn't let the songs determine how they should sound. People were watching a lot of MTV, and the record label was involved, and we had our first bully producer — not in a bad way, but just, like, we had less and less to do with the album. And there were a lot

of law suits. But things are better, as we're not so poor anymore and the lawsuits are done with."

Just for the record, Kristin married manager Billy O'Connell and their three year old, Ryder, is with the nanny in the next room. Eight year old Dylan, her son from a previous relationship and the subject of bitter custody battles, is back home in the States. Yet it seems, if the new album *University* is anything to go by, that Hersh's currently settled personal life is conducive to her best music.

"I have a good personal life," she explains, stifling another yawn. "It's not settled because it never stops. Bad things like law suits and custody battles are gonna make you stronger in that they give you a perspective for what hard means. But they make me weaker because they're on the pile of things that happen that I can't really take. Now I can afford to live hard again, things don't have to be nice around me because I'm healthy."

Since their first album, released around 1986, Throwing Muses have been aligned with the traumatic, intellectual bed-sit society. Is Kristin Hersh a sensitive, vulnerable person?

"No, I'm really strong," she counters, almost laughing. "I've just had some really bad shit happen to me. And songwriting is a weird process. But, other than that, I'm a housewife and I have a strong, normal life. There is nothing calm about that. That could be what confuses people. If you're living hard, it's gonna be

scary all the time."

Last year Hersh had her most commercially successful year with the release of her delightful, easily digested, solo album, *Hips and Makers*. Most people regard it as the best thing she's done.

"I think it's easier to take. There are plenty of people who don't understand rock band sound in recent years. *Hips and Makers* is a really good album, but they're all like children to me, so it's hard for me to say if one album is better than the others."

"I did my solo record kinda by accident, and I didn't expect to have to promote or tour it, but that became a priority and, in America, we've never been a priority before, which is cool. They still pay us to make records, but they don't think they'll be records that will sell, so *Hips and Makers* was the first time I've ever seen the record company really work a record."

When you toured the album, how did you feel without the band for live moral support?

"At first, it was weird. I'm not really shy, but I'm private, and it seemed presumptuous of me to sit there all by myself and make people pay money to look at that and wonder where's the show. But I appreciated how well they were all listening, and the only reason they were there was for the music. I just had to put a guitar in my lap and I knew exactly what was going to happen. It was just like playing in my bedroom."

Hersh's surprisingly successful solo phase

meant the Throwing Muses' new album, *University*, was put on hold for a few months. Now it's here, with justified acclaim that this could be the best music she's made with the band.

"Yeah, it's very realised, cohesive, and we were incredibly focussed. We began with a collection of about 30 songs and whittled them down. These were very delicate songs, so they took a very detailed production, probably the most produced record we've done, and yet there's nothing real slick on it."

The opening track and new single, 'Bright Yellow Gun', has the irresistible buoyancy to clean up the alternative charts.

"All I know about that song is that it's an attractive weapon, which is like the poison that happens in you when you love someone. The most dangerous thing that can happen to you is to be attracted to someone else's weapon."

Are your songs a form of release?

"I hear them, but I don't feel like I'm expressing myself. So, I get as much cathartic release from listening to other people's songs as I do from writing my own. The one thing that does figure in my songs from my life is my family. I had a song called 'Dylan' on *The Real Ramona*, and on 'Flood', on *University*, there's a line about Ryder. Every now and then my real kids or real husband pop up, and it becomes a less universal song for that."

GEORGE KAY

collision 3



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Samuel L. Jackson, John Travolta & Harvey Keitel, *Pulp Fiction*

That's Entertainment 3

Directors: Bud Friedgen & Richard J. Sheridan

We're into our third instalment and those MGM vaults are still coming up with goodies. Rampant nostalgia it may be, but *TE3* offers two fascinating hours of classic and not-so-classic clips that catch the energy and sheer inventiveness of the MGM musical, from *The Hollywood Revue of 1929* to *Gigi*.

There are some turkeys (June Allyson's 'Cleopatterer' certainly comes into that category) and some dazzlers, particularly in the dance department. These cover the gamut from the leggy Ann Miller shaking her blues away in *Easter Parade*, to Gene Kelly doing wonders with a sheet of newspaper and a squeaky floorboard in *Summer Stock*, as well as such camp little moments as Esther Williams in an underwater Grecian temple, pursued by animated statues. Discreet and careful archive-raiding lets us marvel at the cameras gliding around filming Eleanor Powell, as she manically taps her way through 'Fascinating Rhythm', as well as Fred Astaire side-by-side with himself in two takes of a dance sequence from *The Belle of New York*.

We see Debbie Reynolds both glam and rustic in two different treatments of 'A Lady Loves' from *I Love Melvin* (the former has uncanny parallels with the 'Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend' sequence from *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*), and Judy Garland sings 'I'm an Indian Too', one of the few numbers filmed before she exited from *Annie Get Your Gun*. The studios were notorious for recycling costumes from movie to movie, and they did it with soundtracks too; *TE3* shows India Adams version of 'Two Faced Woman' being mimed, in two different films some years apart, by Cyd Charisse and Joan Crawford.

Lest we become too haughty, we're reminded that vaudeville was never far away with an early 1928 clip of The Five Locust Sisters and, much later, the extraordinary Ross sisters, combining harmony vocals worthy of the Andrews sisters with bizarre contortionist feats. We're also reminded of the respect the MGM musical

had for its charismatic performers. For most of Lena Horne's performance of 'Just One of Those Things', the camera dwells on the singer's rapturously expressive face.

We're reminded too that these films could be up with their Eisenstein and René Clair in the technical department (*Hollywood Party of 1934* is quite an eye-opener here) and also how the 'Jailhouse Rock' sequence from Elvis Presley's first film, although considered radical at the time, now seems to fit easily into the MGM house style. In fact, it even had a precedent in the Dodge Twins singing 'The Lock Step', with both set and costumes a riot of verticals. Well, as Harry Truman once said: "There's nothing new in the world except the history you don't know."

WILLIAM DART

Serial Mom Director: John Waters

John Waters has already charted his fascination with violence and crime in his 1981 autobiography *Shock Value* — from searching out bloodied car seats in wrecking yards as a youngster to his admiration for the psychotic Gertrude Baniszewski ('perhaps the nastiest woman who ever lived') from Kate Millett's *The Basement*.

Kathleen Turner makes a fetching serial killer in Waters' latest study of the seamy ole suburbia. And she's a damned inventive multiple maniac, using everything from air conditioning units to legs of lamb to despatch her victims. What's more, she's a woman of some community conscience (one murder is a punishment for not rewinding rental videos, another is exacted upon a young stud-about-town for standing her daughter up).

There are many hysterical moments in *Serial Mom*, from an American nuclear family shrieking in unison when Turner flashes them a Serial Mom smile, to a scene in which Turner transforms Mink Stole (now a frazzled, if gracious, matron) into a foul-mouthed harpy.

The trial scene is a hoot, with Turner conducting her own defence and tearing the prosecution witnesses to shreds (one is exposed to

public ridicule as a non-recycler, a copy of *Chicks with Dicks* is found in the detective's trash) and managing (for a wee while, at least) to quell her utter fury with jury member Patty Hearst, for wearing white shoes out of season.

There are parallels with Waters classics. Divine is also a star killer in *Female Trouble* and much of *Pink Flamingoes* is involved with revenge rituals. Smooth though *Serial Mom* may be when it comes to studio values, one misses the rough-hewn amateurism of those earlier films and the 'stars' they made, particularly the late great Edith Massey. Now, with a girlfriend like Edie, Kathleen Turner might have been happy to stay home and polish the furniture.

WILLIAM DART

Pulp Fiction Director: Quentin Tarantino

The film that everyone's been waiting for, hot (well nine months) after its Cannes success and released just in time for pre-Academy Awards fever.

Pulp Fiction elegantly presses all the right buttons for the mid-90s, from the quotes at the beginning to the slick symmetry when the film closes with the coffee shop hold-up. Tarantino fans are in for few surprises if they've seen *Reservoir Dogs* and *True Romance* — this man is *auteur* to the point of being obsessive. The only serious drawback would seem to be a 154-minute running time where once there would have been 100, but you're really getting three films for your money.

For all its lustrous colour and immaculately framed images (this film must have been storyboarded to the last flicker of Uma Thurman's eyelash) the ultimate strength of *Pulp Fiction* lies in Tarantino's script. The best scenes come across as self-contained spiels — a discussion between John Travolta and Sam Jackson about the niceties of Parisian fast food and that marvellous cameo of Christopher Walken in what Tarantino has described as a 'three-page monologue', with the actor spinning a Burroughsian tale of how his wristwatch managed to survive world wars and other dis-

asters, natural and man-made.

Tarantino may not have nifty quotes from William Castle and Gordon Hershell Lewis, as does John Waters in *Serial Mom*, but the post modernist impulse is still there — Uma Thurman dancing to Urge Overkill's Neil Diamond cover has Godardian associations; a creepy scene with Ving Rhames and Bruce Willis in the clutches of some Neo-Nazi perverts echoes a similar moment in Joel Schumacher's *Falling Down*.

How long Tarantino can keep the zing in this cocktail of gut-wrenching violence and belly laughs is a matter for some worry. Some day he'll have to make the move from pulp to good, solid hard-bound.

WILLIAM DART

Bullets over Broadway Director: Woody Allen

Bullets over Broadway sees Woody Allen back in form after the diffuse disappointments of *Manhattan Murder Mystery*. It's a bitter-sweet backstage comedy set in the 1920s, that could have come from the pen of either Damon Runyan or O. Henry, an ambitious new writer (John Cusack from *Shadows and Fog*), has a gangster bankroll his new play as long as the gangster's chorus-girl moll has a good part in it. During the course of the rehearsals, one of the gangster's hitmen proves to have the real flair with words...

Well, the plot does lumber occasionally; not all is light and frothy or sparkles like the final glorious shouting match about art, sex and Marxism. All this and some classic one-liners too. As Ira would say, who could ask for anything more?

The performances are scrumptious. Dianne Wiest is the theatrical grande dame ('I never play frumps or virgins'), locked in interminable stagespeak even in the most intimate of situations, and Tracey Ullman is a tizzy delight as her poodle-touting co-star. Jennifer Tilly is energetically vulgar, in what could be Allen's take on Eliza Doolittle, and Chazz Palminteri is laconic as the theatrically-inclined thug.

WILLIAM DART

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KALIFORNIA
Director: Dominic Sena
(Columbia Tristar)

My big screen viewing of this film had something of a shadow cast over it by the awesome *Natural Born Killers*, which I viewed just days earlier. Both films share the same subject (serial killing) and co-star (Juliette Lewis), and, although the similarities end there, one can barely view this, the inferior work, without thinking of the other. Impossibly intellectual couple Brian (if you reverse two letters in his name it spells Brain, as Pitt's character points out) and Carrie embark on a road tour of American serial killing sites, collecting material for a book they are making. Brian (David Duchovny) decides they should take on board a couple of extra passengers to share the petrol costs with. Carrie (Michelle Forbes) thinks it's a bad idea — but then, she thinks just about everything's a bad idea. She is an annoying woman with a majorly irritating haircut.

As it turns out, Brian and Carrie hit the serial killing jackpot with the hick couple they get to ride with them. Early (Brad Pitt) is a bona fide serial killer. His girlfriend Adele (another scene stealing turn from Lewis) is a bona fide eejit, who literally lets him get away with murder. Early makes disgusting sounds with the snot in the back of his throat and plays with his feet at the diner table. Understandably, the car gets very small, very fast.

Adele eventually spills the beans about Early's chequered past. Carrie gets way mad and does the "it's him or me" routine. Brian picks her, and the shit hits the fan big time when he tries to give Early and Adele the kiss off.

Pitt makes a very scary murderer, especially after he has his pretty face fucked up. Things get gory and bleak. Even more bleak is Brian's constant, moralising voice-over. He leaves no conclusion to our own intelligence, and the goodie and baddie roles are as clear cut as can be. Serial killers are bad, nuclear testing sites are creepy, and even writers can get things wrong sometimes.

This is one for diehard Lewis and Pitt fans only. I seriously doubt it will make Forbes into a household name. Speaking of stickability, can anyone remember David Duchovny's transvestite detective in *Twin Peaks*? Refresh my memory, on the back of an envelope, please!

BRONWYN TRUDGEON

The Good Son
Director: Joseph Ruben
(Roadshow)

This is a very standard horrifying thriller type movie, with a strong Hollywood feel. Funny that. It has beautiful child actors (Macaulay Culkin, Elijah Wood), beautiful parents, sweet Mommy, sensitive and strong Daddy, beautiful houses, and bea-u-ti-ful scenery — all accompanied with a typical, supposedly tear jerking soundtrack.

Mark (Elijah Wood's) Mom has just passed away. Mark's Dad is upset, but he also needs to go and close a business deal in Japan, so he and Mark "never need to be separated again" (presumably because Dad will make a killing and they'll be loaded forever).

So, for the two week duration, little Mark must go and stay with Dad's brother's family, which all looks swell. Mark seems to be doing okay. He even laughs when he and his cousin Henry (Macaulay Culkin) smash a lobster leg up at the table together! Henry's Mom looks on approvingly, and whispers to Dad: "Everything's gonna be okay". But no, that is not so.

Henry turns out to be a right little blighter and tries to get Mark into all sorts of trouble. First, Henry shoots a dog with a bolt-shooting rifle he made. Then he coaxes Mark into helping him lift a stuffed man onto

a bridge. Before Mark can realise what's happening, Henry tosses the mannequin over the bridge with horrifying results! Later that day, Mark realises little Henry is "sick", and tells him so. Henry retaliates by saying he feels sorry for Mark because he doesn't know how to have fun. The next day Henry throws his little sister onto thin ice while they are skating, and you can guess what happens. Poor Mark is a nervous wreck by the film's end, and it's a real cliff hanger ending too.

SHIRLEY CHARLES

In The Name Of The Father
Director: Jim Sheridan
(CIC)

In The Name Of The Father tells the tale of a famous case which was (and, some would say, still is) "so insane that if you made it up no-one would believe it". This description comes from so-called 'Guildford Four' member Gerry Conlon (played here by Daniel Day-Lewis), whose book *Proved Innocent* provided the basis for this stunning film.

On October 5, 1974, the IRA carried out the fatal bombing of a Guildford pub, which whipped the English nation into an outraged frenzy. The police, desperate to quench the public's thirst for blood, arrested four hippies (Conlon and his friends Paul Hill, Paddy Armstrong and Carol Richardson) under the brand spanking new Prevention of Terrorism Act. The act gave police the right to hold suspected terrorists for up to seven days without charging them. During this time, the police forcibly cajoled the group into signing confessions. In addition, an assortment of "ringleader" Conlon's relatives were arrested and charged for a series of IRA "support network" related crimes.

The public shared the triumph of the "decorated officers", who had lied their way through the weeks of court hearings which found the innocent guilty. Conlon received the maximum incarceration period of 30 years. It was 15 years before the truth came out — too late for Conlon's father and cell-mate Giuseppe (Pete Postlewaite), who died waiting for it to be uncovered.

The narrative is recounted on a tape Conlon made for the lawyer (Emma Thompson) handling the appeal. As their campaign goes public, the nation change their tune and begin 'free the Four' protests. The everyday people, who were turned into villains, are transformed into heroes, as their case goes head to head with the British legal system and police force.

The interrogation scenes and court cases are intense and frightening. A normal reaction when faced with blatant stupidity is laughter, but the consequences of these acts make for angry and despairing chuckles indeed. Splendid performances across the board make *In The Name Of The Father* compelling viewing. An excellent soundtrack (featuring a glut of 70s hits and framed by a pair of stellar tracks from Bono and Sinéad O'Connor) are the icing on this bitter cake.

BRONWYN TRUDGEON

BACKBEAT
Director: Eion Softly
(Columbia)

John Lennon had a best friend in the early 60s called Stuart Sutcliffe (Stephen Dorff). John and Stuart decided to make a band, so they made the Beatles. Easy.

Backbeat takes place mainly around the time the Beatles took their first journey to Hamburg in 1960, with original drummer Pete Best and Stuart playing bass. It focuses mainly on Stuart's involvement (or non-involvement) with the band, with John, and his relationship with German photographer Astrid Kircher (Sheryl Lee, who we last saw dead in *Twin Peaks*).

Stuart was initially an artist, and sold his first painting for 50 quid, which he brought a bass guitar with. He was doing well with his

art, but decided to give it up for a bit to go to Hamburg with the Beatles.

The band played consecutive nights in a sleazy German bar, occasionally sharing the stage with strippers. The crowd consisted mostly of rowdy piss heads and a few token German girls. One night, an arty sort of man named Klaus comes to see them. He likes them. He has friends in high places. He gets them a little recording deal. He introduces them to his foxy girlfriend, Astrid. Stuart and Astrid start going around together. John initially doesn't like this. Astrid says it is because he is jealous of her (implying that he fancies Stuart). Astrid introduces Stuart to the underground bohemian scene. John says the bohemian scene is "all dick", and makes a huge fuss about it. Meanwhile, Stuart decides that painting and being with Astrid are more important than the band. Paul takes up the bass.

One night, after doing the limbo at an artsy affair, Stuart discovers he has rather a serious problem in the head, so to speak, and ultimately this rather ruins his relationship with Ingrid and his painting career. Sad really.

As far as the cast goes, young Stephen Dorff looks remarkably like the real Stuart, who was also very pretty. Sometimes his Liverpool accent is a little dodgy though. Ian Hart does a very feasible job as the feisty, young and rather obnoxious John Lennon.

Terrific! Captivating! Stunning! A slice of Beatlemania that we didn't get to see... yes, it was quite good.

SHIRLEY CHARLES

LIKE WATER FOR CHOCOLATE
Director: Alfonso Arau
(Columbia Tristar)

Based on Laura Esquivel's novel-with-recipes, *Like Water For Chocolate* is a romantic family epic, flavoured with enough good cooking and mysticism to turn it into something truly different.

Tita (Lumi Cavazos) is born the youngest of three daughters, in a family headed by a fearfully domineering matriarch. Tradition forbids her to marry, deeming she take care of her mother until she dies. Love, however, makes no concessions for Tito's family status, and turns up in the form of Pedro (Cinema Paradiso's Marco Leonardi). His request for permission to marry Tito is turned down by her mother, who offers her daughter Rosaura instead. The film turns on Pedro's desperate decision to accept this offer, in order to be close to Tita. The farcical newlyweds will live with Tita and her mother.

Unable to externalise her love for Pedro, Tita pours it all into her cooking, making her the envy of all who eat it (usually). The emotion invested in the meals is sometimes transferred to those who eat them. This happens at the wedding of Pedro and Rosaura, with hilarious, bile inducing results, lending a comic turn to an otherwise heartbreaking event.

For two decades, Tita and Pedro weather a tempest of unrequited passions and tragedy, with only brief stolen moments keeping their fires burning. In what is to prove an ironic speech from Tita's doctor (and later fiancé), we hear how such fires would burn all consumingly if a person ever met another who could light their whole box of matches at once. Without knowing it, he has described the agony and the ecstasy of Tita and Pedro's forbidden relationship.

If the title doesn't say enough, let me recommend eating a large and exquisite meal before sitting down to this delectable slice of Mexican magic. Chances are your cooking won't measure up to Tita's, but this kind of cooking is so good, and its consequences so powerful, it's probably best partaken in from afar.

BRONWYN TRUDGEON

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albums



Throwing Muses

THROWING MUSES University (4AD)

Time to roll out the mortar boards and dust off the academics — Throwing Muses are back, and this time their poetic and intellectual aspirations seem to be nakedly admitted in the album title, *University*. Actually, the title alludes to universality, and not to any higher learning many have thought was a pre-requisite for cracking Kristin Hersh's cryptic, internal world.

Relax 'cause *University* is their most accessible, orthodox and least intense album ever. For these reasons, arguments that it's also their best are pretty persuasive. The idiosyncratic energy of the band and Hersh's often strident attempts at conveying her own songs are still there but *University* rocks and rolls with a consistency they haven't previously mustered.

Enough has been written in this issue about the merits of 'Bright Yellow Gun', and that could be joined by 'Hazing' and 'Shimmer'. 'Crabtown' crawls delightfully, with veiled sexual undertones, and the doubts of 'Teller' are delivered in a haunted, inescapable tread. Mere highlights from an album that should convince the sceptics you don't need advanced psychology to appreciate the Muses' rock 'n'roll.

GEORGE KAY

SIUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES

The Rapture (Polydor)

It's getting to the stage where one can almost be called old fashioned for clutching a disc from these old devils with eager fingers. It's almost two decades since Siouxsie's early public appearances as a wild punk princess in a pair-of-tits T-shirt. That early footage and the incendiary albums which followed blew my mind. These days, each new album shocks me with news of the band growing older. Siouxsie is still holding the grand dame of Gothic look well. And Budgie... well, Budgie is starting to bear a remarkable resemblance to a sort of damned Danny Kaye. Good on him too, but I'm jolly glad it hasn't rubbed off on his drumming. I was a little afraid at first, for the shuffling drum loops of the lovely but light 'O Baby' open this album. True fans will have to hang in there for his relentless intro to 'Not Forgotten'. It is also here that Siouxsie's banshee returns to its house of howls, but that's later. It's still relatively light on the instrumental side for track two, 'Tearing Apart', but the vocals get tantalisingly closer to their wilder origins. Well, as wild as you can be in the presence of a poppy keyboard lead. The more inspired stuff begins with 'Stargazer'. It's here you realise aging has benefitted the band's experience, even if it is at the cost of their previous abundance of evil intent. Instead, we get some breathtaking moments of beauty, such as the cavernous guitar intro of 'Fall From Grace' and the intricate strings and guitars that grace the melancholic 'Forever'. 'The Rapture' is the soaring epic of the piece (clocking in at 11.32). This is a true modern symphony, which quietly screams to be picked up for a dance work. In fact, it's mostly quiet

screams for attention here, except for the climax of 'Love Out Me'. This track is as good a reason I've found for programmable CD players. I've ridden waves of ambience to Nighty Night Land with this album, only to wake bolt upright, in a cold sweat, hearing the lyrics: 'I smash the glass into my face / Cutting through to my disgrace.' I certainly didn't mind being jerked screaming from sleep for the album's finest moment, all I can say is it's a bloody good thing I don't sleepwalk!

BRONWYN TRUDGEON

MASSIVE ATTACK VS. MAD PROFESSOR No Protection (Virgin)

The Mad Professor, aka Neil Fraser, has produced more than 100 dub albums since he started with a four-track studio in his front room. Now's he's taken the mixing desk to Massive Attack's second album. The result is a mind altering musical attack. At times unsettling, at times un-nervingly good. The cut and paste approach doesn't always improve on the originals, especially the Horace Andy tracks, but this is *serious* dubwise stuff.

Deep, deep drums, vocals that drift across the soundscape, music that ripples and changes in character with the Mad Professor's sure hand on the controls. It's what the Massive Attack soundscape would sound like after an earthquake had sent great shuddering cracks through those smooth sounds.

MARK REVINGTON

JPS EXPERIENCE

Jean Paul Sartre Experience (Flying Nun)

THE CLEAN Oddities (Flying Nun)

Another couple of re-releases dredged up from the catacombs at the nunnery. Any more of these will almost amount to a tacit admission from the New Zealand's premier independent record label that their best is behind them. Hopefully the justification for these albums is based more on commercial reasoning than desperation. There must be an awful lot of recently converted Nun acolytes (many of them in overseas markets) who would be hungry for the re-release of such seminal (and difficult to obtain) recordings. This is also known as money for old rope, but I'm not about to complain when the material is as good as that contained on the JPS Experience CD — a collection of all the tracks from their first eponymous EP and debut album *Love Songs*.

It's not overstating the matter to compare that first EP favourably to other classic Nun EPs — the Verlaines' *10 O'Clock In The Afternoon*, the Clean's *Boodle Boodle Boodle*, Straitjacket Fits' *Life In One Chord*, Goblin Mix, Tall Dwarfs, Doublehappys — actually the list goes on. Moving from delicate to moody, not a note is wasted and the five tracks from that EP (including the monumental 'Flex') seem to make even more sense now than they did then. The following debut album was somewhat berated when released, and perhaps did suffer a touch from 'how-do-we-top-the-first-effort' syndrome. Hindsight, however, reveals it as a compelling wistful, almost goofy, pop record,



PJ Harvey

where the band release their inhibitions and do what comes naturally. Occasionally that meant some ill advised white-boy funk, as on 'Crap Rap' and 'Let the Good Thing Grow', but it also spawned the gorgeous 'Grey Parade' and the totally dumb, but totally addictive 'I Like Rain'.

If time has been (for the most part) charitable to the JPS Experience re-release, it is markedly less so for the Clean's *Oddities*. Originally released on cassette, the 'Oddities' sessions were recorded in 'very relaxed' circumstances in the band's practice room, on a borrowed two-track. The album does contain its share of minor gems — alternative versions of Clean classics such as 'Thumbs Off', 'Getting Older', 'End Of My Dream' and 'Sad Eyed Lady'. But, if these are the rough diamonds, then the rest is very much coal from the Clean slag heap. Too much of it sounds like little more than practice room doodlings and the 'fi' is intrusively 'lo' to the point of irritation. At the time of its release, *Oddities* may have sounded like a breath of fresh air, inspiring countless fledgling garage bands to 'have a go', but, removed from its own time frame, it simply runs out of puff.

MARTIN BELL

TRANSGLOBAL UNDERGROUND

International Times (Sony)

Well, at least they've got a sense of humour. "Good things come to those who wait," says the sample that opens the album. Considering we were expecting this last July, then watched its release overseas and still waited, the salivation was hydrodam filling. And, yeah, it is quite good.

What puts the Transglobals ahead of all the other ethno practitioners (poxy Green Forest etc), is their ability to merge the coolest eastern and western sounds of surround. It's not just African tribes for the sake of it. Bassy dance beats merge with bongos, snake charmer clarinets interwangle with violins, rap compliments Indian choirs.

International Times is more cloudy than their debut. The crystal clear production is gone and they've opted for a warm, less jarring sound, akin to old tracks like 'I Voyager'. It does have its share of uneventful background music. Like 'Protean' which starts off like a third world version of a Prince intro and turns into the theme from *Bombay Vice*. Their attempt at dub, 'Dopi', is just plain dull.

But then 'Dustbowl' is stunning — jumbo bass and trickling vocal sounding like some crowded ancient Indian Colosseum. 'Holy Roman Empire' is about as hard hitting as they get, with a stomping rap and metallic guitar riffs. 'Topkapi' sways around, dazed, like the living dead on downers. And, after the initial amazement at their fluidity of sound, the taste of their melting pot, there are over 70 minutes of other worldly pleasures to experience.

JOHN TAITE

PJ HARVEY

To Bring You My Love (Island)

'I was born in the desert / I've been

down for years / Jesus come closer / I think my time is near...

This is a fine summation of Polly Jean Harvey. You'd have to be goddamn strong to be an ice queen living in the desert. Polly is that. She sings her time is near just three songs into this album's first and title track, then hauls herself through a whole album of gut twisters that spit in the face of any Saint Peter type, before being perfectly closed by the redemption of 'The Dancer'. Flood and John Parrish join Polly as producers this time round. The band name still sticks, but Flood, for one, is calling this very much Polly's project, despite any thing one may read into 'Working For The Man'. This track puts the heaviest pressure on your bass monitor it will have felt in a while (and will brace it well for the muted thud of 'I Think I'm A Mother'), before beating its way to one of those squealing burts you hear just before your hearing goes. 'C'Mon Billy' trades the bass for violin, teamed with acoustic guitar, augmenting one of the album's finest tracks. While PJ's left holding the baby here, she's looking for a lost one on the eerily hissed 'Down By The Water'. The best vocals are delivered on 'Tecto' and 'Send His Love To Me', which remind you just how essential this talent is, while unearthing a couple of dozen more of those often hauled out Patti Smith comparisons. 'Long Snake Moan' is a slow driven rocker which I'd kill to see live. Until that day comes, I suggest you lock your-

self in a disheveled room (mental or physical) and tear the hair out of a couple of voodoo dolls. Yes Polly — your voodoo is working, and how!

BRONWYN TRUDGEON

LITTLE AXE The House That Wolf Built (On U Sound)

Former Sugarhill and Tackhead guitarist Skip McDonald meets the blues, but I bet it's not what Leadbelly had in mind.

The House That Wolf Built is a musical melting pot, filtered through the awesome On U Sound machine. It's like Tackhead without the crunching rhythms and heavy metal guitars. It's like Eric Clapton discovered the rhythm in blues and the 90s all at the same time. It's like... it's like... it's really hard to describe Little Axe. 'Another Sinful Day' is about the closest they get to traditional blues, yet dem blues haunt the album. 'Wolf's Story' pretty much sums up the feeling conjured up by McDonald, who has been co-producing and remixing for On U for the past few years.

Little Axe is the kind of music you can put on at the start of a car journey in the middle of the night. Three hours later, you arrive and don't even realise the time has gone.

Listen to the compelling rhythm of 'Ride On', the first single, and let Little Axe's haunting hard rhythms and atmospheric samples subvert your mind.

'Wake the town and tell the people about the king of sound and blues / Each sound around you carries you deeper, and deeper and sounder.'

MARK REVINGTON

ALT Altitude (EMI)

Alt is German for 'old' which is a fairly accurate depiction of ALT's members — Tim Finni, Hothouse Flower Liam O'Maonlai and unknown Dublin victim Andy White. This is one of those part-time, hopefully one-off, band relationships that stars occasionally indulge in through chance encounters or fiscal incentives.

In keeping with the rather informal nature of the band *Altitude* is an album of relaxed bonhomie and half-realised songs and ideas. There's the kernel of substantial songs in 'The Refuge Tree' and 'What You've Done'. Even the throwaway, loose party feel of 'We're All Men' and 'Penelope Tree' can't totally disguise there's some charm lurking in there. The rest is either pretty tardy, like 'When the Winter

Comes' and 'I Decided To Fly', or just plain maudlin and lacking in the commitment and conviction needed to justify making this record. The only good news is it could have been worse.

GEORGE KAY

VAN HALEN Balance (Warner)

Another No. 1 album in the States for Van Halen, and it's a bunch of new songs that continue their trademark big rock sound with a few surprises thrown in. Different offerings like 'Strung Out', which is Eddie getting some crazy sounds out of his piano, plus two other instrumentals, add a different touch to the expected formula. Another change is Eddie's short hair and beard, giving him a true Dutchman look. Mainly though, it's the guys rocking out and having a good time in 'Amsterdam' ('Stone you like nothing else can / Don't have to worry about the man') and 'Big Fat Money' which is basically a 90s version of the old Bradford/Gordy rock 'n' roll number. The stand-out tracks are definitely 'The Seventh Seal', 'Don't Tell Me' and 'Feelin'', which all contain brilliant playing from the Van Halen brothers, and the band as a whole demonstrate how powerful and tight-knit they are as a unit. Hagar is more prominent this time too, with two tunes ('Deja Vu' and the cheesy 'Can't Stop Loving You') sounding straight out of the Sammy songbook. He's now been in Van Halen for longer than David Lee Roth was, so we can probably rule out any return to the diamond days when their albums rated 10 out of 10. *Balance* would get somewhere around six and a half, which is still high enough to buy.

GEOFF DUNN

VARIOUS ARTISTS Collision 3 (Mushroom)

VARIOUS ARTISTS Red, Hot and Cool (BMG)

VARIOUS ARTISTS Red, Hot on Impulse (BMG)

Well, another *Collision* compilation. Exactly the same as the last two, only different songs. What else do you need to know?

Errm, 20 tracks. Spot of Brit rock (Primal Scream), spot of hip-hop (Coolio), spot of Mozz, Grant Lee Buffalo. Weezer's one wonderful hit. Even the 3Ds and Head Like A Hole (yay!). Being an Australian comp, there are lots of

Ozzy bands pretending to be important like Barker and Ash(!?). It's your very own Australian, alternative radio playlist.

The next two chapters in the AIDS awareness compilations are also among us. First up, picking up on the jazzy hip-hop flavour, is *Red Hot and Cool*.

It opens with its worst song, 'Time Is Moving On (live)', which has Guru doing all this live toss like "Come on y'all turn it up". Yeah, yeah, yeah. It gets a bit better as MC Solaar does his thing, then Michael Franti sneaks in 'Positive' off the latest Spearhead album (not all that jazzy, but it's a great song). Some of the rapper meets jazzster team ups are amazing: MeShelle's bad Gurrl blues and Herbie Hancock's piano mastery (phew); the Roots with the floating vibes of Roy Ayers (wow). There's UFO, Digable Planets, Pharcyde, US3. This is the jazzy hip hop album of the moment. Knievil listening.

Red Hot and Cool even gives you a bonus CD of Branford Marsalis doing Coltrane's 'A Love Supreme' and Alice Coltrane's trippy hippy version. Both of which are a taster of the companion jazz album, *Red Hot On Impulse*. Basically, Impulse records have capitalised on all the sampling on Red Hot and Cool, just as Blue Note did with US3's album — they've re-released the original songs that were sampled. There's lots of Pharoah "don't call me the Colonel" Sanders' solo spiritual (well, hippy) jazz. There are the highlights of Alice Coltrane's career (as well as John's 'Love Supreme'). There's the bass brilliance of Charles Mingus, the rolling be-bop drumming of Max Roach, all sorts.

I wouldn't recommend grabbing it just 'cause you're into *Red Hot and Cool*, but it's certainly got all the magic of the Impulse label for the enthusiasts.

JOHN TAITE

HELLO SAILOR The Album (EMI)

The ignoramus really come out of the woodwork when you mention the new Hello Sailor album. Two out of three people feel they have the right to creatively dismiss a musician or a band just 'cause they're over 40. The bottom line though, is the necessity for good songs and great vocals, and *The Album* has both.

Graham Brazier has a superb rock voice — it's strong and powerful, and he carries a melody brilliantly. Song wise, *The Album* is notable for the lack of Brazier/McArtney com-



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Royal Trux

positions (due to the two songwriters residing in different continents), but both have delivered several impressive tunes.

The Brazz is definitely on the rock tip, coming up with the ballsy 'New Tattoo', the wonderful whiteboy reggae of 'G.M.T.' and 'Million \$ Hand', a swinging ode to harder times. That said, he really shines on two lighter numbers. *The Album's* finest track 'Easy (The Last Procession)' is a partner to McCartney's 'I'm In Heaven', from *Shipshape And Bristol Fashion*, and sees Brazier requesting an easy ride when his time's up, and the folksy 'Bush By Where You Live' is his best love song yet.

Dave McCartney's 'Never Fade Away' reads like a Sailor autobiography, while both 'Dolly' and 'Nothing Void' are beautiful pop gems.

The Album may be an easy one for idiots to knock, but Hello Sailor have the last laugh — they're the ones who know what rock 'n' roll is all about.

JOHN RUSSELL

ROYAL TRUX Thank You
(Virgin)

Neil Haggerty used to be in Pussy Galore. His partner Jennifer Harrema wasn't. Now, with a few extra musicians playing things like drums and bass, they are Royal Trux. These cooler than anything cool peoples hail from New York (of course) and *Thank You* is their debut on a major label (Virgin).

This album is just a little bit easier to swallow than their last lo-fi, drug induced efforts (*Twin Infinitives* '90, *Royal Trux* '92, *Cats and Dogs* '93) — having said that, sometimes it's nice not to swallow isn't it.

Although Neil and Jennifer now appear to have kicked the junk, that doesn't mean

they've turned into a modern day Richard and Karen — their music still feels kinda dirty and fun. The guitars get pulled and twanged by a nonchalant Neil, Jennifer's voice strains and breaks over the sometimes Stones-like grooves, always accompanied by Neil, who sounds like he's stuck down a tunnel in the background on the opening track, 'A Night To Remember'. They both smoke a lot of cigarettes.

This is lazy, uncouth music, which also has its fair share of lotsa good grooves, nice sing-along hooks! (like 'Ray.O.Vac' — just about the whole song consists of the words 'gotta build your rock on the Ray.O.Vac', umm, yeah, okay), and some not so nice. I imagine *Thank You* to be a nice album to put on after a night on the turps. You could lie on your bed and nicely nod off to the music, occasionally mumbling along drunkenly to the words in a ridiculous manner. Yeah, anyway...

I'm having trouble making out any of the lyrics at this early stage, but in 'Map Of The City' I think Neil is trying to express some thoughts on love — he mentions looking at himself in the shower, and loving a woman, even when she has 'rotten cancer breath'. Charmed, I'm sure.

The songs are very consistent. They all have the same feel, which doesn't mean you get sick of it, but you have time to get warmed up and get into them. This is a good thing.

John, my fellow worker thinks they sound like 'any pub rock band', and also like 'any band that plays at the Papakura Roadhouse'. He's talking shit but, really, they do play kinda... just plain old rock music, except it doesn't rawk in the traditional sense. But, with any sort of music, you've gotta feel like you can maybe make some sorta connection with the people

making the music, via the music. Of course we wouldn't like this music if Extreme or Crash Test Dummies did it because they're dorks. And they couldn't do it anyway.

I like this. That's all. Thank You.

SHIRLEY CHARLES

HEADLOCK It Found Me
(Pavement)

Headlock's *It Found Me* is very good. The people in Headlock must be very nice people to make such a nice album. Not that *It Found Me* is sissy cos it's not... I don't think any girls would like it, they can listen to Nirvana or Morrissey and other yukky, wimpy stuff anyway. Sometimes mum has to sedate me after I've been listening to Headlock coz it's the sort of music that can make you really mad. Yesterday after drinking a litre of thirtee and listening to Headlock I killed Yellow Ted and was about to disembowel squiddly Diddy before mum found me and said any more outbreaks of this sort would lead to no sounds. A long time ago Headlock used to open for Biohazard and they're certainly from the same school (not my school nyAAAAh) but a little wimpier (I'm not allowed to listen to Biohazard till I've grown up more) but not much wimpier. The sound is not quite as dense and full as Biohazards instead it's sounds like Pantera circa 'cowboys from hell'. This is my most favourite type of music ever, the drums bash and double kick (Really tricky to do without falling over) the guitars go real fast and then play huge lumbering chords and the singer sounds like someones stolen his jelly sandwiches. If anyone ever takes Headlock off me I swear on the bible I'm gonna hold my breath till, I die.

KEVIN LIST (Age six and a half.)

BIG AUDIO Higher Power
(Columbia)

After *The Globe's* menacing use of samples and superior tunes, it was expected that Mick Jones and Big Audio were cooking up something really potent in the overdue *Higher Power*. Not so, 'cause this is a tame, overly catchy series of songs linked by irrelevant, irritating samples, that fail to add either atmosphere or presence to the album.

Titles like 'Harrow Road' and 'Modern Stoneage Blues' promise fear, loathing and rock 'n' roll muscle, but they're merely pleasant, lightweight, Jones-fronted dance hops. This is Jones' weakest post-Crash statement.

GEORGE KAY

SKATENIGS What A Mangled Web We Weave
(Red Light Records/Festival)

Howdy pardners. I got a little bitty tale to tell y'all 'bout an album called *What A Mangled Web We Weave*, by some varmints called the Skatenigs. These crazy critters don't play to no Christian god, no siree, they kneel before the god of industro-metal. Now, I ain't a bible bashing man, but I reckons that the keyboard and

the sampler do be the devil's work. Take Flock of Seagulls, for instance... what the jumping Jehosaphats...

Sorry for this readers, but we here at No Bullshit Reviews have taken Old Tex out back and lynched him, as a warning to all who would use a meagre knowledge of the western to write a review of anything that comes from Texas... back to the review in a far more sensible manner. *What A Mangled Web We Weave* is exactly 34 minutes and 20 seconds long. The vocals are masculine and aggressive. The aggression of the vocals is matched by the lyrics, eg.: 'I love my gun / I love my bike / I'd rather ride than self destruct.' These unhealthily phallic lyrics are taken from 'Regret', and are an example of the heterosexist lyrics that dominate the album. Regretfully, 'Regret' is the highlight of the album, most songs becoming dull and repetitive after repeated listenings. Ministry fans should enjoy the Skatenigs with their tolerance for dull, repetitive bands fronted by people who think they're cowboys. No Bullshit rating: 5/10. Be seen' y'all.

KEVIN LIST

ALAN VEGA New Raceion
(Infinite Zero)

GANG OF FOUR Entertainment!
(Infinite Zero)

This is a re-release that promised to deliver and actually has. Here you have a pair of very wonderful releases. *Entertainment!* in particular is a really great and powerful chunk of our rock culture. Amazingly, four tea-drinking commies from Leeds produced some very incisive and accessible work, both lyrically and musically. As a band, the Gang of Four were streets ahead of everyone. They had both ways — from a straight rock perspective there was a serious machine of a rhythm section, behind an inventive guitarist and vocalist who could keep pace with everyone else. At the same time, this crew could take it all a step further — Dave Allen and Hughie Burnham were comfortable sliding around funk and reggae rhythms, and still sounding very dour and minimal, while Andy Gill's guitar playing would sail off on tangents today's noisemasters can only marvel at. *Rage Against the Machine* and the Chili Peppers should hang their heads in shame. It's impossible to pick a few songs as examples of this band's art, simply because every song is so damn good and better yet, they all sound really clean on this reissue although I don't think it's been remastered. Probably one of the best purchases you could make all year.

Next up is Alan Vega's most recent solo deal, *New Raceion*. For those of you familiar with the might that was Suicide, no further recommendation is needed. If not, then this is Vega's solo continuation of some groundbreaking and twisted music. Suicide were a duo who did some wild work, sort of a combination of drone music and techno, except no-one had invented that stuff yet. With *New Raceion*, Vega

BANSHEE REEL

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keeps taking those themes just a little further on. Guitars, keyboards and a rhythm section combine to create some pretty sinister, driving sounds. It's New Yorkers so cool you could store meat in them, doing what sounds like Kraftwerk fed PCP and downers, except it's better than that. Basically, if it was a perfect world, Depeche Mode, NiN and co. would be banished back to day jobs as bank tellers and towel boys at the local Turkish baths, while albums like this would be beating fans off with a stick.

KIRK GEE

BOXCAR Algorithm (Volition)
SEVERED HEADS Gigapus (Volition)
SINGLE GUN THEORY Flow, River of My Soul (Volition)
FALLING JOYS Aerial (Volition)

Four glimpses of the Aussie alternative/independent scene begins with the lightweight techno aerobics of Sydney's Boxcar. *Algorhythm* is 12 tracks of electronic confectionary with 'Spirit' and 'Dust' being the most impressive since they're the closest vocalist Brett Mitchell can sound to New Order's Barney Sumner (and he's pretty damned close). Pleasantly hyperactive and ideal for testing the lycra, but don't expect innovation or exploration.

According to the usual hyped up bio, Severed Heads' pivotal member, Tom Ellard, is generally recognised as one of the pioneers of techno. He's sure been working at it long enough, as he formed the band in 1979 and *Gigapus* is something like his tenth album. He covers all

the reference points, from the bounding electro-pop of 'Heart of the Party' to more menacing fare like 'Arrivederci Coma', with his most effective extensions being the ambient explosions of the last four tracks. Not a leader in the genre, contrary to company claims, but a very fine exponent.

Sydney trio, Single Gun Theory, are still under the Indian/South East Asian influence that pervaded their last album, 1991's *Like Stars In My Hands*. The OE travel influences aren't quite so dominant on *Flow, River Of My Soul*, but they try to conjure up an exotic brew of samples, the odd eastern chant and floating melodies carried by Jacqui Hunt's vocals in the obligatory gossamer production. Soothing, seductive, yet incredibly boring.

That leaves stalwarts Falling Joys, who apparently nabbed the No. 1 Independent Act at the Australian Music Awards. That's the least they deserve as Suzie Higgle proves on this, their third album, that she's developed into an acute and intelligent writer with the ability to combine her sensitivities into memorable, melodic pop songs. As a band, Falling Joys have gradually moved from the harder rock phases of patrons like Concrete Blonde, to the more left-field, stylish pop of Throwing Muses, Belly et al. Stuff like 'Fiesta', 'Calendar Blues' and 'XYZ' prove that *Aerial* is an album from a band that deserves bigger plaudits than an Australain Music Award.

GEORGE KAY

ADRENALIN Open Your Eyes
(Adrenalin Music)

Adrenalin's debut kicks off with a track that was apparently a favourite in the bFM office earlier this year, the righteous ballad 'Delightful Lady'. Second up is the cheeky blues rock of 'Moving Forward', and the remainder of the



Adrenalin

album falls somewhere between these two extremes.

In today's musical climate, Adrenalin would be, without a doubt, considered old-fashioned, but who cares? They know what they like. *Open Your Eyes* was recorded at Mountain Studios with Phil Rudd behind the desk, and the band couldn't have wished for anyone better. The production is crisp and punchy, with the melody-heavy vocals out front. Tracks like 'NZ Green', 'Sweet Cherry' and 'Open Your Eyes' represent the more hard rock/blues side of Adrenalin, but they're more than capable of producing the goods on head-down pop songs like 'Twister', and the traditional-style power ballads 'Falling Down' and 'Crystal Clear'.

Adrenalin aren't breaking any new ground, and they wear their influences like medals, but *Open Your Eyes* hold its own in its genre.

JOHN RUSSELL

WAYNE KRAMER The Hard Stuff
(Epitaph)

Ladies and Gentlemen, Brother Wayne Kramer is back, and he is ready to show all you youngsters how to Rock (capital R intended). After all, he served his time in the mighty MC5 who, although they aren't the originators of all hard rock (as many grunge and journo types would have us believe), did manage to put out a couple of albums that blow most contenders out of the water. After a 12 year silence, Mr Kramer is back, and showing no signs of softening up. Epitaph gave him a selection of its young punk guns to provide backing, and they handle the job admirably. Otherwise non-eventful acts like Clawhammer lay down the goods here, while Mr Kramer deals out his (mostly) utilitarian guitar work — a little wild and dirty but pretty much all meat and no filler. There are a few meandering moments, yet the album never loses the thread and turns dull. *The Hard Stuff* is proof positive that some people can find that X factor and keep it functioning no matter what.

KIRK GEE

SPIRITUALISED Pure Phase

There are gimmicks to Spiritualised. Recently they've changed their name to Spiritualised Electric Mainline. Uh-huh. Sounds a bit too much like Electric Light Orchestra to me. And this CD cover, well, elaborate, a glow-in-the-dark square tomb (meaning they're impressive night listening and average daytime listening?).

Jason Pierce formed the group when Spaceman 3 split (and they don't sound all that dissimilar). Then *Laser Guided Melodies* made critics drool at their keyboards in 92, and now this. Not so many melodies. It's more numb. Remember 'Run' from their debut? Sounded like wading through porridge with your eyes shut. Spiritualised are a womb. A cocoon. Their electric storms remain in the distance, barely audible as Jase gives us some iron lung assisted R&B warbles. That is apart from 'Electric Phase', which gives us some metal machine music. Then they hypnotically float back into 'All of My Tears' which sonically throbs and whimpers while violins weep.

Right now they're like the elaborate orchestral big brother of Verve. Isolated. Unaware of the external. Bewildered. And without much charting potential anywhere outside of England.

JOHN TAITE


DODGY Homegrown (A&M)
DEUS Worst Case Scenario (Island)

Two contrasting but ultimately satisfying perspectives on what constitutes thrilling pop music introduced Dodgy — an English three-piece totally smitten with the idea pop should be joyous, tuneful and largely fuelled by Beatles influences. *Homegrown*, their second album, is a more cohesive and consistent refinement of the unaffected and timeless hooks and harmonies that graced their eponymously titled debut *The Dodgy Album*. There's a soaring, melodic opening, in 'Staying Out For The Summer', that's complicated perfection, with the self-explanatory 'Melodies Haunt You' and the big, Beatlesque 'Grassman' being other random representatives from an album that's a flawless exposition of how good classic pop music can be.

Belgian five piece Deus approach from a different angle, but their aim to thrill is nearly as true. Their nagging, disruptive but often soothing experimentalism fluctuates through these 14 songs, with their single, 'Suds and Soda', providing an early indication they're going to be difficult bastards, and the better for it. Visions of Waits, Beefheart and Pere Ubu lurk in the background, with more recent glimpses of My Bloody Valentine and the Boo Radleys making an appearance. Yet this is Deus's showcase, a coherent and challenging stab at avant garde pop.

GEORGE KAY

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● CROWDIES

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Miscellaneous

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AUCKLAND

Dead Flowers' temporary bassist is Dion from Nothing At All ... TV3's New Zealand music show **Frenzy**, now screens on Sunday nights at a ridiculous hour ... the **Nixons** all ages benefit show at the Powerstation was a huge success. The venue was donated free of charge by manager Carmelle Bennett, and the band raised more than twice the amount they were expecting. As yet, there's still no word on the missing gear. If you've any info, contact the Takapuna Police (09) 489 4008, or the Nixons (025) 747 536 ... the new issue of **Planet** magazine will be in the shops March 10 ... **Dave Dobbryn**, **Otara Millionaires Club**, **Maree Sheehan**, **Muttonbirds**, **Tama Renata**, **Semi MCs** and **Purest Form** are performing at Hayman Park in Manukau City at 3pm on Sunday March 12. The concert, organised by former Blam Blam bassist and MCC special events manager Tim Mahon, is free ... new Wildside act **Lodger** are recording their debut album at the bFM studios ... **KAFM 93.8's** Thursday night (7-9pm) NZ metal show is growing in leaps and bounds. Bands keen to have their demos playlisted can contact Studio 2, PO Box 167, Oneroa, Waiheke Island ... ex-Chills drummer **Earl Robertson** has joined **Grace** ... Nick D'Angelo's **Absolute Retro** is on at the Box, Squid and Cause Celebre on Thursday March 9. This celebration of the 70s and 80s features DJs Sam Hill, Sample Gee, Manuel Bundy, Roger Perry, Andy Vann, Jon Davis and D'Angelo, plus performances by Mika, the Drag Babies and the NDA Breakers ... the annual **Pasifika Festival** takes place at Western Springs lakeside on March 4, 9am-6pm ... 'top act' **Cosa Nostra** will release their debut album, *This Thing Of Ours*, early March, with a single to follow in April ... the collaboration between OJ and Slave and DLT mentioned last month will be released under the name **Joint Force** ... **Tadpole** have a new singer and play at Squid on March 10 and 16 ... Friday March 10 sees the return of **Skavoville** at Squid, featuring the Managers, plus DJs Big Matt, Dubhead, Slowdeck and Skabrim ... **Upper Hutt Posse** release a new single, 'As The Blind See', in March, and an album, *Movement In Demand*, follows late April ... **Chris Knox** has signed with American label Caroline, who will oversee the US release of the LP *Songs Of You and Me* ... **Jungle Fungus** have been recording a single, 'Crushed', at the Lab, while the **Hallelujah Picassos** are recording demos for a new album there also. They play at Squid on March 16 ... **King Loser** will release their second album, *Rock Action*, in May ... the **Able Tasmanians** have completed demos for their next record and begin recording this month ... New York house DJ

Erick Morillo will do a two hour set at the *Raise Your Hands* dance party, that also features **Reel to Real**, at the Powerstation April 1. The show is all ages and tickets are available from Quaff Records and Truetone ... local promoter **Greg Hammerdown** has recorded a single live-to-disc at King Records in Geraldine. The limited edition release features two original compositions and a Mighty Lemon Drops cover ... 1993 *Smokefree Rock Quest* winners **Halucian** release their debut single, 'Good Morning Mrs Earth', on Pagan Records this month ... bands performing at Auckland's annual *Easter Show* include **Hallelujah Picassos**, **Urban Disturbance**, **Hello Sailor**, **Dead Flowers**, **3 The Hard Way**, **Purest Form**, **Fagan**, **DLT and Slave**, **Tuffy Culture** and **Dubhead**, **Hammond Gamble** and **Emma Paki**. The *Easter Show* gets going at the Auckland Showgrounds on April 12 and continues until the 17. Contact *Rumours* with your rumours on (09)376-3235 or fax (09)376-1558.

JOHN RUSSELL

HAMILTON

The third annual Contact 89FM busking competition is being held from March 8 till 10 ... Contact are also introducing a new logo and merchandise at a gig at the Exchange featuring **Garageland**, **Inchworm** and **the Widdershins** ... the **Widdershins** plan to release some recordings made with Greg Locke's Orange label on vinyl ... **Wendyhouse** have released a new tape *Dead Man's Shoes*. Their guitarist Daniel has left for England, but he will continue to record with them from there ... MSU recently released their debut tape *My Pyjamas Smell Acidiky*. Watch out for them at an orientation gig near you ... **Dean Leary**, former manager of King Biscuit, Five Girls, Swamp Goblin and Inchworm has moved on from two years of band management to take up the position of distribution and marketing manager at **Hark Records** ... 'Television Eyes', **Knightshade's** first single off their forthcoming album, was recently released on Hark ... the vocalist for **Valhalla** has left and the band are currently looking for a new one ... **Fridge Records** are planning two very possible CD compilations of Hamilton music for 1995.

JUSTIN HARRIS

WELLINGTON

The Wellington invasion of Europe will soon be underway. **Shihad** are touring there supporting Faith No More (or is that the other way around?) ... **Head Like A Hole** are to storm through the old

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38

WARKWORTH'S 2nd ANNUAL MUSIC FESTIVAL
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New New Zealand Music Show

TV2 will begin screening an all New Zealand music show in April. *Music Nation* will follow *Top Of The Pops* on Sunday mornings, and is aimed at the 10-19 year old viewer. The brainchild of Maxwell Film & Television, *Music Nation* will feature video clips, field reports and band profiles.

Jayrem Distribute Reissue Labels

Jim Moss has returned to distribution of imports representing the See For Miles, Beat Goes On, Ace and Sequel catalogues in New Zealand. The Sequel label includes former Pye label artists such as Ivy League, Cookies and Joe Meek productions. Moss is completing new reggae compiles — *Sisters in the Heart of Reggae*, *Sisters in Reggae Vol.2* and *Black, Brown & Reggae*. Half of the tracks on the latter title are by New Zealand artists. Warner Music have picked up Jayrem's *Reggae Blasters* series to distribute in nine Asian countries. Jayrem is once again based in Wellington at (04) 587-0436.

NZ Album Radio Series

From mid-February 15 commercial music stations throughout New Zealand are airing the *Long Player* series of documentaries on recent local albums. The artists featured are Hello Sailor, Dave Dobbyn, Supergroove, Pumpkinhead, Tufnells, Kulcha, Strawpeople, Grace, Greg Johnson Set and the movie soundtrack *Once Were Warriors*. Stations airing the series include KCC FM, Hauraki 99FM, Breeze 91FM, Breeze 89.8, Coromandel FM, Classic Rock 92FM, Bayrock 97.7FM, Lake City 96FM, Kis FM, Rock 95.6FM, River City FM, 2XS FM, Fifehire 93FM, Scenicland FM, 98 Port FM, Whitestone 100 FM and Q92FM.

Musical Chairs

Simon Grigg has opened a dance music shop **BPM** in Lorne St in downtown Auckland...

Jana Rangooni has resigned as programmer at **Radio Works** in Hamilton to travel to England... **Jeremy Millar** has left IBC's consultancy **Median** to work for Sydney consultancy **BP&R**.

Dates & Deadlines

The **Arts Council New Artist Recording Scheme** applications close March 31. Twice annually the Arts Council give five new artists a \$5000 recording grant to record a debut single. To get an application form write to NZ Arts Council, New Recording Artists Scheme, PO Box 3806, Wellington... the next deadline for **NZ On Air Video Grant** and **NZ On Air Hit Disc** applications is Friday March 10... the regional Music Industry Conference **IMM** takes place in Singapore May 17-20. Further info (0044-171) 723-2277 or fax 723-2288... the **NZ Music Awards** takes place at the Aotea Centre Wednesday April 12.

NZ ON AIR Music Videos

The acts who have received NZ On Air video grants at the February meeting are:
Supergroove Next Time (BMG)
Teremoana Beautiful People (BMG)
Joint Force Static (BMG)
The Clean Outside The Cage (Flying Nun)
Southside Of Bombay Umbadada (Pagan)
Greg Johnson Set You Stay Out Of Your Life... (Pagan)
Shihad Bitter (Wildside)
Dead Flowers Not Ready (Wildside)
Pumpkinhead Third Eye (Wildside)
Feelers The Leaving (Wildside)
Exponents Happy Loving People (Polygram)
Maree Sheehan What Have You Done To Me (Roadshow)
Upper Hutt Posse As The Blind See (Tangata)
Ruia Ka Tangi Te Tiitil Ka Tangi Te Kaakaa (Tangata)
Bush Beat Let Me Know (Tangata)
Igelese Groovalation (Papa Pacific)

NZ ON AIR Kiwi Hit Disc

The tracks selected for the Kiwi Hit Disc No.13 are:
Supergroove Next Time (BMG)
Greg Johnson Set Those Aren't Real Tears (Pagan)
Southside Of Bombay Umbadada (Pagan)
Shihad You Again (Wildside)
Dead Flowers Same Same (Wildside)
Second Child Crumble (Wildside)
Feelers The Leaving (Wildside)
Igelese Groovalation (Papa Pacific)
Young & Ruthless Run For Cover (Southside)
Teremoana Beautiful People (BMG)
Maree Sheehan What Have You Done To Me (Roadshow)
D Faction First Cut Is The Deepest (Southside)
The Brainchilds Thinking About You (Rimu)
Throw Honeyblonde (Failsafe)
Squirm Voodoo (Failsafe)
Knightshade Television Eyes (Hark)
Marc Hunter One Of The Good Guys (Roadshow)

NZ ON AIR Radio Hits Funding

The following NZ artists qualified due to the "significant airplay" achieved, for funding by the NZ On Air Radio Hits Scheme:
Hello Sailor New Tattoo (EMI)
Hello Sailor Never Fade Away (EMI)
Dave Dobbyn Lap Of The Gods (Sony)
Strawpeople Sweet Disorder (Sony)
The Chills Wet Blanket (Flying Nun)
Headless Chickens George (Flying Nun)
Headless Chickens Cruise Control (Flying Nun)
Supergroove You Freak Me (BMG)
Emma Paki Greenstone (Virgin)
Maree Sheehan The Past To The Present (Roadshow)
Purest Form It's Christmas (Madame X)
Satellite Spies It Must Be Love (Andromeda)

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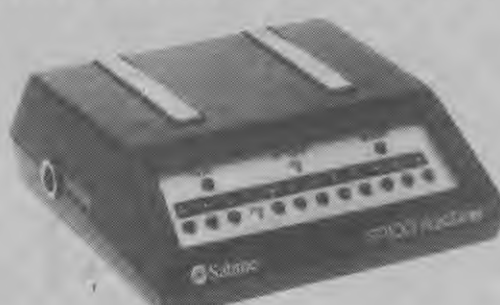
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Issue No.211 March 1995

Published by In Tune International Ltd,
Level 14, Brookfields House, 19
Victoria Street West, Auckland 1.
Postal Address: PO Box 5689,
Auckland 1.

Phone (09) 376-3235

Fax (09) 376-1558

Editor Murray Cammick

Sub Editor Bronwyn Trudgeon

Staff Writer John Russell

Designer Ryan Henderson

Fire Warden Shirley Anne Charles

Advertising Manager Suzanne Wilson

Direct Sales Simon Bell

ISSN 0114-0876

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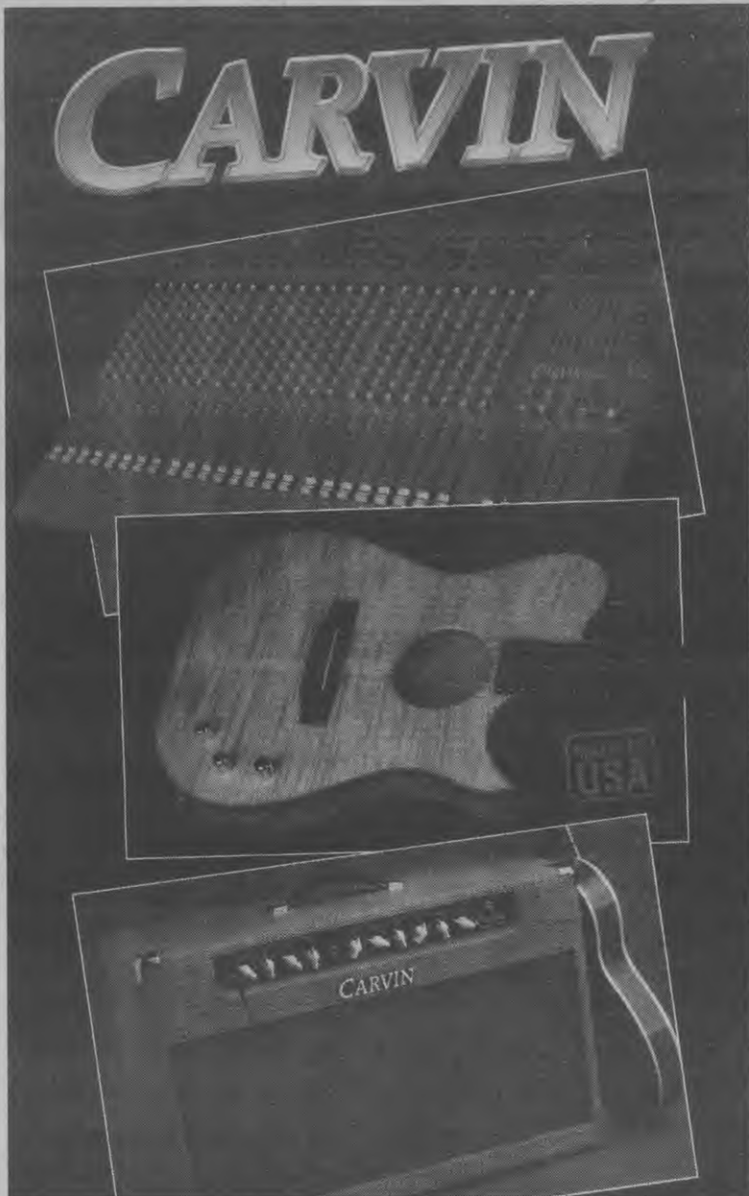
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Dance



Mo' Better Beats

SCARFACE (WITH ICE CUBE)
Hand of the Dead Body

Ice Cube succeeds in giving his boy a leg up the gangsta charts by walking in halfway through and popping a verse (not the first time the two have worked together). The beat is phat g-funk, the lyrics all about the BS of rap censorship, but the video is of more interest to me. Till now rappers have avoided showing their colours, almost always appearing in basic black. Scarface seems to be wearing a bit of blue, all his homeys certainly are, and they're throwing up Cripps gang signs all over the vid. When Ice Cube turns up, he's not showing any colours, but one can guess he's not a Blood by association.

TECHNOTRONIC (FEATURING YA KID K)
Move It To The Rhythm

Wow, it's been a long time since she pumped up the jam, but Ya Kid K is back! This is pretty much the same sort of stuff Technotronic were doing before, just with the technology/production upgrade you'd expect after all this time. Ya Kid K is in excellent form, and her voice is now a lot more mature — obviously she's older now! This is no better or worse than their original stuff — nice dance-floor pop with a strong driving beat.

PUBLIC ENEMY
What Kind Of Power We Got?

The song I picked as one of the highlights of the PE album Muse Sick-N-Hour Mess Age is now a single. Five minutes of jester Flavor Flav funkling around in a party jam: "What kind of power we got? Soul power!" The chorus refrain is a simple anthem, but the lyrics go deeper. "What kind of power we got?," is the question many black Americans are asking themselves. Flav's response is that the power is there, you've just got to find it and tap into it.

SEAL Newborn Friend

You've probably heard this on the radio already. Seven foot tall, Seal has already established his credentials with the cross-over audience, but there's no denying he's got a great voice. A mid tempo slice of soft soul, the original Trevor Horn production is augmented with various remixes by Brothers in Rhythm and David Morales.

ISDN FSOL

High quality packaging, lots of full colour cyber graphics, shame about the music. Actually, there isn't really any — just 20 minutes of ambient room noise, production noise,

and general synthesiser noise. I just didn't get it. This is the sort of *reptitious beats* nonsense that gets rave parties banned in the UK.

KYLIE Put Yourself In My Place

I was genuinely surprised this single didn't stand alone well without the video. It's a soft, brooding little number, but the video, of course, features Kyles floating through space and getting her gear off — kind of diverting. Three mixes here, plus an additional Morales remix of 'Where Is The Feeling?', which is very lame indeed.

HOUSE OF PAIN Legend

A rather excellent single which, among other things, spits on the grave of Kurt Cobain — and that can't be a bad thing! House of Pain address the nihilism of teen angst: "A hero

ain't nothing but a sandwich / a legend ain't nothing but a car." The chorus refrain sums up the hopelessness of Generation X, and the society that revels in rock stars shooting themselves.

JADE Mind, Body And Song

More mid-tempo funk and slow jams from the female trio known as Jade. The album starts funky enough, but slows down by the end — the sort of thing you want to be playing in the car as you take your date home. By the time Jade sing 'It's On', you should be well in. Best tracks are the radio hit '5-4-3-2- Yo Time Is Up' and 'Every Day of the Week'. Jade have already established themselves with their first album and, if you're a fan, you won't be disappointed this time round. Very nice indeed.

SHAQUILLE O'NEAL Shaq Fu: da Return

This weak-ass punk rapper has only survived because those around him know his heart's in the right place. By 'those around him' I mean the wealth of rap talent that hang around the Shaq mansion, telling him to record another rap album. People like Fu-Schnickens, Erick Sermon, Method Man, Redman, and Prince Rakeem. This album is okay enough, but, if Shaq wasn't an NBA all-star, you'd all be laughing like you did when Hammer tried to buy in some talent for *his* last album. Best tracks are 'My Dear' (with Warren G) and 'Biological Didn't Bother' — an ode to Shaq's dad, who ran off, and his adoptive father.

SLICK RICK Behind Bars

This album was completed while Rick was on 'work release', because he was jailed a few years back for shooting his cousin. Although resident in the US, he is expected to be deported to his UK homeland once he's done his time. All of which makes this album very interesting indeed. Rick is old school, first emerging around the time of Dana Dane (also coming back), Fresh Prince, and Doug E Fresh (who appears here for a pairing on 'Sittin' In My Car'). Clearly prison has had a sobering effect on Rick. Some of his trademark sick humor is toned down this time — perhaps he wants early parole. The sound and lyrics are still very much classic Slick Rick, without sounding dated. Considering the problems of recording the album bit by bit, this is quite an achievement.

NICK D'ANGELO

WHAT THE



IS FUDGE?



Dunedin

Hip-Hop Cornered



CL Smooth

PETE ROCK AND CL SMOOTH The Main Ingredient (Elektra)

The main ingredient is the second album from Pete Rock and CL Smooth. The first, *Mecca and the Soul Brother*, was highly acclaimed and launched Pete Rock on a solo production run for acts from NAS to Michael Jackson. He offers a very accessible style, sampling from well known oldies, which makes for a musical, tight, polished overall feel.

Main ingredient has more of an R&B feel to it than most hip-hop, it's almost too clean.

CL Smooth appears most on the album and is a positive, highly skilled brother who obviously thinks about his lyrics and their effect on his community. He's not using any of the trendy 'fillers' that plague rap.

Being a father is a recurrent theme, along with his obvious love for his wife. Overall CL and Pete Rock are milky and *Main Ingredient* is refreshing, positive and without a body count.

Check 'World Wide' for vintage Pete

Rock and 'Main Ingredient' for most innovative KRS One sample. Well worth the thirty bucks.

BRAND NUBIAN Everything Is Everything (Elektra)

This is Brand Nubian's third album. The first was an up-beat classic, the second was a ward militant classic and this one is... different.

'Word Is Bond' is the single and shows the trend of the whole album. There is a female vocalist who appears in a good percentage of the songs, giving them a soft, almost mushy feel.

'Alladat' is really the only stand-out, and features Busta Rhymes in the chorus and outstanding Sadat X verses.

The posse cut is blah, with a brother calling himself Snaggle Puss (a pink lion!?) making a feeble attempt at a 'new style'.

The Brand Nubian rawness has been replaced with musical slickness, making for a mediocre album. I hate to say it, but *Everything Is Everything* lacks something.

BLACK SHEEP Non Fiction (Mercury)

Finally! I've been waiting for this for years. After their debut, *A Wolf In Sheep's Clothing*, I was itching to hear part two. Disappointed is the word to describe my feelings when I heard it. Dres is still an excellent rapper, who amazes me with his brilliance, and the songs where he is solo are great ('Autobiographical' and 'Do Your Thing') but every other song has the DJ producer Mr Lawnge rapping as well. He is an average rapper and put next to Dres he is blah! His annoying rhymes pop up all over the album and render it almost unlistenable. There is none of the humour that was ever present in their debut and no really outstanding beats. It's like they are painting by numbers. If I could make an edit without Mr Lawnge it would be better.

AG guests on 'E.F.F.E.C.T.' and the Legion guest on 'Weboys' but on the whole this is pretty ordinary. Dres needs to go solo!

OLI GREEN

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WHAT THE

f

IS FUDGE?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32

country in April ... **Blige Festival** have a European distribution deal for *Cape Goat* ... the new **Antipodes Bar** is quickly gaining a reputation for its eclectic range of bands on offer. Recently their acts have ranged from the bouncy **CCDs**, to a Cook Island dance troop, to **Emulsifier** ... the Wellington *Fringe Festival* has started, bands of a 'fringe' nature performing this year include the wonderful **Wendyhouse**, doing weird things in the Wendyhouse, **Electric Puha** and **Stefan Wolf**, with a band that includes members of **Apollo 10**, the **Justin Payne Orchestra**, the **Skin Darlings** and **Skapa** ... **Banana Revolution** have kicked off 95 with their operation World Domination, starting with a show at Antipodes. They plan to take over the entire Southern North Island by April ... the **Brainchilids** have been cruising back to their jazzy roots, entertaining eaters and drinkers at Downstage Theatre's cafe during the fringe shows ... founding member of **Robber's Dogs**, Rob Joass has been busy performing unplugged shows the Dubliner. Playing with him have been members of Banana Revolution, **Banshee Reel** and good old boy **Wayne Mason** ... once New York, now Wellington resident, **Tim Strong** has been performing monthly jazz shows at Circa ... the **Desert Road** band are about to head to America for a tour around the southern states ... reggae/soul artists **Southside of Bombay** are embarking on a tour of Australia ... **Access Radio** in Wellington has a new New Zealand music show on Saturday nights, covering new and old material, all with that sharing - caring Access Radio approach.

DONALD REID

CHRISTCHURCH

Warners Hotel was the venue for a fitting tribute to the late **John Greenfield**. The likes of **Leonard Nimoy**, **I & I**, **Snort**, **Loves Ugly Children**, **147 Swordfish**, **EST**, **Trawler**, **Al Parks**, **Jeremy Taylor**, **Atomic Blossom** and **Chameleon** donated their time for a night that showed the respect and friendships John had within the city. John will be missed by all of us ... **Salmonella Dub** have received the pressed copies of their second CD for release in the near future, while it appears that drummer Dean Deacon will remain involved with the band ... recording at the moment (or just finished) are **Trawler**, **Squirm**, **Ape Management**, and **Loves Ugly Children**, who recorded 16 songs in 23 hours as demos for their follow up album to the *Cold Water Surf* EP ... **Creely** have also finished mixing recordings for their second of three cassette releases, which is due out in March ... **Hampster** are (or have just finished) touring to promote their second CD *Syzygy* and the re-issue of their first release *Hampsterdam* ... a new band to look out for is **Holocene**, featuring former members of **Shyster**, **Two-Bob Bit**, and **Squirm**'s old drummer ... **Pouamu** have released an excellent second cassette called *Uha*, and have further recordings targeted for a CD release in the future ... a success for RDU were the live to air performances of **Snort**, **Trawler** and **Loves Ugly Children**. RDU will also be producing the second of their *The Sheep Technique* cassettes for the

student radio network. Any bands with demo recordings interested in being a part of this promotional compilation phone 379-6320 ... anybody who has a piece of the ceiling that **Trawler** managed to dislodge from the roof of Warners Hotel during their set at John Greenfield's wake, or who understands why Dave Wernham believes that pressed trousers and short sleeved shirts are a hot fashion item, or has any rumours for this column, phone 379-6320.

HAT

DUNEDIN

Dunedin is once again full of musical activity after the usual festive break ... venue news: The music community will soon mourn the loss of **Viv Crowe**, who is to leave her job as the manager of the Empire ... the **Empire** is also currently up for tender but looks set to continue as one of the best intimate venues in the country ... the **Crown** has been attracting large crowds to touring bands over the past few months, including a blistering and sweaty **Sticky Filth** gig last month ... the **Provincial** is booking original bands again, with the **Puddle** playing there regularly ... newish group the **Cheeseband** has built up a sizeable following by playing support gigs at the Provincial with high profile local acts ... the Wharf Hotel played host to **Gate**, **Handful Of Dust** and the **Dead C** in late February. The gig was set up because Mac, founder of the Philadelphia based **Siltbreeze** label, has been in town for a few weeks. The noise loving crowd drank the pub dry of draught beer — a great night all round. The **Dead C** will tour the States later in the year to promote new album *The White House*, out on Siltbreeze ... Recording news: **Trinder** compilation *Does It Float* has been selling well in Holland, UK, Germany, USA and even NZ. Future releases from Trinder include **Fats Thompson**'s debut CD, *Loneliness Is OK As Long As You've Got Someone To Share It With*, and limited edition 7". Trinder Music will also be releasing Geraldine pressings of **Omit**, **Stephen Kilroy**, **Nigel Bunn**, **Melita Johnston**, (West Coast) and maybe **Crude** (Christchurch) ... the **Clean** have just finished their new album at Fish Street, which will be out on Flying Nun in May ... **Loves Ugly Children** are also rumoured to be recording there soon ... Volt Studios are fully booked until June. Recent recordings there include **Sandra Bell**'s new CD *Net*, to be released through IMD in June. Other musicians involved include **Kathy Bull** (ex Look Blue Go Purple), **Shaun Broadly** (Chug), **Matthew Thornicott** (Nimrod Diabolique). Look out for a tour in June ... **Two Foot Flame** (Michael Morley, Peter Jeffries and Jean Smith from Mecca Normal) are mixing a four track recording which will be released soon ... **Snapper** have recorded a new album which will be released through Flying Nun ... **Cloudboy** (Demarina from Mink), is busy completeing a CD which will be released through Infinite Regress ... **Deadboy**, who are Demarnia and Volt engineer Brendan Hoffman, are soon to release a CD ... **Trash** are recording four-track material and will mix at the Volt in March ... new **Gate** album available through IMD soon ... **Nimrod Diabolique** are recording their debut album for IMD ... **Puddle** single 'Power Of

Love'/'Mamelons d'Amadou' is out on Acetone records and available on mail order from IMD, PO Box 730, Dunedin ... **Swarm** are about to release a split CD on Atomic Action with US band the **Laurels** entitled *Rabbit Vs. Pig*. Their full length CD *Forever Bled Hollow*, also through Atomic Action, will be available March/April, and is pre-selling well — Cargo Distributors in Chicago have made an initial order of 3,000 ... **Trash**, **Swarm** and **Nimrod Diabolique** are touring nationally in April — not to be missed ... what's happening in Port Chalmers? Well, a lot of material which was recorded last year is due for release soon. Here are some edited highlights ... **Doramaar** and **Rain** are both releasing Geraldine singles, and **Doramaar** are releasing a CD on **Hermescorp** (Bruce Russell's new label). **Doramaar**'s second CD will be released in August on Siltbreeze ... **Files Inside the Sun**'s CD, *An Audience Of Others (Including Herself)*, is to be released on Chicago label Kranky. They also have a single coming out on Siltbreeze ... **Pieters Russell** and **Stapleton** are to release a CD, *Last Glass*, on Hermescorp ... the **Renederers** new CD, *That Dogs Head In The Gutter Gives Off Vibrations*, is out now on Ajax ... local weirdo **D Baser** is releasing his debut 10" *Un-Plug*, with three acoustic and three experimental pieces ... **Gaylene and the Undertakers** have released a single, 'She Could Cause Death' ... new group **Drugs Vs. Grandchildren** (Shaun Jury and Kez Bizarre) are expecting a single soon ... Andrew Spittle is pressing **Dating Godot**'s back catalogue through Geraldine ... **Das Phaedrus** have been playing around town again ... **Piers Graham**'s collection of drum kits is expanding still ... **Critic** editor **Victor Billot** has been promoted to band publicist ... **Polyp** are releasing a single soon through Dutch Label Rotten Windmill ... local cult heroes **Too Many Daves** are now a three piece ... metallers **Axiom**, will tour the South Island over Easter. Come stoke the velvet thunder ... **Mantis** have split ... **Bungalow** have lost another drummer ... **Liquid Chaos** need a bass player. Contact Radio One for info ... there have been a series of successful dance parties held around town recently, the largest of which was *She Comes In Colours*, a free all-night dance party in the Octagon during festival week ... Friday wet lunches at the university are to be broadcast live on Radio One this year ... **Operation Music Storm** entries close March 24. *OMS* starts in Christchurch at Warners April 6, with the final at Sammy's in Dunedin on Friday May 12. Prizes include a single to be distributed through Festival, an NZ On Air funded video and heaps of recording time. Spaces are limited. Contact Doug Nuttall (03) 455-1462 ... the Super 8 collective have lost their permanent home, but are to continue at a number of different venues in town. The University of Super 8 is conducting the inaugural *Sex and Drugs in New Zealand Literature* symposium from April 1-9. If you are interested in participating in this multi-dimensional festival of activity, openness, cheap thrills and hedonism write to: PO Box 459, Dunedin ... if you have any info to share phone David on 477-6115.

DAVID MUIR

NEW ZEALAND SINGLES

MAREE SHEEHAN Past To The Present
CD Single (Roadshow)

'Past To The Present' kicks off with a melody that sounds suspiciously like Upper Hutt Posse's 'Ragga Girls', before settling into a bright and bass heavy dance tune. There's four versions here, English and Maori language, plus dance and extended mixes. Unremarkable but certainly not unlistenable.

RUIA APERAHAMA
Ka Tangi te Tiitii Ka Tangi te Kaakaa
CD Single (Tangata)

A weird one this, written and recorded to celebrate Maori Language Year, but it has this distinct, up-tempo Kantuta feel about it. On 'One September Morning', Rula sings the story of TW Ratana's world expedition over a broken drum pattern, soaring guitar and vocal beatbox.

PUMPKINHEAD I Like
CD Single (Wildside)

'I Like', an ode to vegetables, *Shortland Street* and marijuana (amongst other things), represents the heavy riffing, repetitive side of Pumpkinhead that is not my choice. The equally impacting, but more melodically appealing, 'Lights Are Out' pushes Brent Mulligan's vocals out front, and this is the tactic that works best. 'Decaf', the menacing third track, shifts into industrial territory, with a guitar assault that again swamps any semblance of a tune.

CHRIS KNOX One Fell Swoop
CD Single (Flying Nun)

When song four, the noisefest of 'Shrapnel', comes on the radio I have to switch stations 'cause it's so utterly dire, in total contrast to the unashamed beauty of 'One Fell Swoop'. A simple but effective guitar melody lies under the purest of Knox vocals, interspersed with occasional bursts of fuzzbox. He's still got it. Next up is the pacey 'Giving Her Away', and finally, desperate and pleading renditions of Abba's 'SOS' and Lennon's 'Mother.'

D-FACTION First Cut Is The Deepest
CD Single (Southside)

Four versions of a very 80s sounding reggae rendition of Cat Stevens' 'First Cut Is The Deepest' feature within. Sugar-coated to the extreme, the *Maximum Vocal Mix* leaps out of the stew as the most pleasing.

MR ME Rush Me Colour
Cassette EP (Spasim)

Christchurch's Mr Me have come up with four new tracks plus a remastered version of their first single 'Fireman.' Overall, more jangly, polite, smiley-pop without an edge or spark to draw attention to itself. However, the female backing vocalist featured on the title track can hold a tune — perhaps a switch in positions may help.

TRUCK
Cassette (Ratshitrecordings)

Tuneless punk metal-for-noise-sake from Nelson, and why not? Quite possibly devoid of any musical ability whatsoever (and proud of it). Truck know that rock 'n' roll doesn't give a shit — so they don't either.

JOHN RUSSELL

WHAT THE

IS FUDGE?

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DUNEDIN	THE CROWN	FRI 3RD MARCH
WELLINGTON	ANTIPODES	SAT 4TH MARCH
HAMILTON	WAILING BONGO	SUN 5TH MARCH
AUCKLAND	SQUID	MON 6TH MARCH

fudge Gig Guide

for hair

For Don't Care Hair

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
 <p>American duo Mecca Normal tour nationwide during March.</p> <p>the shampoo</p>	 <p>The Cranberries play at the Logan Campbell Centre on March 11 with the Greg Johnson Set.</p> <p>hair shaper</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Hello Sailor Mon Desir, Auckland Dimmer Squid, Auckland Paul Ubana Jones Galaxy Theatre, Auckland 3Ds, Urban Disturbance, Salmonella Dub Massey Uni Mecca Normal, Peter Jefferies, Gate Empire, Dunedin Complete Madness, The Managers Auckland Mad Professor, Macka B Canterbury Uni Pansy Division Quadrophonia, Chch Black Static New Royal, Palm Nth Banshee Reel Lincoln Uni Voodoo Jungle The Box, Auckland Arts Alive 12.30pm Aotea Square, Auckland</p> <p>dynamite</p>	<p>3</p> <p>3Ds, Tufels, Alfalfamao Auckland Uni Ruby Turner, Grace Founders Theatre, Hamilton Dam Native, Dahmer Squid, Auckland Paul Ubana Jones Victoria Uni Mecca Normal, Peter Jefferies, Gate Dux De Lux, Chch Hallelujah Picassos Victoria Uni Mad Professor, Macka B Otago Uni Pansy Division Crown, Dunedin Squirm, Frothead, Meat Market, Foiesmaster Stomach, Palm Nth Wendyhouse Canterbury Uni Mellowthumb, Static Black Ale House, Wanganui Banshee Reel Canterbury Uni Arts Alive 12.30pm QEII Square, Auckland</p> <p>hair varnish</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Pasifika Festival Western Springs, Auckland Ruby Turner, Grace Town Hall, Auckland Mad Professor, Macka B, Hallelujah Picassos Massey Uni Mecca Normal, Peter Jefferies, Gate Penguin Club, Oamaru Nothing At All, Balance Frisbee Leisure Lounge, Auckland Paul Ubana Jones Forum, Whangarei Pansy Division Antipodes, Wgtn Mellowthumb, Static Black Glasshouse, New Plymouth Banshee Reel Otago Uni</p> <p>hair putty</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Ruby Turner, Grace Michael Fowler Centre, Wgtn Mad Professor, Macka B Wgtn Uni Paul Ubana Jones Paris, Gisborne Pansy Division Exchange, Hamilton Rhapsody Rock AIDS Fundraiser Albert Motor Lodge, Palm Nth</p> <p>hair cement</p>	
<p>6</p> <p>Paul Ubana Jones, Hammond Gamble Folk Club, Waioroa Pansy Division Squid, Auckland</p> <p>fudge fudge</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Ruby Turner, Grace Opera House, Palm Nth Hallelujah Picassos Waikato Uni Paul Ubana Jones O'Flaherty's, Napier Complete Madness Waikato Uni</p> <p>hair shaper</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Paul Ubana Jones Waikato Polytech (day), Waikato Uni (night) Stella Chiweshe Aotea Centre, Auckland Banshee Reel Napier Polytechnic, Napier</p> <p>the shampoo</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Absolute Retro Squid/The Box/Cause Celebre, Auckland Paul Ubana Jones, Hammond Gamble Burundi's, New Plymouth Mecca Normal, Peter Jefferies, Gate Cuba Cuba, Wgtn Wendyhouse Arts Centre, Nelson Laurent De Wilde Trio Galaxy Theatre, Auckland</p> <p>the conditioner</p>	<p>10</p> <p>The Return of Skavovvie: The Managers, Tadpole, DJs Big Matt, Dubhead, Slowdeck, & Skabrim Squid, Auckland Skapa Framptons, Mt Maunganui Blackjack Harbour View Hotel, Raglan Guy Clarke Cask & Cleaver, Auckland Laurent De Wilde Trio Galaxy Theatre, Auckland Mecca Normal, Peter Jefferies, Gate New Royal, Palm Nth Raw Meat For the Balcony Glasshouse, New Plymouth Banshee Reel Waikato Uni</p> <p>dynamite</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Cranberries, Greg Johnson Set Logan Campbell Centre, Auckland Mecca Normal, Peter Jefferies, Gate Squid, Auckland Skapa Pod, Auckland Raw Meat For the Balcony Antipodes, Wgtn Banshee Reel Bar In The Park, Tauranga</p> <p>hair varnish</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Dave Dobbyn, Otara Millionaires Club, Maree Sheehan, Muttonbirds, Purest Form, Tama Renata, Fuemana, Semi MCs Hayman Park, Manukau City Guinness Celebration of Irish Music Aotea Centre, Auckland Skapa Glasshouse, New Plymouth Teddy Bears Picnic Domain, Auckland Arts Alive 12.30pm Victoria Park Market, Auckland</p> <p>the shampoo</p>
<p>13</p> <p>Mecca Normal, Peter Jefferies, Gate Exchange, Hamilton</p> <p>hair shaper</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Hot Chocolate Aotea Centre, Auckland Mecca Normal, Peter Jefferies, Gate The Mill, New Plymouth</p> <p>the shampoo</p>	<p>15</p> <p>fudge fudge</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Hallelujah Picassos, Tadpole Squid, Auckland Syzygy Stomach, Palm Nth Banshee Reel Moose McGillicudy's, Wanganui Arts Alive 12.30pm Albert Park, Auckland</p> <p>hair varnish</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Upper Hutt Posse Canterbury Uni Voom, Pet Rocks, Lanky Squid, Auckland Mecca Normal, Peter Jefferies, Gate Tillermans, Invercargill Arts Alive 12.30pm QEII Square, Auckland</p> <p>hair putty</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Upper Hutt Posse Dux De Lux, Chch Mecca Normal, Peter Jefferies, Gate Crown, Dunedin Warkworth Mini Blues Festival Warkworth Banshee Reel Antipodes, Wgtn Arts Alive 3.30pm Mission Bay, Auckland</p> <p>hair cement</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Slayer, Biohazard Town Hall, Auckland Arts Alive 1.30pm Cornwall Park, Auckland</p> <p>hair gum</p>
<p>20</p> <p>Slayer, Biohazard Town Hall, Wgtn</p> <p>the shampoo</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Violent Femmes Town Hall, Auckland</p> <p>hair shaper</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Violent Femmes Town Hall, Wgtn Banshee Reel Totara Lodge, Upper Hutt</p> <p>dynamite</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Violent Femmes Town Hall, Chch Loreena McKennitt Town Hall, Auckland Arts Alive 12.30pm Aotea Square, Auckland</p> <p>hair varnish</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Pearl Jam Mt Smart Supertop, Auckland Loreena McKennitt Michael Fowler Centre, Wgtn</p> <p>hair putty</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Pearl Jam Mt Smart Supertop, Auckland Arts Alive 1.30pm Cornwall Park, Auckland</p> <p>fudge fudge</p>	<p>26</p> <p>M People Town Hall, Chch</p> <p>hair cement</p>
<p>27</p> <p>M People, The Grid Show & Sports Centre, Wgtn</p> <p>the shampoo</p>	<p>28</p> <p>M People, The Grid Mt Smart Supertop, Auckland Dinosaur Jr Town Hall, Wgtn</p> <p>hair shaper</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Dinosaur Jr Town Hall, Auckland</p> <p>dynamite</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Hampster Stomach, Palm Nth</p> <p>the conditioner</p>	<p>31</p> <p>African Headcharge Powerstation, Auckland Blackjack Tutukaka Hotel, Tutukaka</p> <p>dynamite</p>	<p>1 APRIL</p> <p>James Brown Mt Smart Stadium, Auckland African Headcharge Wgtn Uni Raise Your Hands Dance Party Powerstation, Auckland</p> <p>hair shaper</p>	<p>2</p> <p>African Headcharge Ministry, Chch</p> <p>hair cement</p>



the shampoo

hair shaper

dynamite

hair varnish

the conditioner

hair putty

hair shaper

hair cement

KEEP IT UP ALL NIGHT

f

WE WANT YOUR SCALP

f

WHAT THE

f

IS FUDGE?

"Only From Hair Salons With Attitude"

fudge **it**

scrunch it mould it slick it

Live

GEORGE BENSON

Auckland Town Hall, February 8.

When I was nine, a man appeared on *Ready To Roll* and funk'd his way through a song called 'Give Me The Night', and I didn't know what had hit me. Like 'Stomp', by the Brothers Johnson, and the Commodores' 'Brickhouse', it was a song that supplied a rush of pure joy, unequalled by any other stimulus that occupies a mind not quite into double figures.

So, many years later, it's my first opportunity to see George Benson really play, and the feeling of anticipation reaches unreal heights in the sold-out Auckland Town Hall. He strolls on wearing black trousers and shirt, a royal blue blazer, and cradling a blood red Ibanez attached to a rhinestone-encrusted guitar strap. This cat has all the style.

With his spirited six-piece band, he launched straight into two lengthy, swinging instrumentals, before pausing to make his introductions. Overall, he didn't chat much, but that was cool — the less said the more sung.

The first tunes to really shake up the crowd were the smooth and deceptively powerful 'Turn Your Love Around', and the flowing groove that's wrapped around 'Love Times Love'. Played almost back-to-back, it was obvious Benson was going to make this a 'greatest hits' show.

Midway through, he changed the mood to mel-low with 1983's 'In Your Eyes' and 'The Greatest Love Of All' — schmaltzy to the extreme, but it was a brilliant display of Benson's vocal range, and not at all "colourless", as was suggested by a pretentious review in the *NZ Herald*.

As the cruisy instrumental 'Breezin'' wound to a close, Benson flowed on to the intro of 'Give Me The Night', and immediately I'm frothing like a rabid hound. As he hits the second verse, the sad sacks who've been clapping politely downstairs finally leave their seats, the fans near the back rush the stage, and the place is bursting with energy. Benson, grinning from ear to ear, adds three extra choruses and still it's not enough. Moments like these should be never ending.

For the encore, Benson has changed into a light brown blazer. He only does one for the road, an epic version of 'On Broadway', before the house lights go up. Admittedly, I'm disappointed 'Never Give Up On A Good Thing' wasn't given a whirl, but in the scheme of things, that notion was surrendered insignificant. This was a tremendous show, and there's nothing quite like seeing a childhood hero deliver in the flesh.

JOHN RUSSELL

DAVE DOBBYN

Powerstation, January 27.

Being the last night of a nationwide tour, you can excuse Dave Dobbyn and crew for celebrating with a few handles of indulgence. It was as he said, "a party".

A slightly unsteady-on-his-feet Dobbyn strikes the first chords of 'Rain On Fire' just before 11pm, and the tables upstairs, reserved for REM, remain unused. It was their major loss.

Through the years Dobbyn hasn't lost any of his vocal chops, and tonight, armed with the rhythm section of Auckland band Breast Secreting Cake and percussionist Jay Foulkes, he swept and

rocked gloriously, from the old school charm of 'Be Mine Tonight', to the fresh visionary tales collected on *Twist*, to the desperate ballads 'Loyal' and *Lament For The Numb's* 'Don't Hold Your Breath'.

'Whaling' — the best sea shanty in the world — was given a huge reception, as is normal, but a big surprise tonight was the number in the crowd who knew word for word songs lifted from *Twist*. It appears Dobbyn has swayed the faithful, who usually demand he play more than a fair share of old favourites.

He found himself accompanied by 600 voices on 'Lap Of The Gods', 'Naked Flame', a sublime version of 'It Dawned On Me', and the huge sounding 'What Do You Really Want'. Earlier, a stomping cover of 'Sweet Jane' led into *Twist's* first single, 'Language', and when Dobbyn and the assembled fans joined forces on the opening line, "my hands are tied...", it seemed the strength of the combined voices could lift the roof. Repeating it as an encore was a perfectly played ace.

When I last saw Dobbyn at the Powerstation, the *Loyal* album had just been released and I held a false ID in my back pocket. He had a band called the Stone People in tow, who were far too flashy and more of a hindrance than a plus. The current three-piece definitely serves him better, and there's a rawness and freshness about the new songs that suggests an entertainer still living large near the top of the pile.

JOHN RUSSELL

ALT

Powerstation, February 11.

Mostly curiosity was responsible for drawing a crowd that half-filled the Powerstation on this night — Tim Finn was making his first appearance within a band since his departure from Crowded House. As a member of the trio called ALT, he contributed to moments that were either tremendous or tragic.

The L in the equation, Liam O'Manolai of the Hothouse Flowers, graced the stage first for a double dose of acoustic Irish folk, before he was joined by A, guitarist Andy White. Sounding unbelievably like Mike Scott of the Waterboys, White was undoubtedly the hero of the evening, exercising a subtly controlling hand that held things together.

Two dreamy pop songs later, on came Mr T, and the first ridiculous combination of the evening. 'I Hope I Never' was ruined by O'Manolai nervously tapping at the drums, and it was a relief when they tapping into the first ever ALT single, 'We're All Men.'

A stunning version of 'Many's The Time' followed, and it was here they peaked. First heard on Finn's *Before And After* album, 'Many's The Time' was transformed tonight from a sweeping ballad to a glorious, intensely powerful epic.

Later on came the poignant section — the ballads 'I Decided To Fly', 'What You've Done' and 'Favourite Girl' — with Finn and O'Manolai trading instruments, T proving a more competent skinsman.

The first encore was the boisterous sing-along 'Halfway Round The World', and the second was provoked by an impromptu football chant from the fans. The trio were immediately called back for a third, where upon Finn careened round the stage,

either fuelled by speed or euphoria, playing one instrument for 20 seconds, then leaping to the next. Unfortunately 'Lean On Me' crashed messily into a directionless, self indulgent jam session, that threatened to sour an otherwise fun performance, but judging by the smile on Tim Finn's face, he's unperturbed, just happy to belong.

JOHN RUSSELL

THE CRAMPS

Palace Hollywood, January 27.

It's a great and wondrous thing, this rock 'n' roll, and the Cramps are living proof of this. Ably supported on this night by Big Sandy and the Flyrite Trio's straight up rockabilly, and the retarded folk-blues of Tucson's Doo-Rag, it was a truly celebratory atmosphere by the time the headliners hit the stage. For all their flamboyance, the Cramps know how to keep things simple and powerful on the musical front. The new kids, Harry Drumdini and Slim Chance, had the beat nailed down tight. Ivy strutted her very fine stuff, and Mr Lux Interior showed everyone exactly what a real frontman should be like. No speeches on inequality from a guy earning six figures, no stories on how bad his childhood was. There's just a simple "let's all do some drugs", and the band drive into a version of 'Bop Pills' that makes you realise the golden age of punk was probably 1956.

Naturally, the new material was given a serious workout and it stands out well. 'Mean Machine', 'I'm Customised' and 'Sado County Auto Show' made up a nice hot rod triptych, while 'Naked Girl Falling Down The Stairs' was simply pure artistic genius. It's nice to hear this stuff stand up to 'Daddy Drives A UFO' or a mighty 'Garbage Man', which drove the crowd into a near frenzy. No easy crowd to impress either, for every hammered college boy or alternokid there was a serious freak, most of whom were as entertaining as the band, especially if you're a fan of big hair or ornate fetish wear. Stand out moments had to be a most twisted introduction to 'She Said' and show stopper 'Surfin' Bird', during which Lux indulged in his usual orgy of microphone destruction, nudity and downright threatening behaviour, while the band ignored him and blistered through some serious feedback. It mayn't sound like high art to you, the tender reader, but believe me, we all left the seedy confines of the Palace as believers that night.

KIRK GEE

POI ON HEELS

Starfish Enterprise, January 26.

The gin has left the details hazy. On a hot February night it enhanced a wonderful show. So did the unexpected raucous quartet of strangers at my table.

Mika is brilliant. He can dance. He can sing. He is the mistress of his cabaret. He wore the ab-fab heels. There are some who will say, platforms? Enough retro! Likewise the stilettos. Why not throw both extremes together. A decidedly dangerous stiletto heel, it would go clean through one ear and out the other, a massive platform forward. Shiny black, patent leather, held together elegant scuff stylee. I was assured of their comfort, having been hand made in New York. The best frock went to Carmen, resplendent in full length refractive

sequins. But this is not a drag comp', it's a show.

Mika is the star, though ably assisted by his bi-cultural posse of backing singers. The whites, 'the Blokes', were Arjan Hoefflak and Jason Heap. The brownies, 'the Ahuras' were Taiaroa Royal and Taane Mete. There were guest appearances throughout — the aforementioned Carmen singing 'Summertime', and the inevitable drag thing, lip syncing. Dalvanus did a no-show but dispatched young man Leon Wharekawa, who did a number from Dalvanus' up coming musical. Opera singer Mary Astin put in an appearance.

Being a cabaret, everyone was given a chance to shine, so the songs kept coming. 'Juiced' produced the actual *Poi On Heels*. Others were camp classics. 'Say A Little Prayer', 'I Will Survive', the turgid 'Endless Love' and 'Can't Hurry Love', and a brilliant piss-take of Dame Kiri Te Kanawa doing 'Pokare Kare Ana'. How did he get so high and all that vibrato? Mika's new single 'Marina' got showcase treatment. But it wouldn't have been so lush without the extravagant wigs and costumes. Te Mika Aue!

BARBIE

KING LOSER, SHAFT

Squid, February 15

The best rock 'n' roll story of 1994 goes to King Loser. Loser land tour support for cult international band. They, the very famous Celia and the equally infamous Chris Heazelwood search again for a drummer. They've had a few. Steve Pikelet was superb. Original banger (am I really saying this?) Duane Zakarov had style, as did Sean O'Reilly. Guy Treadgold, as I heard it told, wasn't really a drummer at all, hence the free jazz label, but he was badly in need of a lift to Auckland. Time was running out, speed burn was setting in. Why not kill two birds with one stone? The merry trio play their way from Auckland to Dunedin. They did not live happily ever after.

Their 95 follow up? There is no bullshit about drummer number 13 Lance Strickland. The stacks of dishes aside, this is a working musician with an impressive track record — SPUD, Freak Power, Rainy Days and his own Virginia Reel. A tribute to Lance — power, precision, lots of presence — all on the basic Loser kit, the drumming is not. Mr Strickland still throws in the signature fills.

The Loser sound is basic too. Either guitar, bass, drums or guitar, keyboards, drums. The singing is shared between Celia and Chris. Chris plays most of the guitar. Mr Heazelwood, though appearing loose, is very in control of the guitar sound. Clean use of his whammy bar as pitch variation contributes greatly to Loser noise. Nolsy it is, see I don't reckon they rock. King Loser groove, down and dirty. They laugh a lot. They write classic songs, especially their surf numbers. 'Surf's Up In Malibu', 'Surfarama', the finale, and 'Surf Lost'. There were some new songs. I liked 'You Follow, You Fall'. Just for good measure, some covers too. 'Morning Dew' showed off the dueting style of Celia and Chris. So did the banter: "Chris, I spilt piss on your guitar."

"That's all right. I spilt piss on your keyboards." Version 13 of King Loser is one fine Mama of a plaything. Shaft played support. I don't like Shaft. They annoy the fuck out of me. At least they're not forgettable. Make up your own minds.

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REM, CROWDED HOUSE, GRANT LEE BUFFALO
Western Springs, January 28.

I'm sure some radio station, somewhere, would have been promoting this as 'the concert event of the summer', and for once they would have been right. There are very few reasons that justify immersing yourself into the seething mass of humanity that is an outdoor concert at Western Springs. Here were three of them, all on the same bill — Grant Lee Buffalo, Crowded House, and REM — not the sort of line-up you would expect to find at the Garter and Strumpet on an average Tuesday night.

Opening up were American three-piece Grant Lee Buffalo, who seemed to have the hugest sound of the night. It was certainly the most intense — with bass/keyboard player Paul Kimble stalking the stage like a peroxided Vyv (from the *Young Ones*), and singer/guitarist Grant Lee Phillips teetering beautifully between delicate and demonic. As the first act of the evening, it was all over too quickly, of course — a mere six songs provided only circumstantial evidence that Grant Lee Buffalo are something very special. Their two-hour concert the following night at the Powerstation, however, was the sort of show that re-affirms your faith in rock 'n' roll. Truly spiritual.

Crowded House, the local(ish) meat in the overseas sandwich, were up next, with Neil Finn and co. in their usual jocular mood. Their set was peppered with their trademark between-song banter (although the exact meaning of some of it eluded these ears). Finn sounded for all the world like a proud parent, as he introduced his home-town audience to the band (and vice-versa). As the sun sank lower the mood was definitely relaxed. The band swung through a song selection that was surprisingly light on the hit single side of things, preferring to concentrate on lesser known (but not lesser) album tracks. However, a rousing 'Weather With You' had the crowd singing along for the first time (as they were to do even more emphatically during REM's encore of 'Everybody Hurts'), and the percussion driven finale of 'Private Universe' was simply magic.

With opening acts this good, the stage was well and truly set, as they say, for the main event — the triumphant return of REM. The last time they visited these shores, they played to 2,000 people in a concrete bunker masquerading as a live music venue and pulled off one of the most stunning performances I'd ever seen. Here was the real McCoy — everything a rock group could and should be. Here was a band who didn't just say they were the greatest rock 'n' roll band on Earth, but convinced you they were, with the brilliance of their songs and the power of their performance. Six years, three albums and mega-stardom later the question was whether they could still do it, without succumbing to exaggerated Jaggeresque stage antics designed to appeal to the lowest common audience denominator, ie. the unfortunate punter watching the ant-like figures from row Z.

Well, the only concession they made to such over the top behaviour was Mike Mills' Flying Burrito Brothers rhinestone suit. Otherwise, REM played it straight. There were no fireworks, no laser lightshows, no giant video screens (just a sporadically used back-lit screen), no runways out into the crowd, hell, not even any tight pants with root vegetables strapped to the inner thigh. Coupled with Stipe's perfunctory between-song comments ("Uh, we're the band and you're the audience and this is a song"), the message was clearly about ignoring distractions and concentrating on the music. As such, their most recent album, the sexy, back-to-basics *Monster*, seemed like a perfect vehicle for exploring that vibe — providing an opportunity for the band to get down and dirty, feed off each other's energy and tension, and bring the house down. But there's the rub — there's no house big enough to hold REM any more. A natural amphitheatre in a residential Auckland suburb is the nearest New Zealand can offer and, frankly, REM's music suffered for it. Perhaps the 1,000 or so people who could see and hear the band (and by that I mean facial features and loud enough to make your ears ring) achieved some sort of emotional connection with those on stage. For the other 29,000 of us being 'orange crushed' tighter than a gnat's chuff further back, the pleasures (and volume) were less discernible.

However, when the pleasures arose, they were often spine-quiveringly good — the opening song mosh-fest of 'What's The Frequency, Kenneth?', an explosive 'Finest Worksong', a sublimely brooding 'Country Feedback' (introduced by Stipe as "my favourite song") and the wonderful finale of 'It's The End Of The World As We Know It (And I Feel Fine)'. In between there were surprises both good and bad. Versions of lesser album tracks grew in stature when played live — 'Circus Envy' (from *Monster*) and 'Me In Honey' (from *Out Of Time*). Yet some excellent studio tracks — 'I Don't Sleep, I Dream' and 'Near Wild Heaven' among them — failed to gel live. We got one totally new track, the rather nifty 'Revolution', but nothing pre-*Document* — an era that contains some of their strongest material. I think you're getting the picture — the only consistent thing about the set was its inconsistency.

As I trudged away from Western Springs, I knew I'd heard some great versions of some great songs, yet my feet had remained strangely unmoving throughout the show. A feeling of vague disappointment began to descend. Perhaps I was expecting too much based on past experience. Perhaps my thoughts were clouded by my conviction that huge outdoor concerts are not the best way to experience rock 'n' roll (10 nights at the Powerstation next time?). Or perhaps I had merely witnessed an almighty rock band being recast into the unfamiliar role of middling stadium rockers. Time, and the rest of the *Monster* tour, will tell.

MARTIN BELL



Photos Kerry Brown



White Summit shirt from Love Shop, black suit from Vera Lyn.



'London' print shirt from This Is Not A Love Shop.

NICE BOY



Red Shirt by 'X-Girl' from Booty. Brown pinstripe trousers courtesy of editor Cammick — circa 1960s.



'London' print shirt, blue pinstripe suit from Vera Lyn.



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